



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 74th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KOBINA SEKYI (Ghana)

later: Miss MUCK (Austria)

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.

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

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolutions submitted by the Second Committee in documents A/C.2/33/L.63/Rev.1 and L.101 concerning agenda item 58 and document A/C.2/33/L.34/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 69 (A/C.5/33/105 and Corr.1, A/C.5/33/111, A/C.5/33/107/Rev.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the Advisory Committee was reporting orally on documents A/C.5/33/105, A/C.5/33/111 and A/C.5/33/107/Rev.1. The documents should be taken up together since they involved only conference servicing costs, which would be considered later in the meeting in the context of the consolidated statement of administrative and financial implications in respect of conference servicing costs (A/C.5/33/100).

2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the consolidated statement indicated that conference servicing costs arising out of draft resolution A/C.2/33/L.63/Rev.1) would be absorbed. Therefore, no additional appropriation was being requested in document A/C.5/33/105.

3. As to draft resolution A/C.2/33/L.34/Rev.1, no conference servicing costs were envisaged for 1979 and future requirements would be considered in the contexts of proposals for future biennia. Accordingly, additional requirements in 1980 with respect to the high-level meetings of representatives of all States participating in UNDP would be included in the programme budget proposals for 1980-1981.

4. The implementation of draft resolution A/C.2/33/L.101 would involve conference servicing costs amounting to \$252,000, of which \$135,000 would be absorbed. In document A/C.5/33/100, the Secretary-General had indicated that an additional amount of \$117,000 would be required. The Advisory Committee had reported separately on document A/C.5/33/100 (see A/33/7/Add.36).

5. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, as a result of the adoption of draft resolutions A/C.2/33/L.34/Rev.1, L.63/Rev.1 and L.101, no additional appropriations would be required in the programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979. The related conference servicing costs were set forth in document A/C.5/33/100.

6. It was so decided.

Consolidated statement of administrative and financial implications in respect of conference servicing costs (A/33/7/Add.36, A/C.5/33/100)

7. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General had estimated the total conference servicing requirement on a full-costing basis at \$22,059,700. On the basis of his

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assessment of existing capacity, the Secretary-General estimated that services costing \$17,192,600 could be provided from within available resources, leaving a net additional requirement of \$4,867,100 (A/33/7/Add.36, para.2).

8. There were conferences referred to in the consolidated statement (A/C.5/33/100) whose dates had not yet been determined. It was therefore not yet possible to indicate the related additional requirements. The Advisory Committee considered that once the dates were determined, any additional requirements which might arise should first be submitted by the Secretary-General to the Advisory Committee before being included in the final performance report.

9. The Advisory Committee had made certain observations concerning the costing methods used by the Secretary-General in determining the level of total requirements and the level of additional requirements. The Committee was of the opinion that future consolidated statements should contain additional information to enable it to better analyse the estimates; the kind of information it had in mind was indicated in paragraphs 4 and 6. The Secretary-General's representatives had indicated that providing the information requested would pose no problem.

10. The consolidated statement indicated that expenditure at Geneva was running slightly ahead of expectations and in New York at a lower level than envisaged. The Advisory Committee felt that it was not yet possible to conclude that there would be over expenditure under sections 23 A and 23 B. On the basis of that and other considerations indicated in its report, the Committee was recommending an additional appropriation of \$3.1 million under section 23 (\$600,000 under section 23 A and \$2.5 million under section 23 B).

11. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America), referring to the conferences and meetings whose dates had not yet been determined, said that his delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General should submit the related statements of financial implications to the Advisory Committee for consideration under the terms of resolution 32/214, rather than wait to deal with them in the context of the final performance report (A/33/7/Add.36, para. 3). His delegation welcomed the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the inclusion in future consolidated statements of statistical data (para. 4) and information on how the absorption and the net additional costs had been arrived at (para. 6).

