

1650th meeting

Friday, 25 October 1974, at 10.35 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Costa P. CARANICAS (Greece).

A/C.5/SR.1650

AGENDA ITEM 78

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General (*continued*) (A/9189, A/9731, A/9807, A/C.5/L.1152)

1. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) said that, although many representatives had offered constructive criticism and made specific proposals, the question of publications and documentation of the United Nations had been discussed extensively in the past and many resolutions had been adopted and he did not feel very optimistic about the chances of finding a satisfactory solution. The expanding membership of the Organization, the possibility of the adoption of additional official languages and the continuing increase in the number of meetings held would make it almost impossible to find a solution. Taking note of the two reports of the Secretary-General (A/9189 and A/9731) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9807), he expressed the hope that expenditure on documentation could be reduced to a certain extent.

2. Technical innovations, such as microforms, could be very useful but he noted that they would have to be used on an experimental basis at first and that new techniques could become obsolete very quickly and thus be very expensive.

3. Mr. ELIOPOULOS (Greece), expressing a widely held fear that the Secretariat and Missions would soon be submerged in documentation, said that for practical and financial reasons every effort should be made to limit the volume of documentation produced by the Secretariat. Missions were faced by the problem not only of space in which to store the documents but also of handling the material efficiently and evaluating correctly the importance of the information contained in the publications.

4. Drastic measures would need to be taken by the Secretariat, while delegations should also co-operate with a view to reducing the volume of documentation. Distribution of documents to Missions should be handled in a more rational way; surplus copies were often issued, the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations often received documents in English and French, which was in most cases not necessary. In that connexion, he said that his delegation was willing to discuss with the Secretariat its exact document needs. Truth, clarity and substance were not necessarily linked with verbosity. The situation could be considerably improved if an attempt was made to ensure that every document observed the golden rule of laconism.

5. With regard to technological innovations, the Advisory Committee should explore the possibility of introducing

more effective methods in the United Nations system of documentation. The exhibit of microform techniques gave some idea of what could be done.

6. He proposed that the Committee should unanimously approve the reports of the Secretary-General in documents A/9189 and A/9731.

7. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that institutional growth and expansion in the form and scope of United Nations activities had led to a constant increase in the volume of documentation. Because of the expenditure involved, the questionable usefulness of the documents produced and the limited ability of delegations to digest the flow of documentation, the General Assembly must regularly and systematically review the volume of United Nations documentation and the technology used in its production.

8. His delegation noted with appreciation the efforts of the Department of Conference Services to operate the quota system for documents emanating from the Secretariat. He also commended the initiative of the Secretariat to familiarize members of the Fifth Committee with the application of the microfiche system to United Nations documents and the chart showing the volume of weekly United Nations documentation.

9. However, there was also a need for concerted efforts by all organizations and their member States. Intergovernmental organs should consider measures further to curtail unnecessary documentation, as advocated by a number of delegations during the debate in the Committee. The United Nations, through the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, should co-ordinate its activities with the specialized agencies and consider measures aimed at the rationalization of documentation and the introduction of new techniques of document utilization and reproduction. It was important to introduce new techniques such as the microfiche system when appropriate and adapt them to the needs of the Secretariat and Member States. In that connexion, he endorsed the view expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union that more detailed information should be made available on microfiche techniques as applied to United Nations documents, and their financial, organizational and other implications. His delegation would welcome a report by the Secretary-General on those matters at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly.

10. He fully endorsed the opinion expressed by the representatives of Italy and Canada that it was unnecessary for the Fifth Committee to continue the current practice of recording representatives' speeches in press releases, Committee reports, and provisional and official summary records. There were different views as to the utility of summary records or press releases, but he hoped that,

whatever steps might be taken, the problem would be given careful consideration.

11. He supported the request by various delegations for implementation of the suggestion made by the Secretary-General and endorsed by the Advisory Committee (A/9807, para. 9) that a short list should be established of United Nations bodies entitled to summary records. The Advisory Committee was the appropriate body to draft such a list, which should also enumerate the criteria governing the publication of summary records. He emphasized the need to make such a document available in advance of the General Assembly session in order to allow Member States sufficient time for consideration and elaboration of their positions.

