



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 33rd 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

AGENDA ITEM 117: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

Section 8. Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters

Section 9. Transnational corporations

Section 10. Economic Commission for Europe

Section 11. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

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The meeting was called to order at 7.20 p.m.

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

AGENDA ITEM 117: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/40/3, A/40/6, A/40/7 and Add.1, A/40/38 and Add.1, A/40/262; A/C.5/40/2 and Corr.1; A/C.5/40/CRP.1)

First reading (continued)

Section 8. Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew attention to paragraph 8.4 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/40/7), which dealt with the request for a temporary P-3 post for the full biennium, and said that when the Advisory Committee had considered that post it had questioned the rationale of the Secretariat's treatment of the post as non-recurrent, since it was doubtful that the functions involved would end within the coming biennium. The Secretariat had insisted, however, that the resources should be treated as non-recurrent.

2. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee approved the recommendation of CPC in paragraph 637 of its report (A/40/38).

3. It was so decided.

4. Mr. MILLER (United States of America) said that the rate of real growth in the appropriations requested under section 8 was too high and that his delegation shared the misgivings expressed in that respect by the Advisory Committee.

5. At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on section 8 of the draft programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Congo, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

6. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$4,585,700 under section 8 for the biennium 1986-1987 was approved in first reading by 82 votes to 1, with 5 abstentions.

7. Mr. MONIRUZZAMAN (Bangladesh), Mr. DIALLO (Guinea) and Mr. MOJTAHED (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, if they had been present, their respective delegations would have voted in favour of the appropriation under section 8.

Section 9. Transnational corporations

8. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), referring to the recommendations of CPC contained in paragraphs 639 and 640 of its report (A/40/38), said that, according to paragraph 11 in the Secretary-General's statement (A/40/38/Add.1), no additional resources were being requested to implement the CPC recommendations. The only reduction proposed by the Advisory Committee for section 9 was an amount of \$121,300 in the estimate for travel and subsistence for 16 experts who would participate in the deliberations of the Commission on Transnational Corporations. The Advisory Committee believed that the role of the experts had not yet been precisely defined and it therefore recommended that provision should be made for one year only and that the requirements for the second year should be considered at the forty-first session of the General Assembly, in the light of a report containing a precise definition of the experts' role.

9. Mr. CABRIC (Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination) said that section 9 of the draft programme budget for 1986-1987 had been the subject of detailed discussion, often indeed controversy, at CPC's twenty-fifth session. In the light of those discussions, the Centre on Transnational Corporations had made certain clarifications. First, the Centre had indicated, in connection with table 9.4 of the draft programme budget, that the negative rate of real growth of 2.4 per cent was due to the decline in expenditure on consultants, travel and the rental and maintenance of equipment. Second, regarding programme element 1.1 (Code of conduct), the Centre had recalled that at its twenty-third session the CPC had been in favour of assigning that element highest priority and it had indicated that the resources requested were needed to prepare documents and for support activities connected with the negotiation of the Code.

10. Concerning programme element 1.2 (Illicit payments), the existence of a mandate for the two reports planned had been questioned, it had been noted that the question of illicit payments had not appeared on the agenda of the twelfth session of the Commission on Transnational Corporations, and it had been proposed that the Centre should prepare a report to assist the intergovernmental bodies to formulate and adopt an international agreement on illicit payments.

(Mr. Cabric)

11. Regarding programme element 1.4 (Other arrangements and agreements relating to transnational corporations at the international, regional and bilateral levels), it had been suggested that the resources freed as a result of the reduction in outputs should be assigned to programme element 1.3.

12. During the consideration of subprogramme 2 (Minimizing the negative effects of transnational corporations and enhancing their contribution to development), the question had arisen of the Centre's interpretation of its mandate, since there was as yet no agreed definition of transnational corporations. In the opinion of many delegations, CPC was not the proper forum in which to decide that definition and the matter should be the subject of intergovernmental negotiations in the context of the preparation of a Code of Conduct on transnational corporations. One delegation had stated that the acceptance of CPC's recommendation to the General Assembly that the programme narrative of section 9 should be approved, should depend on a satisfactory settlement by the Commission on Transnational Corporations of the question of the definition of transnational corporations.