12. Paragraph 3 of the Advisory Committee's report stated that the net additional requirements indicated by the Secretary-General excluded the costs of servicing several conferences and meetings the convening of which in 1979 was still uncertain. The paragraph added that should any of those conferences be held in 1979, the costs involved would be reflected in final performance report on the programme budget for the current biennium. He inquired whether that meant that the Fifth Committee, in acting on the financial implications of those conferences, had not been advised of the conference servicing costs. The situation was not clear to his delegation. Apparently the conferences had been authorized by the General Assembly, but it was uncertain whether a statement of conference servicing costs had been presented to the Fifth Committee in all cases.

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(Mr. Cunningham, United States)

13. His delegation was interested to note that the Department of Conference Services intended to absorb \$17,192,600 for conference servicing activity in 1979. The total amount appropriated for the current biennium at the thirty-second session had been \$145 million. Accordingly, that amount had contained what had turned out to be a savings of some \$17 million. The General Assembly could therefore have appropriated \$127 million without in any way handicapping conference activity in 1978. At the thirty-second session, his delegation had proposed an appropriation of approximately \$133 million. Had that reduced appropriation been approved by the General Assembly, there would still have been a cushion of \$6 or 7 million between that amount and what had turned out to be the actual requirement. It was therefore evident that his delegation had made quite a conservative proposal at the previous session.

14. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) noted that there were no representatives of the Department of Conference Services present to answer questions. The Advisory Committee had stated in paragraph 6 of its report (A/33/7/Add.36) that for items involving a high level of additional expenditure, the consolidated statements should also provide a brief explanation indicating why it had not been possible to absorb more expenditures from within resources already available to the Secretary-General. His delegation would like information on the validity of the full-costing exercise. Paragraph 2 of the Advisory Committee's report indicated that the total amount involved was \$22,059,700 on a full-costing basis, and that, on the basis of his assessment of existing capacity, the Secretary-General estimated that services costing \$17,192,600 dollars could be provided from within available resources, leaving a net additional requirement of \$4,867,100. His delegation wished to know why the net additional requirement was precisely that amount.

15. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services, Controller) said that full costing really meant marginal costing made on the assumption that current activities would entail additional requirements which had to be financed. Such an exercise was valid and important, and was very common, particularly in business accounting. Experience had shown that the Department of Conference Services, New York, and Conference Services, Geneva, had the capacity to take on additional workload and absorb additional requirements. As everyone would agree, the deployment of conference staff was not a simple mechanical exercise. Because of the peak periods and other periods, a great degree of discretion had to be used. Considerable savings could be achieved through good management and the rearrangement of conference services. Those factors helped to explain the difference between marginal cost and the final figure. Arriving at that figure required judgement, discretion and experience, as well as a close analysis of past practices, the perspective for the utilization of resources and the existing burden on the units involved.

16. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), in reply to the question put by the United States representative, said that one of the conferences which might be convened in 1979 was the United Nations Conference on a Convention on International Multimodal Transport. The financial implications of that Conference were given in document A/C.5/33/112. He had reported

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orally on those financial implications and had indicated that it was not known when the Conference would take place. Another conference whose dates had not yet been determined was the United Nations Conference on Restrictive Business Practices. He had reported orally on the statement of financial implications which was contained in document A/C.5/33/106.

17. He had been informed that the Committee Established under General Assembly resolution 32/17⁴ was scheduled to meet for one week in 1979, but might decide to hold more meetings. It was meetings and conferences of that kind to which reference was made in paragraph 3 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/33/7/Add.36).

18. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), while commending the Advisory Committee on its in-depth analysis of the Secretary-General's request, said that his delegation was not entirely satisfied with that Committee's recommendations. The Soviet Union could not support the request for additional appropriations, because it felt that such a request should not be made in the middle of the biennium. The costs involved should be met through the reallocation of resources already approved or through the use of funds liberated as a result of the completion or review of other activities.

19. Mr. RAMZY (Egypt) observed that the documents before the Committee made no mention of the Swiss Government's decision to offer the United Nations an international conference centre free of charge. He asked whether the amount of the appropriation would be affected if the Swiss parliament ratified the decision.