12. His delegation was doubtful as to the need to continue press releases for the Fifth Committee. Such releases were a source of information for delegations rather than the mass media, as the latter did not give sufficient attention to the highly specialized work of the Committee. Continuation of press releases for the Committee should be reconsidered by the Advisory Committee.

13. If there was to be any limitation or discontinuance of summary records, his delegation suggested that the reports prepared by the Rapporteur should be more comprehensive. Position papers prepared by delegations could be annexed to those reports.

14. The system of distribution of documents should be re-examined in order to explore the possibility of effecting savings. His delegation proposed that a questionnaire be sent to all the recipients of United Nations documents.

15. United Nations documents could be reduced by shortening reports and documents and making their contents more precise and clear. His delegation would hesitate to advocate the introduction of page limits. However, it considered that United Nations organs should clearly state their requirements when asking for a report.

16. Attention should also be given to improving the conventional presentation of United Nations documents, to avoid unnecessary waste of paper. The *Journal of the United Nations*, for example, frequently contained two empty pages.

17. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the problem of the publications and documentation of the United Nations was an extremely serious one to which there seemed to be no solution. Although partial solutions had been implemented, their effect had been negated by the expanding scope of the work of the Main Committees of the General Assembly. While an effort should certainly be made to ensure economy and efficiency, there was no call to take Draconian measures such as dispensing completely with summary records. In that connexion, he noted that magnetic tapes of meetings were never as convenient or useful to delegations as written records. Supporting the suggestions made by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee, he observed that delegations too should try to show as much restraint as possible. Efforts should also be made by the Secretary-General to find less expensive ways of reproducing documentation. Although very many of the

documents produced were not read but merely filed away, many of the documents issued were important.

18. In conclusion, he stressed the need for Member States to exercise restraint, and for the Secretariat to distinguish between useful and indispensable documents and documents that were of secondary importance and possibly superfluous.

19. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) approved the report of the Advisory Committee and congratulated the Secretariat on the 27 per cent reduction in documentation it had achieved in 1973 at a time when United Nations activities were expanding. While expansion was essential if the United Nations was to remain a dynamic organization, new activities meant more publications. Innovations should be considered that would make the documentation system more efficient.

20. He expressed support for the decision by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1894 (LVII) not to consider reports exceeding 32 pages, and suggested that the Fifth Committee might follow that example.

21. Although technological innovations should be explored, he shared the concern expressed by some delegations. Technical innovations that would raise problems for delegations should not be introduced.

22. Summary records, while they might place a heavy burden on the staff and budget of the United Nations, did reflect the official views of delegations. He therefore opposed the suggestion that they should be eliminated. Duplication and triplication in the reproduction of documents should, however, be avoided, and blank spaces in publications should also be avoided as much as possible.

23. He supported the proposal that a list of bodies entitled to summary records should be prepared, and that the Secretary-General should suggest which bodies could manage without summary records. The Secretary-General should submit a report to the General Assembly at the thirtieth session, when a position could be taken on that question.

24. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) expressed condolences to the Iraqi delegation on the death of the Foreign Minister of Iraq.

25. He commended the reports by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on the problem of United Nations publications and documentation, and expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretariat to reduce the production of documents in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2836 (XXVI). Those efforts had led to a reduction of 21 per cent in Headquarters documentation, 32 per cent in Geneva documentation and 25 per cent in ECA documentation, with resulting savings.

26. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General's assessment of the sharp increase in unit costs and the cost of preparing summary records, contained in paragraph 13 of document A/9731.

27. In view of the increase in the costs of paper and manpower, the Committee should attempt to reduce

unnecessary documentation throughout the United Nations system. His delegation agreed in principle with the report of the Advisory Committee but warned against an across-the-board reduction of documentation without careful analysis and proper study of possible effects. Efficiency and proper communications within the United Nations system should not be sacrificed. United Nations documentation and publications were the main source of governmental interaction on matters of policy during and after United Nations conferences. His delegation would be reluctant to accept the discontinuance of summary records of the Committee as had been advocated by some delegations, because it might lead to misunderstandings between delegations.

