

1746th meeting

Monday, 24 November 1975, at 3.20 p.m.

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

A/C.5/SR.1746

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (continued) (for the previous A/... and A/C.5/... documents, see the 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6, A/C.5/1682/Add.1, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1229-1233, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1250, A/C.5/L.1251)

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

SECTION 3. POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TRUSTEESHIP AND DECOLONIZATION ACTIVITIES (concluded)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2, A/C.5/L.1251)

1. Mr. ZIMBA (Zambia) noted that, owing to the attainment of independence by former Portuguese Territories and other Territories, some delegations maintained that the estimates for the Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization required a more drastic reduction than that recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2). His delegation did not support that view, because the situation in southern Africa in regard to decolonization did not yet give grounds for optimism.

2. Now that the international community was psychologically prepared for decolonization, greater attention should be directed to the decolonization of Southern Rhodesia and Namibia, which could be achieved only by allocating sufficient funds to the Department concerned. Even though no substantial reduction had been recommended by the Advisory Committee, his delegation would have preferred the Fifth Committee to endorse the Secretary-General's proposals in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006).

3. The Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization required funds in order to carry out in-depth research on a number of questions with a view to facilitating the decolonization of southern Africa. Those questions included: (a) military relationships in southern Africa, with special reference to the military build-up and actions of South Africa in Namibia and the use of that Territory for incursions into neighbouring countries; (b) relationships of foreign economic companies in the region; (c) continued violations of economic sanctions against Southern Rhodesia; and (d) brutality against and arrests of Africans in Zimbabwe and Namibia in order to perpetuate *apartheid*.

4. In addition, funds were required to deal with the problems that had arisen in southern Africa as a result of a growing number of refugees from Namibia and Zimbabwe. Moreover, it was necessary to maintain supreme vigilance at all times in order to thwart the efforts of the minority régimes of South Africa and Rhodesia aimed at dividing the oppressed masses in order to perpetuate minority rule over them.

5. Zambia had paid a heavy price, in human lives as well as financial terms, as a result of United Nations sanctions against Southern Rhodesia. It would continue to make sacrifices with a view to preserving ideals of justice, liberty and peace. His delegation would therefore support the Algerian draft decision (A/C.5/L.1251).

6. He drew attention to a decision by the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa concerning the allocation of \$100,000 to the Programme, to the recommendations made as a result of the evaluation of the Programme as requested by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session, and to a draft resolution on the Programme adopted by consensus in the Fourth Committee.¹ Expansion of the Programme was vital in order to meet growing needs arising from recent developments in the region and the administration of the Programme also needed to be strengthened.

7. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that in the Secretariat's opinion the draft decision submitted by Algeria had no financial implications; it merely entailed a reallocation of resources under section 3.

8. In reply to the questions raised at the 1737th meeting by the representative of the United States of America, he said that the estimated costs for 1976-1977 of maintaining the South West Africa People's Organization Office in New York was double the previous appropriation because it covered two years, whereas the earlier appropriation had been for 1975 only. The transfer from New York to Lusaka of 2 posts in the Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia was expected to generate economies of \$15,000, owing to the lower cost of living at Lusaka; however, additional provisions in respect of travel, supplies and material would be required. With regard to estimates for the Trusteeship Council and for the Special Committee against *Apartheid*, he said that, as was indicated in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.20 of the proposed programme for the biennium 1976-1977, the estimates were tentative and would not be finalized until the annual programmes of work had been drawn up.

* Resumed from the 1740th meeting.

¹ Subsequently adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 3422 (XXX).

9. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), recalling that the representatives of the United States of America, Belgium and Canada had asked why it had not been possible to make reductions in the staffing requirements of the Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization, said it was true that there had been a substantial reduction in the number of dependent Territories during 1974, from 37 to 32. However, as would be seen from the explanations given in paragraph 3.35 of the proposed programme budget and paragraph 3.8 of the Advisory Committee's report, it was the opinion of the Secretary-General and of the Advisory Committee that it was nevertheless unlikely that there would be any immediate decrease in the workload since the legislative bodies concerned—notably the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the United Nations Council for Namibia—would be called upon to give closer attention to the remaining problems of decolonization.

10. As far as the secretariat of the Trusteeship Council was concerned, the number of Professional staff had in fact been reduced to 2, which was felt to be the minimum required to service the Council and the forthcoming visiting mission to Micronesia.

