

Another factor was that the conference might be held in a developing country with limited resources; reducing the appropriations for preparations might impose additional financial burdens on the host Government.

45. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should suspend its consideration of section 18.

### ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

#### *Question of including summaries of the debates in the Committee's reports to the General Assembly*

46. Mr. ABoul GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, recalled that at its 1651st meeting, at the twenty-ninth session, the Committee had decided, during its consideration of the item on United Nations publications and documentation, to dispense with an account of the general discussion on certain items in its report to the General Assembly. That decision was pursuant to paragraph (f) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 2292 (XXII), and, the con-

clusions of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly. The Committee had decided that summaries of its debates on only certain substantive items—corresponding to items 97, 102 and 104 to 107 on the agenda of the current session—should be included in its reports to the General Assembly. The decision had been a provisional one, and the Fifth Committee must now reconsider the matter and decide whether it wished to continue the practice and also include a summary of its debate on item 96 (Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979) in its corresponding report.

47. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee take note of the Rapporteur's statement and take a decision on the matter later.

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.*

## 1704th meeting

Thursday, 2 October 1975, at 11 a.m.

*Chairman:* Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1704

### AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

**Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (continued)** (for the documentation, see 1701st meeting)

**Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (continued)** (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

#### *General discussion (continued)*

1. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the attitude of his delegation to administrative and budgetary questions in the United Nations had been constantly determined by the principled support rendered to the Organization by the Soviet Government through active participation in its activities, and the constant desire to increase its effectiveness as an important instrument for the maintenance of peace and security.

2. In his statement before the General Assembly on 23 September 1975 (2357th plenary meeting), the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gromyko, had stressed that the successful fulfilment of its lofty mission by the United Nations, as an important instrument for consolidating international security, presupposed constant enhancement of the effectiveness of its work.

3. In the examination of budgetary questions, his delegation proceeded from the assumption that budgetary

appropriations must be utilized rationally and be directed, first of all, towards carrying out the basic tasks of the United Nations set forth in the Charter, and towards contributing to the further development of détente so as to make it irreversible. In its concern to consolidate international peace and security, the Soviet Union had brought before the General Assembly at its current session two most important questions, namely, prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, and the conclusion of a treaty on complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. His delegation was hopeful that the General Assembly would endorse those proposals.

4. Proceeding from its principled position, the Soviet Union, as one of the major contributors to the budget, could not agree that the contributions of Member States should be utilized for purposes other than those for which the Organization had been created and, moreover, for aims contrary to the Charter.

5. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 totalled \$737 million, which represented an increase of \$131 million, or 21.6 per cent, as compared with the biennium 1974-1975. If one also took into account the potential additional requirements which might arise owing to decisions of intergovernmental bodies and which, as the Secretary-General had reported, might be of the order of \$45 million, then the increase in the United Nations budget could reach 29 per cent as compared to the previous period and could set a record in the entire history of the United Nations. It must be noted in particular that the United Nations budget was growing at a much faster

rate than the gross national product and national income of Member States. According to the data of IMF, in recent years the real growth of the gross national product and national income of the countries members of the Fund had not exceeded 5 to 6 per cent a year on the average. Meanwhile, the United Nations budget growth rate had reached almost 30 per cent, or from five to six times more than the GNP growth rates of the majority of Member States. Thus, obviously a contradictory situation arose, as the resources of the Member States grew at a substantially slower pace than the appropriations requested in the United Nations budget. That contradiction could no longer continue and it must be resolved by means of more rational and economical planning of United Nations resources. It would be wrong to think that the Member States, particularly the developing countries, derived any benefit from that growth of budget expenditures; budgetary resources were spent mainly on Secretariat personnel costs, and there was no relationship between the increase in the number of United Nations personnel—and in salaries—and the real development needs of the Member States. The unjustifiable rate of growth of the United Nations budget in recent years aroused concern on the part of many Member States, and that was why the United Nations budget for 1974-1975 had not been endorsed by a considerable group of States, including four permanent members of the Security Council. The total contribution of those States accounted for more than 58 per cent of the budget. Unfortunately, the analysis of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 showed that the Secretariat had not heeded those wishes of Member States but had gone even further along the road of unwarranted increase of budgetary expenditures.

