



Chairman: Mr. Motoo OGISO (Japan).

AGENDA ITEM 75

**Pattern of conferences: report of the Secretary-General
(A/8790 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/8868 and Add.1)**

1. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in examining the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on the pattern of conferences, the main point to be considered was whether work on the study requested by the General Assembly in resolution 2609 (XXIV) should be postponed or completed. The Secretary-General believed that it would be better, for the time being, to suspend work on the study. The Advisory Committee, however, believed, as indicated in its report (A/8868, para. 4), that the study was particularly necessary at the present time, as the new conference facilities in Geneva would soon become operational.
2. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services) said that he looked forward to working with the Committee on the two items which continued to be of concern both to Member States and to the Secretariat, namely the pattern of conferences and the question of publications and documentation. He assured the Committee that, for the Secretary-General and himself in the execution of their responsibilities, the objective was and would be to make the most rational and economic use possible of the conference and documentation services available.
3. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 2886 (XXVI), the Committee would take up the programme of recurrent publications of the United Nations later. He hoped at that time to be able to submit a brief interim report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2836 (XXVI), in so far as it related to the introduction of a "quota system" for documentation and a 15 per cent reduction in the "volume of documentation originating in the Secretariat, other than meetings records".
4. Turning to the pattern of conferences, he said that there was no real difference between the views of the Secretary-General and those of the Advisory Committee and that the one apparent difference related more to methods than to substance. Perhaps that difference arose from the Secretariat's desire to avoid producing unnecessary documentation and using staff time and resources to prepare documents which might not lead to practical results.
5. The study of the most rational and economic use of the administrative premises and staff assigned to conferences and meetings services had first been requested by the Economic and Social Council in 1969 and subsequently by the General Assembly, which had broadened the scope of the study in its resolution 2609 (XXIV) and 2834 (XXVI). In 1970 and 1971, the Secretary-General had submitted brief reports indicating the reasons why he felt that certain unknowns hampered the preparation of a meaningful study and suggesting that the relevant report should be postponed for a further year; on both occasions the General Assembly had agreed.
6. On taking up his new position, he had approached the question and, since the same variables existed to a greater or lesser degree, he had at first been inclined to propose a further postponement of one year. After more detailed consideration, he had realized that it was very doubtful whether the situation would be sufficiently stable to warrant meaningful study, even in 1973.
7. It was for those reasons that the Secretariat had suggested that work on the study should be suspended. That did not mean that it would slacken its efforts to plan the programme of conferences in the most economical and rational way possible or that it would avoid the responsibility of indicating to the various organs what the most economical venue and timing for their meetings would be. That was a task which the Secretary-General and his representatives in such matters intended to fulfil to the best of their ability. The calendar of conferences and meetings for 1973 contained in document A/8790/Add.1 was not simply a list of meetings reflecting the desires of the various bodies involved. It was the result of many consultations during which thorough consideration had been given to the ability of the Secretariat to provide the requisite services from its regular capacity.
8. It was in that context that the Secretary-General had suggested the suspension of the study. However, the Secretariat was very much aware of the continuing concern of Member States—and particularly of the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee—regarding the number of conferences on the programme and their impact on the volume of documentation. It was for that reason that the Secretary-General had suggested that, while suspending work on a formal study, he should remain in close consultation with the Advisory Committee on the pattern of conferences, with a view to presenting, when conditions so warranted, a formal report to the General Assembly. Naturally, if the Committee so wished, the Secretary-

General would submit a report to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, as proposed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

9. He was fully aware that one of the concerns of Member States, when the study had first been proposed, had been to ensure that meetings were distributed in such a way that they were not all held at Headquarters as a matter of course, particularly in view of the construction of additional conference facilities at Geneva. The calendar proposed for 1973 provided that the United Nations Office at Geneva would be called upon to service all the meetings of bodies based in Geneva, namely UNCTAD, ECE, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and other bodies in that field, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. The calendar did not list the hundreds of meetings of the committees, sub-committees and working groups of ECE. Furthermore, in accordance with long-standing arrangements, the Palais des Nations accommodated the annual conference of the ILO and the Assembly of WHO. In addition, under resolution 2609 (XXIV), the sessions of various bodies normally based at Headquarters in New York would be held in Geneva. Those included the International Law Commission, the summer session of the Economic and Social Council and the attendant meetings of bodies involved in that session, a session of the UNDP Governing Council, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, four of the functional commissions or committees of the Economic and Social Council and the standing functional sub-commission. The list was not exhaustive, but it gave a clear indication of the important role of the Geneva Office as a site for meetings of United Nations bodies.

