# General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
39th meeting
held on
Friday, 30 November 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

#### SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 39th MEETING

Chairman:

Mr. MAYCOCK

(Barbados)

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

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Distr. GENERAL A/C.5/45/SR.39 6 December 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

## The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

#### AGENDA ITEM 118: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1990-1991 (continued)

- 1. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would consider seven statements of programme budget implications of draft resolutions and one statement of programme budget implications of a draft decision.
- 2. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that it had been the practice of the Committee, before the adoption of General Assembly resolution 41/213 and the application of its budget provisions, to vote on the programme budget implications of resolutions adopted by the other Main Committees. In accordance with the spirit of renewal and reform, the Twelve would not request votes on the statements currently under consideration. They nevertheless believed that the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 concerning the use and operation of the contingency fund, including questions such as the redeployment of resources, modifications of existing activities and the deferment of additional activities, should be scrupulously observed. They reiterated their support for the Secretary-General's call, in document A/45/226, for an unprecedented degree of restraint and reserved the right to examine all possibilities for redeployment and deferment in the context of consideration of the consolidated statement to be submitted towards the end of the current session.
- 3. Mr. HILL (United States of America) said that his delegation associated itself with the views expressed by the representative of Italy on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.10 concerning agenda item 61 (A/C.5/45/48)

- 4. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, under the terms of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.10, the General As: ambly would renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and request it to perform the activities summarized in paragraph 2 of document A/C.5/45/48. The Secretary-General indicated that the adoption of the draft resolution would give rise to conference-servicing costs in 1991, as indicated in paragraph 9, but that no additional appropriations would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.
- 5. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, based on the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/45/48 and in the light of the comments of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.10, no acditional appropriations would be required under sections 2A or 29 of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.
- 6. It was so decided.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.22/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 53 (A/C.5/45/46)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.50/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 56 (A/C.5/45/47)

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Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.53/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 6° (A/C.5/45/51)

- 7. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the combined additional non-conference-servicing requirements arising from the implementation of the five draft resolutions under consideration amounted to \$404,700 for 1991. The combined conference-servicing costs which would arise in 1991 in respect of four of the five draft resolutions amounted to \$330,500. In that connection, the Secretary-General estimated that no additional resources would be required for conference servicing under section 29 of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.
- 8. The Advisory Committee noted that the implementation of two of the draft resolutions (A/C.1/45/L.22/Rev.1 and A/C.1/45/L.50/Rev.1) would entail combined expenditures of \$273,000 in 1992 for non-conference-servicing activities. A further requirement of \$97,400 would arise in 1993 in respect of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.22/Rev.1. Conference-servicing requirements in 1992-1993 would amount to \$723,500. The Secretary-General stated that all additional requirements for 1992-1993 would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for that biennium.
- The Advisory Committee noted that, under three of the draft resolutions (\(\lambda\)C.1/45/L.22/Rev.1, \(\lambda\)C.1/45/L.50/Rev.1 and \(\lambda\)C.1/45/L.49), the Secretary-General was requested, with the assistance of experts, to carry out specific studies, as identified in documents A/C.5/45/46, A/C.5/45/47 and A/C.5/45/50. In that connection, the Secretary-General recalled the decision whereby activities related to the preparation of disarmament studies mandated by the General Assembly should be treated as perennial expenditures. To that end, a total amount of \$554,200 had been appropriated by the General Assembly for consultants' services and ad hoc export groups in connection with disarmament studies in 1990-1991. A balance of \$89,400 remained as of 31 October 1990, but that amount would be required in its entirety for the completion of a study already mandated by the General Assembly. In response to inquiries as to why the bulk of the appropriation for 1990-1991 had been expended in 1990, the Advisory Committee had been informed that most of the related programme of work for the current biennium would be completed in 1990. Secretary-General therefore stated that the additional requirements for the preparation of such studies during 1991, which together amounted to \$379,500, could not be absorbed under section 2B of the programme budget.