13. Regarding programme element 2.11 (Transnational corporations and industrialization: activities and impact of transnational corporations in selected manufacturing sectors), the feeling had been that it covered activities that were important to the developing countries and it had therefore been proposed that the designation of lowest priority assigned to it should be deleted.

14. Mrs. KNEZEVIC (Yugoslavia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that before taking a decision on the reduction of \$121,300 proposed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 9.6 of its report (A/40/7), two questions should be clarified: what would be the consequences of that reduction for the Centre's work programme, and what effect would it have on the decision that the Commission on Transnational Corporations would have to take regarding the participation of the 16 experts in its sessions?

15. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that the list of experts and consultants contracted by the Centre (A/C.5/40/CRP.1) covered the greater part of the expert services corresponding to the programme under consideration. However, the cost of the services was not indicated and his delegation would like that information to be provided. Furthermore, he had considerable difficulty in understanding why the consultants were included among recurrent payments since, as noted in paragraph 3 of document A/C.5/40/CRP.1, "the need for specialized expertise is often of a one-time nature". Logic would demand that that type of need should be examined every biennium in respect of each case and according to the programme of work approved by the Commission on Transnational Corporations. It was to be hoped that in future that criterion would be adopted.

16. Mr. MILLER (United States of America) said that it appeared to be impossible to get the Secretariat to come up with a definition of so-called transnational corporations, which were simply a group of arbitrarily and politically selected economic entities. In his delegation's view, the Commission on Transnational Corporations had no mandate and no legal standing. It would therefore vote against the work programme as a whole, as well as against the request for appropriations under section 9 of the draft programme budget.

17. Mr. PARSHIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that there were many deficiencies in the method of selecting consultants and experts, since most of them came from the developed capitalist countries in which the transnational corporations had their headquarters. In the last 18 months, only one expert from the Soviet Union had been appointed, for a seminar that lasted only two days. The same was true of other socialist countries and developing countries. The situation called for the adoption of methods to ensure balanced geographical representation in the appointment of consultants and experts in accordance with the General Assembly's guidelines. Quotas should be established for such contracts and the United Nations should have an effective internal centralized control mechanism for the hiring of experts and consultants. Furthermore, as the budget was currently drafted, it was impossible to have any clear idea of the length of the various contracts.

18. Mr. ANNAN (Director, Budget Division) replying to the questions asked by the representative of Yugoslavia, said that the proposed reduction was provisional, and that the appropriations in question could be restored in the following year when the nature of the experts' functions became clear.

19. Regarding the remarks of the representative of Poland about the cost of consultant services, he said that the funds appropriated under that heading in 1984-1985 had been \$800,800 and that as of 30 September 1985, \$635,162 had been obligated from that appropriation. Consultant services were continued from one year to the next because, when they had completed a study of a particular topic, they turned to other topics, which meant that it was still necessary to be able to count on their services.

20. Mr. SCHLAFF (Office for Programme Planning and Co-ordination) said that paragraph 9.8 of the draft budget gave in detail the requirements relating to consultants, determined on the basis of an appraisal of each programme element. If delegations so desired, the information could be provided in greater detail, with the drawback, however, that the draft budget would be even bigger in volume.

21. With regard to the question raised by the representative of Yugoslavia, he understood the reduction proposed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 9.6 of its report (A/40/7) to apply only to 1987 and that the entire appropriation for 1986 would remain available. The programme of work for 1986 would not be affected. In due course, once the question of experts' participation had been clarified, the Fifth Committee would take a decision on the appropriation for the entire biennium.

22. At the request of the representative of the United States, a recorded vote was taken on paragraph 640 of the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Congo, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji,

Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Toqo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Ecuador.

23. Paragraph 640 of the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination was adopted by 95 votes to 1, with one abstention.

24. Mr. GUERRERO (Ecuador), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that his delegation had abstained since it had received no instructions from its Government.

25. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt paragraphs 638 and 639 of the CPC report without a vote.

26. It was so decided.

27. Mr. FIGUEIRA (Brazil), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote on section 9 as a whole, said he did not agree that it was up to the Fifth Committee to decide on the participation of experts - a matter for the Secretary-General alone. His delegation would support the Advisory Committee's recommendation on the understanding that approval would be given next year for the appropriations relating to the participation of experts in sessions of the Commission on Transnational Corporations.

28. Mr. ROY (India) endorsed the views expressed by the representative of Brazil.

29. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that he shared the concern expressed by the representatives of Brazil and India. Moreover, the geographical representation of Secretariat personnel and experts alike was inadequate, especially in regard to the Arab and African countries. His delegation hoped that suitable steps would be taken to ensure equitable geographical representation.

30. At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on section 9 of the draft programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987.

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

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: None.

31. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation of \$10,671,900 under section 9 for the biennium 1986-1987 was approved in first reading by 96 votes to 1.

32. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that although his delegation supported the proposals under section 9, it was concerned that the term transnational corporation had not yet been clearly defined.

Section 10. Economic Commission for Europe

33. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that, as indicated in paragraph 10.2 of the ACABQ report, ECE, unlike the other regional commissions, relied on the United Nations Office at Geneva for conference servicing. In previous years, costs for such support were indicated in the budget as apportioned costs, but, since the Budget Division had informed the Advisory Committee at its spring session that, for technical reasons, it had not apportioned the costs for the biennium 1986-1987, the Advisory Committee had indicated in its report the level of apportioned costs for ECE for the biennium 1984-1985.

34. With regard to the Secretary-General's request for a new P-3 post in paragraph 10.55 of document A/40/6, which was supported by the Advisory Committee, it should be noted that, in paragraph 643 of its report (A/40/38), CPC had expressed its opposition to the establishment of that post. In the statement of financial

(Mr. Mselle)

implications submitted by the Secretary-General (A/40/38/Add.1), it was indicated that, if the CPC recommendation was adopted, the budget requirements would be reduced by \$54,100 under section 10, \$13,800 under section 31, and \$13,800 under income section 1. In its discussion of the matter with the representatives of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee had reached the conclusion that the latter considered that CPC had rejected the establishment of the new post but was unable to establish whether the rejection was the Secretariat's interpretation or an actual decision taken by CPC. The Advisory Committee was subsequently informed that the former was the case. In that connection, it should be drawn to the attention of the Fifth Committee that, while CPC reviewed programmes, the function of the Advisory Committee was to submit recommendations on the level of appropriations which the General Assembly should approve.

35. Mr. ROY (India) said it would be useful if in future the Fifth Committee had a breakdown of the total estimate for ECE. In that regard, it surprised his delegation that, even taking as a basis the amount of \$35,281,580 corresponding to the biennium 1984-1985, total ECE expenditure had risen to some \$58 million, whereas the amounts in respect of the other regional commissions varied between \$51 million and \$35 million. Such a distribution of resources - possibly the outcome of a past error - was somewhat strange; the Secretariat should re-examine it with a view to appraising the various region's requirements more accurately in the future.

36. Mrs. KNEZEVIC (Yugoslavia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and referring to sections 10 to 14 of the draft budget, stressed the importance of supporting the regional commissions and reiterated the Group's concern at the inadequate growth rate (1.6 per cent) in the resources allocated to the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), bearing in mind the provisions of General Assembly resolution 39/29.

37. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that, in view of the conflicting opinions of the Advisory Committee and CPC about the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a P-3 post to deal with tasks related to the transport of dangerous goods, and his delegation's belief that in general an increase in staff did not lead to greater efficiency in programme execution but to bureaucratic overload, his delegation would not support the proposal should it be put to a vote.