Miss Forcignanò (Italy), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

10. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation was sorry to say that it had been greatly disappointed with the report of the Secretary-General on the pattern of conferences (A/8790). In fact, the report did not answer any of the questions—whose substance remained unchanged—posed over a long period of time on the matter; nor did it indicate that any effort was being made to define and solve those problems. He regretted, moreover, that the comments of the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services, although valuable, had not entirely convinced him.

11. His delegation felt its disappointment well founded on noting, from the report of the Advisory Committee, that the latter had made similar comments regarding the conclusions, or rather the lack of conclusions, in the Secretary-General's report. Perhaps the Under-Secretary-General had been a little over-optimistic in stating that there was no difference between the views of the Secretary-General and those of the Advisory Committee.

12. The Advisory Committee's comments were extremely pertinent. His delegation fully endorsed them and particularly regretted that the study requested

by the General Assembly in resolution 2609 (XXIV) had not been presented. The recommendation contained in paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report was also most important. It was very surprising that, with the new conference facilities at Geneva nearing completion, no over-all plan for the fullest and most economical use possible of the facilities had been prepared.

13. To date, no reply had been given to the following questions which Member States continued to ask. Firstly, what was the current capacity of the conference services at Geneva and in New York and to what extent would that capacity be increased when the new facilities at Geneva became operational? Secondly, what was the comparative cost of conferences in New York and Geneva? Thirdly, was it true that the cost at Geneva was less than in New York because of the larger percentage of non-permanent staff employed by the United Nations Office at Geneva? Fourthly, if so, why did the holding of a new conference at Geneva always incur what appeared to be inordinate expenditure? Fifthly, in order to avoid that difficulty, would it be possible to make the conference services at Geneva more flexible? Sixthly, was it not essential, in any case, to undertake a review of the situation in order to determine whether the balance of staff between New York and Geneva was still appropriate and whether any change was needed in the number of permanent or temporary posts in the languages area at Geneva, as the Advisory Committee suggested in paragraph 11 of its report, having particularly in mind the new aspect of the problem introduced by the construction of new premises? But even with the existing facilities, did the current utilization of services meet the requirements and was it really economical?

14. At the Advisory Committee's request, comparative statistical tables had been prepared by the Secretariat indicating the number of meetings held in New York and Geneva from 1970 to 1973 (A/8868/Add.1). His delegation supported the views of the Advisory Committee on those tables. Furthermore, it wished to draw attention to the already large number of conferences held at Geneva using only the existing facilities and to point out that plans must be made to ensure that the new facilities, once operational, would be used in the most economical way possible.

Mr. Ogiso (Japan) resumed the Chair.

15. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) associated himself with the very relevant questions put by the representative of France. He was convinced that the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services would discharge his very difficult task in the best possible manner and would study the most rational and economic use of the staff and facilities available. It was now more than ever necessary to apply strict planning to the pattern of conferences because: firstly, the General Assembly had adopted the new system of programme budgeting and the biennial budget cycle; secondly, as the representative of France had said, many new facilities would soon be operational in Geneva and thought should be given to their optimum use; and

thirdly, since the legitimate rights of the People's Republic of China had been restored in the United Nations, new interpretation needs had arisen. The United Nations Office at Geneva did not have enough personnel to attend to those needs and at present New York staff were being sent to Geneva at considerable expense. The Under-Secretary-General had assured the Committee that the Secretary-General would keep in close touch with the Advisory Committee and that he would submit to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, if the Committee so wished, a thorough study of all the problems.

16. Another point which deserved consideration by the Committee was the need for delegations themselves to make a very careful study of the pattern of conferences because, as stated in paragraph 6 of the report of the Advisory Committee, the Secretary-General was required to indicate at the very outset to any organ contemplating the holding of a meeting or conference what would be the most economical venue and timing of the proposed meeting. Delegations should therefore be in a position to decide whether to follow the Secretary-General's suggestion or to choose a more expensive alternative. Moreover, if they were to decide that a body should meet away from its headquarters, the host country should be called upon to bear the additional costs involved in holding the conference or meeting in that country.

