

1582nd meeting

Wednesday, 24 October 1973, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. C. S. M. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania).

A/C.5/SR.1582

AGENDA ITEM 79

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975 and medium-term plan for the period 1974-1977 (*continued*) (A/8840 and Add.1-3, A/8997, A/9006 and Add.1, A/9008 and Add.1 and 2, A/9008/Add.3 and Corr.1, A/9008/Add.4, A/9036, A/9052, A/9067 and Add.1, A/9164 and Add.1, A/C.5/1505/Rev.1, A/C.5/1506, A/C.5/1508, A/C.5/1509 and Add.1, A/C.5/1510, A/C.5/1511 and Add.1 and 2, A/C.5/1512, A/C.5/1513 and Corr.1 and 2, A/C.5/1516, A/C.5/1517 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1518 and Corr.1 and 2, A/C.5/1520 and Corr.1 and 2, A/C.5/1521 and Corr.1 and 2, A/C.5/1526, A/C.5/1527, A/C.5/1530, A/C.5/1533, A/C.5/1537, A/C.5/1109, A/C.5/L.1111, A/C.5/L.1117)

First reading (continued)

SECTION 7 – DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (*continued*) (A/9006, A/9008, A/C.5/1506, A/C.5/1508, A/C.5/L.1111, A/C.5/L.1117)

1. Mr. JIMENEZ (Philippines) said that his delegation usually voted for the appropriations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. It was regrettable, however, that while in the case of travel costs and new posts the Advisory Committee, in its report (A/9008), specified the size of the reductions recommended for each of the programmes, in the case of consultant services and expert groups it had recommended across-the-board cuts. Yet the whole point of programme budgeting was to match individual programmes or activities with a measured amount of resources, so that any reduction in resources meant either a reduction in the activities concerned or their phasing over a longer period of time. Since the Advisory Committee had recommended very substantial reductions under section 7—almost 15 per cent for consultants and 33 per cent for travel costs—his delegation had asked the representative of the Secretary-General to what extent the cuts would affect the implementation of the programmes. At the preceding meeting, the Under Secretary-General for Administration and Management had stated that it would be possible to implement the programmes in 1974, but perhaps not in 1975, and that the Secretary-General reserved the right, if the need should arise, subsequently to ask the General Assembly to authorize him to establish the new posts requested. At the 1579th meeting, the representative of the Secretariat, Mr. Saddler, had given the Committee a breakdown of the \$45,000 requested for travel in connexion with the social development and humanitarian affairs programme, and had explained that the increase of 73 per cent had been due to the fact that a sum of \$18,000 had been earmarked for travel connected with the preparation and holding of the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders.

Mr. Saddler had also given a breakdown by programme of the funds requested for consultants—which the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had omitted to do for the corresponding reductions—and had clearly shown that the consultants' activities complemented those of the United Nations regular staff. The Philippine delegation warned the Committee that it would be unwise to reduce both the number of posts and the consultant services and still expect the programmes to be implemented. It repeated its proposal that the estimate for consultants should be reduced by \$150,000—about 10 per cent of the initial estimate—instead of by \$213,000 as recommended by the Advisory Committee, and that the estimate for travel in connexion with the social development and humanitarian affairs programme should be reduced by \$5,000, instead of by the \$15,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee. After deduction of the \$18,000 for the preparation of the Congress, that reduction of \$5,000 would leave for the programme in question only \$22,000 for the travel of regular staff, which was less than the appropriation of \$26,000 for the preceding biennium. He would like those two proposals to be put to a vote at the current meeting when a decision was taken on section 7. If, however, that would delay the first reading of the section, he would reserve the right to resubmit the proposals during the second reading of the proposed budget.

2. The CHAIRMAN said it was his understanding that, in order not to delay the Committee's work and not to raise new difficulties during the consideration of section 7, the representative of the Philippines would not insist on a vote on his proposals at the current meeting and agreed that the vote should not be taken until the second reading.

3. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to a question raised at the preceding meeting by the representative of India, said that the Advisory Committee had been unable to take into account Economic and Social Council resolution 1802 (LV), entitled "Marine co-operation", when it had drafted its report, because that resolution had not been adopted until after the Advisory Committee had concluded its summer session. If the resolution were to have financial implications, they would be covered in the revised estimates.

