



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (Cameroon)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET* FOR THE BIENNIUM 1986-1987 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 117: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

General debate (continued)

*This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC-2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/40/SR.20

4 November 1985

ENGLISH

ORIGINAL: FRENCH

/...

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1986-1987 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 117: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

General Debate (continued) (A/40/6, A/40/7, A/40/38, A/40/262)

1. Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic) said that at a time when Member States were applying the strictest austerity measures to their national budgets, the United Nations should show the greatest restraint. New activities should be financed from existing resources and additional appropriations should be requested only in the most extraordinary cases.
2. Any further increase in the number of staff would be unreasonable. Requirements should be met instead by transferring staff members to sections of high priority. When recruiting personnel, preference should be given to candidates whose qualifications were such that they could be given tasks which previously would have had to be given to outside experts and consultants. Finally, a greater proportion of the staff should be given fixed-term contracts so that the Organization could benefit from a constant flow of new ideas.
3. His delegation welcomed the efforts that had been made to utilize resources in accordance with the established priorities, but wondered why some units did not operate in the same manner. It fully supported the decisions taken by the General Committee to make more effective use of the conference facilities. It supported the idea of examining to what extent the duration and periodicity of the sessions of individual bodies met actual requirements and recalled that the rule established by the General Assembly that all meetings and conferences should be held at the headquarters of the organizational unit responsible for substantive servicing applied also to meetings of committees of experts which were funded from the regular budget.
4. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination should play a more active role in identifying programmes that were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective and that placed an undue strain on the Organization's budget; the Joint Inspection Unit and the Board of Auditors could give some advice in the process.
5. He noted that while the total amount of resources requested was presented as being very moderate it did not include certain capital expenditures and that the estimates for certain sections remained at the same level as in the previous budget. Furthermore, because of the increase in the value of the US dollar, the dollar amounts of expenses quoted in other currencies had decreased as against the 1984-1985 biennium. While the additional expenditures could be explained in part by the revaluation of the resource base for 1984-1985 at the revised 1985 rates they were primarily due to inflation adjustments: they should be funded by applying the principle of responsibility.

(Mr. Zachmann, German Democratic Republic)

6. He also noted with satisfaction that with relatively few exceptions no provision had been made for transferring to the regular budget posts which had previously been funded from extra-budgetary resources. However, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions could decide whether the variations between the two categories of posts indicated in Tables 2 and 8 of document A/40/6 did not, in fact, reflect transfers from the latter to the former category.

7. Mr. RUSTICO (Benin) said that if all Member States abided by the provisions of the Charter, the Organization's expenses would be reduced. The funds that the United Nations allocated to peace-keeping activities could then be used to enhance the well-being of all, in a better world.

8. The new budget format was satisfactory but the Secretary-General should be asked to do his utmost to ensure that the new methodology used for calculating apportioned costs was submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-first session. In order for the relevant subsidiary organs to assess their proposed programme budgets more accurately, in future, all foreseeable expenses should be calculated in time.

9. His delegation was in favour of purchasing modern equipment, provided it was done gradually and met the real needs of the Secretariat. When consultants were needed, the Organization should look first to its own staff members. Finally, noting the proposal to eliminate one of the temporary posts on the Committee of the Security Council to monitor the implementation of resolutions of the Council concerning a mandatory arms embargo against South Africa, he said that the Secretary-General should have taken into account not only the important political aspect of such a measure but also the tragic situation of the black people who were victims of apartheid.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.