6. The proposed budget for 1976-1977 had been drawn up without due regard for possible benefits from the introduction of the new budget programming system, without proper analysis of the effectiveness and advisability of all existing programmes, and without critical reappraisal of those programmes from the point of view of establishing priorities and redistributing the Organization's resources on that basis. The Secretariat had not only built into the proposed budget the continuation of practically all current activities, but had also provided for the expansion of programmes without specific instructions of the General Assembly to that effect. Thus, the proposed budget had again been drawn up in violation of rules 153 and 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly; in many cases, the expansion of activities provided for in the budget was being done without any decision by the Assembly, although, in accordance with the rules of procedure he had mentioned, any increase in expenditures must follow a decision of the Assembly. Expenditures totalling some \$40 million had been included in the budget estimates for the expansion of programmes without General Assembly decisions to that effect. Such practice was inadmissible, and his delegation was in complete accord with the opinion expressed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report that "programme increases should normally follow rather than precede action by the legislative organs" (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 28). The Secretary-General, in his capacity as chief administrative officer of the Organization, must at last take measures to implement the clear-cut and unequivocal guidelines of the General Assembly on that question. His delegation would also like to draw attention to the

inadmissible fact that the budget contained understated data on the real growth of programmes and of total budget growth as compared to previous periods. His delegation was therefore in complete agreement with the material contained in paragraph 19, methodology B, and paragraph 29 of the Advisory Committee's report, indicating that the real growth rate of programmes in the new budget amounted to 6.1 per cent and that the growth of the new budget set a record.

7. In recent years, the deepening of the crisis of the monetary and financial system of capitalist countries and currency rate fluctuations in some of them had negatively influenced the United Nations budget and those of the specialized agencies, resulting in significant additional expenditures. The Secretariat had always followed a doubtful trend to finance the deficit resulting from currency rate fluctuations by increasing the contributions of Member States. However, in its resolution 2150 (XXI), the General Assembly had approved the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, which had indicated that unavoidable increases in expenditure, caused by price increases and other circumstances, should as far as possible be financed by savings, reassessment of programme priorities, redeployment of resources and internal budget adjustments.<sup>1</sup>

8. Taking the foregoing into account, one could not in any way agree to the decision of the Secretariat to include in the budget considerable sums (more than \$118 million) to finance the effect of expected inflation; such an approach was contrary not only to the previous guidelines of the General Assembly on the question but also to the decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session (resolution 3360 (XXIX)), when it had requested the Secretary-General, in solving the problems connected with the effect of inflation on the United Nations budget, to take into account the views expressed by Member States. A large number of Member States had repeatedly expressed their opinion that additional expenditures caused by inflation should be financed out of savings in the execution of the budget or absorbed through contributions—including voluntary contributions—of the developed States where the Secretariat units which suffered from inflation were situated. The Secretariat, in violation of the directives of the General Assembly, had arbitrarily decided to levy the additional expenditures on all Member States. Consequently, his delegation could not endorse the Secretariat's proposal to include in the budget for 1976-1977 the expenditures to absorb inflation, and it expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would take effective measures to lessen the impact of inflation on the United Nations budget.

9. There also arose the question how that tremendous amount of \$118 million had appeared; in that regard, his delegation requested the Secretariat to provide the Fifth Committee with the following information: what would be the increase of actual expenditures from the United Nations budget in 1974 relating to inflation, with breakdown separately for New York, Geneva and Vienna, and

<sup>1</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Annexes, agenda item 80, document A/6343, para. 40.

what would be the expected increase of expenditures from the United Nations budget in 1975 relating to inflation, with breakdown for the same three locations?