4. He was unfortunately unable to meet the wish of the representative of the Philippines, who would have liked a breakdown, by programme, of the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee for consultants; no breakdown of that kind had been made. The Secretary-General had given an estimate for consultants for the whole of section 7, and the reduction recommended was also applicable to the whole section, which had the advantage of leaving the Secretary-General free to transfer funds between the different parts of the section.

5. In recommending so large a reduction in the estimate for consultants, the Advisory Committee had been guided by a report by the Joint Inspection Unit on the use of consultants in the United Nations (see A/8811).¹ Some members of the Fifth Committee had pointed out that the report was only an interim one, which had not yet been approved by the Committee: nevertheless, it was the Committee itself which had requested that the report should be prepared and the report had been submitted to it at the twenty-seventh session. To the extent that the Committee had expressed confidence in the Unit and had decided that it should remain in existence, the Advisory Committee had been bound to take into account the view expressed by the inspectors in paragraph 8 of the report, namely that on the basis of their investigations to date, the inspectors were in a position to say that there was some laxity in the programming of projects involving the use of individual experts and consultants and of groups of experts; that controls were in many cases either inadequate or ineffective; that many projects were only remotely related to the problems of development and that in many cases consultants were recruited in effect as staff supplementary to the existing establishment. The inspectors had also recommended that the appropriations approved by the General Assembly for those items in 1973 should not be exceeded in 1974. In other words, the Advisory Committee had been more generous.

6. The CHAIRMAN asked the representative of Kenya whether the sponsors of the proposal in document A/C.5/L.1117 had been able, as the Chairman had suggested at the previous meeting, to redraft their text so as to take account of the representative's suggestion made by the representative of Brazil which the Committee had received favourably.

7. Mr. KITI (Kenya) said that after exhaustive consultations the sponsors of the proposal had succeeded in working out the following text, which they believed would not raise objections and could be adopted without difficulty:

"The Fifth Committee noted the statement by the representative of the Secretary-General that the reductions in new posts recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 7 might possibly affect the implementation of certain programmes in the second half of the 1974-1975 budget period. The Committee decided, therefore, to accept in first reading, without prejudice to any position it might adopt in second reading, the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 7. In the interim, it requested the Secretary-General to make available to the Fifth Committee the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service on the manpower requirements of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs."

8. Before the Committee began the second reading of section 7, the sponsors hoped to be able to hold further consultations and obtain more complete information which would allow them, after they had seen the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service, to decide

whether or not they accepted the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee.

9. He announced that Sierra Leone and Barbados had joined the sponsors of the proposal.

10. The CHAIRMAN welcomed the fact that the procedure set out in the proposed text allowed the Committee to take a decision with respect to section 7; he asked the representative of the Philippines whether he was still prepared to defer until the second reading of the proposed budget the vote on the proposals he had submitted at the beginning of the meeting.

11. Mr. JIMENEZ (Philippines) said that he was.

12. Mr. STOBY (Guyana) said that the second reading tended to be merely a formality which did not allow for a detailed examination of questions; he would like the Chairman to give him the assurance that the members of the Committee would in the present instance have all the time they needed for the question's re-examination.

13. The CHAIRMAN said he was certain that that would be possible if the Committee's deliberations proceeded at the same pace.

14. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation had been favourably disposed towards the Brazilian proposal, but the new text proposed was considerably different.

15. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the representative of Brazil had not submitted any proposal; he had supported the proposal in document A/C.5/L.1117 while asking the sponsors if they could take his suggestion into account.

16. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked the Chairman if he intended to have the proposal just read out by the representative of Kenya circulated in writing.

17. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, if the Soviet representative pressed for a written text, consideration of section 7 should be suspended until the document could be circulated, which should occur before the end of the meeting. He asked whether the Soviet representative would agree to the Committee's voting on section 7 at the present stage.

18. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he was certain that he was not the only one who wanted to have the written text before him. Still, he would not like to slow down the Committee, which had already spent a great deal of time on section 7.

19. The CHAIRMAN said that it appeared to him that the Soviet representative agreed to the Committee's voting on section 7 while awaiting the circulation of the new text of the proposal just read out by the representative of Kenya.