AGENDA ITEM 82

Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (*continued*) (A/8709 and Corr.1, A/8860, A/C.5/XXVII/CRP.7 and 8)

17. The CHAIRMAN, replying to the request made by the representative of Colombia in connexion with the long-form report mentioned in paragraph 5 of the report of the Board of Auditors (A/8709 and Corr.1, annex IV), said that he had held consultations with many delegations, including that of Colombia, and also with the Secretary of the Pension Board and the Secretary of the Board of Auditors, and that the Chairman of the Board of Auditors had authorized the Secretary of that Board to communicate the long-form report to delegations which wished to see it. The Secretary of the Committee had a number of copies which delegations might consult if they wished. He hoped that the representative of Colombia would approve of the action taken on his request.

18. Mr. ARBOLEDA (Colombia) expressed his satisfaction with the solution proposed by the Chairman.

19. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on section I of the draft resolution, relating to the adjustment of benefits, which appeared in annex V of the report of the Pension Board (A/8709 and Corr.1).

Section I of the draft resolution was adopted by 79 votes to 7, with 3 abstentions.

20. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee, in its report, should recommend to the General Assembly that it should endorse the understanding in para-

graph 20 and the suggestions in paragraphs 15 and 40 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/8860).

21. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) recalled that his delegation at the 1520th meeting had considered that it would be necessary to complement the proposal formulated by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 40 of its report by proposing that some competent inter-governmental organ should prepare a report on the situation of the Fund. That proposal, which had been supported by a number of delegations, was of a purely administrative character and without political bias of any kind. However, in view of the reservations formulated by one delegation, the Polish delegation had seen fit not to call for a vote on the proposal. It wished to request merely that the report of the Committee of Actuaries and any remarks on the subject by the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination should be communicated at an early date to delegations for their in-depth consideration, for the study of the situation of the Pension Fund was an extremely complex matter and called for the most careful preparation. His delegation therefore proposed that, if paragraph 40 of the Advisory Committee's report was endorsed by the General Assembly, the report of the Committee of Actuaries and the observations of the Secretary-General should be ready by June 1973, so as to permit Member States to prepare thoroughly for the consideration of that difficult question.

22. Mr. KULAZHENKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) endorsed the proposal of the Polish delegation as he considered that the report of the Committee of Actuaries and the remarks of the Secretary-General should be submitted sufficiently early for delegations to be able to study them in depth.

23. Mr. LIVERAN (Secretary of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) said that the data required for an actuarial evaluation of the Fund's assets could not be communicated to the actuaries before May, because they would not be received until March and two months were needed for processing. The report of the Committee of Actuaries would therefore not be ready until June and would not be issued before the beginning of July. However, the Secretariat would do all in its power to expedite its distribution.

24. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should endorse the understanding in paragraph 20 and the suggestions contained in paragraphs 15 and 40 of the Advisory Committee's report.

It was so decided.

25. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee, taking into account the observations of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 29 and 32 of its report, adopted section II of the draft resolution in annex V of the report

of the Pension Board (A/8709 and Corr.1) and the proposed administrative expenses of the Pension Board.

It was so decided.

26. Mr. LIVERAN (Secretary of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) pointed out that the administrative expenses proposed in section II of the draft resolution had been calculated without taking into account the study proposed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 40 of its report and that endorsement of that paragraph by the Committee would accordingly involve additional administrative expenditure for 1973.

27. Mr. KULAZHENKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had voted against section I of the draft resolution because he had failed to find in the Board's report any information justifying the need for the adjustments proposed. He recalled that the Soviet delegation had proposed that consideration of the question should be deferred until the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly so that it could base its decision on a full knowledge of the facts.

28. U KYAW SHEIN (Burma) said that he would have preferred the lower rates of adjustment suggested by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 22 of its report, but that in a spirit of solidarity he had nevertheless voted in favour of section I of the Board's draft resolution.