20. Mr. IYER (India) said that his delegation commended the Advisory Committee on its report (A/33/7/Add.36) and would be happy to support its recommendations. It hoped that in approving the appropriation, the Fifth Committee would express the wish that the Secretariat would take into account the Advisory Committee's recommendations on future consolidated statements (paras. 4 and 6).

21. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that paragraph 31 of the consolidated statement (A/C.5/33/100) indicated that a further provision of \$1,205,400 was required for additional staff assessment under section 25, offset by an equivalent increase in the estimates of income from staff assessment under income section 1. The Advisory Committee's recommendation on staff assessment had inadvertently been omitted from its report. He was therefore recommending approval of \$775,000 under section 25, to be offset by the same amount under income section 1.

22. An additional appropriation of \$3.1 million under section 23 (\$600 000 under sect. 23 A and \$2.5 million under sect. 23 B) and a further amount of \$775,000 under section 25, offset by the same amount under income section 1, was approved by 68 votes to 8, with 5 abstentions.

23. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the representative of Poland had been correct to complain about the fact that no

(Mr. Palamarchuk, USSR)

representative of the Department of Conference Services had been present for most of the discussion on a question so important to that Department.

24. The CHAIRMAN explained that the items on the agenda had not been taken up in the advertised order and that, consequently, other responsibilities had prevented the representative of the Department of Conference Services from being present during the Committee's discussion of conference servicing costs.

25. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that his delegation had abstained, not out of dissatisfaction with the work done by ACABQ, but rather to lend further weight to the observations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 9 and 10 of its report.

26. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had concluded its consideration of the subitem.

Revised estimates under section 5D, Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, section 5E, Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters and section 22D, Office of General Services (A/33/7/Add.35; A/C.5/33/98)

27. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General's requests included the reclassification of two G-4 posts, and the creation of an additional G-5 post, the reclassification requests presented the Advisory Committee with the same difficulties it had been facing throughout the session, and ACABQ had recommended that they should be considered in the context of the initial budget proposals for a biennium. The Advisory Committee had been careful not to state which biennium: that was for the Secretary-General to decide.

28. With regard to the Secretary-General's request for a G-5 post to accommodate the personal assistant to the Assistant Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee recognized the need for such an assistant, but recommended that one of the existing G-5 posts within the Department should be redeployed for that purpose.

29. There had been extensive discussion of the proposed redeployment of the D-1 post originally approved by the Fifth Committee for the secretary of CPC. It transpired from information provided in the Secretary-General's report and additional information given to the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General was no longer of the view that CPC required a secretary at the D-1 level. Should the post be redeployed, however, ACABQ recommended that the functions to be assigned to the official should be redefined as suggested in paragraph 12 of its report.

30. Approval by the General Assembly of the recommendations by ACABQ would not entail any additional appropriations under the programme budget for 1978-1979.

31. Mr. AYENI (Nigeria) said that, to judge by the information given in paragraph 7 of the report of ACABQ and in paragraph 20 and the annex of the report of the Secretary-General, it might be difficult to redeploy one of the existing G-5 posts

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(Mr. Ayeni, Nigeria)

to accommodate a personal assistant. His delegation could not understand the basis for the Advisory Committee's view that all posts could be redeployed. He invited a representative of the Secretary-General to comment on the matter.

32. Mr. GREEN (New Zealand) noted that, according to paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report, the new Director would serve as secretary to the Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council. His delegation, which had always stressed the importance of greater integration of United Nations economic and social activities, was concerned to find no reference to the Third Committee in that connexion. It would welcome an explanation of the omission.

33. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services, Controller) said that it would in practice be difficult to find a G-5 post from among the posts currently available which could accommodate a personal assistant to the Assistant Secretary-General, even though it was the practice of the Organization to provide such an assistant in a post at the G-5 level. It was important, in considering requests for reclassification, to consider the individual circumstances rather than take an over-all position.

34. The Secretary-General was aware of the position taken by the Fifth Committee on the issue of reclassification during a budget biennium. He submitted requests only when he had overriding reasons for doing so. It sometimes happened that the change in the functions attached to a post necessitated immediate action to re-establish the post at a new, more appropriate level. If the grade of a post was not commensurate with the functions to be fulfilled, friction would inevitably result.