20. Mr. YOGASUNDRAM (Sri Lanka) feared that, if the proposed text was adopted, it might be necessary to provide for a similar text for every one of the sections of the budget, since the new text stated that the Committee

¹ Document of 14 September 1972.

accepted the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee in first reading without prejudice to any position it might adopt in second reading—which would seem to imply that as a general rule it could not reverse a first reading decision in second reading. It might be best if the sponsors of that text agreed to withdraw their proposal.

21. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the members of the Committee should withhold their comments on the paragraph read out by the representative of Kenya until the text had been circulated, and he proposed that the Committee should pass to a vote on section 7.

22. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) endorsed the tenor of the draft paragraph read out by the representative of Kenya. He did feel, however, that the phrase “without prejudice to any position it might adopt in second reading” was pointless and would like to see it omitted.

23. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) supported the views stated by the representatives of Canada and Sri Lanka.

24. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) pointed out that the draft paragraph proposed by the Kenyan delegation had been accepted by the Brazilian delegation.

25. Mr. SILVEIRA DA MOTA (Brazil) observed that he had not actively participated in the drafting of the paragraph but was grateful to its sponsors for having appreciably improved, as he saw it, the text they had originally submitted. He wondered, however, why reference was made in the new text only to the implementation of “certain programmes”, whereas, in the proposal in document A/C.5/L.1117, specific reference had been made to four programmes which should perhaps be mentioned in the new text as well. He also wondered whether there was really any need to have two separate votes, one on the appropriation for section 7 and another on the draft paragraph, since the latter already said that the Committee decided to accept in first reading the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 7.

26. Mr. STOBY (Guyana) thanked the representative of Brazil for his last point. There was, in his view, no need to hold two votes; it was on the draft paragraph introduced by the Kenyan delegation that the Fifth Committee should take its decision.

27. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that he would like to have some clarification as to the proper interpretation of the phrase “it requested the Secretary-General to make available to the Fifth Committee the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service”. He wondered in particular whether, in the Committee’s view, the Advisory Committee continued to have a role to play in the consideration of the Administrative Management Service’s report and, if so, what the scope of that role was. The Committee seemed, in effect, to be tending to rely more on the judgement of the Secretary-General than on that of the Advisory Committee.

28. Mr. KITI (Kenya) considered that the draft paragraph which he had read out in no way prejudiced the ultimate

decision on the matter, and he therefore saw no reason for making further amendments to it. With regard to the remarks made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, he wished to assure him that it had never been the intention of the sponsors of the draft paragraph to question the usefulness of the Advisory Committee’s role in the consideration of the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service.

29. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought the Committee might be devoting too much time to a discussion that seemed to serve no clear purpose. In accordance with its usual practice the Committee was considering a section of the budget and delegations were making their views on it known. The Committee had first had before it a proposal circulated as document A/C.5/L.1117 and also a proposal by the Brazilian delegation. A compromise text, which the representative of Kenya had read out at the beginning of the meeting, had later been prepared. As it was proposed to include that text in the Committee’s report, it would be logical to vote on section 7 and to take a decision later on the text submitted by the Kenyan delegation, after it had been circulated in all the working languages. That manner of proceeding would have been in line with the practice followed by the Committee.

30. Mr. VAN DER GOOT (Netherlands) supported the draft paragraph which the representative of Kenya had read out, and urged the members of the Committee to give it positive consideration for it was extremely well balanced and took account of all the points of view that had been expressed. Furthermore, the representative of Kenya had assured the Committee that the role of the Advisory Committee would not be diminished in any way.

31. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) called for a vote on section 7 without further delay. He wondered whether it was really necessary to vote on the text proposed by the representative of Kenya and whether the Committee could not adopt it by consensus. He endorsed the amendment to the text proposed by the representative of Brazil and the suggestions made by the representatives of Sri Lanka and Canada. He suggested that the words “through the Advisory Committee” should be added after the words “to make available to the Fifth Committee”.

32. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that it was stated in the proposed text that the Committee decided to accept in first reading the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 7. As that would be done anyway when the Committee took a decision on section 7, it would hardly serve any purpose to have a second vote on the text in question. He therefore invited the members of the Committee to vote on section 7.

33. Mr. STOBY (Guyana) considered that the Committee should not vote on section 7 until it had voted on the draft text introduced by the Kenyan delegation.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that, that being the case, he would adjourn the consideration of section 7 until the draft text introduced by the Kenyan delegation had been circulated in all the working languages.

