



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 47th 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 a.m.

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

1. Ms. HILLYER (New Zealand) said that the financial emergency of the Organization had grown to crisis proportions and it was essential that before contemplating any growth of the budget, the Secretariat and Member States should rigorously review all programmes in order to eliminate activities of questionable priority. However, a more efficient use of existing resources would not be enough to solve the Organization's financial problems, which were basically due to the late payment or the withholding of contributions.
2. New Zealand strongly condemned the attitude of those Member States which, taking refuge behind a position of principle, refused to contribute to the financing of certain programmes or activities and thus virtually held the Organization to ransom. Her delegation, like that of Canada, deplored resort to such pressure tactics. In particular, it did not accept the argument advanced by some Member States that the costs of peace-keeping operations did not constitute a legitimate expense. The Charter specifically recognized that the United Nations had been founded to maintain and foster peace, and therefore the costs of peace-keeping operations were a wholly legitimate expense that should be shared equally by all Member States without exception. By shirking their responsibilities, some Member States were abusing the willingness of those States that were ready to contribute to the financing of those activities. For example, Fiji, a developing country and one of the smallest Member States of the Organization, was bearing a very heavy burden since 17 members of its military forces had already been killed in the course of peace-keeping operations and the sum owed to it by the Organization currently exceeded \$14 million.
3. None of the solutions proposed in the report of the Secretary-General was completely satisfactory. Borrowing from Member States, the issuance of long-term bonds and borrowings in the open market would have further implications for the budget and would increase the burden on those States which paid their contributions promptly. The application of credits to those States would be a means of encouraging them, but it was difficult to see how such a measure could be put into practice for the time being. The assessment of contributions on a biennial basis seemed undesirable and the suspension of certain of the financial regulations, even if justified, was not an answer in itself. Lastly, an increase in the Working Capital Fund and further resort to voluntary contributions were mere palliatives. The only means of curing the financial emergency was for States to show the necessary political will and pay their assessed contributions promptly and in full. Many delegations had expressed the conviction that a wind of reform was blowing in the Organization on its fortieth anniversary; before any other reform, States should start by meeting their financial obligations.
4. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) said that the short-term deficit had been increasing steadily for the past 10 years, which indicated that no substantive

(Mr. Chowdhury, Bangladesh)

action had been taken to arrest and reverse the situation. The financial emergency was undoubtedly due to the fact that a considerable number of Member States were failing to comply with their financial obligations, but a distinction should be made between the countries in default: some of them, such as the developing countries, were willing to pay their contributions but were constrained by financial difficulties, whereas others, although they had a very high capacity to pay, refused to honour their commitments for reasons of principle.

5. It was the political will of the latter States that was the issue. Instead of withholding a part of their contributions, they could well record their disagreement by entering official reservations in regard to those activities of which they did not approve. At all events, it was paradoxical that such States should exert pressure on the United Nations when they themselves were engaging in activities incompatible with the Charter, such as the arms race. Bangladesh, despite its own serious financial difficulties, had always tried to honour its commitments, since it believed that no State which was a party to the Charter could avoid the obligations arising from it. Like the Nordic countries, Bangladesh regarded the withholding of contributions for whatever reason as an illegal act.

6. As far as the solutions proposed in the report of the Secretary-General were concerned, his delegation endorsed the comments of the Advisory Committee (A/40/831). However, looking at the problem of the deficit from the expenditure side, it should be remembered that the Organization's activities and thus the expenses deriving from them, were intended to make it possible to achieve the objectives laid down in the Charter and to implement the decisions of the General Assembly and other bodies. The developing countries were fully aware of the need to exercise financial restraint and to eliminate outmoded or useless programmes, but it seemed to them impossible to cut down the volume of activities severely without irreparably damaging the Organization. In the end, the problem was not so much one of budgetary restraint as of political will on the part of all Member States.

7. His delegation was gratified that the plans to issue special postage stamps on the economic crisis in Africa were proceeding satisfactorily. It hoped that it would help to increase the world community's awareness of the problems of Africa.