28. Perhaps the best alternative would be for the Secretariat to prepare a few summary records for the Committee, to be kept at a strategic point—such as the Dag Hammarskjöld Library—for the convenience of the Committee and to enable delegations to check that their statements had been properly recorded.

29. His delegation welcomed technological innovation and had been impressed by the microfiche exhibit. However, proposals for innovations should be submitted to the Committee for consideration with a statement of all the financial implications. He endorsed the view that a thorough study be conducted by a group of experts who would submit a report to the Advisory Committee, which in turn would submit its recommendations to the Committee.

30. There seemed to be a general consensus that there should be a reduction of United Nations documentation, and consequently expenditure. The Committee must strike a balance and enhance the substantive nature of international conferences without creating an undue burden on United Nations finances.

31. Mr. OCHIRBAL (Mongolia) said that the important problem of how to control and limit the flow of superfluous documentation and reduce expenditure on documentation must be resolved in order to enhance the authority and effectiveness of the United Nations. His delegation supported the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 6, 9 and 10 of its report. He also accepted the comments by the Secretary-General concerning the role of Member States in controlling and limiting documentation, and supported his request that Members and their representatives in different organs should exercise restraint in requests for documentation. That did not, of course, imply any limitation on the sovereign right of every delegation to have statements by its Government distributed as official documents of United Nations organs.

32. He expressed support for the proposal that a list of bodies entitled to summary records should be drawn up, with a view to considering whether the number of such bodies could be reduced. He also expressed support, in principle, for the use of technological innovations in the documentation system, although new techniques should be introduced only after careful study to ensure that they would not be too costly. The quota system in documentation for different units and departments of the Secretariat had proved effective, and his delegation supported further measures along those lines, such as quotas for various

reports and research—particularly on the subject of economic and social development—and limitations on the total volume of documentation prepared for different organs and committees and many international conferences, without prejudice to the quality of such documentation. That could make discussions more lively and lead to concrete results. It could also reduce the time required for preparation and promote timely distribution of documents.

33. The problem of control and limitation of United Nations documentation was directly related to the problem of the rationalization of the work of the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations, and the elimination of duplication and overlapping. Solutions should therefore be sought not only at the level of individual organs and departments but also through general improvements in the effectiveness of the work of the United Nations.

34. Mr. AL-SHARAFI (Yemen), referring to the microform exhibit provided for the Committee, asked how much it had cost to prepare the exhibit and provide personnel to explain the advantages of the equipment shown. He also asked why the company that produced the equipment had not been invited to prepare the exhibit itself, which it no doubt would have been willing to do for the sake of publicity. Such an approach should be borne in mind in future if other exhibits were planned.

35. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments), referring to the points raised by the representatives of Australia and Poland, pointed out that, in the interest of efficiency, documents were collated mechanically; the advantages outweighed the small waste of paper involved in leaving one side of the paper blank.

36. He acknowledged the suggestion by the representative of France to the effect that diagrams should be used as far as possible, adding that in future production figures for all locations, not only Headquarters, would be given in diagram form as suggested.

37. Replying to a question by the representative of Austria, he stated that a 15 per cent saving could be achieved by using recycled paper but that such paper could not be used for all documents as it had certain technical limitations. He agreed with the suggestion made by the representative of Austria to the effect that the agenda items of the General Assembly not be numbered differently in successive texts; indeed, that practice was already followed by the Economic and Social Council.

38. The increase in the number of documents originating in the Secretariat in 1974, referred to by the representative of Turkey, was due mainly to the special session of the General Assembly and the World Population Conference. With regard to the improved procedures for reviewing classes of publications and manuscripts, referred to in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's report (A/9731), an attempt was being made to determine the quality and usefulness of publications on the basis *inter alia* of their sales effectiveness, and the findings would be reported to the Publications Board and the various departments and units involved in the preparation of documents.

39. He fully agreed with the representatives of Turkey and the Philippines concerning the need to reflect all the document-related costs in the next biennial programme budget.