AGENDA ITEM 73

Budget estimates for the financial year 1973 (continued)*
(A/8706, A/8708 and Corr.1 and Add.1, 2 and 4 to 6, A/8739, A/8748, A/8811, A/8840 and Add.1, A/C.5/1429 and Corr.1 and 2, A/C.5/1430, A/C.5/1431, A/C.5/1436, A/C.5/1440, A/C.5/1442 to 1446, A/C.5/1449, A/C.5/1452, A/C.5/1453, A/C.5/1461, A/C.5/XXVII/CRP.2)

*First reading (continued)**

SECTION 3. SALARIES AND WAGES (A/8706, A/8708 AND CORR.1 AND ADD.2, A/C.5/1436)

29. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take up, in first reading, the initial estimates under section 3, together with the revised estimates under the same section resulting from the actions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-second and fifty-third sessions. In the initial estimates for 1973 (A/8706), the Secretary-General had proposed an amount of \$99,951,000. In the revised estimates (A/C.5/1436), an additional appropriation of \$78,400, had been requested, for a total provision under that heading of \$100,029,400.

30. In its first report (A/8708 and Corr.1) on the 1973 budget estimates, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had recommended a reduction of \$837,500 in the Secretary-General's estimate. With regard to the revised estimates, the Advisory Committee had recommended

in its related report (A/8708/Add.2) an additional appropriation of \$57,000 for that section, that was to say a reduction of \$21,400 in the Secretary-General's revised estimate. The total recommended by the Advisory Committee for section 3 for 1973 was therefore \$99,170,500.

31. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that section 3 was by far the most important section of the budget since the amount requested was some \$100 million, or about one half of the total budget. The section contained the estimates for established posts and provisional staffing requirements and also for temporary assistance, experts and consultants. Expenses relating to salaries and wages were not all grouped in that section but were also to be found in sections 15, 16 and 18, concerning UNCTAD, UNIDO and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and in four other sections. However, the costs for 70 per cent of the established and provisional posts were budgeted for in section 3. The estimate submitted under section 3 for 1973 represented an increase of \$13.6 million over the 1971 obligations and an increase of \$4.3 million over the 1972 appropriation. However, if the freeze on appointments was taken into account, the increase over the 1972 appropriation was in fact much higher than the latter figure seemed to indicate. In making a comparison between the estimate submitted for 1973 and the 1972 appropriation, due account should also be taken of the change in the manner of budgeting the costs of staff incurred for implementing technical assistance projects of UNDP, which had led to the removal of 92 posts from the budget—43 posts at the Professional level, and 49 at the General Service level; otherwise an estimate of \$1.33 million would have had to be included in chapter I to cover that cost.

32. Chapter I (Established posts), the most important chapter with estimates amounting to \$90 million or nine tenths of the estimate submitted for section 3 as a whole, included approximately 5,000 posts, more or less equally divided between Professional and General Service posts. The number of new posts requested by the Secretary-General—4 posts at the Professional level and 10 at the General Service level—was fairly small when compared to the total number of posts, and the number of proposed reclassifications—which was 27—was not very high either. The increase in the estimate submitted under chapter I was therefore due mainly, as the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 3-4 of its first report, to higher salaries for General Service staff and changes in post classifications at various duty stations (approximately \$3,350,000), the cost of implementing General Assembly resolution 2480 B (XXIII) on language incentives (approximately \$250,000) and the extra cost of financing on a full-year basis for 1973 new posts approved for 1972 to which a large deduction for delayed recruitment had been applied in that year (approximately \$450,000). He drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 3-9 of the same report, in which the Advisory Committee noted that in calculating the estimate under chapter I the Secretary-General had responded

* Resumed from the 1516th meeting.

to the directive given by the General Assembly in its resolution 2836 (XXVI) of 17 December 1971, by applying to the calculated cost of posts relating to documentation a deduction of 2 per cent. In addition, the Secretary-General had made the usual 5 per cent deduction to the cost of all existing posts at the Professional and higher levels to reflect savings which arose from the normal turnover of staff, and to provide for the normal delay in recruitment he had applied a deduction of 40 per cent to the cost of proposed new posts at the Professional level and a deduction of 20 per cent to the cost of new posts at the General Service level.