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- 10. Under draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.39, the Secretary-General was requested to assist the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in convening, at Addis Ababa during 1991, a meeting of experts to examine the modalities and elements for the preparation and implementation of a convention or treaty on the denuclearisation of Africa. The related conference-servicing costs would be met by OAU. The financial implications of the draft resolution for the United Nations, which would amount to \$32,600 in 1991, covered the travel and subsistence of eight experts and of one staff member from the Department for Disarmament Affairs. The travel and subsistence of the staff member, estimated at \$3,800, would be absorbed under section 2B of the programme budget.
- 11. Under draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.53/Rev.1, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) was requested, with the assistance of independent experts, to prepare a research report on the economic aspects of disarmament, on the understanding that the costs would be shared between the regular budget of the United Nations and voluntary contributions. In view of the task facing the Director of UNIDIR in obtaining voluntary contributions in the short term, the Secretary-General proposed that the 1991 substantive costs (\$52,600) should be borne by the regular budget, but that all substantive costs in 1992, estimated at \$48,800, should be met through voluntary contributions. The amount for 1991 covered the travel and subsistence of eight experts for one 3-day session, a fee of \$500 for each independent expert, three work-months of consultancy services, with related travel and subsistence, and one work-month of temporary assistance. According to the Secretary-General, those requirements could not be absorbed under section 2B of the programme budget.
- 12. In considering the Secretary-General's statements, the Advisory Committee had noted that the studies requested were very costly and felt that the time had come to reconsider the arrangements under which such studies were conducted, including, inter alia, the number of experts convened and the length of sessions. Furthermore, since it had been decided that activities relating to disarmament studies should be treated as perennial and therefore included in the programme budget, the Advisory Committee questioned the ne3d to begin the studies called for in the draft resolutions under consideration during the current biennium. Such activities could, instead, form part of the programme of work for the next programme budget. The Advisory Committee also trusted that the Secretary-General would, wherever possible, co-ordinate with UNIDIR in completing such studies and, with regard to the report requested under draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.53/Rev.1, that UNIDIR would take into account past work on the economic aspects of disarmament.
- 13. Bearing in mind the foregoing observations, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolutions currently under consideration, additional expenditures of \$460,900 would be required under sect in 2B of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991. Additional expenditures of \$6,800 would also be required under section 31, to be offset by the same amount under income section 1. Those additional requirements would be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines for the operation and use of the contingency fund. Accordingly, such additional

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appropriations as might be requested by the Secretary-General would be considered in the context of the consolidated statement to be submitted to the General Assembly towards the end of the current session, in accordance with section C of the annex to General Assembly resolution 42/211.

14. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, based on the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/45/46 and on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.22/Rev.1, first, it was estimated that an additional appropriation of \$64,400 would be required under section 2B of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 and that an additional amount of \$1,400 would be required under section 31, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, while the additional requirements of \$264,300 estimated for 1992 and 1993 (\$166,900 for 1992 and \$97,400 for 1993) would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993; and, second, that the requirement of \$64,400 would constitute an additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget for 1990-1991 and, should it not prove possible to meet the costs required from the contingency fund, the activities described in paragraphs 4 to 8 of document A/C.5/45/46 would have to be postponed, as provided for in the quidelines for the use of the contingency fund set forth in General Assembly resolution 42/211.

# 15. It was so decided.

16. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, based on the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/45/47 and on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.50/Rev.1, first, it was estimated that an additional appropriation of \$170,700 would be required under section 2B of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 and that an additional amount of \$2,400 would be required under section 31, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, while the additional requirements of \$106,100 estimated for 1992 would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993; and, second, that the requirement of \$170,700 would constitute an additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget for 1990-1991 and, should it not prove possible to meet the costs required from the contingency fund, the activities described in paragraphs 4 to 7 of document A/C.5/45/47 would have to be postponed. as provided for in the guidelines for the use of the contingency fund set forth in General Assembly resolution 42/211.

#### 17. It was so decided.

18. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, based on the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/45/49 and on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.39, first, it was estimated that an additional appropriation of \$28,800 would be required under section 2B of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991; and, second, that the requirement of \$28,800 would constitute an additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget for 1990-1991 and, should it not prove possible to meet the costs required from the contingency fund, the activities described in paragraph 4 of document A/C.5/45/49 would have to be postponed, as provided for in the guidelines for the use of the contingency fund set forth in General Assembly resolution 42/211.

# 19. It was so decided.

- 20. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) noted that under paragraph 9 of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.39, section A, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to provide all necessary assistance that OAU might seek regarding the convening, at Addis Ababa during 1991, of a meeting of experts to examine the modalities and elements for the preparation and implementation of a convention or treaty on the denuclearization of Africa. While his delegation would agree to the possible provision of assistance by the Secretary-General to OAU, its position that the cost of the preparation and implementation of treaties should normally be borne by the countries participating in those treaties remained unchanged.
- 21. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, based on the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/45/50 and on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.49, first, it was estimated that an additional appropriation of \$144,400 would be required under section 2B of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, and that an additional amount of \$1,600 would be required under section 31, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, and, second, that the requirement of \$144,400 would constitute an additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget for 1990-1991 and should it not prove possible to meet the costs required from the contingency fund, the activities described in paragraphs 7 to 10 of document A/C.5/45/50 would have to be postponed, as provided for in the guidelines for the use of the contingency fund set forth in General Assembly resolution 42/211.