35. The task of preparing budget proposals for a new biennium was not an easy one: the Controller had to balance the different interests within the Secretariat without suggesting too many reclassifications or transfers of staff from temporary assistance to the regular budget. By refusing to approve requests for reclassifications during the budget biennium the Committee was placing an additional burden on the Controller in that respect.

36. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America), referring to the request for a further G-5 post, observed that out of 14 General Service posts currently assigned to the office, five were already at the G-5 level. His delegation therefore supported the view taken by ACABQ.

37. In the light of the Controller's remarks on the reclassification of posts during the biennium, he asked whether the appropriate classification level for the posts in question had yet been established by the Office of Personnel Services.

38. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) pointed out that the Office had been created through redeployment. The Secretariat had not been called upon to justify to any legislative body its redeployment of posts. His delegation suspected that the Assistant Secretary-General might have been left without a personal assistant because a request for an additional G-5 post for that purpose was easier to justify to the

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(Mr. Schmidt, Federal
Republic of Germany)

General Assembly than a request for a staff member to fulfil different functions. It felt that the conclusion drawn by ACABQ was sound.

39. His delegation preferred requests for post reclassification to be submitted together precisely because it obliged the Controller to balance the different interests at stake without demanding too many reclassifications or transfers of temporary-assistance posts to the regular budget.

40. Mr. FIGUEROA (Argentina) said that his delegation supported the proposal of the Secretary-General for the creation of an additional G-5 post.

41. Mr. AYENI (Nigeria) said he agreed with the analysis of the problem given by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Committee had not been provided with a breakdown of the responsibilities carried out by the staff members already serving in the Office at G-5 level. He requested that the Secretariat should make such a breakdown available to the Committee as soon as possible.

42. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) pointed out that the Organization operated on the basis of a biennial programme budget, and that the General Assembly had decided that the first performance report should deal solely with the effects of inflation and currency fluctuations and with the financial implications of decisions which required urgent action. His delegation therefore felt it was wrong to consider the reclassification of posts in the middle of a biennium unless such reclassification was rendered necessary as a direct consequence of a decision taken by the General Assembly.

43. His delegation took the position that all future reclassifications should be based on the results of the reclassification exercise currently under way, and the findings should be considered together when the exercise was complete. Meanwhile, it supported the position taken by ACABQ.

44. Mr. CORDOVA (Ecuador) said his delegation supported the views expressed by the representatives of Argentina and Nigeria, and was in favour of the creation of the new post to accommodate a personal assistant to the Assistant Secretary-General, as recommended by the Secretary-General. If the new post was not established, the Assistant Secretary-General would be the only staff member at that level who did not have a personal assistant; that would amount to discrimination.

45. The CHAIRMAN, speaking as representative of Ghana, said that the Fifth Committee had approved the establishment of a D-1 post for the Secretary of CPC in view of the functions which CPC exercised. Under the terms of General Assembly resolution 32/197, the role of CPC had been expanded; yet the Secretariat was claiming that there was no longer any need for the Secretary to be at the D-1 level, and in the annex to the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/33/98) there was no reference to any staff member directly responsible for servicing CPC. It appeared that CPC was being "downgraded", and consequently the Fifth Committee was entitled to an explanation from the Secretary-General.

46. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the report of the Secretary-General had evidently caused deep dissatisfaction. The activities which, he had thought, were to be performed by the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General were described in detail in the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197, part VIII,

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(Mr. Pirson, Belgium)

paragraph 61 (e). But the pyramid administration described in the report of the Secretary-General hardly seemed suitable to fulfil the functions which the General Assembly had called for.