33. The Advisory Committee's first recommendation on chapter I was based on the exceptional number of vacancies at the beginning of 1973, which was a result of the freeze on recruitment in 1972. When the Advisory Committee had considered the budget estimates, the Secretary-General had forecast that there would be approximately 290 vacancies in the United Nations at the end of the year. Those 290 vacancies would include 170 normal vacancies due to staff turnover and the application of General Assembly resolution 2836 (XXVI) on limitation of documentation, and 120 vacancies—95 or 100 of which would be financed from section 3—would be exceptional vacancies due to the freeze on recruitment. Even if recruitment returned to normal in 1973, it could be assumed that the 100 vacancies financed from section 3 would not be filled immediately. The Advisory Committee had, accordingly, considered that a deduction could be made in the cost of those posts to take account of recruiting delays, but the reduction should be less than the normal reduction of 40 per cent since recruiting would doubtless be undertaken more speedily than usual. The Advisory Committee had therefore, in order to deal with that exceptional situation, recommended a reduction of \$500,000 (which was roughly a 25 per cent deduction to cover recruiting delays) under chapter I. That reduction had seemed appropriate under the circumstances existing in June 1972 when the Advisory Committee had examined the budget estimates and drawn up its recommendations; it did, however, intend to review the situation, if necessary, before the end of the General Assembly's current session, taking into account the Secretary-General's statement at the 1494th meeting (A/C.5/1442), that he would follow a policy of voluntary restraint in appointments until the end of December.

34. The second reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee under chapter I referred to the new posts requested by the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee realized that the request was a modest one, for 4 posts at the Professional level and 10 posts at the General Service level, but it felt it was not logical to establish new posts when there were already so many vacancies and the freeze of recruitment provided an opportunity for a redistribution of existing posts. The Advisory Committee had therefore seen no point in including new established posts in the manning table, with the exception of the proposed new post of Assistant Secretary-General. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee was recommending a further reduction of \$70,000, which would bring the total reduction recommended for chapter I to \$570,000. If, however,

as the Advisory Committee recommended in paragraph 3-19 of its report, credits of \$148,500 provided for part-time cleaners at Geneva, which the Secretary-General had removed from chapter I of section 3, was restored, the net reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee under that chapter would amount to \$421,500.

35. Estimated requirements under chapter II (Temporary assistance for meetings) represented a large increase by comparison with the 1972 appropriation, despite the reduction in documentation. The Advisory Committee felt the increase was excessive and accordingly recommended a reduction of \$20,000 for New York and \$20,000 for Geneva. A further reduction of \$65,000 also seemed feasible as a result of modifications decided by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law to its meetings programme for 1973. The total reduction recommended was therefore \$105,000.

36. The estimate submitted for chapter III (Other temporary assistance) also represented a considerable increase—half a million dollars—over the 1972 appropriation. The entire increase was the result of the estimate for article (i) (General temporary assistance), and the Advisory Committee had recommended that the estimate should be reduced by \$120,000 for the reasons given in paragraphs 3-25 to 3-28 of its report. The estimate required under article (ii) (Individual experts and consultants) was slightly lower than the 1972 appropriation, yet the Advisory Committee had nevertheless recommended that it should be reduced by \$100,000, for it viewed the high level of expenditure on consultants as a matter for concern. Several delegations had expressed the same concern at the previous session of the General Assembly and had requested that the Joint Inspection Unit should review the use of experts and consultants by the United Nations and report on the subject to the General Assembly at the current session. In paragraph 3-31 of its report, the Advisory Committee had indicated that it would review its recommendation in the light of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit. The Unit had published only an interim report (see A/8811), but the preliminary conclusions seemed to corroborate the Advisory Committee's proposed reduction.

37. The estimate for chapter IV (Overtime and night differential) had been based primarily on obligations in 1971 and insufficient account seemed to have been taken of the reduction which the Advisory Committee had recommended to the initial estimates for 1972, and which the General Assembly had approved. Consequently, and also because of the stringent controls introduced on the initiative of the Secretary-General to reduce expenditure on overtime, the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of \$86,000 to the estimate submitted for that chapter.

38. With regard to chapter V (Provisional staffing requirements), he said that because of the very nature of provisional posts the Advisory Committee had recommended in the past two years that when an office was due to be the subject of revised estimates based

on a manpower survey by the Administrative Management Service, any credits sought in the initial estimates for provisional posts should be excluded. The situation was, however, different in 1972, for when the Advisory Committee had reviewed the budget estimates it had been informed that the manpower surveys of the Office of Personnel Services and the Office of General Services were due to be finished by the end of June 1972, but that there was considerable doubt that revised estimates could be prepared in time for the next session of the Assembly. There were thus two alternatives: either to exclude all credits for provisional posts, pending the submission of later estimates, or to retain them all, on the understanding that should revised estimates be submitted for any or all of the offices concerned the related provisional posts would disappear as such. The Advisory Committee had chosen the second alternative and the latest information available seemed to justify that decision, for it was not at all definite that the last stages of the manpower surveys would be finished before the end of the current session. The Advisory Committee's recommended reduction of \$5,000 took account of the freeze in recruitment which applied to provisional, as well as to established, posts.