## 22. It was so decided.

23. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, based on the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/45/51 and on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.53/Rev.1, first, it was estimated that an additional appropriation of \$52,600 would be required under section 2B of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 that an additional amount of \$1,400 would be required under section 31, to be offset by a

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corresponding amount under income section 1, and that, as stated in paragraph 11 of document A/C.5/45/51, the additional requirement of \$48,000 estimated for 1992 would be met through voluntary contributions; and, second, that the requirement of \$52,600 would constitute an additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget for 1990-1991 and, should it not prove possible to meet the costs required from the contingency fund, the preparation of the report would have to be postponed, as provided for in the guidelines for the use of the contingency fund set forth in General Assembly resolution 42/211.

#### 24. It was so decided.

25. Mr. MORDACO (France) said that his delegation attached great importance to the research report to be prepared by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research on the economic aspects of disarmament and was therefore gratified by the approval by consensus of the related statement of programme budget implications. The effort made to finance the project largely from voluntary con'.ributions was also gratifying since it meant that it would not weigh too heavily on the regular budget or on the contingency fund, to which his delegation also attached great importance as an essential part of the new budgetary procedure.

# Programme budget implications of draft decision A/C.2/45/L.45 concerning agenda item 12 (A/C.5/45/54)

- 26. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, as indicated in the statement submitted by the Secretary-General, the inclusion of Liberia in the list of the least developed countries would lead to an estimated cost of \$27,000 for travel for its representatives to the forty-fifth and forty-sixth sessions of the General Assembly, but that no additional appropriations would be required.
- 27. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, based on the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/45/54 and in the light of the comments of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft decision A/C.2/45/L.45, it was assumed that Liberia would be entitled to reimbursement of the travel costs of its representatives to the forty-fifth and forty-sixth sessions of the General Assembly and that an estimated additional cost of \$27,000 would arise during the biennium 1990-1991, but that as a consequence of the merger of Democratic Yemen and Yemen, the number of Member States on the list of the least developed countries had been reduced, that the anticipated additional costs could thus be absorbed within existing resources, and that no additional appropriations would therefore be required under section 1 of the programme budget for biennium 1990-1991.

### 28. It was so decided.

Programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/45/L.20 and A/45/L.21 and Corr.1 squerping agenda item 152 (A/C.5/45/56)

- 29. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budg, tary Questions) said that, under the terms of draft resolution A/45/L.20, an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole would be established for the purpose of preparing the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, and that it would be authorized to hold a series of meetings. The estimated conference-servicing costs of those meetings amounted to \$526,800, but no additional appropriations would be required under section 29 of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.
- 30. Draft resolution A/45/L.21 and Corr.1 would require the Secretary-General to undertake a number of activities, as indicated in paragraphs 10 to 13 of document A/C.5/45/56. Under paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would be requested, in consultation with the President of the African Development Bank, to include in his report to the forty-sixth session a study on the proposal of the feasibility of establishing an African commodity diversification fund in the African Development Bank. As explained in paragraph 21 of the statement of programme budget implications, additional consultancy requirements of \$50,000 would have to be met in that connection. That amount would be an additional expenditure, to be considered by the General Assembly in the context of the consolidated statement to be submitted to the General Assembly towards the end of the current session.
- 31. Mr. MONTHE (Cameroon) asked the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to explain what the position would be if, at the end of the session, after the consolidated statement had been reviewed, it appeared that the reports called for in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the draft resolution would have to be postponed, despite the fact that, at its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly would be conducting its final review and appraisal of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. He would like to know with whom the decision would rest, and what use the reports would be if they had to be postponed beyond the forty-sixth session.
- 32. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) urged the representative of Cameroon not to press the question for the time being. It touched upon one of the most complex procedural issues that the Fifth Committee would have to deal with when it came to consider the consolidated statement. Members would recall the very detailed discussions that had taken place at earlier sessions of the Committee on the operation of the contingency fund. He pointed out that, in its reports, the Advisory Committee did not say that additional appropriations were required immediately, but rather that additional expenditure would arise and that the matter of appropriations would be dealt with in the context of the consolidated statement. The question of who should make the decision was thus postponed and would be settled when the time came. The General Assembly had already designated the critical economic situation in Africa a high-priority area and the decision on the additional appropriation requested would

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be taken in the light of that priority and the urgency of the matter. He therefore urged the Committee not to become entangled in such a complex technical issue but to use its remaining time to the best advantage. He would have ample opportunity in due course to give a full, fair and, he trusted, satisfactory answer to the question.