47. Mr. IYER (India) said that his delegation was quite prepared to support ACABQ's recommendations. However, it was puzzled at the creation of the D-2 post and wished to know whether that post had been envisaged in the Secretary-General's budget proposals the previous year. It seemed that the Secretary-General had taken it upon himself to pronounce upon the administrative support required for CPC, which in normal circumstances would be perfectly legitimate. However, the Fifth Committee had originally approved the creation of the D-1 post on the express understanding that it was needed by CPC. His delegation was astonished that the Secretariat had been unable, after 13 months, to find a competent person to fill the post. Such developments tended to shake his delegation's confidence in the Secretariat and any recurrence might result in the Fifth Committee's changing its generally charitable attitude to such request. If the post was not necessary, it should be surrendered.

48. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that, as Vice-Chairman of CPC, he felt obliged to express his delegation's surprise at the developments in question. The D-1 post had been approved specifically for the Secretary of CPC and that Committee would certainly repeat its request for such a post, if necessary. The Committee should, therefore, reject the request made by the Secretariat and abide by the terms of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly.

49. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) expressed the hope that at the following meeting the representative of the Secretary-General would state that it was not in the latter's interests to go against the wishes of the General Assembly and that the Fifth Committee should not be called on to approve measures which were contrary to the directives of the General Assembly.

Revised estimates under sections 5F and 22D, Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/33/7/Add.34; A/C.5/33/110)

50. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) asked whether, in estimating the staffing requirements for the Director-General, the Secretariat had considered the possibility that the staff might be provided entirely from existing Secretariat resources and wondered what other options had been considered by the Secretariat. With regard to the revised estimates under section 22D, he asked whether any possible savings had been considered in respect of the appropriations requested for additional common services and furniture and whether the requests were in line with the usual Secretariat procedures.

51. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation fully appreciated the importance of the tasks entrusted to the Director-General, for which considerable resources had been requested by the Secretary-General. His delegation had taken careful note of the assurances given in paragraph 6 of the Secretary-General's report that the resources did not represent a duplication of capabilities available elsewhere in

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(Mr. Akashi, Japan)

the United Nations and wished to stress the need for full co-operation and assistance from existing United Nations units. The latter should make their resources and expertise readily available to the Director-General, and should facilitate the ad hoc secondment of staff members. The various tasks and functions assigned to the Director-General were of such a nature as to defy a clear-cut delineation and classification. His delegation was aware that the Director-General intended to use his staff in the most effective manner, which would call for the utmost flexibility.

52. His delegation trusted that the potential administrative conflicts alluded to by ACABQ in paragraph 13 of its report would not arise and that all concerned would take due account of the responsibilities entrusted to the Director-General and of the necessity for the maximum utilization of all existing resources and expertise for the attainment of common aims and objectives. Subject to those observations, his delegation would accept ACABQ's recommendations.

53. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) asked why a representative of the substantive department concerned was not present. It was not possible for the Controller to be a specialist in all the matters before the Committee and it was in the interests of the Committee's work that both the Controller and a representative of the substantive department should be present.

54. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that a representative of the Director-General was, in fact, present for the purpose of answering any questions raised. He drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 16 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/33/7/Add.34) and said that, if the Fifth Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly should make an exception to the provisions of resolution 32/209, an additional appropriation of \$120,000 under section 5 F of the programme budget for 1978-1979 would be required.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/33/L.39/Rev.2 concerning agenda item 70 (continued)
(A/33/7/Add.29; A/C.5/33/103 and Corr.1)

55. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the representative of Sweden had formally proposed at the 72nd meeting that the Committee should recommend that the General Assembly should make an exception to the provisions of resolution 32/209. That proposal would result in an additional appropriation of \$151,600 under section 4 of the programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979. He asked the representative of Sweden to indicate the conditions under which the study could be presented.

56. Mr. ANDERSSON (Sweden) said that the time-table for the preparation of the study requested by the Second Committee was very tight but that if the study was to be made at all, the experts in question were necessary. It had been suggested that the first version of the study should be made available in time for the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee and that the final version should be ready for the Conference itself. The Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination had indicated that the suggestion was acceptable but that, if no funds were forthcoming, the Secretariat would abandon the project.

