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New York

## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 46th 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 ITEM 124: UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (continued) (A/40/30 and A/40/653 and Add.1; A/C.5/40/26, 41, 44 and A/C.5/40/45 and Corr.1)

AGENDA ITEM 125: UNITED NATIONS PENSION SYSTEM: REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS JOINT STAFF PENSION BOARD (continued) (A/40/9 and A/40/848; A/C.5/40/24 and A/C.5/40/41)

1. Mr. MALIK (India) supported the recommendation of the International Civil Service Commission that the desirable range of the margin between the remuneration of United Nations staff and that of the comparator civil service should be between 110 and 120 with a midpoint of 115. The question of the basis on which the margin should be calculated remained to be considered. In his delegation's view, it would be more accurate to take the average remuneration in each grade rather than remuneration at the first step. It also wondered whether it might not be more appropriate to compare total rather than net remuneration, and would like to see a further study of that question. In that connection, he recalled that, in the comparator civil service, base salaries at all duty stations were the same as in Washington, D.C., except where the cost of living was higher, when a supplement was provided. In contrast, post adjustment in the common system could result in a deduction as well as an increase. Furthermore, the comparator civil service provided a number of expatriate benefits which were more generous than those of the United Nations. A number of other countries followed that practice. It would be useful, therefore, for the Commission to carry out a comparative study of the remuneration of the United Nations and of the comparator civil service at various duty stations.

2. In view of the wide divergencies in the figures for the margin provided by the various bodies and by delegations, his delegation urged that there should be an agreed methodology for calculating it. That would lend stability to the conditions of service of the international civil service and would improve its morale. Since the question was a technical one, it could not be settled by the General Assembly but only by the technical body which it had set up for that purpose, namely the ICSC. Any attempt to challenge the findings of the Commission on technical matters would merely erode its integrity, competence and authority.

3. The ICSC should continue to refine the manner of operation of the post adjustment system within the range for the margin in order to ensure a stable and effective system. Account must be taken of a large number of factors which affected the movement of remuneration, not only in the international civil service but in the comparator civil service. His delegation looked forward with interest to the report to be submitted by the ICSC to the forty-first session of the General Assembly. It also considered that the ICSC should continue its studies of the remuneration levels of other civil services, in order to be able to provide new elements of comparison should the need arise in the years to come.

(Mr. Malik, India)

4. On the question of pensionable remuneration, his delegation had noted that the ICSC was following the current review of the United States Federal Civil Service pension system with close attention. It urged the ICSC to conduct a thorough study and to submit a comprehensive and clear report to the forty-first session of the General Assembly, so that Member States would be able to take an informed decision.

5. His delegation supported the compensatory measures recommended by the ICSC for staff with disabled dependants; the financial implications of those measures were relatively insignificant for all organizations of the common system.

6. His delegation was disturbed by the problems that had been raised by the reclassification of general service posts and would like further information on that subject from the Secretariat, particularly on the overpayment resulting from the premature implementation within the previous five-level structure of the conclusions of the Salary Survey based on a seven-level structure.

7. Despite the criticism to which its action had given rise in 1984, and the decision taken by the General Assembly in resolution 39/27, the Joint Inspection Unit had presented a follow-up report to the Assembly on staff costs in the United Nations Secretariat. His delegation believed that it was the ICSC and not the JIU which was the proper body to deal with technical questions related to conditions of service of staff. JIU reports on those issues were therefore not only a duplication of effort but a waste of resources, which could not be condoned.

8. Mr. FIGUEIRA (Brazil) said that his delegation deeply regretted the JIU's decision to publish a follow-up to document A/39/522 in the form of document A/40/653. That decision was not in accordance either with the JIU's Statute or with resolution 39/27 of the General Assembly. Such a violation of the established rules was not constructive. His delegation could not accept the arguments put forward by the Joint Inspection Unit in paragraph 5 of its report seeking to justify the lack of consultation with the affected organizations. Like the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, it believed that the report should have been referred to the ICSC before being considered by the General Assembly. It appealed to the JIU to act responsibly in the future.

