



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 69th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KOBINA SEKYI (Ghana)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C.5/33/L.46)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Fifth Committee's attention to document A/C.5/33/L.46 containing a tentative daily programme of work and a list of relevant documents for the resumed session. The Committee should attempt to adhere to the programme as far as the availability of documents permitted.
2. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that although the tentative programme was perhaps over-optimistic, every effort should be made to expedite the work of the Committee.
3. Noting that the Committee was scheduled to take up consideration of the first performance report (A/C.5/33/25/Rev.1) at its following meeting, he said that it should have a clear picture of possible increases in the programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979. For that purpose, the Secretariat should prepare a table, similar to one recently issued by WHO, giving precise figures for the appropriations approved for the biennium 1976-1977 at the beginning of the biennium and after consideration of the performance reports and equally detailed figures for appropriations approved at the beginning of the biennium 1978-1979, as well as the total appropriation for that biennium to be approved before the end of the session.
4. The CHAIRMAN said that, if the Committee so wished, a document of the kind suggested by the representative of Belgium could be issued as a conference room paper. However, since the Committee was attempting to complete its work as soon as possible, it was important that requests for documents should be kept to a minimum.
5. Mr. OREBI (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) pointed out that there was no reference in the tentative daily programme of work to document A/C.5/33/94 on revised estimates under section 5C.
6. The CHAIRMAN said that the document was listed in the annex to document A/C.5/33/L.46, and that the relevant correction would be made in the tentative daily programme of work.
7. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted its programme of work contained in document A/C.5/33/L.46, on the understanding that the relevant correction would be made.
8. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 100: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1978-1979 (continued)

Revised estimates under section 2C, Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, arising from resolutions 418 (1977) and 421 (1977) of the Security Council (A/33/7/Add.22; A/C.5/33/61)

9. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that after the Committee established by Security Council resolution 421 (1977) had been set up, the Secretary-General had used the authority granted to him under General Assembly resolution 32/214 to recruit five temporary-assistance staff to service the Committee in 1978. The Secretary-General was now proposing that those temporary-assistance posts should be established on a permanent basis as of 1 January 1979.

10. The Advisory Committee had adopted a slightly conservative approach to the Secretary-General's request. It had been informed that the Security Council Committee had held five meetings in 1978, and that its 1979 schedule provided for one meeting every other week. The Advisory Committee felt that it was too early to say whether that schedule would be followed. It was therefore recommending that the level of staffing utilized for 1978 should be continued for 1979 on a temporary-assistance basis and that requirements for established posts should be examined in the context of the Secretary-General's 1980-1981 programme budget proposals. That recommendation would not affect the amount of additional appropriations requested by the Secretary-General in paragraph 9 of his report (A/C.5/33/61).

11. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that an examination of the annex to document A/C.5/33/61 raised a serious question concerning the under-utilization of staff. It appeared to his delegation that the D-1 post and the P-5 post described in the sections (a) and (b) of the annex could have been combined into one post. It was the Senior Officer who was doing the substantive work of the Committee established by Security Council resolution 421 (1977). His delegation would like to know whether the services of the second Senior Officer referred to in section (c) of the annex were being fully utilized. That staff member did not appear to have sufficient work to occupy him throughout the year.

12. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) said that his delegation shared the scepticism of the Advisory Committee concerning the advisability of establishing the posts on a permanent basis. It also shared the scepticism of the representative of Pakistan. The Department of Political and Security Council Affairs had sufficient staff to carry out the responsibilities assigned to it and should absorb the costs of the activities in question.

13. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that judgement should be reserved until the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, by which time it should be easier to assess permanent staffing requirements in relation to workload.

14. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had welcomed the Security Council decision to establish the Committee and was

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(Mr. Palamarchuk, USSR)

sympathetic to the Advisory Committee's recommendation. At the same time, his delegation regretted that the Secretary-General was requesting additional appropriations, since the costs involved could be met from the existing appropriations.

15. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services, Controller) said that the representative of Pakistan had made valid observations concerning the job descriptions in the annex to document A/C.5/33/61. The format and language of the job descriptions were such that they could give the impression that there was overlapping of duties. He could assure the Committee, however, that the situation had been studied very carefully to determine whether all the posts in question were needed. The conclusion had been reached that in view of the importance of the work of the Committee established by Security Council resolution 421 (1977) and the diversity of tasks involved, the level of staffing was justified.