57. Mr. IYER (India) said that his delegation was quite prepared to approve the proposal made by the representative of Sweden. As a member of CPC, his delegation was confident that additional funds would be expended only if a suitable team was found which could carry out the study in the necessary time. With regard to the reference, in paragraph 27 of the Secretary-General's report, to the "planned pre-conference session on preliminary substantive matters", he pointed out that the Second Committee had approved the holding of an interregional meeting of developing countries, and he requested an assurance that it was to that meeting that the phrase in question referred. His delegation did not wish to reinterpret what had been decided in the Second Committee and to use the resources for a purpose for which they had not originally been intended.

58. Mr. BACHROUCH (Tunisia) said that, as he understood it, the meeting referred to in paragraph 27 of document A/C.5/33/108 was in fact a meeting of the Group of 77. He requested confirmation of that interpretation.

59. Mr. ONIGA (Romania) said he trusted that paragraph 27 of the Secretary-General's report related to paragraph 7 of the resolution adopted by consensus in the Second Committee, in which the Secretary-General had been requested to provide the necessary resources for the preparation of the Conference at the national, regional and interregional levels. The Group of 77 had originally wanted to be mentioned specifically but had agreed on the wording adopted in order to avoid creating a precedent. However, it had been the clear understanding of representatives in the Second Committee that the interregional preparations in question related to that Group. The fact that the paragraph in question referred specifically to a meeting of the Group of 77 should be placed on record.

60. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) agreed that the original intention of the draft resolution was to provide for regional and interregional meetings, primarily for the Group of 77. The Secretary-General's statement of financial implications failed to make that fact sufficiently clear.

61. Mr. EINHAUS (Executive Secretary, United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development) said that it was the understanding of the Secretary-General of the Conference that the resources requested in paragraph 27 were intended to cover the type of meetings referred to by the representatives of India, Tunisia, Romania and Kenya.

62. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) asked whether the representative of the Secretary-General could confirm that the meetings in question, like all other meetings financed from United Nations resources, would be open to all Member States without distinction.

63. Mr. WILLIAMS (Panama) said that it was clear, in the light of the explanation just provided by the Executive Secretary of the Conference, that paragraph 27 of the Secretary-General's report referred to a meeting intended exclusively for the members of the Group of 77.

64. The CHAIRMAN said he did not understand why paragraph 27 had not been drafted in more straightforward language.

65. Mr. EINHAUS (Executive Secretary, United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development) said that the language used in paragraph 27 of document A/C.5/33/108 corresponded to the language agreed upon in the negotiations in the Second Committee. The resources requested would be used for the meeting referred to by earlier speakers. However, that did not exclude the possibility of other preparatory meetings being organized in the period immediately preceding the Conference. In that way all Member States would be given an opportunity to take part in consultations.

66. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) indicated that the deletion of \$120,000 from the Secretary-General's estimates recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 15 of its report (A/33/7/Add.29) related to the cost of the interregional consultations at the governmental expert level which were referred to in paragraph 21 of the Secretary-General's report and which, according to the Secretary-General's representatives, would no longer be necessary in view of the results of informal consultations in the Second Committee. The deletion did not relate to the costs outlined in paragraphs 23 and 28 of the Secretary-General's report.

67. Mr. KE FU-TSUN (China) asked whether all Member States were entitled to participate in the interregional meeting and noted that paragraph 27 (c) of the Secretary-General's report referred only to Arabic, English, French and Spanish as languages of the meeting. If all members could participate, his delegation hoped that Chinese would be included among the working languages.

68. Mr. MILLS (Budget Division) said that, in accordance with normal practice, any United Nations meeting for which resources were appropriated for conference servicing was open to the participation of all Member States. It was also the practice, however, to provide conference servicing for the meetings of regional groups, subject to the availability of facilities at New York and Geneva. He interpreted paragraph 27 to mean that the meeting although convened for a regional purpose, would be open to all. Regional meetings had been convened, with regular-budget financing, in connexion with preparations for other conferences.