38. Mr. FIGUEIRA (Brazil) said that the sluggishness of the process of distributing responsibilities between global and regional entities, as evidenced by document E/AC.51/1985/13, was disappointing. Equally regrettable was the implicit insinuation that since it had not been considered possible to effect distribution for the time being, regional commissions should be assigned an above-average increase in resources. In his delegation's judgement, it should be taken for granted that programmes and activities determined needs for financial and human resources, not vice versa. It was to be hoped that the Secretary-General would continue trying to achieve a real decentralization within the United Nations system, so as to rationalize the Organization's work and to implement more effectively the regional programmes and activities which particularly interested Member States.

39. Mr. VAHER (Canada) drew the Committee's attention to General Assembly resolution 39/127, which requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the executive secretaries of the five regional commissions, to allocate sufficient budgetary resources to regularize all temporary and permanent senior women's programme officers posts. Although it was clear from the resolution that such posts at the regional commissions should be senior and should be created where possible by redeployment, it seemed that the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) had been unable to carry out its provisions; his delegation would like the Secretariat to explain what measures ECE had taken to that end.
40. Mr. GITSOV (Bulgaria) said that to enable his delegation to form a clear idea of the possible need to establish a new P-3 post for work on the transport of dangerous goods, CPC should explain what reasons had caused it to reject the Secretary-General's proposal to that effect. He also wished to point out that the difference of opinion between the Advisory Committee and CPC posed a procedural problem, because if the Committee simultaneously approved section 10 of the Administrative Committee's report and the corresponding section of the CPC report, it would be approving both the recommendation of the former that the new post be established and, at the same time, the disagreement expressed by the latter in that connection.
41. Mr. MONIRUZZAMAN (Bangladesh), supporting the statement by the representative of India on the distribution of resources among the different regional commissions, said that there was an element of chance in the distribution. The largest estimate was for ECA (approximately \$51 million), followed by ECLAC (\$49 million), ESCAP (\$40 million), ESCWA (\$35 million) and ECE (\$23 million). However, if direct costs were considered, including extrabudgetary allocations, the largest total was for ESCAP (more than \$88 million), followed by ECA (\$72 million), ECLAC (\$66 million), ESCWA (\$41 million) and ECE (\$24 million). Since it was impossible to avoid comparing the relative sizes in such a situation, his delegation would like the Secretariat to explain on what basis the distribution of resources was made.
42. Mr. ODUYEMI (Nigeria), supporting the statements made by the representatives of India and Bangladesh, asked the Secretariat if it had been unable to provide the Advisory Committee with at least an estimate of the amount of ECE conference-servicing and general services costs, since the opacity of the figures - though doubtless not deliberate - was in contrast to the aggressiveness with which all other aspects of hidden budgetary costs had been discussed in the Fifth Committee. His delegation could not believe that the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General and approved by the Advisory Committee gave a correct picture of the situation. In its judgement, the Secretariat had made a serious omission, and it was to be hoped that in future all such hidden costs would be duly revealed.
43. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) said that since the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) was becoming an independent body, it seemed inappropriate to continue including provisions for industrial development in the sections of the budget relating to the regional commissions. It should be ascertained whether such industrial development programmes were going to be transferred to UNIDO together with other activities.

(Mr. Murray, United Kingdom)

44. His delegation did not think it expedient to establish the P-3 post proposed in paragraph 10.55 of the proposed programme budget (A/40/6). In paragraph 3 (d) of its resolution 1983/7 on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, the Economic and Social Council had asked for the work to be done with existing resources. That request had so far been respected and there was no reason why it should not continue to be respected. His delegation therefore hoped that the work of the Committee of Experts could be completed without having to establish the post. Moreover, the recommendations of CPC and of the Advisory Committee differed in the matter. He wondered if the fact that the CPC recommendation in paragraph 643 of its report (A/40/38) came after the recommendation in paragraph 642, which stated that the General Assembly should approve section 10 of the proposed programme budget, meant that the content of paragraph 643 was only a comment and not a real recommendation. The general understanding was that paragraph 643 was a recommendation, but perhaps CPC could clarify the matter once and for all.

45. Mr. DEVREUX (Belgium) said that he shared the Nigerian representative's opinion that section 10 of the proposed programme budget should be clearer and more detailed. Furthermore, he believed that opinion to be shared by all the delegations taking part in the Committee's work.