**SECTION 17 - OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR (A/9006,
A/9008, A/C.5/L.1111)**

35. The CHAIRMAN noted that in the proposed programme budget (A/9006) the Secretary-General requested an amount of \$1,215,000 for section 17. In its report (A/9008, para. 17.15), the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$601,000 in that amount. The total amount recommended by the Advisory Committee was therefore \$614,000.

36. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew attention to paragraph 17.1 of the report of the Advisory Committee, in which the Committee pointed out that the additional amount requested by the Secretary-General under section 17 represented by far the largest rate of increase for any section of the budget estimates. The reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee, which seemed substantial if it was judged from the figures alone, was nevertheless much less than it appeared to be if it was borne in mind that the Advisory Committee recommended, for technical reasons, the deletion of the amount of \$400,000 requested for emergency assistance. While the Secretary-General had asked that provision for emergency aid to Governments should become an integral part of the appropriations under the regular budget, the Advisory Committee had considered that emergency assistance to Governments, in symbolic amounts, should continue to be provided through withdrawals from the Working Capital Fund, as being of a contingent character. The Advisory Committee's reasons for considering it preferable to maintain the existing arrangements were set out in paragraphs 17.4 to 17.11 of its report.

37. As the Advisory Committee stated in paragraph 17.12 of its report, the new posts requested by the Secretary-General consisted of 5 Professional and 4 General Service posts, of which 3 Professional and 2 General Service posts represented the conversion to established posts of posts previously financed from temporary assistance funds. The Advisory Committee had had no difficulty in accepting the latter request. On the other hand, for the reasons it had set out in paragraph 17.13, it had been unable to approve the proposed establishment of 2 Professional and 2 General Service posts. It had considered that, even without the establishment of those new posts, the number of staff of the Office of the Co-ordinator would be considerably higher than the number provided for when the Office had been set up in 1971 in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 2816 (XXVI).

38. Lastly, as it had stated in paragraph 17.14 of its report, the Advisory Committee had been unable to concur in the Secretary-General's request for \$32,000 for the hiring of special consultants, as that request was inconsistent with the General Assembly recommendation in paragraph 4 of its resolution 2816 (XXVI).

39. The reduction of \$23,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee corresponded to the over-estimation by the Secretary-General of requirements for common staff costs and was therefore purely technical in nature.

40. Mr. ROMAN (Nicaragua) noted that the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee in section 17 was considerable in relation to the amount requested by the Secretary-General. His delegation, which attached great importance to the question of assistance in cases of disaster, requested that the Committee should not vote on section 17 at the current meeting as it would like to have time to draft a formal proposal which it would submit to the Committee.

41. Mr. CARRASCO (Chile) found the size of the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee for section 17 particularly disquieting. The Advisory Committee had recommended the deletion of the amount of \$400,000; but, in his view, the Secretary-General's arguments reflected in paragraph 17.16 of the proposed programme budget, in support of the inclusion of that sum in the regular budget were perfectly convincing. His delegation would therefore like the representative of the Secretary-General to explain to the Committee what effect the approval of such a reduction would have on the flexibility and speed of action of the Office of the Co-ordinator.

42. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation had noted the Secretariat's request that a sum of \$400,000 should be appropriated for the biennium for emergency assistance to Governments. In support of that request, it had been alleged that the current system of drawing from the Working Capital Fund caused difficulties, because the authorization of the Secretary-General was required to make a grant of emergency assistance. Such a requirement should not cause any real difficulty in the granting of speedy relief in disaster situations and did not appear to be a satisfactory reason for altering existing arrangements.

43. His delegation noted that, in 1972, only \$92,000 had been allocated to emergency assistance to Governments. Therefore, if \$200,000 was appropriated for each of the two years in the biennium, it would increase the total budget figure needlessly without giving any indication of specific and identifiable expenditure. In other words, specific sums would be set aside for use on a contingency basis, at a time when there was a constant danger of the budget being insufficient to meet all kinds of other expenditure.

44. His delegation had also noted the Advisory Committee's concern lest the inclusion of appropriations under the regular budget for assistance to Governments should be unwittingly interpreted as providing for a United Nations operational role in disaster relief. In addition, the budgetary implications of such a measure would be very considerable. His delegation did not wish to belittle the vital role of the United Nations in the co-ordination of disaster relief operations or in any way minimize the importance of the operations carried out under its auspices. But, in view of the factors that he had outlined, and since it had been the intention of the General Assembly that the functions of the Office should be that of a relief co-ordinator, his delegation strongly supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the \$400,000 sought for emergency assistance should be deleted from the budget.