9. His delegation endorsed the ICSC's recommendations on the margin and the comments in paragraphs 117, 121-122 and 131 of the Commission's report. The aim of the Noblemaire principle was not only to attract qualified staff but also to ensure their equitable geographical distribution. His delegation, unlike others, was not convinced that the net remuneration of United Nations staff stationed in New York should be the same as that of United States civil servants in Washington, D.C. The aim of the system was not that remuneration should be equal but that it should be comparable. If rents or the quality of life in Washington, D.C. and in New York were compared, it would be seen that the post adjustment allowance was fundamentally justified. Nevertheless, the ICSC should develop a more refined methodology for the calculation of the margin and should give further consideration, among other elements, to the possibility of a comparison centred on total or average remuneration at each grade, the latter alternative seeming more logical than the current method.

(Mr. Figueira, Brazil)

10. The ICSC, in consultation with the Joint Staff Pension Board, should try to find a methodology for calculating the pensionable remuneration of the professional and higher categories independently of the comparator civil service pension system. Such a methodology would be particularly appropriate at a time when the United States system was being reformulated. His delegation accepted the suggestions of the ICSC for adjusting pensionable remuneration amounts for benefit purposes, as explained in paragraphs 33 and 42 of the report.

11. His delegation had no objection to the introduction of an additional step for long service at the P-1 through P-5 levels. It hoped that, if the recommendation was adopted, the staff would see it as an expression of the continued support of Member States at a time when most of them were having to ask their national civil services to make sacrifices. It also hoped that in its report to the forty-first session, the ICSC would be able to make final and acceptable recommendations on all the pending questions, and, as the Austrian representative had requested, to formulate them in a more precise and understandable way.

12. Mr. VAHER (Canada), said that the International Civil Service Commission should be encouraged to continue its efforts towards making its reports less difficult to read. By the position they had adopted at the thirty-ninth session, Member States had clearly indicated that the determination of international civil servants' emoluments was a prerogative of the General Assembly. At a time when individual Member States were imposing austerity measures upon their own civil servants, the margin between the remuneration of United Nations officials and that of the comparator civil service could not continue to rise as it had done between 1978 and 1985. The margin of 115 proposed by ICSC would undoubtedly disappoint United Nations staff, but his delegation was confident that so long as the question of the margin was settled once and for all in a spirit of fairness and equity, the international service would react no less responsibly than their national counterparts.

13. Recalling the basic postulate of the Noblemaire principle, he said that the interpretation given to it in practice tied the conditions of employment of international civil servants to the unilateral decisions of a single Government; in other words, United Nations staff were directly affected by the domestic policies of a single Member State. Clearly that had not been the original intention. Furthermore, the use of a civil service as the comparator ignored conditions of employment in other economic sectors of the State concerned.

14. Moreover, the Noblemaire principle provided no guidance for the calculation of margins. With the same basic data but a different set of assumptions, there could be a variation of as much as 12 per cent. What was needed as a starting point was a rigorous and unambiguous methodology for calculating the value of the margin, taking into account all clearly measurable income factors and allowing for adjustments to compensate for variations in systemic characteristics. An increase in the number of variables would, of course, increase the complexity of calculations, but the exercise was not impossible, since it was carried out regularly by several Governments, including his own.

(Mr. Vaher, Canada)

15. The most contentious issue from the start had been the choice of a methodology for objective determination of an appropriate margin. ICSC was proposing that account should be taken of four factors, only one of which - the cost-of-living difference between New York and Washington - was subject to precise measurement. The other three factors were the increased stability and security of national employment, the more limited promotional prospects within the international civil service, and the additional financial costs associated with expatriation. The largely non-quantifiable nature of those three factors could not justify the adoption of a purely arbitrary system. On the basis of the 1956 Salary Review Committee's recommendations, reaffirmed by the 1972 Special Committee for the Review of the United Nations Salary System, ICSC recommended a net remuneration range of between 110 and 120, the mid-point of 115 constituting a desirable level around which the margin should be retained over a period of time. His delegation did not think that precedents constituted sufficient grounds for the choice of margin level. Conditions of employment both in the United Nations and in the United States Federal Administration had changed greatly since 1956. The United Nations had become a much more international organization and 85 per cent of Professional staff now served away from New York. In continuing the review in 1986, ICSC should recommend a more objective method taking account of the following factors: (a) remuneration of staff in other international organizations; (b) comparability with non-government sectors in the comparator country; (c) where appropriate, remuneration of non-expatriate international staff as compared with that of nationals; (d) remuneration of international civil servants on secondment from comparator and other national services; and (e) analysis of various pay systems other than the General Schedule. His delegation also wished to receive further explanation of the proposed method of maintaining the post adjustment system within the margin range, in particular in situations where the existing margin dropped below the lower limit of the margin range. It also requested ICSC to specify when the margin was expected to reach 115, bearing in mind the anticipated freeze in United States civil service salaries for 1986.