40. Replying to the question by the representative of Yemen concerning the possibility of having tapes of meetings in all languages, he said that there was no technical obstacle; however, the matter would have to be studied in order to determine the cost. The small exhibit outside the conference room had involved no out-of-pocket expense for the United Nations. He had serious doubts about the advisability of trying to involve the companies supplying the equipment used by the Organization in such an exhibit and considered that, regardless of the region they came from commercial enterprises should not be accorded privileged treatment. The very fact that the United Nations used their equipment was in itself a form of advertisement. Besides, the exhibit had been intended for the information of delegations, not to promote a particular type of equipment.

41. With regard to the remarks by the representatives of the Byelorussian SSR and the Federal Republic of Germany to the effect that neither the Secretariat nor any other body should try to limit the sovereign right of Governments to voice and publicize their opinions, he said that he shared that view entirely and that the Secretariat had no intention of doing anything of the sort.

42. With regard to the comments by the representatives of the Byelorussian SSR, Ecuador and Greece concerning the documents distribution system, he drew attention to paragraph 18 of the Secretary-General's previous report (A/9189), which referred to the difficulties that arose when delegations spoke with different voices in different halls. Letters had been sent to delegations three times in the preceding year asking them to indicate whether they could reduce the number of documents requested and, if so, by what percentage. The Secretariat would continue to urge delegations to limit their requests. As to the question of documents being received in a language which a delegation did not use, he pointed out that certain recurrent publications were published only in certain languages, for instance English or French; when a delegation had indicated a desire to receive all documents regardless of the language, it would receive such documents also.

43. For the next few days the *Journal of the United Nations* would be available only in the Documents Distribution Section and, if representatives approved of that experiment, it would be extended to other Committees. There would be no difficulty in circulating the documents exhibit to other Committees, as one delegation had suggested, provided the Committee approved.

44. With regard to the suggestion by the representative of the Philippines concerning the possibility of juggling the quotas among various areas as the need arose, he stated that, regardless of the quota, if any legislative body requested further documentation in any particular field, it would be provided. He hoped that such requests would be limited to emergency situations. In that connexion, he assured the representative of the United States that the Documents Control Unit did not hesitate to remind

departments in no uncertain terms of the need for greater conciseness.

45. Delays in distributing documents, which various delegations had referred to were often blamed on the Department of Conference Services, even when it was not at fault. For example, at the last plenary meeting of the sixth special session of the General Assembly, the Assembly had had to wait over one hour for the final report. On that occasion, the Department had received the final pages of the report just over one hour before the meeting was scheduled and had been expected to have the report translated into all the languages, reproduced and distributed in that time. The Department was naturally only too willing to do its very best but it should not be expected to perform miracles.

46. Responding to the question by the representative of Chile concerning the time needed to put a document into microform, he replied that currently 10 to 12 weeks were needed. Naturally, if the programme were expanded and if studies demonstrated that it would be economical for that work to be done within the United Nations rather than by an outside company as was currently the case, the delay could be minimal and in fact the transfer could be done almost overnight.

47. Replying to a question put by the representative of Sweden, he stated that so far the response of delegations to the innovations had been somewhat disappointing. In all only 22 bodies were making use of the new microfiche programme, only 8 of them delegations. That number did not justify expanding the programme, although plans for a gradual expansion had been prepared and would be presented to the Committee when it considered the next biennial programme budget.

48. Commenting on more general matters, he stated that the quota system would continue to be applied vigorously in order to maintain the 25 per cent cut in Secretariat-originated documents which had been achieved since 1970. However, the Organization was facing a problem of limited resources versus growing demands. The pressures could be alleviated through technical innovations and through traditional methods.