16. An additional appropriation in the amount of \$142,500 under section 2C of the programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979 and \$55,800 under section 25, offset by a corresponding increase under income section 1, was approved by 76 votes to 1.

Revised estimates under section 13B, Habitat - Human settlements (A/33/7/Add.23; A/C.5/33/63 and Add.1)

Transfer of posts and activities to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (A/33/7/Add.23; A/C.5/33/29)

17. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in document A/C.5/33/29 the Secretary-General was responding to the request made by the Fifth Committee at the thirty-second session that he should explain why the number of posts then considered available for transfer to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) was 43 posts fewer than the total contemplated one year earlier. The Secretary-General had gone into some detail to explain the missing 43 posts but the Advisory Committee was not making any recommendation in that regard. Its report (A/33/7/Add.23) therefore dealt almost entirely with the Secretary-General's report on the revised estimates under section 13B (A/C.5/33/63 and Add.1).

18. Under section 13B, the Secretary-General was requesting additional staff resources totalling 17 Professional posts, 3 principal-level General Service posts and 16 local-level posts. The Secretary-General was proposing that for 1979 the new posts should be approved on a temporary-assistance basis, on the understanding that he would request their conversion to established posts in the context of his programme budget proposals for 1980-1981. The Advisory Committee reserved its position on the question of such conversion until it considered the Secretary-General's related programme budget proposals.

19. The Advisory Committee recommended that all the posts requested for the Planning, Evaluation and Projections Unit in paragraphs 8 and 9 of document A/C.5/33/63 be approved, except for one P-5 post and one principal-level General Service post.

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(Mr. Mselle)

20. In paragraphs 10 to 14 of its report, the Advisory Committee dealt with the proposed New York liaison office of the Habitat Centre. The Advisory Committee had already made certain observations in document A/32/315 on the general question of liaison offices. In connexion with the present request the Advisory Committee recommended that the staff in the New York liaison office of the Centre should be funded at the present stage from a lump-sum provision sufficient to cover the salaries and common staff costs of one Professional and one General Service staff member, and that the Secretary-General should review his requirements and should submit the conclusions resulting from the review to the General Assembly in the context of the programme budget for 1980-1981.

21. In paragraph 19 of document A/C.5/33/63, the Secretary-General requested a total of 22 posts for administration and common services. The Advisory Committee saw some merit in the Secretary-General's request and was prepared to recommend approval, with the exception of one P-3 post for procurement and contractual services. The Advisory Committee considered that the available staff resources should be adequate.

22. The Secretary-General would be including requests for some additional posts in the regional units in his programme budget proposals for 1980-1981. The Advisory Committee would consider any such requests in the context of those programme budget proposals.

23. He had been unable to ascertain from the consolidated statement of administrative and financial implications in respect of conference servicing costs (A/C.5/33/100) whether the Secretary-General was making a proposal in connexion with the holding of the second session of the Commission on Human Settlements. If the Secretary-General was making no such proposal, conference servicing costs in connexion with the session could be absorbed within available resources.

24. In paragraph 24 of document A/C.5/33/63, the Secretary-General dealt with the question of the deduction for delayed recruitment. The Advisory Committee believed that it was most unlikely that posts approved by the General Assembly in January 1979 could all be filled immediately and therefore recommended that an additional 10 per cent delayed-recruitment deduction be applied to the cost of all the new temporary-assistance posts.

25. The Secretary-General estimated at \$72,600 the common services costs related to the requested posts, including \$5,400 for rental and maintenance of premises for the New York liaison office. The Advisory Committee was of the opinion that that amount could be absorbed within available resources in view of the number of units proposed for transfer from New York to Vienna and Nairobi.

26. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada) noted that three of the functions of the new Centre for Human Settlements had been directly carried over from the former Centre for Housing, Building and Planning (CHBP), and the number of regular-budget posts devoted to those functions would not be increased. Resolution 32/162 called for the consolidation in the new Centre of further functions, in addition to those carried out by CHBP, and the transfer of the related posts and resources. But

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(Mr. Pedersen, Canada)

instead of transferring 13 Professional and 9 General Service posts from ESA and OTC to carry out the latter functions, the Secretary-General proposed to create 8 new Professional and 6 new General Service posts, thus providing the Centre with fewer resources than had previously been determined. Even counting the one Professional and two General Service posts already given to the Office of the Executive Director, the Centre would have five fewer posts (four Professional and one General Service) than had been deemed necessary.

