

United Nations
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

FORTIETH SESSION

Official Records*



FIFTH COMMITTEE
63rd meeting
held on
Saturday, 14 December 1985
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 63rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (Cameroon)

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

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 124: UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (continued)

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

Revised estimates under section 31 (Staff assessment) and income section 1
(Income from staff assessment)

AGENDA ITEM 115: PROGRAM 3 BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1984-1985

Standards of accommodation for air travel

AGENDA ITEM 123: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

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

Job classification of the General Service and related categories in New York

* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room IX 2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/40/SR.63
20 December 1985

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

/...

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 124: UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (continued) (A/40/37; A/C.5/40/L.7)

1. Mr. KASTOFT (Denmark), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/40/L.5, said that the draft resolution was the result of extensive consultations and testified to the spirit of co-operation shown by members of the Committee. It had been clear at the end of the consultations, however, that the concerns of some delegations had still not been met completely. For instance, some delegations had expressed reservations about the range of 110 to 120 provided for in part I, paragraph 2, and also about paragraph 3 (a) of part I. Paragraph 3 of part I was in fact the most important element of the draft resolution and he hoped that, despite the reservations he had mentioned, it would be possible to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.
2. The CHAIRMAN expressed the hope that, in view of the protracted negotiations that had taken place concerning the draft resolution, the Committee would now expedite a decision on it.
3. Mr. ROY (India) paid tribute to the tireless efforts made by Mr. Kastoft to arrive at a consensus resolution. His delegation generally supported draft resolution A/C.5/40/L.7 but had reservations concerning certain elements of paragraph 3 (a) of part I and paragraph 3 (b) of part III.
4. In the light of the views expressed in the Committee and in the informal consultations, his delegation could support the study proposed in paragraph 3 (a) of part I for calculating the margin between the net remuneration of United Nations officials and those of the comparator civil service. However, the phrase "thus eliminating the rationale for a cost-of-living differential between Washington, D.C. and New York" seemed to prejudge the outcome of that study. In the experience of members of his country's foreign service, there was a marked difference between the cost of living in New York and that in Washington, D.C. Besides, the United Nations and the United States federal civil service were not meant to be carbon copies of each other. The post adjustment was designed to reflect differences in purchasing power not only between but also within countries to which officials were posted; and there were a number of countries where the cost of living differed markedly between major cities. Such differences in purchasing power must be reflected in the proposed study. If Member States wanted an international civil service that was an exact replica of the United States federal civil service, they would also have to take account of the fact that when posted overseas, officials of the United States federal civil service frequently received remuneration greater than or equivalent to the base remuneration in Washington, D.C., while, in 80 per cent of United Nations duty stations away from Headquarters, United Nations officials received less than the base remuneration in New York. If the United Nations was to replicate the comparator civil service in that regard, the cost to Member States would be an additional \$100 million to 200 million a year. He therefore proposed the deletion of the phrase in question.

(Mr. Roy, India)

5. Turning to paragraph 3 (b) of part III, his delegation was not opposed to re-examining the scope of the education grant but had reservations concerning the phrase "in relation to the purpose for which it was originally approved". When the education grant had first been introduced in the late 1940s, its original purpose had been to allow staff members to educate their children in their country of origin. The General Assembly had subsequently altered the original purpose of the education grant in order to give staff members the right to educate their children either at their duty station or in any other country where appropriate education was available. That alteration of the original purpose of the education grant had proved useful and the General Assembly had stood by it for decades. Introducing a reference to the "original purpose" of the education grant could only call into question a right long exercised by staff members and supported by the General Assembly.

6. The CHAIRMAN reiterated his appeal for the Committee to expedite a decision on the draft resolution.

7. Mr. FIGUEIRA (Brazil) said that his delegation shared most of the concerns and reservations raised by the representative of India. It supported fully India's position on paragraph 3 (b) of part III. With regard to paragraph 3 (a) of part I, he reiterated Brazil's position that a thorough review of the whole comparator system was needed in order to ensure that any decision taken by a Member State with regard to its own civil service did not directly or indirectly affect the functioning of the United Nations. Moreover, all delegations were aware of the huge difference between the consumer price index for Washington, D.C. and that for New York City, especially Manhattan. His delegation therefore supported the proposals made by India.

8. Mr. MILLER (United States of America) said that it was his delegation's understanding that the process of consultations on the draft resolution, a process in the course of which all participants had made concessions, was now over. He therefore questioned the appropriateness of the latest proposals to amend a consensus text, which seemed to render the consultation process superfluous.