- 33. Mr. MONTHE (Cameroon) said that he would not insist on his question. He could not, however, associate himself wholly with the formula that was being used to convey the Committee's decisions.
- 34. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) said that the comments of the representative of Cameroon had confirmed his own observation that the formula used by the Chairman departed somewhat from the traditional wording. He was glad that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had emphasized that there would be a consolidated statement of programme budget implications. The Chairman's formula seemed to rest on the notion that if an activity could not be covered out of the contingency fund, it would be deferred. Traditionally, the Fifth Committee had presented a consolidated statement of programme budget implications at a later stage of the session and it had been left for the General Assembly to decide, on the recommendation of the Secretary-General, which programmes should, if necessary, be postponed. Chairman could amend his formula to reflect the concern of representatives and the fact that there was to be a consolidated statement of programme budget implications, there would be no need to ask who would decide whether or not an activity was to be postponed. The implication that the Secretary-General, or some other party, reserved the right to decide whether or not to defor an activity was a matter of concern to all delegations. Traditionally, the formula had been that, should the General Assembly adopt a resolution, certain financial requirements would arise which, if they could not be met from the regular budget, would constitute an additional expenditure. Then, when the consolidated statement was submitted, delegations were able to decide whether the costs of the activity should be met from the contingency fund or through some other arrangement.
- 35. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, based on the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/45/56 and on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolutions A/45/L.20, and A/45/L.21 and Corr.1, first it was estimated that no additional resources would be required under section 29 of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, but that an estimated additional consultancy requirement of \$50,000 would have to be met under section 5A of the programme budget for 1990-1991; and second, that, as the requirement of \$50,000 would constitute an additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget for 1990-1991, and in the event that resources were not available from the contingency fund, the preparation of the reports mentioned in paragraphs 13 and 15 of document A/C.5/45/56 would have to be deferred, as provided for in the guidelines for the use of the contingency fund set forth in General Assembly resolution 42/211.
- 36. It was so decided.

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37. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) said that it was his delegation's understanding that the decision in no way gave the Secretary-General the authority to decide on the deferment of activities. It was the prerogative of the General Assembly, in the context of the consolidated statement, to decide on the final funding of programmed activities.

#### ORGANIZATION OF WORK

- 38. Mr. VISLYKH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) expressed his delegation's deep concern at the slow pace of the Committee's work. There were 21 items on the Committee's agenda, of which it had so far completed only two. Fifteen working days remained before the end of the session and his delegation was very doubtful that it would be possible in that time to consider and adopt decisions satisfactory to all delegations on the remaining 19 agenda items. There appeared to be only two ways out of the difficulty. First, the Committee could agree to postpone a number of items until the next session of the General Assembly. His delegation would be prepared to propose the deferral of such complex and traditionally time-consuming items as the financial emergency of the United Nations, the pattern of conferences, the United Nations common system and the United Nations pension system. A decision to that effect would help the Committee considerably in successfully completing the rest of its agenda. The second course, which was being discussed more and more outside the Committee room, was the possibility of abandoning the practice of conducting informal consultations on all the complex items on the Committe's agenda and starting to vote on those items which, in the view of some representatives did not affect any position of principle. He wished to warn the Committee very seriously against choosing that course, however, since what might not appear very important to some delegations could be regarded by others as an important question of principle. If decisions not based on consensus were taken on such items, the delegations concerned might be forced to press for a vote on others, such as the outline of the budget for the next biennium. From a practical point of view, all the questions before the Fifth Committee were directly or indirectly related to the budget outline and, if the Committee failed to reach a consensus on all thosy matters, it was doubtful that it would be able to reach a consensus on the outline of the next budget. The political, practical. financial and other consequences of such a possibility were well known to all delegations. The Chairman might be able to suggest a third course; if so, his delegation would welcome a more detailed explanation of how he intended to plan the continuation of the Committee's work.
- 39. <u>Mrs. EMERSON</u> (Portugal), <u>Mr. MONTHE</u> (Cameroon) and <u>Ms. SHITAKHA</u> (Kenya) said that they shared the concern expressed by the representative of the USSR.
- 40. The CHAIRMAN said that the pace of the Committee's work had been determined in large measure by the pace of the release of documentation, to some extent by the method of informal consultations, and to some extent by requests from delegations to postpone their statements. While he shared the concern that had been expressed, he believed that it was too early to start deferring agenda items. He was still hopeful that, if the Committee redoubled its efforts, it would be able to finish on time. The possibility that certain issues might have to be deferred could be dealt with at a later date.

41. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said he feared that concern about the pace of work was general. While it was true that delegations were not always ready to speak and that not all documents were issued on time - a perennial problem for the Fifth Committee - the documents for items 117 and 119 had been available for a considerable time and it might have helped to clarify the views of delegations if they rould have been discussed in the informal consultations. His delegation had taken note of the proposal that some items should be deferred and he recalled that the spokesman for the 12 States members of the European Community, speaking on personnel questions, had referred to the possible biennialization or even triennialization of some of the related items. The Committee might be able to find some help in the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, in particular, annex VI, paragraph 12, which stated that it was imperative that Main Committees should allow sufficient time for the preparation of the estimate of expenditures by the Secretariat and for its consideration by the Advisory Committee and that they should take that requirement into account when they adopted their programme of work, and paragraph 13, which stated that a mandatory deadline, not later than 1 December, should be established for the submission to the Fifth Committee of all draft resolutions with financial implications.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.