10. His delegation believed that the reasons justifying the estimates were of utmost importance when preparing the programme budget. The programme budget must definitely contain information concerning the time-limits for programme implementation and the expenditures planned for programme implementation with details for each year. The Secretariat must provide complete information on staff and financial resources released as a result of the completion or reduction of certain programmes, and submit for the consideration of the General Assembly proposals on the utilization of such resources. Unfortunately, the programme budget proposals under consideration contained practically no information on such matters. Moreover, the Secretariat had, without informing the General Assembly, redeployed significant numbers of staff without even giving the reasons for its decisions. In future, the Secretariat should include in the proposed budget complete information on the resources allocated to each programme—expressed in man-months—and on the resources released for each programme, and submit to the General Assembly proposals on the subsequent utilization of such resources. His delegation wished to emphasize its disagreement with the Secretariat practice of increasing continuously and automatically the number of staff, which entailed an irrational and unjustified increase in budgetary expenditures. Requests for staff must be based on the objective requirements of the Organization's priority programmes, and not on the assumption of an arbitrary and automatic increase of staff each year. At the current stage, there were approximately 10,000 permanent posts in the United Nations, the cost of which accounted for almost 80 per cent of the budget. As everyone knew, however, in many parts of the Secretariat, employees were not fully occupied and productivity was often in need of improvement. In such conditions, the Secretary-General's request for 826 new posts was unjustifiable. It was necessary, instead, to put existing personnel to better use and to use the programme budget as an effective means to control the implementation of programmes and ensure the optimum use of United Nations resources, including, above all, its manpower resources. The Joint Inspection Unit should be made responsible for overseeing the effective utilization of Secretariat personnel. His delegation could not, for its part, approve the requests for additional permanent and temporary staff.

11. His delegation noted with concern the clear trend whereby posts which had previously been financed from extra-budgetary resources were transferred to the United Nations regular budget without a special decision of the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee had also drawn attention to that trend in paragraphs 52 and 53 of its report, and his delegation fully endorsed its recommendation on that question.

12. The reclassification of posts, which was regularly requested by the Secretary-General, was not justified in most cases, since requests were not based on an increase in either the responsibilities or workload of staff members, and reclassification merely constituted a means of promoting employees, which led to considerable additional ex-

penditures for salaries. The United Nations post classification should be based exclusively on the requirements of the Organization's work programmes. His delegation therefore fully supported the recommendation in paragraph 62 of the report of the Advisory Committee.

13. That report showed that the Secretariat did not take sufficiently vigorous action to realize greater savings. Thus, while it provided services to various United Nations agencies, over and above those which were partially reimbursed as overhead costs, the Secretariat did not take every possible step to see that the costs of such services were fully reimbursed by the agencies in question. As could be seen in particular from paragraph 22.91 of the report of the Advisory Committee, agencies such as UNDP and UNICEF did not reimburse the United Nations fully for the services of the Purchase and Transportation Service, which amounted to 21 man-years or approximately \$300,000 a year. Similar situations existed in the case of other Secretariat units. His delegation endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General should take urgent steps to ensure the full reimbursement of the costs of services thus rendered. The Fifth Committee should consider a report on the implementation of that recommendation at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

14. The unjustifiable tendency to increase the budget must be reversed through such means as the following: the volume of programme activities should be determined on the basis of the amount of resources that Member States were willing to provide to the United Nations for their implementation; strict priorities must be established for the implementation of programmes, with due account being taken of the importance, urgency and real possibilities of implementing them within the proposed time-limits; in establishing such priorities, account should be taken of the availability of other possible methods for the execution of programmes in the framework of the United Nations system, and attempts should be made to increase co-ordination and eliminate duplication.

15. Full advantage should be taken of the considerable possibilities for increasing the effectiveness of the large staff of the Secretariat, whose salaries accounted for nearly 80 per cent of the budget, so that new programmes could be executed without additional staff through an increase in productivity and a more effective organization of work. When determining the sources of financing for new programmes, internal resources should be utilized to the fullest extent, including resources released as a result of the completion of earlier programmes, the discontinuance of outdated or unimportant programmes and the elimination of duplication. The sessional meetings of new bodies and new conferences should be financed from resources released by such means as reducing the number of United Nations bodies, shortening the length of their sessions, organizing their meetings more rationally and reducing expenditure on documentation. Finally, for the purpose of achieving effective stabilization of the United Nations budget, which should not exceed the average rate of annual growth of the gross national product and national income of Member States.

16. The situation with regard to the geographical distribution of posts in the Secretariat was still unsatisfactory. New

staff were recruited mainly from among nationals of overrepresented countries—a practice which was at variance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter and numerous resolutions of the General Assembly. The activities of the Secretariat would be more effective if, in accordance with the principle of broad geographical distribution enunciated in the Charter, all Member States were equitably represented without discrimination. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of the Secretary-General, the situation showed little improvement. In order to implement consistently the resolutions of the General Assembly relating to personnel questions, practical measures were needed: the decisions of the Assembly regarding respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution in recruitment should be strictly complied with; the recruitment of nationals of overrepresented countries should be stopped and only nationals of underrepresented countries should be recruited—especially nationals of the Soviet Union, which, despite being one of the countries which paid the highest contributions, continued to be underrepresented—the decisions of the General Assembly concerning retirement should be strictly implemented; the granting of permanent contracts should be discontinued and the possibilities thus created should be used to recruit specialists from underrepresented countries.