27. In his delegation's view, the staffing resources requested by the Secretary-General were reasonable. However, since the establishment of the Habitat Centre secretariat could be expected to continue for some time, and the requirements of the liaison office would not become clear until later in the year, it could accept ACABQ's recommendation, given that requirements could be re-examined in the context of the budget for the biennium 1980-1981. His delegation therefore urged the Habitat Centre secretariat to advance its programme in order to provide an accurate picture of its resource requirements.

28. His delegation seriously questioned the reasons advanced for the Secretary-General's failure to transfer existing posts from UNEP, the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (IESA) and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTC) to the Habitat Centre. It believed that the failure was the result of thwarted attempts at "empire-building" within the Secretariat and the unwillingness of staff to transfer to Nairobi. As a result, Member States were faced with significant additional appropriations.

29. If the new Centre was to be effective, it must be able to redeploy resources to the regional commissions in order to enable them to carry out their human settlements activities. No additional posts were requested under the current budget for that purpose, but he hoped that the request to be included in the budget proposals for 1980-1981 would be granted.

30. It was also essential to ensure that the Habitat Centre secretariat would have adequate provision for overhead costs and separate services, and the recommendation by ACABQ in that regard was reasonable. There would be an opportunity to review the matter the following year, since the posts were being requested on a temporary-assistance basis. The granting of those posts on a temporary basis was without prejudice to the possible establishment of a common administrative service to serve all elements of the United Nations system in Nairobi.

31. The Secretary-General's proposal did not comply with the letter or the spirit of the resolution establishing the Centre for Human Settlements, neither did it satisfy the minimum resource requirements outlined in 1976. The proposal, with the reductions recommended by ACABQ, represented a bare minimum of start-up resources if the Centre was to get off the ground. If the secretariat of the Centre made reasonable progress, his delegation would expect the temporary posts to become permanent the following year. His delegation therefore wished to examine the Centre's resource requirements carefully at the thirty-fourth session, and recommended that the Secretary-General should think again about making available some of the posts promised from existing resources, so that savings could be made during a period of mounting financial difficulty for both the United Nations and Member States.

32. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said his delegation found the reasons advanced in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/33/29) for his inability to transfer posts, notably from UNEP and IESA, to the new Centre to be unconvincing and unsatisfactory. It was consoled, however, by the statement in paragraph 6 of the report that the number of overhead posts available for transfer from DTC might be increased. It seemed probable that the original estimates for posts available for transfer to the new Centre had been inflated when it had appeared possible that the new Centre might come under the control of one or another department, and had subsequently been reduced when it had become clear that that was not to be the case.

33. With regard to the establishment of a common administrative and servicing unit for the United Nations organizations in Nairobi, he noted with some disquiet that the Secretary-General had made no commitment to merge the separate administrative establishments of UNEP and the Centre after the four-year transfer period, but spoke merely (A/C.5/33/63, para. 17) of the "possibility" of a common services unit. His delegation would have preferred a rather more specific undertaking in that regard. Nevertheless, it would accept the Secretary-General's proposals, as modified by ACABQ, although it found them rather on the generous side.

34. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that his delegation found the explanations of the Secretary-General regarding the disappearance of 43 posts originally promised for the new Centre disappointing and unacceptable. It was forced to conclude that some members of the Secretariat had their own preferences concerning the countries or regions in which international organizations should be established. Evidently it had been hoped that the Centre would be located in New York or Geneva - not in Kenya or a similarly "remote" developing country - for it was after the decision to set up the Centre in Nairobi that the posts had disappeared, causing acute embarrassment to Kenya. There had been sound political reasons behind the choice of Nairobi as the headquarters city. When Member States decided to establish a body in a developing country, that decision should be respected.

35. As previously pointed out, the Executive Director had been given increased responsibilities without increased resources. Originally he was to have had 43 posts; now he was asking for 17, and ACABQ had recommended a reduction even in that number. His delegation disagreed with ACABQ because it wanted the Centre to be truly effective and to live up to the expectations of Member States.