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)

8. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that under the terms of article 1 of its statute, the International Civil Service Commission was responsible for regulating and co-ordinating conditions of service throughout the United Nations common system. Its powers had been clearly defined by the General Assembly. The debate on the legal basis of its decisions was therefore pointless. His own delegation commended the wisdom shown by ICSC in recommending that the net remuneration margin should be kept within a range of 110 and 120, with a mid-point of around 115. It endorsed the modalities described in paragraphs 120 to 126 of the ICSC report (A/40/30) for operating the post adjustment system within the range defined for the margin, but would like the Commission to continue its efforts to refine the procedure.

(Mr. Ladjouzi, Algeria)

9. On the other hand, unlike other delegations, his delegation considered that remuneration in the private sector of the comparator country should not be taken into consideration in determining the remuneration of international civil servants on the grounds that doing so would distort both the spirit and the letter of the Noblemaire principle. His delegation would further like to know whether the comparison between the remuneration of United Nations officials and United States civil servants took into account the entitlements of the latter when they were posted abroad. In his delegation's view it should do so.

10. His delegation endorsed the ICSC recommendations regarding planning, recruitment, career development and human resources management. On the other hand, it found the information provided by the Commission on the way in which the various organizations were applying its recommendations insufficient, and it would like to know in particular whether all Member States had made arrangements to exempt their nationals from national income taxation, as they had been requested to do in resolution 39/27. Such action would make it possible to abolish the Tax Equalization Fund and thus to improve the financial position of the Joint Staff Pension Fund.

11. With regard to report JIU/REP/85/8 of the Joint Inspection Unit on staff costs in the United Nations Secretariat (A/40/653), his delegation did not at all appreciate certain value judgements made against the Inspectors' work. It was also surprised that the report had not been sent to ICSC first and therefore firmly requested JIU to observe the established procedure in order to dispel any doubts about its intentions.

12. Although his delegation endorsed the other recommendations of ICSC, it must reserve its position on the question of the amount of the pensionable remuneration pending the outcome of the re-examination requested in resolution 39/246. It reiterated its confidence in ICSC but regretted that peripheral considerations had led the Commission to concern itself too exclusively with the problem of remuneration, to the detriment of other no less decisive aspects of the international civil service career. It therefore invited ICSC to consider the whole range of personnel questions from an overall standpoint, with emphasis on encouraging the advancement and development of staff members within the Secretariat. In that respect, closer co-ordination between ICSC and the Office of Personnel Services might make it possible to identify the real problems affecting staff members and to provide a solid basis for the career development system.

13. Mr. DE CLERK (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the 10 member States of the European Economic Community, noted that the financial emergency of the Organization had lasted for 20 years and had even grown steadily worse. The Negotiating Committee on the Financial Emergency of the United Nations was not even meeting any more, although in its resolution 39/239 the General Assembly had requested it to keep the situation under review.

14. According to Secretariat estimates, the short-term deficit would reach \$US 390.7 million by the end of 1985, a further increase of \$US 28.1 million in one year. Most of that deficit could be attributed to the fact that assessed

(Mr. De Clerk, Belgium)

contributions for the financing of peace-keeping operations had not been paid by certain Member States. The budget for such operations thus showed a deficit of \$US 380 million. It was highly regrettable that troop-contributing Member States continued to bear most of the burden of that deficit.

15. The regular budget deficit was \$US 116.3 million and therefore considerably exceeded the amount of the Working Capital Fund, which was \$US 100 million. The deficit was caused by the fact that a number of Member States were withholding part of their contributions and that most Member States paid their contributions late, if at all: by 30 January 1985, only 35.5 per cent of contributions had been paid, one of the lowest rates of collection in recent years.

16. The Secretary-General was proposing a variety of measures to remedy that situation, the first being the prompt payment of assessed contributions. It was clear that if arrears were paid quickly, the Organization's financial problems would be solved. The EEC countries joined with the Secretary-General in reminding all States of their duty in that respect.

17. The solution of increasing the Working Capital Fund - from \$US 100 million to \$US 150 million - would amount, in reality, to collecting future contributions in advance. The Advisory Committee did not favour that solution because it first wanted to know what effect the conversion of UNIDO into an independent agency would have on the relative size of the Working Capital Fund. The Ten agreed with the Advisory Committee on that score.