16. As the relevant section of the report indicated, women continued to be under-represented in the Secretariat despite the resolutions adopted and assurances given in recent years. His delegation welcomed the recommendations contained in paragraphs 245, 246 and 247 of the report and particularly the emphasis placed on the need to strengthen the presence of Professional women in technical co-operation programmes, given the direct impact of such programmes on women in development.

17. The Joint Inspection Unit's follow-up report on staff costs in the United Nations Secretariat had already formed the subject of comments by ACC, ICSC, staff bodies and representatives of some Member States. A common thread of opinion emerged from those statements. By submitting their report directly to the General Assembly, the JIU had failed to follow the consultation procedures set out in its Statute. The report contained distortions and errors of fact and was unduly critical of United Nations staff. It reflected unfavourably on the integrity of staff representatives and, contrary to what was accepted jurisprudence in other parts of the United Nations system, for example in the International Labour Organisation, cast doubt upon the right to freedom of association. His delegation



(Mr. Vaher, Canada)

could not accept the argument that so misleading a report was justified merely because it expressed a different point of view. Discussion should not descend to personal attacks and must be based on accurate representation of facts.

18. His delegation commended the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board for the quality of its report and noted with satisfaction that recent steps to reduce the actuarial imbalance were proving effective and that the process of disinvestment from South Africa was now complete. The Board had managed the Joint Staff Pension Fund's investments in a competent fashion during a difficult period of high inflation and fluctuating exchange rates. Owing to the state of flux in the retirement scheme of the Federal Administration of the United States, the Board had been unable to address the question of the method of calculating pensionable remuneration for the Professional and higher categories. He associated himself with the representative of Belgium in requesting that a report on that matter should be submitted to the forty-first session, whatever the situation in the comparator civil service. With respect to the pension scheme itself, his delegation wished to reaffirm the principles it had always upheld. The pension scheme should be financially secure and actuarially balanced. Any adjustment of the pension scheme should be preceded by careful analysis of all relevant factors, should protect acquired rights and should incorporate appropriate transitional measures. Regulations of the Fund should apply uniformly. Within those principles, however, ICSC should review the basis for United Nations pensions. The very different figures mentioned by the representative of Belgium on the one hand, and by FICSA on the other clearly showed that further analysis was required of several matters, such as the mandatory retirement age, income levels, capping, lump sum commutation and the two-track system. Comparative analysis of the United Nations pension scheme and that of the comparator civil service should include evaluation of such factors as average length of pensionable service, average age of entry into the scheme, and relative proportions of staff achieving particular levels. The Noblemaire principle might or might not be appropriate for pensions, but that could only be decided after further study.

19. The recommendations of ICSC would help to dispel the inaccurate image of international civil servants receiving bloated salaries which the media and public figures liked to encourage. In view of the complexity of the tasks performed by international civil servants and the very real costs associated with their expatriate existence in New York City, a margin of 15 per cent between their emoluments and those of the United States civil service in Washington was not excessive and was well below the margins which would apply to emoluments received by employees of private sector international corporations working in New York. His delegation believed that, overall, United Nations employees carried out their assigned duties in a thoroughly proper manner and therefore deserved a fair rate of emoluments and a fair pension upon retirement. It supported the ICSC recommendation on the margin and also the Pension Board's recommendation for an increase of 0.75 per cent in pension contributions; but if that support was to be maintained in future, the further analyses which his delegation had requested must be carried out.

AGENDA ITEM 118: FINANCIAL EMERGENCY OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/40/831;  
A/C.5/40/16)

20. Mr. DHRAIEF (Tunisia) said that, while recognizing that external debts, which had put several developing countries in a difficult situation, and the inclusion in the regular budget of peace-keeping expenditures thought by some to be unjustified, could add up to quite a heavy burden, his delegation took the view that there should be greater international solidarity until the Committee on Contributions found the way to a fair and lasting overall solution to the Organization's financial emergency. It was unthinkable that some privileged countries had still not paid their contributions to the current budget, thus depriving the Organization of a sure, regular and predictable source of financing and obliging it at times to draw on accounts reserved for other activities.

21. In his report A/C.5/40/16, the Secretary-General proposed certain options to alleviate the Organization's financial difficulties. In the view of his delegation, implementation of the proposal to put assessed contributions on a biennial basis, might involve serious problems because, on the one hand, it would go against the practice of annual State budgets and, on the other hand, it would constitute an obligation which certain countries might find an especially burdensome constraint.