45. His delegation had also taken note of the Advisory Committee's observations on the proposed increase in staff

in the Office of the Co-ordinator. Since the original intention had been to establish a small permanent body with a co-ordinating and not an operational function, his delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

46. Mr. BENLER (Turkey) reserved his delegation's right to comment on section 17 at a later stage.

47. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that his delegation found itself in a dilemma. Obviously the Advisory Committee's observations were relevant, but the activities of the Office of the Co-ordinator were tremendously important for those countries which were exposed to natural disasters. The observations of the Advisory Committee, particularly those in paragraphs 17.11 and 17.13 of its report, were perfectly logical. In paragraph 17.13 the Committee stated that it was not convinced that a case had been made for the establishment of a P-2 post for a speech-writer for the Co-ordinator. Indeed, it was difficult to see how speeches could help when what was needed was action. His delegation therefore agreed with the considerations on which the Advisory Committee had based the views expressed in paragraph 17.13, and supported the recommended reduction of \$146,000.

48. In paragraph 17.14 of its report, the Advisory Committee stated that it could not concur in the Secretary-General's request for \$32,000 for special consultants who might be sent to the scene of disasters to co-ordinate the action undertaken. His delegation had already stated its views on the use of consultants and felt that it was time to put an end to such a costly exercise.

49. However, efforts should be made to find a solution which would be acceptable to all delegations, in order to prevent the reduction of appropriations by the considerable amounts recommended by the Advisory Committee. The possible effect of such reductions on the activities of the Office of the Co-ordinator, whose role remained important for the countries of the third world, must be borne in mind.

50. Mr. FAYACHE (Tunisia) said that, at the present stage of the discussion, he was not in a position to give an opinion on the Advisory Committee's recommendation, and he therefore supported the proposal of the representative of Nicaragua to defer the vote on section 17 until the following day.

51. Mr. ARBOLEDA (Colombia) said that his delegation was also faced with a dilemma. Obviously the reasons invoked by the Secretary-General in support of his estimates were relevant, but the observations of the Advisory Committee seemed very sensible. However, his delegation felt that the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee were excessive, the more so since natural disasters mainly affected the poor countries, which could scarcely deal with such disasters with their own means. His delegation therefore supported the suggestion of the representative of Nicaragua that the Committee should study the question in greater depth before proceeding to a vote, and he hoped that it would be possible to arrive at a compromise solution.

52. His delegation did not feel that there was a tendency among members of the Committee to trust the Secretary-

General rather than the Advisory Committee as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had implied. There were admittedly occasions on which the Committee did not share the Advisory Committee's views, but that should not be interpreted as a repudiation or a criticism. On the contrary, members were unanimous in recognizing the very great value of the Advisory Committee's contribution to the Committee's work.

53. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that he did not wish at that stage to comment on the content of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and that he would like the Committee to defer its decision on section 17. However, he wished to take the opportunity of expressing his Government's appreciation of the work of the Office of the Co-ordinator.

54. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said that he agreed with the comments made by the representative of Australia. At the twenty-sixth session, his delegation had voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 2816 (XXVI) establishing the Office of the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, on the understanding that the Office would essentially discharge co-ordinating functions. His delegation could not agree that the United Nations should have an operational role in that field and it unreservedly endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee. Any assistance in case of disaster should be financed by means of voluntary contributions and not charged to the regular budget. If necessary, a special fund might be established for that purpose.

55. Mrs. DERRE (France) recalled that, at the fifty-fifth session of the Economic and Social Council, her delegation to the Co-ordination Committee had commended the work carried out thus far by the Co-ordinator and had stated that it was prepared to agree to the increase in its budget, provided that such an increase was within reasonable limits. However, an increase of almost 180 per cent was certainly not reasonable. When the Office of the Co-ordinator had been established, it had been agreed that it would be a small one responsible for co-ordinating the relief provided by organizations other than the United Nations. Moreover, the Co-ordinator had been invited to promote the study, prevention, control and prediction of natural disasters, including the collection and dissemination of information concerning technological developments. She did not think that the Co-ordinator needed a very large staff in order to discharge that task, since he could, if necessary, utilize the services of agencies such as UNDP. As far as the increase in staff requested by the Secretary-General was concerned, she approved the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee.