46. Mr. SINGH (Fiji) agreed with the representatives of Nigeria and Belgium about the need for greater transparency in section 10 of the proposed programme budget.

47. Mr. ANNAN (Director of the Budget Division) said that it might perhaps be necessary for CPC recommendations to be formulated more clearly in future, so that there was no room for contradictory interpretations. In reply to the questions asked, he said that the reason a detailed breakdown of costs had not been provided under section 10 was solely a desire to simplify, and the information in question had not been included for technical reasons. In the next proposed programme budget, the breakdown of costs would be clearer and more detailed.

48. The differences between the provisions for the individual regional commissions reflected historical causes, programme content and varying salary levels, so they could not always be interpreted as distortions.

49. Mr. SCHLAFF (Office for Programme Planning and Co-ordination), replying to the questions put by the representative of Canada, said that the matter of senior women's programme officers posts at the regional commissions was considered in the report of the Secretary-General on that subject (A/40/838). The ECE programme of work did not contain separate programme elements on women's concerns. Activities to do with women were carried out on an ad hoc basis. For example, ECE had contributed to the preparatory work for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women and had organized a regional seminar and prepared a study on the economic role of women in the ECE region. In addition, the Conference of European Statisticians had included in its programme of work a project on statistical indicators for women.

(Mr. Schlaff)

50. In reply to the question asked by the representative of the United Kingdom, he said that, unlike other regional commissions, ECE had its own industrial development programme which was not being implemented jointly with UNIDO. That programme had been assigned priority and should be maintained. The situation was less clear in the case of the other regional commissions, but there were programmes which were being jointly implemented with bodies other than UNIDO and which should therefore also be maintained.

51. With regard to the P-3 post to implement activities on the transport of dangerous goods, paragraph 3 (d) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/7 had requested the Secretary-General to make available, within existing resources, the improved staffing requested by the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. Since 1983, ECE had had two Professional posts for activities relating to the transport of dangerous goods. One was an established post. As to the other, it had been of a temporary nature since the date mentioned, and its conversion to an established post was being requested. It would be financed with existing resources until the end of 1985. It seemed contradictory to approve the activities indicated in the proposed programme budget but not to establish the post which would make it possible to carry those activities out. Finally, he believed that the order of paragraphs 642 and 643 of the CPC report had no particular significance and that CPC was simply opposing establishment of the P-3 post.

52. The CHAIRMAN said that perhaps the Chairman of CPC could answer the question regarding the different functions of ACABQ and CPC, since the latter in paragraph 643 of its report had made a recommendation on requested resources which fell rather within the competence of ACABQ.

53. Mr. CABRIC (Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination) said that, indeed, it was not up to CPC to make recommendations on expenditures but, in the case in question, CPC had wished to express its disagreement with the establishment of a P-3 post. The order of the paragraphs of the CPC report, however, was based on CPC's recognition that it was not its function to recommend that specific posts should not be established. Paragraph 643 should therefore be taken rather as a suggestion.

54. The CHAIRMAN said that, if the suggestion in paragraph 643 of the CPC report was adopted, the Secretary-General's estimate of \$23,462,000 would have to be reduced by \$54,200 and the estimated requirements for section 10 of the proposed programme budget would amount to \$23,407,800. If he heard no objections, he would take it that the Fifth Committee wished to adopt the recommendations made by CPC in paragraphs 641 to 643 of its report (A/40/38) concerning section 10 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987.

55. It was so decided.

56. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on section 10 as a whole of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987.

57. An appropriation in the amount of \$23,407,800 under section 10 for the biennium 1986-1987 was approved in first reading, without a vote.

58. Mr. SINGH (Fiji), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had approved the estimate recommended for section 10 in hope that in the future funds would be appropriated for the regional commissions not on historical grounds but rather on the basis of real needs in the various regions of the world.