22. As for increasing the Organization's Working Capital Fund from \$100 million to \$150 million, his delegation believed that the matter should be considered in the light of the situation created by the conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency. In its opinion, the Organization's financial equilibrium rested on observance of the provisions of financial regulation 5.4, under which every Member State should pay the Organization the amount owed as its contribution promptly at the beginning of the year.

23. The number of States contributing to the United Nations Special Account was still too low and its balance did not always suffice to cover the regular budget shortfall. To achieve that, it seemed desirable that non-governmental organizations or other institutions should make a greater contribution to the Special Account.

24. With reference to the issuing of special postage stamps, his delegation would like the next issue to be for the benefit of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, which was having to face a new wave of refugees requiring yet more assistance and greater respect for the fundamental rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

25. Mr. SWEISI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) referring to the issuing of special postage stamps on the social and economic crisis in Africa, observed that the Secretary-General had indicated in paragraph 8 of his report (A/C.5/40/16) that, in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 39/239 A, one-half of the net revenue would be earmarked for the implementation of objectives as detailed in the Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa and the remaining revenues would be placed in a special account. In his opinion, in view of the deterioration of the situation in Africa, most of the net revenue, not half, should be earmarked for that purpose.

(Mr. Sweisi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

26. With reference to the deficit resulting from the fact that certain Member States were withholding payments towards peace-keeping activities in the Middle East, his delegation recalled its position that the deployment of additional emergency forces would not lead to any practical and lasting solutions for the region's problems and that responsibility for financing such operations lay with the aggressor.

27. The Organization's financial difficulties were such that it had to resort to the Working Capital Fund and draw on funds reserved for peace-keeping activities. The deeper causes of the financial emergency should be considered and efforts should be made to induce States Members to pay their assessed contributions on time. The short-term solutions which the Secretariat had been proposing for years had not helped to solve the Organization's financial emergency because they had been implemented only in part or not at all. The Secretary-General's laudable efforts in that regard would be to no avail if Member States did not have the will to find solutions to the deeper causes of the problem, beginning by paying their contributions.

28. Mr. DITZ (Austria) said that a brief and clear diagnosis of the United Nations' financial situation was needed. It was clear that the Organization could not continue to rely on the generosity of a few rather than the collective responsibility of all of its Members. Some of them obviously wanted to have the United Nations financially à la carte, while expecting others to pay for the whole menu plus a supplement to keep the kitchen going. The deficit had almost reached \$US 400 million, three-quarters of it being debts resulting from peace-keeping operations, the other one-quarter pertaining to the Organization's regular budget. It had only been possible to avoid a financial breakdown thus far because the Governments of some troop-contributing countries had provided the United Nations with goods and services without being properly compensated. Not only were Member States which contributed troops bearing three-quarters of the Organization's deficit, but peace-keeping funds were being increasingly used to meet regular budget obligations. That was unfair, to say the least.

29. The solutions adopted in the past, and those envisaged now, such as the issuing of commemorative postage stamps, had not sufficed to improve the financial situation of the Organization. If the United Nations was to continue to be a dynamic and effective instrument of international action, it had to be provided with a programme of work which all Member States were willing to finance. The Organization's financial problems would not be resolved by improvised policies and ad hoc solutions.

30. In conclusion, he noted the proposal made by Mr. Olof Palme, which could provide a basis for overcoming the Organization's financial ills. In the view of his delegation, the most that could be hoped for in the current circumstances was the establishment of a mechanism to explore the different options for a better and financially sound Organization.



31. Mr. KHAN (Pakistan) said that it was particularly regrettable that an Organization which reflected the aspirations of 159 Member States and whose mandate was to promote international peace, security and economic and social co-operation was facing a financial crisis created by its own Members. The crisis was mainly the result of deep-seated ideological differences and the opposition of certain Member States to peace-keeping operations. The withholding of contributions by those Member States affected not only those activities, but the regular budget as well. In that connection, the contributions made by the troop-contributing countries were to be commended.