49. With regard to the technical innovations, no abrupt change was envisaged. Nor would the existing printed form of documents be entirely abandoned in favour of tapes and microforms. Too sudden a change might be very costly and might even create more problems than it solved. However, in 20 years' time technological advances would undoubtedly have changed current methods of gathering, processing and distributing information. Delegations were therefore being offered a chance to start a parallel experiment in modern techniques and to familiarize themselves with modern systems which they could gradually introduce into their own operations. Some of the fears expressed in the Committee arose, as the Byelorussian representative had said, from psychological barriers. The response to the introduction of modern techniques had so far not been very encouraging. The discussion had shown the need to proceed cautiously in the further development of parallel programmes based on modern technology. Some specific issues would be studied in the light of specific questions raised

during the discussion. In that connexion, he assured the Ukrainian representative that there would not be any need for additional funds for such studies, at least not at the current stage.

50. With regard to traditional methods, all the suggestions made during the discussion would be taken into account and any which seemed likely to increase the efficiency of the processing and distribution system would be implemented. He entirely agreed with the representative of Italy that discussions were often freer when they were off the record. Yet the value of summary records as reference documents had been demonstrated repeatedly. Nevertheless, the most significant potential savings could be achieved in that area. Some 80 bodies were entitled to such records. Sometimes there was a certain amount of duplication between records and reports. For example, the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean contained a detailed account of the Committee's work, even though the body had had summary records. Important conferences such as the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, the World Population Conference and the World Food Conference, and most of the regional economic commissions, did not have written records other than the final report of their meetings, even though they dealt with important problems of world-wide interest and political and economic impact. It was for the Committee to decide whether it would be better to dispense with summary records in some cases and expand the report accordingly. The Secretariat was prepared to provide a list of the bodies entitled to summary records, and the additional data requested by the delegations of Canada, Hungary and the Netherlands. However, it would be very difficult for the Secretary-General to make specific recommendations as to what bodies should be entitled to summary records. In any event, that question was largely dependent upon the rules of procedure of particular bodies.

51. Finally, he expressed appreciation on behalf of the Department of Conference Services for the support voiced by various delegations, which would encourage the Department to strive for an even better performance.

52. Mr. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago) said that his delegation would be interested to learn whether the innovative technologies in use in the Secretariat included retrieval techniques as well as new storage methods, and whether the costs for such innovations had already been approved by the General Assembly.

53. Cost was an extremely important factor in the modernization of the system of United Nations documentation, and his delegation was relieved to learn that the Secretariat intended to submit full details of expenditure. Experience showed that in many instances the introduction of modern methods entailed extra expenditure, and the cost of a new programme might be considerably higher than originally anticipated. As far as the microfiche programme was concerned, he was not sure whether its principal purpose was to bring about economies or to modernize the system.

54. Mr. ELIOPOULOS (Greece) said that his Mission was prepared to receive copies of documents in either French or English instead of in both languages as was currently the

case, with the exception of texts such as draft resolutions, for which it was important to study the finer shades of meaning.

55. Mr. POSSO (Ecuador) said that, in his statement at the preceding meeting, he had not been referring to publications which were issued in English and French only. When stating that his delegation was prepared to receive documentation in Spanish only, he had been endeavouring to co-operate with, not to express criticism of, the Secretariat.

56. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) said that he doubted whether the non-circulation of the *Journal of the United Nations* in the conference room would lead to any substantial savings, since the cost of the paper represented only a small fraction of the total amount spent on publishing the *Journal*.

57. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) said that the decision not to distribute the *Journal* in the conference room used by the Fifth Committee was an experiment which could be discontinued if representatives so desired. In any event, copies of the *Journal* were available in the documents booth.

58. He thanked the representatives of Greece and Ecuador for their desire to co-operate and suggested that there should be more contact between delegations and the Secretariat unit responsible for the distribution of documents so that any errors could be corrected.

59. Replying to the questions raised by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, he said that the United Nations was committed to a limited programme of modernization under previous decisions of the General Assembly, which had authorized the Library to institute a pilot project of microforms. The Secretariat was not asking for any more funds; it was endeavouring to arouse the interest of delegations in a programme which was being developed on their behalf.