9. Mrs. DEREGBUS (Argentina) said that her delegation shared the concerns expressed by India. The phrase "thus eliminating the rationale for a cost-of-living differential between Washington, D.C., and New York" in paragraph 3 (a) of part I prejudged the outcome of the proposed ICSC study and her delegation therefore favoured its deletion. It also supported the proposal to delete the phrase "in relation to the purpose for which it was originally approved" in paragraph 3 (b) of part III.

10. Mr. CHUA (Singapore), referring to paragraph 3 (a) of part I, said that it had been his understanding from the informal consultations that agreement had been reached on the possibility of calculating the margin as proposed.

11. Mr. KASTOFT (Denmark) said that, following further consultations, he wished to propose the deletion, in part I, paragraph 3 (a), of the words "thus eliminating the rationale for a cost-of-living differential between Washington, D.C. and New York". He trusted that the Committee would now be able to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

12. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution, as orally amended, without a vote.

13. It was so decided.

14. Mr. BARAC (Romania) said that his delegation had joined in the consensus but was not fully satisfied, since it did not accept the idea that the Secretariat should be better paid than the comparator civil service. Many staff members were nationals of countries in which salary levels were below those in the comparator civil service. Given the economic difficulties faced by Member States, the proposed margin of 115 was too high. His delegation trusted that the margin would, in fact, decline below that level in the long run.

15. Mr. GITSOV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation was concerned over the fact that ICSC had become a driving force in escalating personnel costs, as indicated by the General Assembly's decision, at the thirty-ninth session, to reject its recommendations on post adjustment. ICSC also bore responsibility for increased pensions, which exceeded those in the comparator civil service by more than 50 per cent. His Government was concerned over the rejection by ICSC of criticism from JIU and Member States. In that connection, ICSC had cited Romania as an example of how wrong Member States could be with respect to personnel issues. His Government's fears had not, however, been dispelled. For example, ICSC should rely on national data when compiling cost-of-living statistics rather than dispatching staff members on missions to collect such data. Further, ICSC, when considering leave entitlements, should note that all United Nations staff members, including United States nationals, received 10 days leave more than employees in the comparator civil service. Equally, a proper comparison should be made of sick leave in the United Nations and in the United States federal civil service.

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

Revised estimates under section 31 (Staff assessment) and income section 1 (Income from staff assessment)

16. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, in its report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987 (A/40/7), the Advisory Committee had recommended an appropriation of \$278,574,600 under section 31, on the basis of its recommendations with regard to the number and level of staff to be included in the budget for the biennium. During the first reading of the proposed programme budget, the Fifth Committee had taken decisions altering the Advisory Committee's recommendations. Those decisions were as follows: under section 2A, the Fifth Committee had decided to retain a P-5 post; under section 10, it had not approved the creation of a P-3

(The Chairman)

post; under section 18, it had approved the upgrading of a D-1 post to the D-2 level and the transfer of an extrabudgetary P-5 post to the regular budget; and under section 28C, it had decided to retain six posts. The Committee's decisions would require an increase of \$154,900 under section 31, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1. The total appropriation under section 31 would thus be \$278,729,500, and the total amount under income section 1 would have to be increased from \$282,423,300 to \$282,578,200.

17. Mr. MILLER (United States of America) observed that the staff assessment system created considerable confusion in the minds of members of the Committee who were not totally familiar with it. The United States had for a number of years been trying, unsuccessfully, to organize a tax reimbursement scheme with the United Nations in order to dispense with the need for a staff assessment system, since the latter system resulted in artificially inflated amounts for some countries, including his own. His delegation therefore requested a recorded vote on the revised estimates under section 31 and income section 1.

18. At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on the revised estimates under section 31.

In favour: Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burma, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Denmark, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire), Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Hungary, Mongolia, Romania, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: None.

19. An appropriation in the amount of \$278,729,500 under section 31 (comprising an amount of \$278,574,600 requested in the initial estimates and an additional amount of \$154,900 requested in the revised estimates) for the biennium 1986-1987 was approved by 73 votes to 12.

20. At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on the revised estimates under income section 1.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burma, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire), Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Hungary, Mongolia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: None.

21. An amount of \$282,578,200 (comprising an amount of \$282,423,300 requested in the initial estimates and an additional amount of \$154,900 requested in the revised estimates) under income section 1 for the biennium 1986-1987 was approved by 78 votes to 11.