32. Since it had proved impossible to reach a genuine consensus on a comprehensive solution to the Organization's financial crisis which was acceptable to all parties, the only appropriate alternative had been the adoption of interim measures. It was in that spirit that his delegation had, in 1984, initiated the project of issuing special postage stamps on the economic and social crisis in Africa, which had enjoyed the support of all delegations. The initiative had been taken in the context of the Negotiating Committee on the Financial Emergency of the United Nations, established by the General Assembly in 1975. His delegation had strongly urged the reactivation of that Committee at the thirty-ninth session. Pending a settlement of the political differences which had given rise to the financial emergency, three types of measure could provide some relief. Firstly, the Working Capital Fund could be increased from \$100 million to \$150 million so that the Organization would have a reasonable margin of safety for a few years; secondly, the Secretary-General could be authorized temporarily to retain budgetary surpluses in a suspense account and to suspend financial regulations 4.3 and 5.2; and thirdly, consideration could be given to transferring all or part of the miscellaneous income to a special reserve. The ideal means of replenishing the Working Capital Fund would have been to use the interest received by the Organization, but that might not be possible in the absence of any willingness on the part of major contributors to pay their contributions early in the year.

33. The fact remained that the late payment of contributions was the main source of the Organization's financial difficulties. As the Controller had stated only one month from the end of the year, less than 63 per cent of the assessed contributions for 1985 had been paid. As at 15 November 1985, only 60 Member States had fully paid their assessments for the year, another 38 had made partial payments and the remaining 61 Member States had not paid anything for 1985, or in some cases, for prior years.

34. The Secretary-General should study possible incentives for Member States to pay their contributions early in the year in accordance with financial regulation 5.4. It would also be useful to have available, by the next session of the General Assembly, a comparative analysis of possible revenue-producing activities which the Organization could undertake.

35. Nevertheless, as the Secretary-General had indicated in his report, the General Assembly should take action at the current session to find a lasting solution to the Organization's financial problems. To that end, it was essential for Member States to realize that they had to fulfil their obligations before enjoying the rights and privileges of membership, as stated in Article 2, paragraph 2, of the Charter.

36. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) noted that at the current session the Secretary-General had once again painted a gloomy picture of the Organization's financial situation. Thus, it was estimated that the short-term deficit would increase to \$390.7 million by the end of the year. Japan fully shared the concern of the Secretary-General and sincerely hoped that it was shared by all Member States, regardless of their contribution to the Organization's expenses or their political views.

37. The causes of the financial crisis were well known: late payment of assessed contributions by Member States and withholdings by certain States of their contributions to the regular budget and assessments for peace-keeping operations.

38. In his report (A/C.5/40/16), the Secretary-General presented a number of options for improving the situation, including an increase in the Working Capital Fund. His delegation did not support the measure, since it was, at best, an expedient. It had already been decided in 1981 to increase the Fund and to suspend some provisions of the Financial Regulations. It had to be said that the situation had not improved.

39. If the Working Capital Fund was compared with those of some of the specialized agencies, it was evident, as noted in the Advisory Committee's report on administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies (A/40/769), that the portion of the Working Capital Fund available to meet cash management was greater in the case of the United Nations than in the case of most of the specialized agencies. Further, there was still less justification for increasing the Working Capital Fund since the Secretary-General had at his disposal special accounts, which was not true of most of the specialized agencies.

40. Similarly, Japan did not support the suspension of certain provisions of the Financial Regulations. The measure was inequitable in that it would impose a heavier burden on certain Member States. In addition, it might lead to the practice of over-budgeting as a means of securing an expanded cash income through greater budgetary surpluses at the end of the biennium.

41. With regard to the other options suggested by the Secretary-General, Japan agreed with the Advisory Committee. For example, borrowing on the open market would compel the Organization to pay high interest rates and might weaken the stringent financial discipline which the Organization was attempting to maintain.

42. The only solution to the financial crisis was to require all Member States to pay their arrears promptly and in full. Japan paid a tribute to the troop-contributing countries for the financial burden they had borne on behalf of the Organization. The Secretary-General should display greater firmness and adopt concrete measures to oblige Member States to pay their assessed contributions, and should not tolerate delays in payment of more than one year.

AGENDA ITEM 123: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/40/652, A/40/673 and Corr.1 (English only) and Add.1; A/C.5/40/5 and Add.1, A/C.5/40/6 and Corr.1, A/C.5/40/25, A/C.5/40/27, A/C.5/40/30, A/C.5/40/38, A/C.5/40/39 and A/C.5/40/59)

43. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document A/C.5/40/59 containing the views of the staff representatives of the Secretariat. That document was being submitted pursuant to paragraph 2 (a) of General Assembly resolution 35/213. He had also received from the President of the United Nations Staff Committee, Mr. George Irving, a communication requesting, on behalf of the staff of the Secretariat, that he be allowed to address the Committee in accordance with paragraph 3 (a) of that resolution.

44. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to invite the staff representative of the Secretariat to make an oral presentation to it to introduce document A/C.5/40/59.

45. It was so decided.

46. Mr. DITZ (Austria) recalled that, according to the Charter, the independence of the international civil service was the only guarantee of the impartiality and hence the quality of the Organization's work. The Charter stipulated that staff must be recruited to the Organization solely on the basis of merit, due regard being paid to geographical distribution. It was therefore intolerable that, as the Secretary-General had indicated to the Committee in the general debate on personnel questions, Member States should complicate recruitment by interfering in the process of appointments, promotions and transfers. The Secretariat must not be turned into a place where staff members, like delegations, represented the interests of their country or group of countries. The Secretariat must act creatively, objectively and in the interests of the international community as a whole.

47. During the debate on the proposed programme budget, it had been stressed repeatedly that 80 per cent of the Organization's expenditures were devoted to staff costs. In that connection, the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, Mr. P. Ruedas, had quite rightly recalled that the staff were the very substance of the Organization, for it was they that produced the research, the analyses and the support for negotiations which were the essence of the Secretariat's work:

48. Recruitment procedures must enable the Organization to secure the services of a loyal and competent staff which was devoted to the cause of international co-operation. A widespread system of recruitment by competitive examination would be the best means of establishing a fair and objective recruitment system. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the proposed extension of the competitive examination procedure to posts at the P-3 level.

49. In order to prevent the Secretariat from losing all momentum, members of the staff should be given the necessary incentives to motivate them to use their capacities to the full. It was high time therefore that the Organization finally

(Mr. Ditz, Austria)

came up with a workable career development plan. His delegation expected the Office of Personnel Services to redouble its efforts and to start implementing the career development plan by 1987 at the latest. The shortcomings of the present system would undoubtedly result in a further deterioration in staff morale and in the quality of the work done by the Secretariat, which was crucial to promoting co-operation among Member States.

50. Mr. BITAR (Lebanon), referring to the report on respect for the privileges and immunities of international civil servants (A/C.5/40/25), condemned the arrests and detentions of staff members on Lebanese territory, in particular the abduction of Mr. Alec Collett while on assignment for UNRWA. The Lebanese authorities were currently working to secure Mr. Collett's release.

51. His delegation wished to know why the report mentioned the staff members detained in Lebanon three times while giving very little information on the UNRWA staff members detained in Israel. Had contacts been established with the authorities in the Gaza Strip and West Bank and, if so, what had been the outcome?

52. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would return to item 123 at a later stage.

AGENDA ITEM 120: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (continued) (A/40/34, A/40/137 and A/40/655)

53. Mr. DEVREUX (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the Member countries of the European Community, said that the Ten attached great importance to the work of the Joint Inspection Unit. The United Nations was in great need of an independent organ with broad powers of investigation and sufficient objectivity to judge critically and constructively the use which organizations of the system made of their resources.

54. The Ten reiterated that, in order to guarantee the independence of the Joint Inspection Unit, JIU reports must be submitted directly to the General Assembly. They also recalled that, in accordance with its statute, JIU must consist of a maximum of 11 inspectors, chosen from among the most eminent members of national control or inspection bodies or from among individuals performing similar functions.

55. In drawing up its programme of work, JIU must take care to choose topics which were fundamental to the proper functioning of the Organization. Both the Main Committees and subsidiary organs must examine with the utmost care reports which concerned them directly. Finally, the Administration must ensure that the recommendations of JIU were implemented.

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AGENDA ITEM 17: APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS:

(a) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS (A/40/101/Add.3 and A/C.5/40/58)

56. The CHAIRMAN said that, as indicated in document A/40/101/Add.3, the General Assembly was required to appoint a member of the Advisory Committee to fill the unexpired portion of the term of office of Mr. Rachid Lahlou, i.e. until 31 December 1987. In document A/C.5/40/58, the Secretary-General informed the Committee that the Moroccan Government had nominated Mr. Nouredine Sefiani. Since no other candidate had been nominated, if he heard no objection he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Assembly that Mr. Nouredine Sefiani be appointed to serve for a period commencing on the date of the General Assembly's decision and ending on 31 December 1987. The Rapporteur would report on that decision directly to the General Assembly.

57. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.