11. More generally, there had been no reduction during 1975 in the servicing requirements of the Special Committee, nor was it expected that there would be any reduction during 1976. On the contrary, additional demands were expected to be placed on the Department in regard to the servicing of a larger number of special and other visiting missions. For example, during 1975, in addition to a regular visiting mission to Montserrat, the Department had been called upon to service two special missions, the second of which had been to the Spanish Sahara and had involved the detailing of 3 staff members for a period of five months. It was anticipated that similar demands might arise during 1976 in connexion with several dependent Territories whose decolonization raised special problems.

12. The Secretary-General was, of course, very conscious of the need to make the optimum use of the staff available and intended to take advantage of any spare capacity and to apply it to areas where additional resources were required. During the current phase of decolonization, the problems had become much more complex and in many cases required intensive in-depth study.

13. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation under section 3 recommended by the Advisory Committee (see 1737th meeting, para. 37).

An appropriation in the amount of \$7,288,600 under section 3 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 76 votes to 2.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to adopt the draft decision submitted by Algeria (A/C.5/L.1251).

It was so decided.

15. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had voted for the appropriation under section 3. However, it would not have been able to approve the funds appropriated to cover inflationary increases if they had been put to the vote separately.

16. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that, if a vote had been taken on the Algerian draft decision, his delegation would have abstained.

United Nations public information policies and activities (concluded)* (A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245)

17. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) formally introduced, on behalf of the sponsors, the second revised version (A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2) of their draft decision.

18. The objective was to establish a time-table for the programming and budgeting of the activities of OPI. Section 21 of the proposed programme budget contained budget estimates for OPI for the biennium 1976-1977, while the report of the Secretary-General on United Nations public information policies and activities (A/C.5/1679) described the activities of OPI over the same period, making certain suggestions and proposals, some of which had financial implications. If the suggestions in the Secretary-General's report were approved, supplementary estimates would probably be submitted in 1976 or 1977. Yet decisions by the Fifth Committee on questions with financial implications should be taken only after such implications had been submitted and considered. According to the concepts of programme budgeting, the report of the Secretary-General was an input for the programming process, and its implications should be reflected in the budget estimates of OPI for the next budgetary cycle as an output.

19. The report of the Secretary-General should be considered, normally and as a matter of principle, in off-budget years. Consideration of United Nations public information policies and activities in off-budget years did not, of course, preclude consideration of the question in budget years. The budget estimates of OPI and progress and interim performance reports would be considered in budget years.

20. Referring to the amendments submitted by the Soviet delegation (A/C.5/L.1245), he said that the words "by the Fifth Committee" had been deleted from the revised draft decision before the Committee. As for the proposal to insert the words "at greater length", he said that the objective of the draft decision was to decide when and not how United Nations public information policies and activities should be considered; the members of the Committee could discuss the subject in detail or at greater length if they so wished, and scheduling the item in off-budget years would provide all members with an opportunity to do so. Accordingly, he appealed to the Soviet representative not to insist upon his amendment.

21. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that the Committee had already

* Resumed from the 1740th meeting.

resolved the question raised in draft decision A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2 by adopting draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4. Accordingly, there was no need to vote on the draft decision before the Committee, or on the amendment he had submitted.

22. Although the sponsors had accepted his amendment to delete the words "by the Fifth Committee", the draft decision still implied that the Fifth Committee would be considering the question. His delegation maintained that the question of United Nations public information policies and activities should be a separate item to be allocated by the General Committee at the thirty-first session. Accordingly, if a vote was taken on the draft decision, his delegation would vote against it.

The draft decision (A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2) was adopted by 45 votes to 9, with 16 abstentions.

23. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to resume its consideration of the draft decision submitted by Pakistan (A/C.5/L.1243).

24. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) supported the draft decision and expressed his confidence that internal management changes would lead to improvements and expedite the publication of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* without an increase in the estimated expenditure. Under the current system, substantive departments prepared the first drafts of the *Yearbook*, and there was considerable delay, as such a task was often assigned low priority by the departments concerned. He suggested that the work of preparing the *Yearbook* should be centralized in the Yearbook Unit, with its 4 Professional and 4 General Service posts, and that the introductions to the various sections should then be reviewed by the substantive departments concerned.

25. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether there were any financial implications, currently or for the future, in the draft decision. He also asked the sponsor of the draft decision why he had singled out the *Yearbook* for special treatment from the many OPI publications.

26. Mr. BENKIRANE (Morocco) welcomed the draft decision, as he considered the *Yearbook* an important reference work.

27. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that draft decision A/C.5/L.1243 had no financial implications. At the thirty-first session, after the Secretary-General had explored ways and means of ensuring more timely publication of the *Yearbook*, recommendations might be submitted, and any financial implications of such recommendations would be considered at that session.

28. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan), responding to the comment by the Soviet representative, said that he had singled out the *Yearbook* precisely because there were so many other documents that foreign offices and delegations felt the need to keep abreast of events by reading the *Yearbook*.

29. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) supported the draft decision.

30. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Director of the Budget Division for his assurance that the draft decision had no financial implications under rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. On that understanding he would vote for the draft decision.

31. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) supported the draft decision, which had no financial implications.

The draft decision (A/C.5/L.1243) was adopted without objection.

32. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the opinion of the Legal Counsel, submitted in response to a request made at the 1740th meeting; the text of that opinion had been circulated as a conference room paper.² As there were no comments on it, he announced that the Committee had concluded its consideration of the question of United Nations public information policies and activities.

AGENDA ITEM 101

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General (*continued*)* (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10299, A/C.5/1670, A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1255, A/C.5/L.1256)

33. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider a new revised version (A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2) of the draft resolution before it, which incorporated the Yugoslav amendment (A/C.5/L.1256). The Committee also had before it three amendments submitted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (A/C.5/L.1255).

34. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) announced that the Yugoslav amendment had been accepted by the sponsors with a few minor alterations. However, none of the amendments submitted by the Soviet Union had been incorporated in the draft resolution for the following reasons. The first amendment was unacceptable, although the sponsors had reflected it to a certain extent by using the stronger wording "as modified by" in operative paragraph 2. The second Soviet amendment was also unacceptable. The third Soviet amendment seemed superfluous in view of the incorporation of the Yugoslav amendment.

35. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) recalled that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal that subsidiary bodies of subsidiary bodies should cease to be provided with meeting records of any other kind than sound recording (A/C.5/1670, para. 14, criterion 6). It seemed to his delegation that, in formulating that criterion, the Secretary-General had drawn an artificial distinction between, on the one hand, subsidiary bodies of main organs and, on the other, subsidiary bodies of subsidiary bodies. Neither the Secretary-General nor the Advisory Committee had taken into account the possibility that the work of subsidiary bodies in the second category might rightly be considered more important than the work of subsidiary

* Resumed from the 1742nd meeting.

² Document A/C.5/XXX/CRP.7 of 19 November 1975.

bodies in the first category. The validity of that argument was proved by the fact that the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System had proposed the abolition of eight bodies directly responsible to the Economic and Social Council but not of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, which was responsible only to the Commission on Human Rights. Summary records of the Sub-Commission would assume heightened importance in the future owing to the impending entry into force of the conventions on human rights. The fact that the members of the Sub-Commission were experts also added to that body's authority and weight. Moreover, the application of criterion 6 would compel the Secretariat to draft far more detailed reports, thereby incurring costs that would largely offset the anticipated economies. The Sub-Commission, like all other bodies of the Economic and Social Council, would be required to apply conscientiously decision 65 (ORG-75), adopted by the Council on 15 January 1975, requesting its subsidiary bodies to limit the provision of summary records to items in relation to which summary records were deemed essential.

36. In view of the foregoing, his delegation proposed an amendment to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2 which would add the words "taking into consideration the merits of each particular case" at the end of operative paragraph 4.

37. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) asked whether the delegation of the Soviet Union was prepared to withdraw its amendments in the light of the explanations provided by the representative of the Philippines. As far as the first Soviet amendment was concerned, it went without saying that, if the Secretary-General applied the criteria, any changes in the budget would be reflected in the Secretary-General's performance report. The second Soviet amendment was unacceptable because it would not allow the Secretary-General any flexibility in applying the criteria. As the representative of the Philippines had pointed out, the third Soviet amendment had been made redundant by the acceptance of the Yugoslav amendment.

38. His delegation could not support the oral amendment submitted by the delegation of Greece in that it was substantive and might lead to a prolonged discussion.

39. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation could agree to withdraw the second and third of its amendments (A/C.5/L.1255), even though it did not find the text of operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution altogether satisfactory. However, it maintained its first amendment, which derived from a recommendation by the Advisory Committee and embodied a principle of great significance. He had been astonished to hear certain members of the Fifth Committee who were also members of the Advisory Committee state that the financial implications of the draft resolution could be reflected at some future time instead of in the budget proposals now before the Committee. He proposed that a roll-call vote should be taken on that amendment.

40. Mr. KISEKA (Uganda) commended the sponsors for producing a generally acceptable text. He supported the Greek proposal because indiscriminate application of certain of the Secretary-General's criteria might impair the

preparation of reports on the important questions deriving from the proceedings of the seventh special session of the General Assembly, including the comprehensive study of the role of international co-operation in the third world.

41. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that his delegation was unable to support the Greek oral amendment because, on the basis of estimates of savings to be derived from the application of criterion 6, adoption of the Greek amendment would reduce those savings by \$181,000.

42. Mr. SETHI (India) noted that paragraph 2 of the draft resolution referred to "the criteria proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 14 of his report, as modified by the comments of the Advisory Committee". His delegation knew of no modifications proposed by the Advisory Committee, which had used the wording in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1670) and made comments on the financial implications of the adoption of the criteria. Paragraph 2 therefore needed to be reworded for the sake of greater clarity.

43. It was also to be noted that some of the hypotheses on which the comments of the Advisory Committee were based were invalid, since the savings envisaged would not be realized during the next biennium. Due account should be taken of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, but they would have to be viewed in conjunction with the statement of probable financial implications prepared by the Secretariat.

44. Mr. HENČIĆ (Yugoslavia) thanked the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2 for incorporating the Yugoslav amendment in the text. His delegation had no objection to the Greek oral amendment.

45. The criteria should be applied with a certain flexibility so as to determine their effects and avoid impairing the functioning of particular committees or sub-committees.

46. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation was in favour of the draft resolution and considered that the financial implications of the application of the criteria could be considered at a subsequent stage. It was also in favour of the first of the Soviet amendments (A/C.5/L.1255).

47. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) announced that the sponsors maintained the revised draft resolution as it had been submitted.

48. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) stated that the adoption of paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2 without the amendment proposed by his delegation would not guarantee that the sum mentioned by the representative of Pakistan would in fact be saved.

49. While it was true that his delegation should have submitted its amendment earlier and that a more felicitous wording was possible, the crucial consideration was not to impair the functioning of United Nations bodies concerned with human rights.

50. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the first of the amendments submitted by the Soviet Union (A/C.5/L.1255).

At the request of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the vote was taken by roll-call.

The United Republic of Cameroon, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen, German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Hungary, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Republic, Madagascar, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Against: Uruguay, Zambia, Canada, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Abstaining: United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Brazil, Burma, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Greece, Guyana, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda.

The amendment was adopted by 18 votes to 16, with 58 abstentions.

51. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the amendment submitted orally by Greece to paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2, calling for the addition at the end of the paragraph of the following words: "taking into consideration the merits of each particular case".

The amendment was adopted by 16 votes to 6, with 50 abstentions.

The revised draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2), as amended, was adopted by 83 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

52. Mr. HART (Australia) said that his delegation had been pleased to vote in favour of the draft resolution as amended, because it was broadly consistent with Australia's views on the need to reduce the flow of United Nations documentation. His delegation took it that the Secretary-General would inform the bodies likely to be affected that the Fifth Committee was anxious to ensure that the effectiveness of the Organization was not impaired. Further, his delegation understood that the Secretary-General would inform those bodies that the Committee on Conferences would review on the basis of appropriate consultations the optimum requirements for records of bodies and organs of the United Nations.

53. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that his delegation had always supported measures to reduce expenditure caused by documentation, but had been unable

to support the Soviet amendment because the phrase "to make the appropriate corrections" was ambiguous. It had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution because the text was unclear and did not provide for definite rational savings on documentation.

54. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution as amended and agreed with Australia on the need to preserve the effectiveness of United Nations bodies. Particular attention should be paid to those bodies which were entrusted with the task of elaborating international legal instruments.

55. Mr. SETHI (India) endorsed the remarks made by the representative of Australia. His delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution in spite of its difficulties with the wording. It understood that the criteria referred to in the draft resolution were those proposed by the Secretary-General and that due account would be taken of the comments of the Advisory Committee during their application.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

56. Mr. SETHI (India) proposed that, in order to accelerate the pace of proceedings, the Committee should decide to refrain from holding a general debate on agenda items 104 and 105, concerning personnel questions and the United Nations salary system, and should instead immediately take up the consideration of any proposals relating to those two items.

57. Mr. ONISCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), speaking on a point of order, expressed concern because the Committee's work was proceeding at a very slow pace, yet only three weeks were left until the session was due to close. Quite clearly, the Committee would have to meet on Saturdays and in the evenings in order to carry out its scheduled programme of work. With such a heavy workload, it was essential that the documentation prepared by the Secretariat should be circulated in good time for study by delegations. His delegation had great doubts as to whether it would have sufficient time to study even superficially the enormous pile of documentation which was still being issued by the Secretariat.

