



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 28th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (Cameroon)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 116 AND 117: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1986-1987 AND PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/40/3, 6, 7, 38 and Add.1 and 262)

First reading (continued)

Section 2A. Political and Security Council affairs, peace-keeping activities (continued)

1. Mr. ALPER (Turkey) said that his Government was not a party to the Convention on the Law of the Sea and did not feel that expenditure arising from the Convention should be met from the regular budget. Accordingly, his delegation wished a recorded vote to be taken on section 2A.C.
2. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation shared the concern of Bangladesh regarding the propriety of the ad hoc expert group meetings referred to in paragraph 2A.56 of the proposed programme budget. The question of acceptance of the Convention lay within the competence of Member States and could not be entrusted to expert groups. His delegation wished to have details of the history of that programme element.
3. Mr. KRAMER (United States of America) said that his delegation could not support appropriations for the Preparatory Commission established under the Convention, since it was legally independent and distinct from the United Nations. The costs should be borne by States parties to the Convention. Accordingly, his delegation wished a recorded vote to be taken on section 2A of the budget as a whole and on the recommendation contained in paragraph 600 of the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination.
4. Mr. DANUS (Chile) said that his delegation attached great importance to activities under the Convention and supported the organization of ad hoc expert group meetings. Such meetings would clarify the scope of articles which otherwise would be open to differing interpretations.
5. Mr. SINGH (Fiji) said that island the Convention had opened up new prospects for island States, which lacked most commodities and depended on marine resources. In view of its importance, it was essential for the provisions of the Convention to be implemented to the full, in which connection the work of the expert group would be invaluable.
6. Mr. ORTEGA (Mexico) said that many problems had arisen owing to the complexity of the Convention, for example, difficulties in harmonizing national legislation. The meetings of the expert group would help to secure wider acceptance of the Convention, and his delegation therefore supported the proposed appropriation of \$35,000.

7. Mr. SCHLAFF (Office for Programme Planning and Co-ordination), responding to questions raised by the representative of Bangladesh at an earlier meeting, said that the work of the expert group referred to in paragraph 2A.56 was intended to facilitate decision-making and to ensure consistent application of the Convention. States parties would need to keep abreast of developments under the Convention and required the assistance of various experts, such as cartographers, who would be selected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution. A large number of delegations had requested assistance in various areas, for example, the determination of the outer limit of the continental shelf. The expert group would clarify issues for Member States to enable them to take decisions.
8. Mr. MONIRUZZAMAN (Bangladesh) said that his delegation had taken note of the information provided by the Secretariat.
9. Mr. FRANCIS (Jamaica) said that there had been no firm agreement on the figures contained in paragraph 2A.61 of the proposed programme budget relating to payments for the use of conference-servicing facilities at Kingston.
10. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) said that the staffing table for UNRWA given in table 2A.45 of the proposed programme budget did not agree with the figures contained in the report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA (A/40/13). Although the totals for Professional staff were the same, the numbers of staff at various grades did not match. His delegation would welcome an explanation. Further, it was apparent from document A/40/13 that the number of extrabudgetary posts had decreased sharply, and that posts were being transferred to the regular budget. Clarification of the situation would be welcome.
11. Mr. FORAN (Controller) said that it would take some time to gather the information requested by the representative of the United Kingdom.
12. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the recommendation made by CPC in paragraph 600 of its report (A/40/38).

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet

Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against: Israel, Turkey, United States of America.

Abstaining: None.

13. The recommendation made by CPC in paragraph 600 of its report was adopted by 100 votes to 3, with no abstentions.

14. Mr. MASSOUD (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. MUTSVANGWA (Zimbabwe) said that, had they been present during the vote, they would have voted in favour of the recommendation.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that he would take it, if he heard no objection, that the Committee wished to adopt the recommendations contained in paragraphs 594 to 599 of the report of CPC without a vote.

16. It was so decided.

17. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take a decision on the proposal made by the representative of Nigeria to maintain the temporary P-5 post referred to in paragraph 2A.24 of the budget. Should the Committee adopt that proposal, an appropriation of \$157,400 would be required under section 2A; an appropriation of \$46,600 would also be required under section 31 (Staff assessment), to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment).

18. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, should the Committee adopt the proposal, the actual appropriations would be considered by ACABQ in the light of information from the Secretary-General on the amounts required for the biennium 1986-1987. In the meantime, the Fifth Committee could decide on the substance of the proposal.

19. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) said that he had some reservations concerning that procedure. The Committee had been informed orally the previous day that given the changed circumstances the recommendation might be altered. Would it not be more appropriate to approve the recommendations in the document before the Committee? When submitting his revised estimates the Secretary-General could explain why the recommendation had been changed.