56. In addition, the Secretary-General requested an appropriation of \$32,000 for the biennium 1974-1975 for consultant services. There again, she felt that the Co-ordinator could make use of the expert services of other organizations.

57. She also wishes to stress that in disaster relief the Secretariat of the United Nations should assume a purely administrative role and should not undertake operational activities. In conclusion, it was somewhat excessive to predict 10 disasters a year and to request for emergency assistance to Governments an appropriation of \$200,000

per annum, which amounted to \$20,000 per country and per disaster. That kind of assistance should continue to be financed through withdrawals from the Working Capital Fund, but the withdrawal of the necessary funds might perhaps be accelerated if the methods currently used were changed.

58. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) felt that the Committee did not have sufficient information to make a rational judgement on the staff increases requested by the Secretary-General for the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator.

59. In 1972 and 1973, there had been an authorized staff of 6, including 1 Professional post on loan from the Division of Narcotic Drugs. The Secretary-General proposed to increase staff to 15 persons for the biennium 1974-1975. He would like to know the duties of the present staff and the tasks which it was intended to entrust to the proposed additional staff. In that regard, his delegation noted that the Advisory Committee had acceded to the request by the Secretary-General for the conversion into permanent posts of 3 Professional and 2 General Service posts previously financed through appropriations for temporary staff.

60. At the fifty-fifth session of the Economic and Social Council, his delegation had noted that the report submitted by the Secretary-General on that occasion² painted a gloomy picture of the future effectiveness of the Office of the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator. The Secretary-General had also urged that action should be taken to solve the problem of the relationship between the responsibilities entrusted to the Co-ordinator and the resources made available to him.

61. In the view of his delegation, the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator was, as his title indicated, no more than a co-ordinator; moreover, that co-ordinating role was spelled out in General Assembly resolution 2816 (XXVI). Emergency assistance could come only from Member States or from bodies such as the International Red Cross.

62. For those reasons, his delegation opposed, at that time, any increase in the staff of the Office, on the understanding that when the Co-ordinator had gained greater experience it would give favourable consideration to any request for additional resources for the following biennium. In those circumstances, his delegation wished to express its appreciation of the work performed thus far by the Co-ordinator and his staff. In conclusion, his delegation was prepared to accept the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, despite its serious reservations on a number of them.

63. Mr. LEVIDIS (Greece) felt that even an appropriation of \$400,000 for the biennium, to be included in the regular budget, would not be sufficient to deal with a very serious disaster for even one day. If the Committee agreed to such an amount, it might discourage the countries which were usually prepared to make voluntary contributions. Therefore, his delegation unreservedly supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee concerning emergency assistance.

Mr. Arboleda (Colombia), Vice Chairman, took the Chair.

64. The CHAIRMAN proposed that consideration of section 17 should be continued at the following meeting, particularly in view of the wish expressed in that regard by the representative of Nicaragua in the course of the debate.

It was so decided.

SECTION 19 - REGULAR PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (A/9006, A/9008, A/C.5/L.1111)

65. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew the attention of the Committee to the last sentence of paragraph 19.6 and to paragraph 19.7 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/9008).

66. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had carefully studied the sections of the proposed programme budget (A/9006) and the report of the Advisory Committee which related to the regular programme of technical assistance. He wished to recall the position of his delegation on the financing of technical assistance activities. In that regard, under Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations, the budget of the United Nations was an administrative one; that implied that technical assistance activities should be financed solely through voluntary contributions.

67. His delegation had always been in favour of the development of technical assistance activities and contributed substantial funds each year for that purpose. It had also repeatedly proposed that States should increase their contributions to UNDP by amounts corresponding to the amounts they were currently contributing to the regular programme of technical assistance. If the expenses of the regular programme continued to be borne by the regular budget, the Soviet Union would vote against the amount requested in section 19 and would, as in previous years, pay in its own currency the part of its contribution to the regular budget which would correspond to that section.

68. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) recalled that his delegation had stated in the general debate (1565th meeting) its view that expenses relating to the regular programme of technical assistance should continue to be borne by the regular budget of the United Nations. Articles 13 and 55 of the Charter provided that one of the essential functions of the United Nations was to promote international co-operation in the economic and social fields. The responsibility was thus a collective one which should be maintained. His delegation would continue to support requests for allocations under the regular programme of technical assistance.

69. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) recalled that in the general debate (1574th meeting) his delegation had reaffirmed its opposition in principle to the retention in the regular budget of the section on the regular programme of technical assistance because that was contrary to the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter. Technical assistance activities should be financed through voluntary contributions and the regular programme of technical assistance should accordingly be incorporated into UNDP. That measure would unquestionably be a salutary one, for

² Document E/5303, of 21 May 1973, transmitting document A/9063.

it would have the effect of concentrating all the resources available for technical assistance and ensuring their effective use. His delegation would therefore vote against the amounts requested in section 19 and if they were approved the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic would reserve the right to pay in its national currency that part of its contribution to the regular budget corresponding to section 19.

70. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation was opposed in principle to financing technical assistance activities through allocations provided for under the regular budget and felt that contributions in respect of section 19 should be made to UNDP. The maintenance of the regular programme of technical assistance had been justified prior to the establishment of UNDP but his delegation now believed that the assessed contributions of the United Nations and the specialized agencies should relate to the administration of those organizations and to activities which were of common benefit to all Member States. Despite those reservations, however, he pointed out that his country had paid its contributions in full and in convertible currency.

71. Mr. LOGVIN (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies had been concerned for more than 20 years with the question of technical assistance to developing countries. Spurred by the activities of the United Nations agencies, increasingly great efforts were being made at the international level to assist those countries.

72. His delegation considered that to finance such technical assistance through allocations provided for under the regular budget of the United Nations was a violation of the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter and it felt that the regular programme should be incorporated into UNDP and financed from voluntary contributions. As the representative of the Soviet Union had said, States should increase their contributions to UNDP by amounts corresponding to the amounts they were now paying in respect of the regular programme of technical assistance. The question of the currency in which their contributions were to be made should be left to the free choice of the countries making such contributions. His delegation would not support the amounts requested under section 19 and if they were approved by the Committee the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic would reserve the right to pay in roubles that part of its contribution to the ordinary budget which would correspond to the regular programme.

SECTION 7 – DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (*continued*)* (A/9006, A/9008, A/C.5/1506, A/C.5/1508, A/C.5/L.1111, A/C.5/L.1118)

73. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take up again the consideration of section 7; he pointed out that document A/C.5/L.1118 (provisional text), containing the text of a draft decision proposed by the delegations of

Barbados, Ghana, Guyana, Kenya, Sierra Leone, the Sudan and Zambia, had been circulated. He thought that the last part of the title of that document should read “draft decision of the Fifth Committee” rather than “draft paragraph for inclusion in the report of the Fifth Committee”.

74. Mr. KITI (Kenya) said that the text of the draft decision of which he was a sponsor should be revised to take account of the observations made during the preliminary discussion of the draft which he had submitted orally.

75. As the representative of Brazil had rightly observed, the words “of certain programmes” should be replaced by the words “the statistics, natural resources, ocean economics and technology, and human settlements programmes”. To take account of the observations of the representatives of the United States of America and Canada concerning the essential role played by the Advisory Committee, the words “through the Advisory Committee” should be added after the words “to make available to the Fifth Committee”. Finally, since several delegations had felt that the phrase “without prejudice to any position it might adopt in second reading” was redundant, he suggested redrafting the last two sentences of the draft decision to read:

“The Committee, therefore, while accepting in first reading the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 7, requested the Secretary-General to make available to the Fifth Committee, through the Advisory Committee, before the second reading, the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service on the manpower requirements of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.”

76. He hoped that as the text had been revised in the light of the numerous opinions expressed in the Fifth Committee, a consensus with regard to it could be reached.

77. Mr. SADDLER (Secretariat) said that he appreciated the efforts of the representative of Kenya to reach a compromise but he wished to draw attention to a slight error in the first sentence of the draft decision. The difficulties to which the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management had referred concerned only the programmes relating to statistics and natural resources, and not the programmes relating to ocean economics and technology and to human settlements. It was certain delegations which had expressed doubts concerning the possibility of continuing the execution of the two latter programmes during the second half of the period 1974-1975.

78. The CHAIRMAN thanked the representative of the Secretariat for having clarified that point, which would have to be borne in mind when the final text of the draft decision before the Committee was formulated.

* See the beginning of the meeting.