58. In that connexion, he drew attention to a decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session and contained in the report of the Committee dated 18 December 1973, in which it was stated, *inter alia*:

"... Documentation on agenda items before the Fifth Committee, with the exception of revised budget estimates and notes on financial implications of different proposals of the Main Committees of the General Assembly and other bodies, should be distributed not later than six weeks before the closing date of the session for timely consideration by the Advisory Committee, unless the Fifth Committee decides otherwise. At the beginning of each session, the Secretary-General is requested to report to the Fifth Committee on the status of the documentation which is to be produced".³

³ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Annexes, agenda item 79, document A/9450/Add.1, para. 61.

He noted with regret that the decision he had quoted had been violated at the current session by the late submission of a number of documents. To quote but a few examples, document A/10350 concerning the financing of UNEF and UNDOF had been circulated on 17 November, i.e., two weeks after the scheduled date; document A/10035—a bulky document of more than 400 pages on the budget and programme performance of the United Nations during the past biennium—although dated 13 November, had not been circulated until 24 November, i.e., three weeks after the scheduled date; moreover, no Russian version had yet appeared; document A/10348 concerning the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences was dated 17 November and had been circulated on 24 November; and document A/C.5/1716, dated 21 November, had just been circulated. Such late submission of documents was of extreme concern because the decisions of the Fifth Committee had great significance for the work of the United Nations as a whole. The Committee did not have the right to take its decisions in haste without careful study of the relevant documentation.

59. His delegation would therefore like the Secretariat to inform the Committee in writing as soon as possible which documents had been and would be submitted late, in violation of the decision taken at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, and to state the reasons for the delay. He hoped that in future the rule concerning the punctual distribution of documents would be strictly observed.

60. With regard to the proposal by the representative of India, he believed that, if the Committee decided not to hold a general discussion on personnel questions and the United Nations salary system, it should also refrain from taking decisions on the proposals before the Committee concerning those questions.

61. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), speaking on a point of order, said that the Committee was making such slow progress that it was threatened with a veritable plague of night meetings. His delegation was therefore proposing, in accordance with rule 114 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, that all interventions, without exception, should be limited to a maximum of five minutes. That rule should remain in force until the Chairman decided that the Committee had made sufficient progress to justify its relaxation.

62. Further, his delegation was suggesting that delegations should voluntarily limit their interventions to less than five minutes. Since the immediate benefit of that self-denial should be a reduced need for night meetings, his delegation was suggesting, as the corollary of its main proposal, that future night meetings after Wednesday, 26 November should be cancelled. It also suggested that the proposals which it had put forward should be voted on individually.

63. The CHAIRMAN noted that under rule 114 of the rules of procedure, before a decision was taken, two representatives might speak in favour of, and two against, a proposal to set a time-limit on speeches.

64. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) and Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) supported the United Kingdom proposal.

65. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that no adequate argument had been produced to justify a time-limit. A number of important items required clarifications which could not possibly be made in five minutes.

66. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) believed that a five-minute limit would not allow delegations sufficient time to present the positions of their Governments and that some delegations might be tempted to make a series of short interventions. It was not necessary, as matters stood, to set a time-limit; an appeal to the self-discipline of delegations would be wiser.

67. The CHAIRMAN said that, as he understood it, whatever decision was reached by the Committee would be without prejudice to the discretionary power of the Chairman. A situation might arise, for instance, where the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions found that he could not limit himself to five minutes on a particular issue. In such circumstances, the Chairman, at his discretion, could waive the time-limit.

68. Mr. SETHI (India) referred to rule 106 of the rules of procedure, which allowed the Chairman such discretionary power.

69. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) suggested that his original proposal should stand with the proviso that the Chairman had the absolute prerogative to decide, in certain special cases, to waive the time-limit. However, the proposal would become meaningless if it was adopted on the understanding that the time-limit could invariably be waived through the Chairman's prerogative.

70. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), speaking on a point of order, said that in accordance with rule 114 of the rules of procedure, the Committee should have proceeded to a vote without delay.

71. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the proposal by the United Kingdom representative that the length of interventions should be limited until such time as the Chairman felt that the limitation could be relaxed.

The United Kingdom proposal was rejected by 39 votes to 21, with 24 abstentions.

72. The CHAIRMAN said that the rejection of the United Kingdom proposal did not pre-empt the prerogative of the Chairman, in accordance with rule 106 of the rules of procedure, to propose to the Committee the limitation of the time to be allowed to speakers.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.