18. The borrowing solution was not a panacea either. The objections raised against borrowings in the open market were still valid, even if the market had become more open and interest rates had fallen slightly. Borrowing from Member States by issuing bonds could entail additional assessments for all Member States, because of the failure to pay of some of them, when the time came to repay capital and interest. The issuance of a new series of long-term bonds similar to the one authorized in 1961 must be ruled out for the same reason.

19. The Secretary-General was also proposing to extend the suspension of the provisions of certain financial regulations. The first to be penalized by that measure were those who met their obligations punctiliously and it would be fairer to consider implementing the measure proposed in paragraph 43 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/40/16), which would have the effect of refunding their share of any unspent balances of appropriations only to those Member States that had paid their contributions in full.

20. Lastly, the Secretary-General was proposing a completely new solution: the assessment of contributions on a biennium basis. The first effect of that proposal would be to increase the burden on those who paid their contributions promptly. Secondly, the interest that might be expected to accrue from the large amounts collected at the beginning of the accounting period would materialize only if those amounts were indeed paid at the proper time. However, the tendency to pay contributions late could be expected to become even more marked.

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

21. The CHAIRMAN invited Mr. Irving, as staff representative, to introduce document A/C.5/40/59 and to present the views of the United Nations staff to the Committee.
22. Mr. IRVING said that the litany of criticisms levelled at the international civil service, whether justified or not, could not fail to have a negative effect on the morale of staff members and hence on the effectiveness of the Secretariat. The staff nevertheless maintained a positive attitude and looked to Member States for confidence, support and guidance. For those who shared common goals, solutions to problems must be possible.
23. The most important problem was that of safeguarding the security and independence of the international civil service. As was evident from the report submitted by the staff (A/C.5/40/59) and from the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/40/25), there continued to be a significant number of cases in which the lives and freedom of United Nations officials had been assailed. Although progress had been noted in certain areas, there were a growing number of cases in which United Nations officials had become the innocent victims of terrorism. Eight months previously, an official on assignment for UNRWA in Lebanon had been kidnapped by persons unknown. That kind of misguided action would cease only when Member States united in a show of support for the special status of the United Nations and of its staff, who were often called on to serve in difficult circumstances.
24. The various staff unions and associations had always resolutely opposed any actions which tended to discriminate among staff on the basis of nationality or which might inject political considerations into the Organization's work. It was most alarming to observe the growing erosion of the Staff Rules and Staff Regulations in favour of special interests or considerations other than merit. The inroads into the independence of the Secretariat took a variety of forms: governmental interference in favour of or against particular individuals, abuses of secondment, forced payment of salaries to Governments and discriminatory travel restrictions.
25. While attention had been focused unduly on financial conditions of service, very little attention had been paid to the most pressing problem perceived by the staff, namely the steady deterioration of the concept of a career based on merit and fairness. The United Nations had operated for 40 years without a defined career development system, with the result that promotions depended largely on one's connections. There was an Appointment and Promotion Board, but the number of cases in which its recommendations had been overturned had increased dramatically. It had become commonplace to arrange for personal promotions at the higher levels through what was euphemistically called reorganization. That usually took place through the elimination of middle-level Professional posts. There appeared to be no effective control over such practices, with the result that posts at the P-1,

(Mr. Irving)

P-2 and even P-3 levels were gradually disappearing. The United Nations was rapidly becoming an organization of generals without troops. The staff unions and associations which objected to such practices had come increasingly under fire, most recently from JIU.

26. Difficulties had also arisen in relations between staff and management at a number of duty stations away from Headquarters, where Executive Heads had replaced the Staff Rules and Staff Regulations with their own policies. That problem had been particularly acute at the United Nations University in Tokyo, in UNEP at Nairobi and in ECA at Addis Ababa. One of the major difficulties had been for the Office of Personnel Services to carry out its functions in the face of increased resistance from administrators, particularly when a decentralization of authority had been granted as was the case with UNITAR and the Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia.

27. The Office of Personnel Services appeared to be less and less able to fulfil its task, despite the efforts of the Assistant Secretary-General who exemplified the highest standards of integrity of the international civil service. In fact, part of the problem lay in the lack of accountability for decision-making, which brought him to the question of the administration of justice in the United Nations.