36. His delegation would continue to watch the situation closely. If necessary, it would call for data on the nationalities of the persons occupying the posts that were not being transferred.

37. Mr. IYER (India) said it was clear that the Secretariat's change of heart regarding the 43 posts for the new Centre had come with the decision to change the location of the Centre. Such cases had occurred before; unfortunately, all the Fifth Committee did or had ever done was deplore such situations. He wondered whether it was within the powers of ACABQ to dig deeper into the reasons why the Secretariat had failed to live up to its promises made at the thirty-first session. A certain amount of rearrangement and redistribution of work to free staff for other duties should be possible within any organization; if the Secretariat was no longer capable of such a redistribution of functions, it was becoming far too specialized.

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(Mr. Iyer, India)

38. The Canadian representative had been right to point out that the Centre was apparently intended to fulfil more functions than had been originally planned, but with considerably fewer resources and personnel. In the circumstances, arguments for a further reduction in the Secretary-General's proposals were very thin indeed, and militated against the long-term trend being established by the Assembly, namely to give more emphasis to regional commissions and bodies away from Headquarters.

39. The number of posts actually to be allocated to the Centre was obviously not commensurate with the work to be done. It could not be argued that the Centre was still preoccupied with the transfer from Headquarters to Nairobi, for the Secretariat had given assurances that the transfer of staff would be completed by March 1979. The resource requirements of the Centre had been discussed within CPC only in very tentative terms, on the understanding that detailed information on the Centre's requirements would be presented in 1979. Any further delays in making specific budgetary provision would compound the difficulties faced by the Centre, which would in effect have two sets of contradictory instructions: to press ahead with its programmes, but also to wait for resources to be allocated.

40. Accordingly, his delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposals concerning the staff resources to be allocated to the Centre, which would at least allow the Centre to pursue its work at a minimum level.

41. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) observed that the implication of paragraph 5 of the report of ACABQ (A/33/7/Add.23) was that while the debate on the missing 43 posts continued the Centre had, in fact, lost a further 62 posts. The Secretary-General's request for support staff set out in document A/C.5/33/63, paragraph 13, was based on the assumption that 168 posts would be available. If that figure was to be reduced by 62, his delegation questioned whether a support staff of the level projected would really be necessary.

42. His delegation acknowledged that the Habitat Centre and the UNEP headquarters would be physically separated by some 10 kilometres. There existed, however, means of communication over short distances; and, judging by the information provided in A/C.5/33/63, annex I, the services to be provided for the Centre were fairly standard. His delegation felt that more effort could be made to absorb within staff resources already available at UNEP a large part of the functions for which the new posts were requested. Not only would there be savings in administrative expenses, but existing staff would also get into the habit of dealing with both organizations immediately, rather than after the four-year transitional period when bureaucratic resistance to the establishment of a common system in Nairobi would have become entrenched. In that connexion, he pointed out that the phrase "without prejudice to" was used to cover a multitude of intentions and lapses. Even if the Assembly established a separate administrative system for the Centre "without prejudice" to the possibility of introducing a common system in Nairobi at a later stage, there would be little that the Fifth Committee could do in four or five years to try and introduce such a common system in the face of the objections which the Secretariat might then put forward.



43. Ms. NOSSBERG (Sweden) said that it was with some reluctance that her delegation associated itself with the decision to be taken by the Committee with regard to the transfer of posts and activities to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements. In the light of the changed prerequisites forming the basis for the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in document A/33/7/Add.23 her delegation had no further difficulties in accepting the recommendations of the ACABQ, although it regarded them as minimal. Her delegation, however, still questioned the very prerequisites of those recommendations, and did not think that the Committee had received a completely acceptable explanation with regard to "the missing posts". Of 211 posts the 43 originally to be made available in 1976 still had not been made available. Instead, new posts were being requested by the Secretary-General. Her delegation also wished an explanation with regard to the 85 extrabudgetary posts belonging to the United Nations Habitat and Settlements Foundation which were included in the 168 posts that, as was shown in document A/C.5/33/29, were available for transfer. ACABQ in its report, A/33/7/Add.23, pointed out that, out of a total of 85 posts originally approved for the Foundation by the Governing Council of UNEP, the actual staffing resources currently available to the Foundation amounted to 23 posts. That meant that another 62 posts needed by the Centre had disappeared and that the 168 posts available for transfer to the Centre were reduced to 106. Since the posts currently being requested by the Secretary-General were on a temporary-assistance basis, there would be an opportunity to review the whole matter in the context of the programme budget for 1980-1981. When the question of staff and financing requirements was considered at the second session of the Commission on Human Settlements in March, her delegation sincerely hoped that it would be thoroughly debated.

44. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General must explain why the 211 posts originally required by the Centre were no longer being requested. The explanations given in document A/C.5/33/29 were clearly unacceptable and were a gross breach of the trust which the Committee placed in the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General should not make an assumption and then later on say that his assumption was wrong. If that practice continued, there would be a serious crisis of confidence between the Fifth Committee and the Secretary-General.

45. Mr. DEBATHI (Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services, Controller) said that he would prepare an extensive explanation of all aspects of the matter. With regard to conference services, the conclusion of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that the costs would be absorbed was correct. With regard to the "disappearance" of 43 posts, a certain estimate had been given following the Vancouver Conference, but there had never been any binding commitment in the sense perceived by some delegations. However, if one started from the assumption that the 43 posts should have been transferred to the Centre, it was necessary to recall General Assembly resolution 32/162, in accordance with which 27 posts out of the 43 mentioned would remain with the regional commissions. That was a decision of the General Assembly and had nothing whatsoever to do with any reluctance or resistance on the part of the Secretariat. With regard to the remaining posts, two posts from the UNEP offices in Nairobi itself had been found not to be available for transfer, given the responsibilities that UNEP was required to discharge. As to the former Office for Technical Co-operation the problem was more general. The post

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(Mr. Debatin)

structure had had to be reshuffled in order to ensure that posts relating to regular budget activities were established posts and that those providing services for technical co-operation activities would be financed, in so far as possible, by extrabudgetary funds. That policy had been endorsed by the Fifth Committee. Accordingly, the original idea of transferring regular-budget posts from the former Office for Technical Co-operation to Nairobi had not remained appropriate. Instead, eight posts financed by extrabudgetary funds would be transferred. Therefore, in the balance there was only a shortfall of two posts. The Secretary-General indicated in his report that, depending on further developments with regard to programme delivery, he would be able to add further staff resources to those activities financed from extrabudgetary funds, if the need arose. That was not a rejection but a constructive decision designed to ensure sufficient staffing for the Centre.

46. With regard to the 12 remaining posts for the former Department of Economic and Social Affairs, he recalled that all posts belonging to the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning had been transferred. The question related to posts which were partly and indirectly involved in human settlements activities on a part-time basis. Careful analysis had revealed that the original estimate in that respect had not been justified. He apologized for the short-comings in the wording of the report which might have misled certain delegations. Those calculations were the result of a very careful examination of all offices concerned. He assured the Committee that the idea of serving in Nairobi was not being rejected and promised to conduct a second examination of the question if there were requests to do so.

47. He was fully aware that the arrangements for a separate servicing unit for the Centre were not very satisfactory and agreed with the statement made by the representative of the United States with regard to the possibility of entrenched resistance to future change. That course of action had been followed in view of the physical location of the unit and since the Centre needed to be effectively staffed to function properly. Those considerations outweighed the concern that future administrative improvements might be blocked. He assured the Committee that he was aware of that situation and that there would be no waste of resources caused by the separate administrative services. Nothing would be done which could not be changed at a later date. Special efforts would be made to ensure that the Centre was provided with the necessary resources to function properly.

48. Finally, he informed the Committee that, contrary to earlier expectations, the Foundation did not have available sufficient resources and could not at the present stage offer the degree of assistance anticipated.

49. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Controller intended to give further explanations in view of the dissatisfaction expressed with document A/C.5/33/29.

50. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services, Controller) confirmed that understanding.

United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (A/C.3/7/Add.24; A/C.5/33/34)

51. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of ACABQ in document A/33/7/Add.24, said that the Advisory Committee had considered the note by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/33/34 and had exchanged views with the representatives of the Secretary-General from the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs on that matter. He then briefly summarized the contents of paragraphs 4 to 9.

52. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) said that his delegation had paid particular attention to paragraphs 5 and 6 of the report of the Advisory Committee regarding the question of autonomy. With regard to the statement in paragraph 6 that "the extent of the Secretary-General's authority over the Institute is a matter for the Secretary-General himself to decide, as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization", it was the understanding of his delegation that the Secretary-General was not completely at liberty to make a grant of autonomy to that or any other subsidiary organ of the United Nations without considering the interests of the General Assembly and the spirit of the Charter; the grant of autonomy could be made only within definite limits, which, though not specifically defined in the document, were none the less understood. He requested the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to confirm that that interpretation was correct.

53. The CHAIRMAN also requested the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to clarify what status the phrase "an autonomous body under the auspices of the United Nations" in paragraph 3 of the report of the Secretary-General conferred on the Institute. It was not clear what the authors of that document meant by the use of the word "autonomous".

54. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that it would be more appropriate for the representatives of the Secretary-General to answer those questions. The Advisory Committee had discussed the question of autonomy with representatives of the Secretary-General and was satisfied that the approach adopted by the Secretary-General was appropriate under the circumstances. No explicit directive regarding the limits of autonomy to be granted to the Institute had been made by an intergovernmental body. Therefore, that word must be interpreted within the context of the concept that the Institute was a subsidiary organ of the United Nations and that the Secretary-General, as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization under the Charter, had responsibility over the Institute. The Advisory Committee therefore saw no reason to disagree with the Secretary-General's view that "the Institute will enjoy the degree of autonomy granted to it by the Secretary-General necessary to ensure its efficient operation" (A/33/7/Add.24, para. 6).

55. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services, Controller) confirmed the statement made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. The Institute was a subsidiary organ of the United Nations under the terms of article 7, paragraph 2, of the Charter. In that context he referred to paragraph 10 of the report of the Secretary-General on the International Research

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(Mr. Debatin)

and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women in document A/33/316: "The Institute, a body of the United Nations, shall be financed through voluntary contributions to a United Nations trust fund. It will enjoy the degree of autonomy granted to it by the Secretary-General necessary to ensure its efficient operation, taking into account the fact that it will be working in close collaboration and co-ordination with institutes within and outside the United Nations system." Therefore the Secretary-General, while granting a degree of autonomy, could not go beyond what was necessary to ensure its efficient operation. Furthermore it was necessary to take into account the fact that the Institute would be working in close collaboration and co-ordination with institutes within and outside the United Nations system. The Secretary-General could not grant a form of autonomy which would separate the Institute from the framework of the United Nations. The Institute was an organ of the United Nations system as provided for in the Charter and only a certain degree of autonomy could be granted to ensure its proper functioning with regard to the tasks and goals assigned to it.

56. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it (1) take note of the contents of document A/C.5/33/34 presented by the Secretary-General with regard to the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the report of the Advisory Committee thereon in document A/33/7/Add.24; and (2) concur with the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee contained in its report.

57. It was so decided.

Services provided by the United Nations to activities financed from extrabudgetary resources (continued) (A/C.5/31/33 and Corr.1; A/C.5/32/29)

Technical co-operation support costs: redistribution of regular budget and reimbursement resources (A/33/7/Add.25; A/C.5/33/56 and Corr.1)

Agency support costs (A/33/7/Add.21)

58. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that at the thirty-second session he had introduced the Advisory Committee's report (A/32/7/Add.9) analysing the Secretary-General's report on services provided by the United Nations to activities financed from extrabudgetary resources in document A/C.5/32/29. The Fifth Committee had not concluded its consideration of those reports at that session. Because of the restructuring exercise, the Secretary-General had decided to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session a report on redistribution of regular budget and reimbursement resources. That report was contained in document A/C.5/33/56 and Corr.1. The Secretary-General had informed the Advisory Committee of his intention to submit a further detailed report on the question to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session. The Fifth Committee should, therefore, bear that fact in mind when taking a decision on the Secretary-General's report at the current session. The Advisory Committee concurred, on the whole, with the Secretary-General's proposals in document A/C.5/33/56, and, as indicated in paragraph 6 of its related report (A/33/7/Add.25), would revert to the matter when

it examined the whole question of extrabudgetary posts in the context of its review of the Secretary-General's programme budget proposals for the biennium 1980-1981.