69. Mr. BACHROUCH (Tunisia) recalled that a gentleman's agreement had been reached in the Second Committee not to make specific reference in draft resolution A/C.2/33/L.39/Rev.1 to the Group of 77 on the understanding that the meeting referred to in paragraph 27 of the Secretary-General's report would be reserved exclusively for the members of that Group.

70. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, as evidenced by the Chinese representative's statement, an important principle of universality was at stake. It was an established practice for the consultations of regional groups held in connexion with official United Nations meetings to receive regular-budget financing. However, his delegation could not agree to providing such financing for a pre-Conference meeting unless it was open to all Member States. Moreover, paragraph 28 of the Secretary-General's report indicated that documentation was envisaged for the meeting, and that was not a normal service provided by the Secretariat to regional consultations. In joining in the consensus reached in the

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(Mr. Palamarchuk, USSR)

Second Committee his delegation had assumed that any meetings which would be convened would be held in Vienna, Geneva or New York in order to minimize expenses and that they would form part of the official conference process.

71. Mr. BACHROUJCH (Tunisia) said that, prior to the adoption of the resolution in the Second Committee, the Secretary-General has presented a statement of administrative and financial implications which referred specifically to a meeting of the developing countries which were members of the Group of 77. (A/C.2/33/L.68/Add.1, para. 3). Delegations which had agreed to the draft resolution had, therefore, also agreed to the financial implications of the pre-Conference meeting.

72. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that it was inadmissible to finance from the regular budget activities in which all Member States, especially those who paid the lion's share of the budget, were not permitted to participate.

73. Mr. KHAMIS (Algeria) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the appropriations requested on the understanding that, should a member of the Group of 77 offer to act as host to the regional meeting, the normal practice would apply with regard to the additional cost of holding the meeting away from Headquarters.

74. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) said that his delegation would vote against the appropriations requested for the reasons put forward in its earlier statements. It was clear that there were hidden implications which had not been brought out in the statement in document A/C.5/33/108 and that the convening of the meeting would violate a number of basic principles governing United Nations activities.

75. The CHAIRMAN indicated that separate recorded votes had been requested on the Advisory Committee's recommendation and the Swedish proposal. Accordingly, he invited the Committee to vote first on the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Committee should approve an additional appropriation of \$928,500 under section 4 of the programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979 and an amount of \$233,000 under section 25 for staff assessment, offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

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Against: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America.

Abstaining: France, Israel.

76. An additional appropriation of \$928,500 under section 4 of the programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979 and a further amount of \$233,000 under section 25 (staff assessment), offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, was approved by 72 votes to 9, with 2 abstentions.

77. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the Swedish proposal that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it make an exception to General Assembly resolution 32/209, which would result in an additional appropriation of \$126,000 under section 4 of the programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979. A further amount of \$25,600 for support staff under section 4, as well as an amount of \$7,300 under section 25 for staff assessment, to be offset by an equal amount under income section 1, would also be required.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Republic of Cameroon, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America.

Abstaining: Canada, France, Israel, Italy, New Zealand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

78. The Swedish proposal was adopted by 68 votes to 9, with 6 abstentions.

79. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendation although it did not approve of the exclusion of any Member State from meetings financed from regular budget resources. It had abstained in the vote on the Swedish proposal because, although it considered the cross-organizational analysis to be essential to the success of the Conference, there was no certainty that the document could be prepared on time.

80. Mr. GREEN (New Zealand) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendation and had abstained on the Swedish proposal. As a sponsor of resolution 32/209, his delegation had been placed in a difficult position. Real doubts had been raised regarding the ability of the Secretariat, even with assistance of consultants, to produce the requested study in time. There was also a matter of principle involved, namely whether additional expenditure should be incurred to make up for the short-comings of the permanent staff of the Secretariat. His delegation recognized that the long-term consequences of not having the report available for the next session of the Preparatory Committee and for the Conference might be even greater than the expense involved, and it had been tempted to support the Swedish proposal. Bearing in mind the Controller's statement regarding the withholding of 10 per cent of programme allotments in order to curb expenditure for outside expertise, his delegation trusted that the Secretary-General would explore every means of financing the study from within existing resources before engaging outside consultants.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.