17. His delegation regretted that once again the proposed budget contained estimates to cover expenses incurred in violation of the Charter, namely, for payment of interest and principal on the United Nations bond issue. Those expenses were the sad and burdensome consequence of operations in the Congo and the Middle East carried out in violation of the Charter. Faithful to the Charter, the Soviet Union had stated its categorical opposition to the decision to undertake those operations. It did not and would not accept any responsibility in respect of those operations, and had no intention of contributing towards the expenses arising from them. Full responsibility for those operations belonged to the countries which had imposed them on the United Nations; they should therefore bear full responsibility for the financial consequences.

18. His delegation reaffirmed its position regarding the method of financing technical assistance. Under Article 17 of the Charter, the United Nations budget could not be used to finance technical assistance which, as in the case of UNDP, should be financed exclusively from voluntary contributions. The Soviet Union would therefore, as in the past, continue to pay in roubles that portion of its assessment which corresponded to technical assistance activities.

19. His delegation shared the concern of others over the critical financial situation of the Organization and wished to do all possible to right the situation, while observing the requirements of the Charter. The means to remedy those financial difficulties should be sought after careful examination of the reasons which had caused them. It was well known that the Organization found itself in a difficult financial situation because of considerable expenditures incurred in violation of the perfectly clear provisions of the Charter. The difficulties had become even more acute when the \$16 million still owed by the Chiang Kai-shek régime had been included in the United Nations short-term deficit. It was impossible to agree to a solution which forced all

Member States to defray that régime's arrears in contributions.

20. In 1972, in the Special Committee on the Financial Situation of the United Nations, his delegation had put forward a proposal<sup>2</sup> which would provide a genuine and just way of settling the question of the Organization's financial difficulties. It also took into consideration the need for strict observance of the United Nations Charter in the solution of that complex question, and his delegation continued to believe that its proposal could form a satisfactory basis for such a solution.

21. With regard to the financing of UNEF, including UNDOF, it was disturbing to note that the Secretariat did not keep Member States sufficiently informed about the way in which the funds appropriated for those purposes were spent. The report of the Secretary-General on that question should provide the necessary information and justifications both on future and past expenditures.

22. His delegation greatly appreciated the efforts made by the Advisory Committee to strengthen the effectiveness of the Organization's activities and achieve greater savings, and supported all its recommendations to that end. However, he hoped that it would play a more active part in determining ways to reduce expenditure and would keep a closer check on the measures taken as a follow-up to its recommendations.

23. His delegation supported the recommendations in the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) regarding that part of the over-all mechanism of the United Nations which concerned the financial aspects of United Nations activities.

24. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) noted that, of the appropriations of \$737 million requested by the Secretary-General for 1976-1977, the Advisory Committee had requested reductions totalling \$15 million, or about 2 per cent of the total. While reserving his delegation's position on individual items, he could accept the Secretary-General's estimates as amended by the Advisory Committee.

25. However, he was concerned that inflation and monetary instability had seriously eroded real programme growth for the biennium 1976-1977. That was particularly serious since the General Assembly had recognized at its seventh special session that the United Nations system would have to play a greater role in the establishment of a new international economic order. To be sure, the Organization's expenditure amounted to almost \$1 million per day and Pakistan, whose contribution to the United Nations budget constituted a far from negligible burden, was anxious to see that the money raised from Member States was spent with maximum regard for economy and efficiency. It should be borne in mind, however, that world-wide military expenditures were approaching \$900 million a day, which was more than the entire biennial budget of the United Nations.

26. His delegation supported the policy of full budgeting, which anticipated the impact of factors such as inflation

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Twenty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 29, para. 16.

instead of reacting to them *ex post facto* by supplementary estimates. With the current substantial rate of inflation, that method was preferable, particularly since the Working Capital Fund was for all practical purposes depleted. Full budgeting helped to reduce cash flow problems and spared the Fifth Committee acrimonious debate at a subsequent date. His Government welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal to double the resources of that Fund.