Section 11. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

59. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee's recommendation on section 11 would result in a reduction of \$1,383,600. The bulk of the reduction was related to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee contained in paragraphs 30 to 33 of chapter I of its report (A/40/7), concerning the procurement of computers for the regional commissions. The Advisory Committee wished to make it clear that it was not calling into question the need of the regional commissions to have adequate computer facilities. It did believe, however, that, in view of the great expense involved in purchasing computer hardware and software, the question should be co-ordinated not only among the regional economic commissions themselves but also between the commissions and Headquarters.

60. In chapter I, paragraph 32, of its report, the Advisory Committee offered certain guidelines and expressed the opinion that the Secretary-General should submit a report on the question to the General Assembly at its forty-first session. The Advisory Committee was therefore recommending the deletion of the amounts requested for the acquisition of computers under sections 11 and 14.

61. Since the Secretariat had indicated that the adoption of those recommendations would adversely affect programme implementation in the commissions, the Advisory Committee expected that the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General would contain information on the extent and nature of the difficulties the commissions would encounter, so that the Committee would be in a position to decide whether to review the timetable proposed in its report. Lastly, the Advisory Committee wished to draw attention to other recommended reductions in paragraphs 11.8, 11.9 and 11.11 of its report.

62. Mr. DEVREUX (Belgium) said that in the Second Committee his delegation had repeatedly stressed the importance it attached to the decentralization of economic and social activities, the expansion of the role of the regional commissions and the need for co-ordination between the decentralized bodies and Headquarters. It agreed with the delegations of Bangladesh and Fiji that budgetary resources should be allocated not on historical grounds but according to objectively determined operational needs.

63. The last column of table 11.3 of the proposed programme budget (A/40/6), reflected very high rates of real growth for programmes of activity, while some support services had a negative growth rate. Apparently, that satisfied the principle of channelling any increase in resources to programmes rather than support services. But an analysis of the third column showed that the resource growth for administration and common services amounted to \$1,050,500, or 64 per cent of total resource growth (\$1,627,700), while the figures for programmes

(Mr. Devreux, Belgium)

of activity represented no more than 22 per cent of such growth. An analysis of the penultimate column showed, moreover, that the 1986-1987 estimates for programmes of activity represented 44.1 per cent of the total, as against 45.1 per cent in the previous biennium.

64. There was a high degree of consensus in the Committee on the need to reduce support costs and to give absolute priority to programmes. The rates of real growth failed to reveal clearly either the priorities or the evolution of programmes and support services. Consequently, the budgetary tables should be presented differently and there should also be a precise definition of what was meant by policy-making organs, executive direction and management, programmes of activity and programme support, because in many cases the distinctions between them were not clearly established.

65. Mr. HERIJANTO (Indonesia) noted with satisfaction that the growth of the regional commissions was greater than that of other branches of the Secretariat. But the necessary steps to effect redeployment to the regional commissions had not been taken, and not enough had been done to translate into practice the intent of General Assembly resolution 37/214, namely to strengthen the regional commissions while not weakening the central bodies.

66. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) said that her delegation opposed the creation of five of the permanent Professional posts referred to in paragraph 11.4 of section 11 of the proposed programme budget, namely the P-3 post in programme 2 (Marine affairs), the P-4 posts in programmes 4 (Environment), 13 (Transport I) and 14 (Transport II), and the P-5 post in programme 15 (Social development). With regard to the P-5 post, she recalled that General Assembly resolution 37/62 had urged the regional commissions to strengthen their programmes for women by using available financial and personnel resources. The post in question would be established by a staff redeployment within the secretariat of the Commission or from Headquarters departments. Her delegation also believed that the number of meetings and the amount of appropriations requested for temporary assistance and ad hoc expert groups were too high.

67. Mr. VAHER (Canada), referring to sections 11 to 14 of the proposed programme budget, said that Canada had strongly supported and would continue to support regional co-operation and regional development programmes, but was seriously concerned by the situation prevailing in ESCAP, ECLAC, ECA and ESCWA, whose costs, particularly administrative, general and service-related expenditures, had continued to rise disproportionately.