20. Mr. FALL (Senegal) and Mr. MOUSSAKI (Congo) said that they would prefer to follow the procedure outlined by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

21. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the proposal to retain the P-5 temporary post referred to in paragraph 2A.24 of the proposed programme budget.

22. Mr. ORSATELLI (France) expressed regret that the Committee was not following the normal budgetary procedure, which was not to take any decision until it had been given all the facts in a document which had been considered by the Advisory Committee.

23. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) pointed out that it was not the first time that the Committee was taking a decision only on the substance.

24. Mr. KRAMER (United States of America) expressed great regret that the Committee was being asked to take a decision before it was in possession of all the information it needed. Accordingly, he would have to vote against the proposal.

25. At the request of the representative of the United States a recorded vote was taken on the proposal.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

26. The proposal to retain the P-5 temporary post referred to in paragraph 2A.24 of the proposed programme budget was adopted by 96 votes to 1, with 11 abstentions.

27. Mr. MUTSVANGWA (Zimbabwe) said that if he had been present during the voting he would have voted in favour of the proposal.

28. Mr. HOLBORN (Federal Republic of Germany), Mr. CAVAGLIERI (Italy), Mr. TAKASU (Japan), Ms. VAN DRUNEN LITTLE (Netherlands), Ms. HILLYER (New Zealand) and Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) said that they had abstained because of their reservations concerning the procedure the Committee was following.

29. Mr. VAHER (Canada) said that in a sense the Committee had had two budget items before it, one in the budget document before the Committee and another, different one which had been outlined orally by a representative of the Secretary-General. His delegation had been obliged to abstain because the Committee was not in possession of all the facts.

30. Mr. REFSHAL (Norway) said that, after hearing the statements made in the Committee, including the one by the Controller, his delegation had realized that there were considerations other than purely budgetary ones which must be taken into account. Although it had some doubts regarding the budgetary aspects his delegation had voted in favour of the proposal in order to make its position on the South African régime clear.

31. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at an earlier meeting the representative of France had proposed that no decision be taken to consolidate the position of the news service of the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs until the evaluation report referred to in paragraph 595 of the report of CPC was received. He had further proposed that, if the report was not forthcoming and that if that report was not available by the time a final decision had to be taken on the budget, the General Assembly should decide that the number of staff assigned to the news service should revert to its previous level, namely 7.

32. Mr. ODUYEMI (Nigeria), supported by Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland), asked the representative of France to reconsider his proposal. The Committee should give the Secretariat an opportunity to produce the evaluation report before taking any decision.

33. Mr. FORAN (Controller), replying to a question put by the representative of Algeria, said that he would do his utmost to see to it that the evaluation report was completed by the end of December. Naturally he could not make a commitment to that effect at that time for he did not know whether the Administrative Management Service had the capacity to do the job within that time.

34. Mr. ORSATELLI (France) said that if there was a consensus on the first part of his proposal, namely, that the Committee should not take a decision until it received the evaluation report he would be willing to let the matter rest.

35. Mr. LOZA (Egypt) said that that proposal was in line with the decision of CPC as outlined in paragraph 48 of its report.

36. Mr. HOLBORN (Federal Republic of Germany) asked the representative of the Secretary-General to explain why, given that the evaluation report had a bearing on the budget, it had not been scheduled to be issued until February 1986 even though the proposed programme budget had to be adopted by the end of December.

37. Mr. FORAN (Controller) pointed out that the news service had been established in response to a need expressed by the Secretary-General for a more systematic capacity for fact-finding within the Secretariat so that he could intervene early on the diplomatic level in questions of crisis. The Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs had always been involved in the collection of information and the news service merely enhanced that activity. The provision being requested in the proposed programme budget was the same as that which had been requested in the previous two bienniums. In response to a question asked by the representative of Nigeria, he said that it was clear from paragraph 595 of the CPC report that the evaluation being undertaken by the Secretary-General would take account of the views expressed by members of CPC at its twenty-fifth session.

38. The CHAIRMAN said that, it was his understanding that the Committee would not take a decision on the news service at the current stage and that the Controller would do his utmost to ensure that it was in a position to do so before the end of the session.

39. He announced that a separate vote had been requested on the Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$6,116,300 for the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea.

40. A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against: Turkey, United States of America.

Abstaining: Belgium, Germany, Federal Republic of, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

41. The proposal was adopted by 99 votes to 2, with 5 abstentions.

42. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had reservations about including costs associated with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea in the regular budget of the United Nations since not all Member States had signed the Convention. It had therefore abstained.

43. Mr. ARAD (Israel) said that his delegation wished to join those which had voted in favour of the recommendation.

44. Mr. MUTSVANGWA (Zimbabwe) said that if he had been present during the voting he would have voted in favour of the recommendation.

45. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take a decision on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$86,203,700 under section 2A for the biennium 1986-1987.
46. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) asked whether that figure reflected any adjustment in respect of the resources requested for the news service.
47. Mr. FORAN (Controller) said that, as he understood it, that figure included some \$US 22,000 for word-processing equipment in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, which would be used, inter alia, if not primarily, to facilitate the output of the news service.
48. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had been unable to ascertain the exact cost of the news service in the absence of a detailed statement of resource requirements from the Secretariat. An amount of \$US 22,400, under furniture and equipment, had been incorporated at 1985 prices. As indicated in paragraph 2A.18 of the budget document, three work stations had already been introduced and it was now proposed to acquire two additional word-processing work stations. Pending a breakdown of all the costs for staffing, equipment and supplies, which would be the most appropriate basis for discussing the matter, the Fifth Committee might wish to take a decision on the recommended appropriation on the understanding that it was provisional, as always in the case of a first reading, and was subject to revision at a later stage when the Secretariat had provided the Committee and ACABQ with further information. It should be noted that \$US 22,400 was probably less than the actual resource requirement for the news service.
49. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) said his delegation was concerned that, if the Fifth Committee were to approve the appropriation under section 2A in first reading, even on a provisional basis, it would subsequently have more difficulty in revising the appropriation downwards rather than upwards, particularly in view of the likely extra financial commitment in terms of staff for the news service.
50. Mr. ORSATELLI (France) said that the Committee should endeavour to be consistent. It had earlier agreed not to take a decision before the submission of an evaluation report by the Secretary-General. It could hardly be expected now, in the first reading, to approve an appropriation for the news service without adequate information on the costs involved.
51. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, without knowing the exact nature of the resource requirements for the news service, the Fifth Committee could take a decision on the section as a whole only on the understanding that the recommended appropriation was provisional and subject to revision. It could, of course, delete the sum of \$US 22,400 plus an amount estimated for inflation, but that would represent only a partial deletion.
52. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) suggested that the Committee might wish to follow the same procedure as it had done at the previous meeting with regard to the United Nations Office at Vienna and delete the amount for subsection 2A.B which related to the news service, pending submission of the anticipated evaluation report.

53. Mr. VISLYKH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation could not support the positions taken by the representatives of Japan and the United Kingdom and was in favour of approving the appropriation for the whole of section 2A, in first reading, along the lines suggested by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. When the Fifth Committee received the evaluation report from the Administrative Management Service, it would then be able to take a final decision on the news service.
54. Mr. DEVREUX (Belgium) noted the remark made earlier by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that the amount of \$US 22,400 in all likelihood represented only part of the resource requirements for the news service. He therefore supported the suggestion of the representative of the United Kingdom to postpone a decision on the subsection to which the news service related.
55. Mr. MUDHO (Kenya) questioned the view that the Committee, once having approved the total appropriation for Section 2A in first reading and on a provisional basis, could not then revise that appropriation, either downwards or upwards, at a later stage. Surely the Committee was master of its own procedure.
56. Mr. ORSATELLI (France) felt that the suggestion made by the representative of the United Kingdom was the only sensible course of action that could be taken. Regarding the comment made by the representative of Kenya, he pointed out that the Committee had agreed not to take a decision at the present stage on the news service; accordingly, it could not now say "yes" to its financial implications, and perhaps "no" later.
57. Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden) said he saw the logic of that position but felt that the Fifth Committee could, as a way out of the present dilemma, follow the advice of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, indicating specifically the provisional nature of its decision as far as the news service was concerned.
58. Mr. MAKTARI (Yemen) questioned the propriety of approving the recommended appropriation under Section 2A when all the relevant costs were not finally known.
59. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that it was normal practice for the Fifth Committee to approve amounts in first reading which might then have to be revised upwards or downwards depending on a number of factors: in the case of the news service, on the findings of the evaluation report.
60. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Fifth Committee should approve, in first reading, an amount of \$US 86,203,700 under section 2A of the programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987, on the understanding that the Committee would revert to that section at a later stage in order to consider the financial implications of the proposal of the representative of Nigeria which it had approved earlier, and to review the question of the political information news service in the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, upon receipt of additional information requested. A recorded vote had been requested on that proposal.

61. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom), explaining his vote before the vote, said that his delegation would abstain on the proposal in view of the reservations which it had already expressed with regard to expenditure for the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea and for the financing of the news service in the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs.

62. Mr. GUERRERO (Ecuador) said that his delegation had difficulty with the proposal since the Fifth Committee had not been provided with the information it needed to take a decision on what was, in fact, not a procedural question but a matter of substance.

63. A recorded vote was taken on the Chairman's proposal.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

64. The proposal was adopted by 105 votes to 2, with one abstention.

65. Mr. ARAD (Israel), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had opposed the proposal since it had reservations on some subitems relating to sections 2A.B.1 and 2A.E and also to subprogramme element 1.2(b) contained in paragraph 2A.21.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.