28. For the system for the administration of justice to function effectively, it should be swift, impartial and effective. Unfortunately, that was not the case. Recent disciplinary action had been taken without the benefit of a hearing and had been applied differently to similar cases. Appeals were characterized by inordinate delays. The appointment of an ombudsman would do much to reduce unnecessary litigation and ensure an effective mechanism for redressing grievances. He regretted that a more concrete proposal on that subject had not been made at the fortieth session.

29. Questions had been raised with regard to the classification exercise for the General Service and related categories in New York. That had been one of the most extensive job classification exercises ever undertaken, involving some 4,000 posts and a change in the structure of those categories from five to seven grades. The exercise had been well received by the staff, largely because it had been coupled with the introduction of special career development provisions for the staff in those categories. Despite regrettable delays, the exercise deserved the support of the Fifth Committee in order to ensure that the expectations of the staff affected were not jeopardized. He trusted that the new system would be put into effect by the end of 1985.

30. The General Service staff were equally concerned about the prospects for the internal competitive examination for promotion to the Professional category, the most immediate concern being the rapid decline in the number of entry-level posts, which had reduced the number of posts available to those who passed the examination by over half since the introduction of the examination.

31. Over 80 per cent of the women employed in the United Nations were in the General Service category. The present dual structure and rigid

(Mr. Irving)

compartmentalization were largely discriminatory in nature and needed to be re-evaluated. A single-category structure, including a unified career development system, was both possible and desirable. Career opportunities for women in the Professional category had not shown any significant improvement either. The staff hoped that the appointment of a Co-ordinator would signal the beginning of the active pursuit of clear goals and accountability within the system for the advancement of women.

32. Staff members in the field also deserved special recognition and were all too often forgotten in terms of career. It was interesting to note that the United Nations was far less favourable than the comparator civil service with respect to the conditions of service of its field staff. Special measures should be taken to assist those staff who were in the front lines of the Organization's battle against war, hunger and disease.

33. Mr. EFIMOV (Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the report entitled "Medium-term plan of recruitment, 1983-1985: Problems of implementation" (A/40/673), recalled that the Secretary-General had devised the plan primarily in order to provide the policy framework for Secretariat recruitment activities with respect to two major goals: first, to raise the level of representation of all unrepresented and underrepresented countries and secondly, to improve the representation and the level of appointment of women on the staff of the Organization. The Secretary-General had also committed himself in 1982 to correcting the situation of unrepresented and underrepresented countries by 1985.

34. The time had come to take stock of the results of that plan and to draw conclusions which might be useful for establishing the next recruitment plan. On the basis of the latest information made available as of 31 May 1985, JIU had concluded that none of the specific goals of the plan were going to be attained. It was clear from the Secretary-General's recent comments (A/40/673/Add.1) that the situation had not changed significantly. The number of unrepresented countries had decreased by only 5 - from 17 to 12, that of underrepresented countries had decreased from 26 to 12, but that of over-represented countries had risen from 29 to 31. Finally, it was clear that the representation of women had not reached its goal of 25 per cent.

35. In other words, the problem seemed to be the following: it was impossible to have 24 unrepresented and underrepresented countries brought within their desirable ranges, and then to their mid-points together with those already within their ranges, while maintaining 31 overrepresented countries. That was why JIU believed that the system of desirable ranges should be modified so that the mid-points became the upper levels, with the lower levels being 10 per cent below but not less than 5.75 posts, as specified in General Assembly resolution 35/210. However, a genuine equitable geographical distribution of posts also had a qualitative aspect: there should be a proportional distribution of posts by grade. The system proposed by JIU was presented in chapter IV of its report, and the ranges calculated for each Member State were given in Annex I to the same document.

(Mr. Efimov)

36. Since the Secretary-General was to submit a new system of desirable ranges to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, JIU believed that the time had come to give a critical view of existing recruitment policy and methods. It hoped that discussion of that question in the Fifth Committee would yield positive results and that the Secretary-General would work out recommendations enabling not only unrepresented and underrepresented countries but also over-represented countries to be brought to their respective mid-points, as suggested in the JIU report.