AGENDA ITEM 115: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1984-1985

Standards of accommodation for air travel (A/40/830; A/C.5/40/22 and Corr.1)

22. Mr. RUEDAS (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/40/22 and Corr. 1) followed the reporting guidelines so strictly that some interesting information had not been provided. For example, during the reporting period the Secretary-General had undertaken travel in the Middle East on which savings had been effected by the use of non-commercial flights. Several portions of his journey had been made at no cost to the United Nations. The Secretary-General had returned to New York from London on the Concorde because he had had to report immediately to the Security Council. But the journey as a whole, reported in the document as resulting in a total additional cost of somewhat over \$4,000, could also be presented as representing savings for the United Nations. Such relevant facts would be included in future reports to ACABQ on the item.

23. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) said that her delegation continued to be concerned about exceptions granted by the Secretary-General for first-class travel and urged him to use maximum restraint in that regard. She requested the figures for total first-class travel expenditure, together with a list of those eligible for such travel and the guidelines for the use of the Concorde. Her delegation agreed with ACABQ that the practice of reporting hypothetical savings should be discontinued, but disagreed with the proposal contained in paragraph 3 of the report that annual reporting to the General Assembly should be discontinued. The item warranted an annual report, which should be expanded to provide the Fifth Committee with information on regular and exceptional first-class travel. Her delegation had submitted a draft decision on the subject, which would be circulated shortly.

24. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked the Under-Secretary-General which class of travel applied for journeys lasting more than nine hours at a stretch.

25. Mr. RUEDAS (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that he would endeavour to provide the representative of the United States with the information she had requested as soon as possible. The Concorde was not used for United Nations travel, the only exception being when the Secretary-General was in Europe and was required to be in New York on the same day.

26. In reply to the representative of Belgium, he said that Under-Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretaries-General travel first class on journeys lasting more than nine hours. Other staff were entitled to the next lower standard of accommodation. For home leave, regardless of the length of the journey, Under-Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretaries-General travelled business class and all other staff economy class. In addition, the United Nations provided one first-class ticket for delegations to the General Assembly and experts and the chairmen of intergovernmental committees travelled first class on their committees' business.

27. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) suggested that the Secretariat should consider business or equivalent class travel for everyone except the Secretary-General.

28. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) said that he was pleased that exceptions to the rule concerning first-class travel were declining. Application of the rule should be carefully monitored and account should be taken of changing conditions in air travel and changing practices in national administrations. He supported the suggestion made by the representative of Belgium.

29. Mr. RUEDAS (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that he had noted that delegations wished future reports to indicate the total cost of first-class travel. He added that the Secretariat was currently studying all aspects of travel, not just standards of accommodation but the conditions in which travel arrangements were made.

AGENDA ITEM 123: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 115: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1984-1985 (continued)

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

Job classification of the General Service and related categories in New York
(A/C.5/40/84 and Corr.1)

30. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that because of the late submission of the Secretary-General's report the Advisory Committee had not been able to examine it. It was therefore inaccurate to assume that the Advisory Committee had either rejected or accepted the results of the classification exercise.

31. The SECRETARY-GENERAL said that the job classification of the General Service and related categories in New York was a matter of great importance. He wished to emphasize three points in that connection.

32. Firstly, the General Assembly had given him specific authority for the employment conditions of the staff whose salary structures and job classifications were being considered. Their salaries were established on the basis of local salaries and he had a special responsibility for the matter.

33. Secondly, the salaries being discussed had been found to be appropriate by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) in 1984 and, although it was proposed that the classification should be effective retroactively from 1 January 1985, each staff member had occupied the post concerned from 1 January 1984. In such conditions retroactivity to 1 January 1985 was not an arbitrary matter, but one of strict justice. For that reason, all the staff concerned had been informed in October 1985 that the reclassification would be effective from 1 January 1985.

34. Thirdly, the United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF, which were not independent bodies but part of the Organization, had already implemented the reclassification of posts in their General Service and related categories. He believed that the Committee would agree with him that it would constitute discrimination that would be impossible to justify if thousands of United Nations staff were not given equal treatment.

35. He acknowledged that the report on the item (A/C.5/40/84 and Corr.1) had been submitted unacceptably late and understood the Advisory Committee's reluctance to consider it. However, that delay should not entail the non-implementation of strictly just measures affecting thousands of staff members.