60. Approximately 50,000 microfiches had been produced from 1969 to date. They contained the official records of the principal United Nations organs from 1946 to 1969; selected mimeographed documents, particularly in the Economic and Social Council series, from 1969 onwards; 800 volumes of the United Nations *Treaty Series*; the texts of six major yearbooks from 1946 onwards; and studies and reports issued in 1972 and 1973. The current production level was 15,000 masters per year, from which copies could be produced at progressively reduced cost according to demand. It should be stressed that the microfiche programme existed alongside the conventional system of documentation, but did not replace it. The Secretariat was currently conducting, within the approved budget, a study to determine the feasibility and financial implications of extending the use of microforms to a broader range of documentation. That study would be submitted to the Fifth Committee for its consideration at the thirtieth session.

61. Greater use was also being made of computer-assisted indexing. Current documents of major United Nations organs and selected studies and publications were being

analysed, and the information extracted from them was stored in computer-based files. To date some 65,000 analytical annotations had been stored in the files. They included the verbatim texts of operative paragraphs of resolutions and the analysis of roll-call votes taken in major organs since 1969. Each year 80 issues of indexes were compiled by computer methods, totalling about 9,000 pages in English, French, Russian and Spanish. During the next five years, the Secretariat intended to enlarge the scope of the activity to encompass a broader range of current and retrospective documentation; to produce cumulative issues of the indexes to facilitate manual retrospective searches; and to establish a computer-based question-and-answer service. Proposals to that effect would be included in the programme budgets for 1976-1977 and 1978-1979.

62. Although he agreed with the representative of Trinidad and Tobago that innovative technologies were not necessarily cost-effective in the first instance, he believed that the Secretariat's studies would show that long-term savings could be achieved and that the current programmes were an important element in the modernization of the United Nations documentation system. He very much hoped that delegations were interested in carrying the modernization further.

63. Mr. ALCONCEL (Philippines) asked whether it would be possible to include in the next programme budget a separate section giving details of the estimated cost of documentation for the period under review.

64. Mr. LAVAU (Director, Budget Division) said that the Office of Financial Services, in drawing up the proposal programme budget for 1976-1977, was endeavouring to show the indirect costs of programmes—including those of documentation—as well as the direct costs. Section 29, concerning conference services, would be retained in much the same form as in the current programme budget. What the Office could do was to pick out the estimates relating to documentation and to reproduce them separately in an annex.

65. Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania) said that he wished to make it clear that at the preceding meeting his delegation had supported the Canadian proposal to exclude summarized accounts of debates from reports to the General Assembly, not the suggestion to dispense with summary records for the current item, to which it was opposed. In that regard, he reminded members of paragraph (f) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 2292 (XXII), which stated that the reproduction in the body of a report of summaries of views that had already been set forth in the records should be allowed only in exceptional cases. He also drew attention to the conclusions of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly, which were contained in annex V to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and in particular to paragraph 107 (c) of that annex.

66. He did not wish to propose anything more radical than the exclusion of summaries of debates on certain items from reports submitted to the General Assembly at the current session. The practice, if it proved unacceptable,

could be discontinued at the thirtieth session. The items to which he was suggesting that the new procedure should apply were: item 72 (Financial reports and accounts for the year 1973 and reports of the Board of Auditors), item 73 (Programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975), item 75 (Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency), item 77 (Pattern of conferences), item 78 (Publications and documentation of the United Nations), item 81 (Personnel questions), item 85 (United Nations International School) and item 106 (Translation of some official documents of the General Assembly and of resolutions of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council into the German language). Summaries of debates should be continued for item 74, which was a new one, and items 79, 82, 83 and 84.

67. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) announced that his delegation had submitted to the Secretariat a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1178) for inclusion in the report of the Committee. He hoped the Committee would shortly be able to consider it.

68. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) expressed his delegation's whole-hearted support for the proposal made by the Tanzania delegation.