27. His delegation agreed with CPC and the Advisory Committee that the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1977 (A/10006/Add.1) contained innovative concepts and represented a major contribution towards the establishment of a real system of planning in the United Nations. The Secretary-General had once again employed the incremental approach in drawing up the plan and had suggested certain criteria for determining priorities (such as effectiveness, political considerations, opportunity, specificity, and the staff/workload ration) which to a certain degree lacked precision and objectivity. The thematic approach would, under certain conditions, give a broader view of certain crucial problems, especially those which were amenable to multisectoral treatment.

28. With regard to the budget, his delegation shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 11 of its report that a more careful analysis in favour of new or more important ones. However, under the incremental approach, that was scarcely possible and the legislative organs were therefore driven to accepting the existing base and accommodating new activities by the addition of new resources. That method distorted the real priorities of Member States whereas the thematic approach would, at least in theory, enable the competent intergovernmental body to decide to which activity the total funds requested should be allocated as opposed to only the additional funds provided for. It was obviously difficult to abolish existing institutions and to start from "zero base". However, his delegation fully agreed with the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 79 of its report as to the need for weeding out obsolete projects and those of less priority so as to redeploy the resources to meet new decisions.

29. His delegation favoured the Secretary-General's suggestion (*ibid.*, paras. 61 and 62) that the medium-term plan and the programme budget should be considered in alternate years and believed that, in order to implement General Assembly resolution 3199 (XXVIII), the medium-term plan should be formulated one year before the budget. Thus, on the basis of the decision taken by the legislative organs, the plan would define in general terms the true objectives of the United Nations and the general policies which would make it possible to achieve them, while the budget, which was the concrete manifestation of the plan, would indicate the necessary inputs of staff and funds and the objectives achieved, such as meetings held and studies carried out. That procedure would facilitate the task of the Secretariat and of delegations and would enable the Secretariat to focus its attention on the medium-term plan. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly would decide at its current session to consider the plan and the budget in alternate years without further delay.

30. His delegation also supported the principle of the rolling plan, which enabled the Organization to readjust its

priorities and targets during the period of the plan, and would have no objection to the adoption of a six-year rolling plan, in conformity with those of the specialized agencies.

31. Consideration of the plan would be entrusted to CPC, while the Advisory Committee would consider the programme budget, and both documents would be examined by the Economic and Social Council and the Fifth Committee also in alternate years. In order to avoid too rigid a compartmentalization, CPC could continue to study both the plan and the budget of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the Advisory Committee could continue to consider the budget and the plan.

32. In that connexion, he noted that the recommendations made by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery in its report (A/10117 and Corr.1) had been largely aimed at strengthening the programming aspect of the medium-term plan and reforming CPC. In his view, the Advisory Committee was discharging its mandate efficiently, since its members, selected on the basis of broad geographical representation and on personal qualifications, could give thorough consideration to the items referred to them, because they could hold long sessions. CPC, on the other hand, had been allocated only one week in 1975 to consider the medium-term plan, inevitably in a cursory fashion. In paragraph 34 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), the Advisory Committee had pointed out that the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and other subsidiary organs could play a major role by carefully scrutinizing the programmes of work submitted by their secretariats and following up approved projects and activities. His delegation considered that the Council had over-all responsibility in the matter but, in view of the size and the limited time at its disposal, it should be assisted by a smaller advisory committee. That body should obviously be CPC, which should be strengthened and revitalized, should be given sufficient time, and, while retaining its intergovernmental character, should be composed of experts so that it could play vis-à-vis the Economic and Social Council the same role as the Advisory Committee played vis-à-vis the Fifth Committee. In that connexion, it was regrettable that, in spite of the soundness of its recommendations in paragraph 77 of its report, the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery had not gone far enough; it would not in fact suffice to give CPC more time—four to six weeks each year—for its work and urge Member States to appoint high-calibre representatives, for the majority of States which were members of CPC would have to continue to rely on the members of their permanent missions, who did not have time to carry out a detailed examination of the medium-term plan and budget, because the calendar of conferences was very heavy. It was essential not only that the United Nations should ask Governments to appoint one or more high-level experts to represent them on CPC but also that the Organization should pay the subsistence allowances and travel expenses of those intergovernmental experts, as it did in the case of the members of the Advisory Committee. The Governments of all countries, in particular those of developing countries, would thus be encouraged to designate high-level experts to represent them on CPC, which would improve the quality of that Committee's deliberations. Far from increasing the

expenses of the United Nations, such a strengthening of CPC would result in greater effectiveness and economy, since CPC, as an intergovernmental body, would be able to weed out obsolete programmes and eliminate activities of lower priority, a task which the Advisory Committee could not perform, since it was a body of experts.