36. After two years' work more than 3,000 posts had been classified - almost all posts in the General Service and related categories. It had been a difficult task and one not exempt from human errors that must and should be corrected. It was now important to recognize, as of 1 January 1985, the situation in which those staff members had been since well before that date and to faithfully implement the commitments undertaken. He hoped the Fifth Committee would reach the same conclusion.

37. Mr. NEGRE (Assistant-Secretary-General for Personnel Services) said that the purpose of the report was to inform the Committee of the results of the job classification exercise and the modalities for retroactive implementation, effective 1 January 1985, and to request the Committee to approve the changes in the staffing tables required to implement fully the results of the exercise. Those modifications were the conversion of 11 General Service posts in the proposed programme budget for 1986-1987 to the Professional category, to be offset by a decrease of 11 General Service posts; and the designation of the highest grade in the General Service category as the Principal level.

38. The results of the exercise had been approved by the Secretary-General and had been announced in an information circular in October 1985. It was the end of a long pilgrimage: the need to restructure the salary scales and grading patterns for the General Service and other locally-recruited staff in New York had been noted on numerous occasions over the previous 25 years. It was felt, in particular, that the five-level structure of the General Service category in New York was inadequate as it neither distinguished sufficiently between different levels of responsibility nor offered any effective career for General Service staff.

39. Standards for the exercise had been carefully developed and had involved discussions between the ICSC secretariat, the staff and the administrations of the United Nations, UNDP and UNICEF. They had been approved by ICSC itself. In early 1983 staff members in the categories concerned had been requested to prepare job descriptions, which had then been reviewed by two trained classification officers, on behalf of the Office of Personnel Services. A Classification Review Group had been set up in April 1984, on the recommendation of the Joint Advisory Committee, with representatives of the staff and of the various administrative services. The Group's terms of reference were to examine and interpret the application of the classification standards to each occupational group; to review the preliminary analysis of the post descriptions and the tentative classification made by the Classification Section in order to arrive at a final determination of the grade level of each post in the General Service and related categories, and to submit its conclusions to the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services for approval; and, lastly, to make recommendations regarding criteria for and the level of recruitment for each occupational group.

40. The Group had reviewed jobs together under the occupations to which they had been assigned by the classification officers. The findings of the Group's review had been submitted to him in August 1985 for approval in accordance with their terms of reference and he had been able to accept many of them immediately. In arriving at his conclusions, he had taken into account the long-term interest of the Organization; staff/management aspects of the matter; and the need to ensure a viable distribution by grade and to take full advantage of the new seven-level salary structure in the organization of staff careers.

41. He had then recommended to the Secretary-General that the Group's findings should be accepted for all but 300 posts. What had been of concern to him had been consistency in the classification of those posts with the standards promulgated by ICSC and the benchmark posts used in the salary survey. The Secretary-General had

(Mr. Negre)

asked that those 300 posts should be further examined by the Joint Advisory Committee. That Committee had endorsed the Working Group's findings, with modifications relating to the occupations of conference typists and messengers. Those categories included many staff who were doing virtually the same jobs as those described in standard job descriptions. It had been concluded that it was necessary to set numerical limits to the number of posts that could be covered by job descriptions at each level in those occupations. Finally, 44 per cent of posts had been graded at the same numerical level as the incumbent, 11 per cent had been graded at a lower level and 45 per cent at a higher level than that held by the incumbent. Those somewhat clumsy expressions revealed the lack of immediate relationship between a five-level system based to some extent on a "rank-in-person" approach and a seven-level system based on a "rank-in-post" approach. From now on the job itself would be evaluated, not the incumbent: a major personnel reform that had been sought for a long time.

42. Another significant change, to be introduced concurrently with the implementation of the classification exercise, and one which had been a prime consideration of both staff and administration, could be the implementation of a career development plan along the occupational lines defined by the exercise. Promotion and staff movements would henceforth be effected by occupation. Vacancies would be announced throughout Headquarters and all qualified staff members would be considered. That system would allow staff members to be aware of the career possibilities in their own occupations and the training required to move to another occupation.

43. The representatives of Ghana and India had asked about the present status of the exercise. It was for all intents and purposes complete. However, classification would continue to be used to assess posts whenever changes in assignments were made.