59. As he had indicated earlier in the session, the Advisory Committee had decided to submit a separate report on the question of agency support costs, since that question had a bearing on the question of services provided by the United Nations to activities financed from extrabudgetary resources. The reason for that decision was that both the General Assembly and the Intergovernmental Working Group established by the UNDP Governing Council were dealing with the question of support costs and there was, therefore, a possibility that the two bodies might issue conflicting recommendations on the matter. It would be recalled that the Secretary-General's reports on services provided by the United Nations to activities funded from extrabudgetary resources touched also on the question of agency support costs. The UNDP Intergovernmental Working Group on Support Costs had sought the views of the secretariats of the organizations of the United Nations system, JIU and the Advisory Committee, and was scheduled to meet shortly to consider a report on the question prepared by the Administrator of UNDP (DP/WGOC/25). The Advisory Committee's views were contained in document A/33/7/Add.21, which had been prepared following extensive discussions with representatives of the specialized agencies and on the basis of the consideration of relevant documentation on the matter, including document DP/WGOC/25. The Fifth Committee might wish to refer the Advisory Committee's report, together with its own comments thereon, to the UNDP Governing Council so that the views of the General Assembly could be taken into account when the Governing Council took a final decision on the question of support costs on the basis of the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Working Group.

60. In his opinion, a pragmatic reimbursement formula had to be decided on the basis of political rather than technical considerations. The current 14-per-cent formula represented a political compromise arrived at by Member States. If that compromise was to be altered, Member States had to agree on such a change.

61. As indicated in paragraph 17 of its report, the Advisory Committee did not view the UNDP Administrator's proposals in document DP/WGOC/25 as presenting significant advantages on technical grounds over the current approach of a uniform reimbursement formula. If, however, Member States decided that the current formula should be changed, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Administrator's proposals should be adjusted in order to take full account of the observations expressed in its report (A/33/7/Add.21).

62. Mr. SADDLER (United States of America) said that his delegation, like the Advisory Committee, could accept the Secretary-General's proposal for an exchange of 19 posts between the Office of Financial Services (OFS) and the Office of General Services (OGS), on the one hand, and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (TCD), on the other. He noted, however, that the 19 posts in OFS and OGS were currently financed from reimbursement resources and had not been reviewed by the General Assembly, whereas the 19 posts in TCD had been subjected to appropriate intergovernmental review. It had not been ascertained whether the posts financed

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(Mr. Saddler, United States)

from reimbursement resources were actually needed or whether they were appropriately graded since all decisions relating to the posts in question had been taken by the Secretariat alone. In the view of his delegation, such a practice was neither reasonable nor proper. While there was no evidence that such would be the case, it was possible that the proposed exchange of posts might serve to compensate for decisions or actions of doubtful validity. His delegation therefore urged the Controller to proceed with caution in exchanging posts that had been properly approved and duly authorized by Governments for posts that had been otherwise created. The Secretary-General's proposal had no financial implications for the regular budget at the current time and might therefore be appealing to some delegations. However, future exchanges of posts might have additional financial implications and his delegation intended to follow the situation with keen interest.

63. With regard to services provided in support of the administrative structure of extrabudgetary activities, his delegation was under the impression that all services provided by the United Nations to UNDP and UNICEF, the major extrabudgetary bodies involved, were being charged to those organizations, with the exception of conference servicing. Conference servicing should be provided to the UNDP Governing Council and the UNICEF Executive Board since it would not be economical for those bodies to attempt to duplicate the existing United Nations conference servicing facilities. Nor should the United Nations seek reimbursement for the conference services it provided to them. In the view of his delegation, support for technical co-operation programmes and substantive activities financed from extrabudgetary resources should be deferred until the UNDP Governing Council dealt with the matter. His delegation noted that the Advisory Committee's view, as set out in paragraph 17 of document A/33/7/Add.21, was further evidence of the need to return to the matter only after the UNDP Intergovernmental Working Group had dealt with the question of support costs in detail.