37. In conclusion, paragraph 63 of the JIU report (A/40/673) contained a misprint: the figure "280" should read "380".

38. Mr. KAMALUDDIN (Afghanistan) said that effective and equitable representation of Member States and a proper geographical distribution of Secretariat staff would enhance the efficiency of the Secretariat. Accordingly, recruitment from underrepresented countries should continue to be a priority objective. He agreed with JIU that the number of permanent contracts should be reduced and the number of fixed-term contracts should be increased. There should also be a ban on recruiting large numbers from over-represented countries.

39. With regard to the employment of women, his delegation considered that women should be recruited in accordance with the principle of geographical distribution and without any discrimination in terms of appointment and promotion, in other words without forgetting the need to increase the number of women in the Professional category and at higher levels.

40. The report of the Secretary-General on respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies referred, in Table 2, to Afghanistan. Afghanistan fully respected the provisions of the Charter and of the conventions on privileges and immunities. It therefore deeply regretted the reference in the report to the five Afghans employed by United Nations bodies in Kabul. The fact of the matter was that all five had been arrested for subversive activities. The Afghan security forces had irrefutable documentary proof in their possession of the close ties between those people and counter-revolutionary hands. Three of them had been sentenced to prison terms after having exercised their rights and enjoyed the protection of the courts. Representatives of the various United Nations bodies had visited them. As to the two others the investigation was still under way. The final decision would be brought promptly to the attention of the respective United Nations bodies.

41. His delegation hoped that steps would be taken to ensure that staff members and locally recruited general service employees of international organizations did not take advantage of the privileges and immunities accorded to them and that they did not violate the rules and laws of the countries in which they resided and worked.

42. He expressed deep concern at the arbitrary decision of the United States to impose restrictions on the travel of some United Nations staff members on the basis of their nationality. It supported the Secretary-General in denouncing that illegal action which constituted a gross violation of the Charter, the Headquarters Agreement and the conventions on privileges and immunities.

43. Mr. HUCKE (German Democratic Republic) said that the mandate entrusted to the Secretary-General and the Secretariat by various resolutions of the General Assembly, particularly resolution 39/245, in respect of recruitment was unambiguous in that it called for measures to improve appreciably, by the end of 1985, the geographical distribution of staff and, in particular, through the implementation of a medium-term plan of recruitment, to raise the level of representation of all Member States to the lower limit of their desirable ranges.

44. While conscious of the efforts made by the Secretary-General to urge the heads of structural units to make greater efforts to attain those objectives and to increase the authority of the Office of Personnel Services in all recruitment matters, his delegation noted with regret that no tangible progress had been made towards improving geographical distribution. It was clear from the report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/40/652) that the German Democratic Republic was among those States which was heavily underrepresented although there was no lack of qualified applicants. It would need at least 12 additional posts in order to bring it within the desirable range.

45. The Office of Personnel Services might have worked out an internal policy to implement the provisions of paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 39/245 but that policy had obviously never been put into practice. He wondered why the heads of some structural units, particularly those which had filled more than 10 per cent of their vacancies with nationals of over-represented countries since the thirty-ninth session, continued to obstruct implementation of the resolutions of the General Assembly.

46. His delegation objected most strongly to that attitude and associated itself with the majority of Member States in calling again for the full implementation of the provisions of Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter of the United Nations. The composition of the Secretariat should reflect the existence of different cultures, ideologies and schools of thought. People with excellent professional qualifications could be found in all States and the current system of desirable ranges made it possible to attain equitable geographical distribution. To fail to take all those factors into consideration would lead to the erosion of the provisions of the Charter and to discrimination between sovereign Member States of the Organization.

47. In order to resolve the problem of unrepresentation and underrepresentation of Member States the head of the Office of Personnel Services should meet before the end of the current session with the heads of delegations and representatives of Governments in order to elaborate a one-year crash programme for the recruitment of the required number of nationals from those States. That proposal went beyond the proposals for further competitive examinations for posts at the P-2 level. Contrary to what the Secretariat had stated, the current competitive examination system had not helped much to improve the geographical distribution and the suggestion that it should be extended to posts at the P-3 level was quite unacceptable. Objective interviews were a perfectly appropriate means of selecting candidates having the necessary skills and integrity.