33. He was aware that the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery had not taken a firm decision on the question of emoluments and travel expenses for CPC members, because it was afraid that other bodies might demand the same privileges. His delegation wished to state emphatically that it would be opposed to the extension of such a system to other intergovernmental bodies. The case of CPC, as an advisory committee to the Economic and Social Council, was unique and could not be compared to that of other bodies.

34. His delegation felt that it would not suffice to forward the Working Group's report to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, which would not be able to consider the United Nations programme and budget machinery as thoroughly as the Working Group had done in 1975. He therefore proposed that, after adopting the recommendation regarding the review of the medium-term plan and proposed programme budget in alternate years, the Fifth Committee should forward the Working Group's report to the *Ad Hoc* Committee for favourable consideration. He hoped that the question of travel expenses and subsistence allowances to members of CPC, discussed in paragraph 55 of the Working Group's report, would be resolved in a manner that would strengthen CPC and enable it to carry out its mandate effectively.

#### AGENDA ITEM 96

**Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (continued)** (for the documentation, see 1701st meeting)

##### *First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)*

#### SECTION 18. HUMAN RIGHTS (*concluded*) (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

35. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) paid tribute to the work of the Division of Human Rights. He pointed out an example of duplication which affected section 18, since some of the Division's activities were financed out of appropriations under section 15, which dealt with the regular programme of technical assistance. Observing that the Division had 42 Professional posts as against 30 General Service posts, he agreed with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that it was a division that was led by too many generals, especially since it was often the General Service staff who were the most active. It was, therefore, not necessary to approve the establishment of additional Professional posts and still less to reclassify as Principal Officer (D-1) the post of senior officer (P-5) occupied by the Head of the New York Liaison Office. It would be unusual for 5 General Service staff to be supervised by a Principal Officer (D-1), and if the incumbent of that post deserved a promotion, he

should be transferred to Geneva. If the staff of the New York Liaison Office was increased after the transfer of the Division of Human Rights to Geneva, it would be tantamount to allowing someone who had left by the door to climb back through the window. In reviewing the staff of liaison offices of United Nations organs and specialized agencies, he had observed that as a general rule it was officials recruited from the developed countries who occupied the D-1 and D-2 posts—which gave grounds for thinking that the policy of liaison offices was not impartial.

36. It was stated in paragraph 18.1 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008 and Corr.2) that the Secretary-General was requesting an appropriation of nearly \$5,300,000 to cover the "direct costs" of United Nations activities in the field of human rights, whereas it appeared from table 18-7 of the proposed programme budget (A/10006) that the Secretary-General estimated that the apportioned indirect costs would amount to nearly \$8 million, bringing the total to \$13,300,000. He was of the opinion that in being asked to approve an appropriation of \$5,299,000, the Fifth Committee was being obliged to approve indirectly expenditure under other sections; the indirect apportioned costs of financial, conference and other services, which would be added to the amount requested by the Secretary-General, should be indicated in each case.

37. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) regretted that he was unable to approve the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General under section 18, particularly with regard to the increases attributed to inflation and fluctuations in exchange rates. His delegation had explained in its policy statement that such costs should be covered by economies and by voluntary contributions from the countries in which the main United Nations offices were situated.

38. His delegation was also unable to approve the increase which would result from the establishment of the new posts requested by the Secretary-General. The additional workload due to programme growth could be carried out by the existing staff of the Division of Human Rights, provided it improved its productivity and expenditure on the less important activities was curtailed. Consequently, his delegation would abstain in the voting.

39. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said he had doubts about the creation of a new unit in the Division of Human Rights to service the projected Human Rights Committee. Although his delegation shared the Advisory Committee's views on the subject, it feared that the Human Rights Committee might be established at the end of the thirtieth session, when it would be difficult for the Advisory Committee to examine the financial implications of setting up the unit.