64. The United Nations, UNDP and UNICEF had made considerable progress in rationalizing the basis for reimbursement for administrative services. It was to be hoped that the United Nations would also move rapidly to reimburse UNDP for the services it received from UNDP field offices. The United Nations should not expect reimbursement for services it provided unless it was prepared to reimburse others providing services to it. That was a fair and equitable policy, and his delegation would continue to follow closely developments in that regard and would raise the matter at a later stage, if circumstances required.

65. With regard to reimbursement for services in support of substantive activities financed from extrabudgetary resources, his delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee's observations in paragraph 16 of the report in document A/32/8/Add.9 that the Secretary-General had not established a sufficiently clear dividing-line between situations in which the 14-per-cent reimbursement formula should be applied and those in which reimbursement of programme support costs should be waived. It also agreed with the Advisory Committee's opinion that such services should not be charged to the regular budget and that reimbursement based on a simple agreed formula should be sought from the funding agencies and trust funds, except in cases in which the General Assembly had specified otherwise.

66. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation accepted the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the General Assembly should agree to the Secretary-General's proposals regarding technical co-operation support costs in document A/C.5/33/56.

67. With regard to agency support costs, his delegation agreed with the United States representative that a final decision on the matter should be deferred until the UNDP Governing Council had considered the question on the basis of the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Working Group. As the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had noted, the question of agency support costs had a long history and involved complex considerations, none of which should be dismissed lightly. His delegation appreciated the UNDP Administrator's proposals as outlined in document DP/WGOC/25, particularly those relating to the nature and component mix of projects and special arrangements with the World Bank and other organizations. His delegation had reservations, however, regarding the Administrator's proposals concerning so-called economies of scale. As the Administrator himself had recognized, it was imperative for the United Nations system collectively to evolve a modified system of reimbursement which was generally acceptable to Member States. However, three organizations of the system, namely the United Nations, UNIDO and FAO, had difficulties in accepting the Administrator's proposals with regard to economies of scale. The Advisory Committee had observed in paragraph 9 of its report (A/33/7/Add.21) that the Administrator's proposals did not deal with the question of reducing support costs but only with the question of redistributing them between UNDP and the executing agencies. The Fifth Committee, for its part, had to assess the impact of support costs on the regular budgets of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. In its report on administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and IAEA (A/33/309), the Advisory Committee had noted that the regular budgets of the United Nations and the specialized agencies bore a considerable burden for the execution of UNDP-funded technical co-operation activities and that the cost to the agencies and the United Nations exceeded by more than \$26 million the reimbursements received from UNDP. His delegation saw merit in the Advisory Committee's suggestions in paragraph 16 of its report on agency support costs (A/33/7/Add.21), particularly the suggestion for a periodic review of the threshold in order to counter the effects of inflation and currency instability. It also agreed with the Advisory Committee's view that the Administrator's proposals could not be regarded as meeting the criterion of general acceptability. In the absence of an alternative that was technically and politically more acceptable, his delegation believed that the 14-per-cent reimbursement formula might have to be retained and that the matter should be considered once again at the thirty-fourth session on the basis of the recommendations of the UNDP Intergovernmental Working Group.

#### OTHER MATTERS

68. Mr. HOUNA GOLO (Chad) said that his delegation had refrained from participating in the decisions taken earlier by the Committee in view of the Assembly's consideration at its 92nd plenary meeting of the letter addressed by the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly (A/33/551) concerning Article 19 of the Charter. His delegation had doubts, however, regarding the correctness of the manner in which Article 19 of the Charter had been interpreted in that letter. Had his delegation been aware that it would be considered in

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(Mr. Houna Golo, Chad)

arrears within the meaning of Article 19, it would have taken a different position when consulted by the President of the General Assembly concerning the possibility of a resumed session in 1979. He wished to know whether, in the normal course of events, the Secretary-General would have sent such a letter to the President of the General Assembly as early as 2 January if the Assembly had not decided to hold a resumed session. In the view of his delegation, the Secretary-General's letter was applicable to the participation of delegations in the work of the thirty-fourth session but that, in determining the eligibility of a delegation to participate in the work of the current session, regard should be had to its resumed nature.

69. The CHAIRMAN said that the matter raised by the representatives of Chad was within the exclusive jurisdiction of the plenary Assembly. He would, however, convey the views of the representative of Chad to the President of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.