(Mr. Hucke, German Democratic
Republic)

48. At the same time, the Secretariat must endeavour to speed up the interview procedure and make it less bureaucratic, to announce vacancies promptly and to proceed without delay to replacing staff members in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/210. In spite of its disappointment with the Organization's recruitment policy the Government and Permanent Mission of the German Democratic Republic would continue to co-operate with Secretariat recruitment officers. They welcomed the initiative of the Office of Personnel Services to increase the number of recruitment missions to underrepresented or unrepresented countries and expressed the hope that data on specific vacancies and assignment areas would be communicated to the country concerned well in advance to ensure that suitable candidates were identified and invited to the recruitment interviews.

49. Concerning the recruitment of women the aim should be not to recruit women from any Member State but to focus the search on countries that were underrepresented or unrepresented; those aims should be spelled out clearly in the resolution on the subject. He welcomed the designation of a Co-ordinator for the Improvement of the Status of Women in the Secretariat; however, he would like to know what the Office of Personnel Services was doing to emphasize the recruitment of women. One truly qualified woman candidate had simply been placed in the roster because the vacancy she had applied for was said to have been filled already although the vacancy had continued to be advertised for several weeks after the candidate had applied.

50. With regard to the career development system he noted with satisfaction that the report of the Secretary-General on the subject better reflected the different types of contracts. While the proposals it contained with regard to career development for staff members with fixed-term contracts were a good beginning, he wondered whether in the case of persons holding permanent contracts greater attention should not be paid to the high qualifications they had at the time of recruitment and whether further training of such staff members should not be geared to the specific assignments which they were asked to undertake.

51. Mr. GRECU (Romania) said that his delegation's interest in personnel questions was explained by the essential role which the Secretariat played in the life of the Organization, the importance of implementing the provisions of the Charter and General Assembly resolutions on the Secretariat, and the magnitude of United Nations administrative expenditures, especially for personnel. Those considerations made it necessary for the General Assembly to ensure that the steady increase in Secretariat staff and the resultant expenses did not take precedence over the goals set jointly by Member States. The complex and delicate nature of personnel questions must not prevent delegations from considering them in a critical light with a view to rectifying inadequacies in personnel policy and adopting measures for enhancing the effectiveness of the Secretariat.

52. Reading the report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/40/652), one was struck by the persistence of quantitative and qualitative imbalances in the representation of Member States in the Secretariat. His delegation welcomed the decline in the number of unrepresented and underrepresented countries, but wished

(Mr. Grecu, Romania)

to see a strengthening of the measures taken in that area. Due attention must also be paid in the recruitment of new staff members to correcting imbalances among States that were within their desirable range.

53. While the number of unrepresented and underrepresented States had significantly decreased, the same could not be said for over-represented States, whose number had declined by only one - having dropped from 32 to 31 - and was higher than it had been in 1981 (30) and 1982 (26). Moreover, of those 31 States, some had two or three times more nationals in the Secretariat than the maximum to which they were entitled.

54. Qualitative imbalances were even more pronounced: of the 148 senior posts occupied by nationals of 57 Member States, roughly 100, or 67 per cent, were occupied by nationals from only 17 States, which left 102 States without any representation whatsoever at that level. Yet surely those few privileged States were not the only ones able to nominate competent candidates.

55. While the persistence of imbalances among States was not surprising, the lack of attention paid in recruitment to the criteria formulated for the appointment of candidates from countries which had reached or exceeded the upper limit of their range was surprising indeed. That attitude perpetuated existing imbalances and totally disregarded General Assembly decisions.

56. In its reports on the question (A/39/522 and Corr.1 and A/40/653), the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) had stressed a number of negative aspects of the Secretariat's utilization of human and financial resources, deficiencies which the General Assembly should seek to correct. His delegation deplored the fact that the Secretariat was resisting JIU involvement in salary and personnel questions and that some parties had a tendency to deflect attention away from the substantive problems identified by the Inspectors towards procedural questions and conflicts of competence. Particularly unfortunate was the move to institute actual proceedings against the General Assembly of the United Nations before the Administrative Tribunal on the grounds that its decision to suspend the implementation of the second phase of the post-adjustment increase recommended by ICSC was illegal. In fact, it was with the General Assembly - i.e. with Member States, and not with a subsidiary organ - that the responsibility for deciding questions relating to adjustments ultimately lay.