44. The Chairman of ICSC had mentioned his concern regarding the application of the new seven-grade General Service salary scale over the existing five-level structure, which he (the Chairman) considered to be technically inappropriate. There was no correlation between the grading of posts in the two scales. However, an issue at stake was the numerical grade level of the incumbent in a five-level structure compared to the numerical grade level of the classified post in the approved seven-level structure. In that regard, the Secretary-General had assured staff that in the transition between the two systems, they would not individually be adversely affected by the results of the exercise and would retain their present numerical grade and step if their post was classified at a level numerically lower than their own. That had happened in 11 per cent of the cases, involving, as the Chairman of ICSC had indicated, additional costs of some \$1.5 million in 1984-1985.

45. The Chairman of ICSC had suggested that staff members receiving remuneration that exceeded the value of their job content should have retained their salary when the new scale had been implemented with effect from February 1984, but instead the Secretary-General had decided to implement the scale on the basis of each staff member's grade under the existing structure at that date. It should be noted that

(Mr. Negre)

the results of the exercise had not been known at the time and that it had not been possible to implement the suggestion made by the Chairman of ICSC. If those results had been known, however, the classification exercise would have been implemented concurrently with the new scale in February 1984 at an additional cost of some \$1.3 million for 1984. The so-called "overpayment" described by the Chairman of ICSC amounted to some \$600,000 for 1984, so that the implementing of the new scale and of the classification exercise would not have resulted in savings but rather in additional costs of \$700,000.

46. More than 3,000 posts had been classified, and any mistakes would be corrected. Although there was an initial cost, in the long run the new structure would be to the administrative and financial benefit of the Organization. Staff members would be doing jobs for which they were correctly remunerated and would be motivated to take on greater responsibilities in higher-level posts. He urged the Committee not to postpone action on the exercise, since that would set matters back a full year and would be unfair to a significant number of staff members.

47. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the Fifth Committee could not take such a major decision without a report by the Advisory Committee, which could, perhaps, be prepared by the following week so that a decision could be taken at the current session.

48. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had already twice decided that it could not submit a meaningful report at the current session. The matter rested with the Fifth Committee.

49. Mr. LOZA (Egypt) said that delegations were being placed in an impossible position. The Secretary-General's report had been issued one week before the end of the session, and the Advisory Committee was unable to present a report. Consideration of the matter should be postponed.

50. Mr. MURRAY (Trinidad and Tobago) asked whether, if the Committee took a decision at the current session, the classification exercise would still be implemented with effect from January 1985, and whether, if consideration of the matter was deferred until the forty-first session, that would allow sufficient time to correct the errors which had been identified.

51. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) said that the Chairman of ICSC had noted the technical inappropriateness of a partial application of the new seven-grade salary scale to the existing five-grade structure and the doubts over the technical consistency of the reclassifications with the standards promulgated by ICSC. Moreover, classification officers within the United Nations had disagreed with the staff-management Classification Review Group, in view of which his delegation was concerned over the objectivity of the classification exercise and the final recommendations. In addition, the Secretary-General's report raised a number of technical, financial and substantive questions.

(Mr. Murray, United Kingdom)

52. Adoption of the proposals would involve a grade change for more than half of the General Service staff and significant additions to the budget. His Delegation had reservations about the practical aspects of the proposed changes. In the absence of any unequivocal endorsement of the proposals from ICSC or ACABQ, the Committee should defer action until it could give the matter due attention.

53. Mr. DITZ (Austria) asked whether the Advisory Committee had submitted reports to the governing bodies of UNICEF and UNDP before classification exercises had been implemented in those organizations, and what the full consequences would be if the Fifth Committee deferred a decision.

54. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had submitted reports to the legislative bodies of UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR and UNDP before any decisions on reclassifications had been taken.

55. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that Committee needed more time to consider the question. Any decision it took must correct the errors identified in the exercise and take account of the commitments made by the Secretary-General.

56. Mr. SEFIANI (Morocco) said that the essential objective was to achieve justice for all concerned. It would not be reasonable for the Committee to take a decision without a report by ACABQ, which could clearly not submit one by the following week. If justice was to be done, a decision could not be taken lightly. More time was required.

57. Mr. KHALEVINSKIY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation shared the concerns expressed in the Committee, and agreed with the United Kingdom delegation that the question required careful consideration. More complete information was required, and in that connection, his delegation would welcome statistical data relating to the first stage of the classification exercise, including details of how many posts had been upgraded, how many downgraded and how many had remained at the same level.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.