69. After a brief procedural discussion in which Mr. McCARTHY (Australia), Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania), Mr. TARDOS (Hungary), Mr. SILVEIRA DA MOTA (Brazil) and the CHAIRMAN took part, Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) suggested that the Committee should take up agenda item 80 in the time remaining and resume consideration of the current item at the following meeting.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 80

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly:

(a) Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9658, A/C.5/1618)

70. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to hold elections to fill five vacancies in the membership of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, resulting from the normal expiration on 31 December 1974 of the terms of office of Mr. Esfandiary, Mr. Hou Tung, Mr. Naudy, Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Takahashi. Nominations for appointment or reappointment had been received from their Governments in respect of Mr. Hou Tung (China), Mr. Naudy (France), Mr. Akashi (Japan), Mr. Stuart (United Kingdom) and Mr. Talieh (Iran). However, Members of the Committee could, of course, vote for any candidate, whether formally proposed or not.

At the request of the Chairman, Mr. Habyarimana (Rwanda) and Mr. Posso (Ecuador) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

*Number of ballot papers:
Invalid ballots:*

90
2

Number of valid ballots:	88
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	87
Required majority:	44

Number of votes obtained:

Mr. André Naudy	84
Mr. Yasushi Akashi	81
Mr. Michael F. H. Stuart	79
Mr. Morteza Talieh	79
Mr. Tung Hou	75
Mr. Mohsen S. Esfandiary	4
Mr. John I. M. Rhodes	3
Mr. Satoru Takahashi	3
Eight other persons	8

Mr. Akashi (Japan), Mr. Hou Tung (China), Mr. Naudy (France), Mr. Stuart (United Kingdom of Great Britain and

Northern Ireland) and Mr. Talieh (Iran) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended their appointment as members of the Advisory Committee for a three-year term commencing on 1 January 1975.

71. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly on the matter to the General Assembly.

It was so decided.

72. The CHAIRMAN said that he had prolonged the meeting beyond 1 p.m. as an exceptional measure. In future he intended to follow the guidelines from the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

1651st meeting

Monday, 28 October 1974, at 3.05 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Costa P. CARANICAS (Greece).

A/C.5/SR.1651

AGENDA ITEM 78

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General (concluded) (A/9189, A/9731, A/9807, A/C.5/L.1152, A/C.5/L.1178)

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Committee had before it two proposals concerning publications and documentation of the United Nations. The first had been introduced orally by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania at the 1650th meeting and had been seconded by the representative of the Netherlands. The proposal was that the Fifth Committee should decide, on an experimental basis, that its report to the General Assembly at the twenty-ninth session for agenda items 72, 73, 75, 77, 78, 81, 85 and 106 be prepared along the lines set out in paragraph (f) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 2292 (XXII) and in paragraph 107 (c) of the conclusions of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly, which were reproduced in annex V of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

2. The second proposal was a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1178) for inclusion in the report of the Fifth Committee, that had been presented at the 1650th meeting by Australia, Canada, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Iran, Japan, the Netherlands and Turkey.

3. Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania) said that he would like to add to the agenda items listed in his proposal one which did not appear in document A/C.5/L.1171/Rev.1 concerning the work of the Fifth Committee at the twenty-ninth session. The item in question was item 76 concerning the Joint Inspection Unit.

4. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia), introducing the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1178) for inclusion in the Committee's report, said that the proposal was sufficiently clear and needed no additional explanation. The sponsors had taken up the suggestion in paragraph 9 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9807) and had taken into account the comments made by the representative of Brazil at the 1648th meeting. The scope of the proposals made in the draft decision was circumscribed by the provisions of rule 58 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, by those of paragraph 108 (c) of the conclusions of the Special Committee on Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly, reproduced in annex V of the rules of procedure, and by the provisions of Assembly resolution 2837 (XXVI).

5. The sponsors of the draft were asking for two things: firstly, an account of the type of record issued for all bodies and subsidiary bodies financed under the regular budget, the volume of such records, the cost and the authority under which they were issued. That should make it possible to detect duplications and overlapping of the documentation of each body. Secondly, they asked that the Secretary-General should propose criteria upon which the General Assembly could base a decision aimed at restraining the amount of documentation currently produced.

6. Given the obvious difficulties involved and the views already expressed by the representative of the Secretary-General, the sponsors of the draft had avoided asking the Secretariat for a judgement as to which bodies might dispense with certain documents to which they were currently entitled. Nevertheless, the Secretariat might provide a certain amount of information which would help the