57. His delegation was concerned at the growth in the number of Secretariat staff members and, consequently, in personnel expenditures, which was disproportionate to the growth of United Nations activities. The increase in the proportion of senior posts (D-2 and above) within the total number of posts subject to geographical distribution (from 4.22 per cent in 1975 to 4.77 per cent in 1985) and the corresponding decline in the proportion of P-1/P-2 posts (from 20.93 per cent to 15.73 per cent) were equally disconcerting. The fact that the number of senior posts had increased by 42.3 per cent between 1975 and 1985 while the total number of posts subject to geographical distribution had increased by only 25.6 per cent should also be emphasized. JIU had quite rightly drawn attention to the fact that

(Mr. Grecu, Romania)

that trend was accompanied by an increasingly frequent use of consultants and experts, a phenomenon which was contradictory to the existence of a numerous and ostensibly qualified staff.

58. It was impossible to separate that problem from the problem of staff salaries and pensions, the increase in which was a frequent source of criticism damaging to the image of the United Nations. It was becoming ever more necessary to halt that constant increase, which had serious repercussions for the Organization's budget. Furthermore, the solution should be consistent with the measures taken by most Member States, including the richest countries, to reduce their administrative expenditures and map out a salary policy adapted to their economic difficulties.

59. That said, his delegation believed it was necessary to ensure a just and equitable representation of Member States within the Secretariat, put an end to the excessive increase in the number of staff, set salaries and pensions at a reasonable level and increase the Secretariat's efficiency by rationalizing its structure. More specifically, the following measures were required: temporarily suspending the recruitment of nationals from over-represented States or States that were close to the upper limit of their desirable range; recruiting as a matter of priority staff members from unrepresented and underrepresented States and States close to the mid-point of their desirable range; increasing the number of staff members recruited on a fixed-term basis, as was done in other United Nations organizations; rationalizing the structure of the Secretariat to reverse the current trend towards a multiplication of senior posts; setting a reasonable margin between the salaries and pensions of the United Nations and those of members of the comparator civil service which would in no case exceed 15 per cent, a figure already high in comparison with the salaries paid in the overwhelming majority of Member States; and, finally, limiting the use of consultant and expert services.

AGENDA ITEMS 116 and 117: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1986-1987 AND PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/40/L.15 concerning agenda item 30 (Critical economic situation in Africa) (A/C.5/40/55 and Corr.1)

60. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the special session of the General Assembly, to be convened in accordance with draft resolution A/40/L.15, and the meetings of the Preparatory Committee of the Whole would entail requirements in respect of conference servicing (\$952,000), and of the travel of representatives (\$556,000). As indicated in paragraph 9 of document A/C.5/40/55, however, no additional appropriation was necessary at the current stage for the travel of representatives. Conference-servicing costs, estimated at \$952,000 (A/C.5/40/55/Corr.1), would be included in the consolidated statement of total conference-servicing requirements which the Secretary-General would submit to the General Assembly towards the end of its fortieth session. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the plenary Assembly accordingly.

61. Mr. KRAMER (United States of America), referring to the discussions on the subject of the date of the special session of the General Assembly, asked whether, in the event that draft resolution A/40/L.15 was adopted, the special session must of necessity be convened on 28 April 1986, or whether it might begin at a later date.
62. Mr. RWAMBUYA (Office of Financial Services) replied that the date indicated in draft resolution A/40/L.15 was not mandatory, so long as it was understood that the duration of the session and the number of meetings would not exceed the figures shown in document A/C.5/40/55.
63. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, on the basis of the Advisory Committee's recommendations, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, if draft resolution A/40/L.15 was adopted, no additional appropriation would be necessary at that stage. Any additional appropriations for conference-servicing, estimated on a full-cost basis at \$952,000, would be considered in the context of the consolidated statement of conference-servicing requirements which would be submitted to the General Assembly later.
64. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.