68. In resolution 39/127, the General Assembly had requested the allocation of sufficient budgetary resources to staff, including, where possible, by redeployment, in order to regularize all temporary and permanent senior women's programme officers posts at the regional commissions. However, with only one exception - ESCAP - requests were being made for new posts which were not always at the senior officer level prescribed by the Assembly.

69. For the reasons just stated, his delegation would not support sections 10 to 14 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987.

70. Mr. MONIRUZZAMAN (Bangladesh) said that, if account was taken of the fact that more than two thirds of the world's population lived in the ESCAP region and that more than half of the region's population lived below the minimum subsistence level, it became obvious that the sum provided for the Commission did not reflect the region's real needs. His delegation endorsed the statement by the representative of Belgium to the effect that appropriations must reflect the economic needs of regions and not be based on historical faits accomplis.

71. Mr. SINGH (Fiji) said that his delegation agreed with the statements by the representatives of Belgium and Bangladesh. It was extremely disquieting that the overall increase in resources for ESCAP for the next biennium was only 1.9 per cent. The ESCAP region included a large number of small island nations whose only natural resources were often marine resources and which, in exploiting those resources, lacked the necessary means or had to contend with the tariffs and restrictive markets of the developed countries. His delegation wondered therefore whether the fact that the Asia and the Pacific region had been allocated such a low level of resources was the result of historical facts or of a futuristic vision which was equally removed from current realities.

72. Mr. ANNAN (Director, Budget Division) said that the factors affecting the establishment of appropriations for the regional commissions were not only historical but also included economic needs, programme content and local costs in the respective duty stations.

73. Furthermore, with respect to the impression which had been created that it was not possible to increase funds for regional bodies without reducing those for central organs correspondingly, it should be noted that there could be a direct correlation of that kind only when functions, together with the corresponding funds, were transferred from the centre to the regional commission.

74. With regard to the remarks made by the representative of Belgium, the Budget Division welcomed any new ideas for improving the budget preparation process in terms both of presentation and quality and agreed that greater discipline was necessary in that regard.

75. Mr. KAZEMBE (Zambia), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that his delegation supported the appropriations under section 11 since, given the problems facing the ESCAP region, growth under that section was very moderate. He also supported the establishment of the posts requested by the Secretary-General and the maintenance of the three temporary posts in the Planning Unit in connection with the proposed expansion of ESCAP's conference facilities. Accordingly, his delegation would vote in favour of the appropriations under section 11.

76. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee endorsed the recommendations of CPC, contained in paragraphs 644 and 645 of its report (A/40/38), relating to section 11 of the budget.

77. It was so decided.

78. At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on section 11 of the programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Chile, China, Congo, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

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

79. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation of \$39,034,900 under section 11 for the biennium 1986-1987 was approved in first reading by 83 votes to 1, with 11 abstentions.

80. Mr. VAN DEN HOUT (Netherlands), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that his delegation supported ESCAP'S activities because of their particular importance. Nevertheless, in accordance with his country's position on budgetary questions, his delegation had been obliged to abstain in the vote since it could not support the rate of growth under section 11.

81. Ms. HILLYER (New Zealand) said that her delegation shared the concern expressed by the representative of Fiji regarding the small island countries of the Pacific. She hoped that the increase in appropriations for ESCAP would mean an increase in the Commission's activities in the Pacific region.

82. Mr. MURRAY (Trinidad and Tobago) said that he wished to place on record that his vote in favour of section 11 had not been recorded.

83. Mr. GREGG (Australia) said that, although his country had supported ESCAP consistently, being one of the main contributors of extrabudgetary resources to it, his delegation had abstained in the vote on section 11 because it had reservations about the steady decline in the proportion of resources devoted to programme outputs.

84. Mr. GITSOV (Bulgaria) said that, had he been present during the voting, he would have voted in favour of section 11 of the proposed programme budget.

85. Mr. MUDHO (Kenya) said that, had he been present during the voting, he would have voted in favour of section 11 of the proposed programme budget. Had he been present at the previous meeting, he would also have voted in favour of section 7 of the proposed programme budget.

The meeting rose at 10.20 p.m.