40. Assuming that the Human Rights Committee was established in the near future, the Fifth Committee could, without infringing the principle laid down by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 18.7 of its report, adopt one of the three following solutions: first, it could defer the examination of section 18 of the proposed programme budget until the Secretariat could submit a request for a specific amount on which the Advisory Committee and subsequently the



Fifth Committee could take a decision; second, it could vote at the current meeting on the Advisory Committee's recommendation, on the understanding that, if the Secretary-General shortly had available the requisite information, a definitive decision would be taken on that particular point during the second reading of section 18 or when the Secretary-General submitted, if need be, a request for a revised appropriation; third, if the Secretariat considered that the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights would come into force after the closure of the thirtieth session, it could forthwith propose a tentative date from which it would be authorized to spend the amount required to set up the new unit to service the Human Rights Committee.

41. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) hoped that, from its inception, the Human Rights Committee to be established would have at its disposal the necessary Secretariat services.

42. Mr. EKONG (Nigeria) agreed with the Advisory Committee about the requests for new posts by the Secretary-General: the Division's existing staff could undertake the preparatory work for the world conference on action to combat racism and racial discrimination. The tendency to create new posts whenever new activities were envisaged should be halted; maximum use should be made of personnel already serving the Organization. He hoped, however, that his remarks would not be interpreted by the Committee to mean that his delegation attached less importance to the proposed world conference.

43. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) shared the concern expressed at the 1703rd meeting by the representative of Upper Volta about the excessive increase in high-level appointments in the Division of Human Rights. Like the Ghanaian delegation, he also wanted an assurance that the world conference on action to combat racism and racial discrimination, which was so important for the promotion of human rights, would have sufficient funds to make its work effective. The Dominican Republic would vote in favour of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

44. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) pointed out that the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights might not become operative within the near future. The Protocol would come into effect three months after being ratified by the thirty-sixth signatory States. Certain Governments had not progressed as far along that route as the representative of Australia seemed to believe. As for the Secretary-General's requests for new posts for the unit which would service the projected Human Rights Committee, the Advisory Committee had given, in paragraph 18.7 of its report, its reasons for recommending that the decision should be postponed. Such considerations were of a purely technical nature, and the Fifth Committee should support that recommendation.

45. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) stressed that there was nothing in the report of the Advisory Committee or in previous statements by its Chairman to suggest that the Advisory Committee was not giving due consideration to the world conference on action to combat racism and racial discrimination. The remarks of the Advisory Com-

mittee were of a purely technical nature and did not at all question the utility of that conference. The Advisory Committee had concluded that a slight reduction in the number of posts requested by the Secretary-General was possible without affecting, in the least, the quality of the preparatory work for the conference. Since the conference was scheduled for 1978, it would be possible to review the matter in the context of the progress report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

46. The Advisory Committee had never questioned the importance of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It was solely for practical reasons—namely, the need to wait for the setting-up of the new committee and the formulation of the work involved—that the Advisory Committee had recommended that a decision on the establishment of the proposed unit should be postponed.

47. Since the Belgian delegation had, at the previous meeting, drawn a parallel between paragraph 18.9 and paragraph 61 of the report of the Advisory Committee, he wished to recall that the recommendations contained in paragraph 61 were of a general nature: the Advisory Committee had made an over-all decision on reclassification, and it was for the Secretary-General to decide in which divisions or departments the reclassifications recommended by the Advisory Committee would take effect.

48. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the Secretariat had already begun a study of posts to be reclassified. Although no definite decision had yet been reached, the P-5 post in the New York Liaison Office was not on the list of posts to be reclassified. He pointed out, for the information of the Committee, that the head of the Liaison Office was also the secretary of the Third Committee.

49. One delegation had expressed concern that there might be a possible overlapping between funds requested under section 15 and section 18. He therefore wished to point out that the \$490,000 requested under section 15 for human rights would be used solely for training fellowships and information seminars. Those strictly operational activities should not be included in the section on human rights.

50. With regard to the question raised by the representative of Algeria on the breakdown of the direct and indirect costs of the human rights programme, he stated that there was nothing peculiar about section 18. In drawing up the budget estimates, the Secretariat had adhered to the wishes of the General Assembly; if the apportioned indirect costs seemed quite high, it was because it was normal in the field of human rights for meeting and conference expenses to be high.

51. Since the representative of the Upper Volta had pointed out at the previous meeting that the Advisory Committee drew attention in paragraph 18.9 of its report to the absence of any workload indicators for the Division of Human Rights, it should be noted that that unit was not the only one of which that was true. Some departments, like the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which were better equipped than others, were in a position to draw up a fairly detailed work programme, but others could

not do so and had to give a precise description of the task envisaged when they requested an additional post. In the case of the P-2 post mentioned in paragraph 18.9 of the Advisory Committee's report, the request had been based on the findings of the Administrative Management Service to the effect that the staff responsible for documentation should be strengthened.

52. As far as the relationship between the number of General Service staff and of other officials in the Division was concerned, the Secretary-General was open to all suggestions by the Fifth Committee.

53. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that he would have been in favour of reclassifying the post of Head of the New York Liaison Office to D-1 if its incumbent had been transferred to the Division of Human Rights at Geneva; however, a post of Principal Officer (D-1) could not be justified in New York.

54. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that, with regard to the expenditures for the group which was to service the projected Human Rights Committee, he was prepared to accept the position of the Advisory Committee in view of the information given by the United Kingdom representative.

55. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, in the light of all the recommendations of the Advisory Committee (see the 1703rd meeting, para. 35), the appropriation under section 18 had been reduced to \$4,975,600.

*An appropriation of \$4,975,600 under section 18 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 73 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.*

56. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that his delegation, for the reasons it had already given, (1702nd meeting) had not participated in the vote and would not participate in the vote on the other sections: he reserved his position on the question of incorporation into the budget of expenditures attributable to inflation.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

57. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) pointed out that the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Mr. Strong, was currently in New York and that it would therefore be useful to proceed as soon as possible to the consideration in first reading of section 13 of the proposed programme budget, relating to UNEP.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee endorsed the proposal by the representative of Algeria.

#### *Question of including summaries of the debates in the Committee's reports to the General Assembly (concluded)*

59. The CHAIRMAN, recalling the statement made by the Rapporteur at the previous meeting, invited representatives to express their views on the question of including summaries of the debates in the reports of the Committee to the General Assembly.

60. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia), supported by Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), said he thought that the Committee

should summarize in its reports only the debates on those items which it had decided, at the twenty-ninth session, should be given such treatment. A summary of the debates on the proposed programme budget would be far too voluminous for inclusion in the report on that item. Interested delegations could always refer to the summary records of the meetings in question.

61. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that he had always been in favour of economy, in the area of documentation as in others. There as elsewhere, duplication should be avoided and the trend towards increasing or enlarging documents curbed, while their quality should be improved. He therefore shared the view expressed by the representative of Australia and the Philippines.

62. However, the fact that certain debates would not be summarized in the Committee's reports raised the problem of the date on which summary records were issued. For example, after more than a week of general discussion and the first reading of two sections of the proposed budget, only the summary record of the Committee's first meeting of the current session had been issued in Russian. There had been cases in which his delegation had not received summary records of one session until May the following year. If the Committee's reports were not to contain a summary of all debates, all the more attention should be given to issuing, in good time and in all working languages, the summary records of meetings.

63. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation thought it essential to include in the relevant report of the Committee a summary of the debates on the pension scheme.

64. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the twenty-ninth session that topic had already been among those on which the debates had been summarized in the reports and said that the same procedure would be followed if the previous year's decision was maintained.

65. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan) said that he would prefer to see the Committee summarize in its reports only the debates on questions to which delegations attached particular importance; the number of questions on which the debates were summarized in the reports need not be as great as it had been the previous year.

66. The CHAIRMAN noted that the tendency was to maintain as it stood the list of items requiring a summary of debates and said he thought that it would be difficult to decide which questions were of particular importance to delegations, as the representative of Pakistan had suggested. If there was no objection, he would take it that the questions on which a summary of the debate would appear in the Committee's reports to the General Assembly would be the same as at the twenty-ninth session.

*It was so decided.*

67. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, replying to a question by Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), said that those questions corresponded to items 97, 102, 104, 105, 106 and 107 of the agenda of the thirtieth session.

*The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.*