39. Mr. BARTUŠEK (Czechoslovakia) said that, despite the policy of budgetary restraint instituted by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee, the budget estimates for the financial year 1973 remained too high and contained certain weak points—for example, the allocations sought for provisional staffing requirements.

40. In paragraph 3.39 of the budget estimates, the Secretary-General indicated that 29 Professional and 86 General Service posts approved for 1972 under the provisional staffing requirements had been maintained in 1973 pending the submission of revised proposals based on the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service in respect of the staff utilization and deployment survey of the departments and offices concerned. According to paragraph 3.40, the cost of maintaining those posts amounted to a total of \$1,691,800. The Advisory Committee had explained that in the previous two years, because of the very nature of the provisional posts, it had recommended that any credits sought in the initial estimates for provisional posts should be excluded if the office was due to be the subject of revised estimates based on a manpower survey by the Administrative Management Service. The posts in question were to be either converted to established posts and moved to chapter I of section 3, or deleted. The Advisory Committee further stated that of the five offices for which provisional posts were provided the surveys of only two had been completed. In other offices the surveys were to be finished by the end of June 1972, but at the time when the Advisory Committee had reviewed the initial estimates there had been considerable doubt that the revised estimates could be prepared in time. The Advisory Committee had reached the conclusion that, in the circumstances, two alternative approaches were possible: either to exclude all the credits requested for provisional posts, pending the submission of later estimates, or to retain them all, on the understanding that should revised estimates

be submitted for any or all of the offices concerned the related provisional posts would disappear as such. The Advisory Committee had adopted the latter solution. The Czechoslovak delegation, which had in the past criticized the continuance of provisional posts, regarded that decision as incorrect because it compromised budgetary discipline. As to delays in the completion by the Administrative Management Service of its various surveys of staff utilization, the Advisory Committee stated, in paragraph 45 of its first report, that they had been due in part to events over which the Administrative Management Service had no control, including the appointment of a new Secretary-General, the reorganization of the political departments of the Secretariat initiated by him and the appointment of a new Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management. The Czechoslovak delegation did not see how events which had taken place in 1972 could have influenced delays which had occurred in 1971. Nor did it understand how the reorganization of the political departments could have caused delays in the staff surveys of the Office of Personnel Services, the Division of Human Rights or the Office of General Services.

41. The Czechoslovak delegation was of the opinion that it was high time that the so-called provisional posts disappeared from the budget, together with the whole of chapter V of section 3. It proposed therefore that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should accept the first alternative suggested by the Advisory Committee and exclude all provisional posts from the budget pending the submission of the results of the staff utilization surveys. There were currently 320 established posts unfilled and that should be more than sufficient to meet staff needs in 1973.

42. Mr. SELMECI (Hungary) observed that, year after year, it was section 3 that attracted the greatest attention in the Fifth Committee's consideration of the budget estimates. That section contained the largest single appropriation in the budget and thus had a considerable impact on the total amount of the Organization's budget. The Hungarian delegation always took a critical look at the section because it was not the quantity but the quality of the staff employed that made the secretariat of any organization an efficient unit. When Member States were requested to grant the staff of the Secretariat the highest salaries by comparison with those of national civil servants anywhere, they were entitled to demand that Secretariat staff members should be as highly efficient as they were highly paid.

43. Table 19 in the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat¹ showed that the actual number of staff at the professional and higher levels alone had increased from 1,267 in 1962 to 2,256 in 1972, an average yearly rate of increase of 7.8 per cent. No data for an average yearly rate of increase for programmes undertaken during the same period in the economic, social and human rights fields were available but if that percentage was compared with the modest 2 per cent expansion in the 1970 budget

¹ Document A/8831 and Corr.1, of 6 October 1972.

for new programmes and related activities and the 0.8 per cent increase in the 1972 budget for the same area, it could be established that the rate of growth of staff was at least twice that of the rate of expansion of programmes. That was a very unhealthy trend, especially taking into consideration the fact that there had simultaneously been a steady increase in appropriations for outside consultants and temporary assistance. The Hungarian delegation was opposed to any increase in expenditure of staff if it was not in line with the actual requirements of new programmes. It was for that reason that it welcomed the policy of restraint introduced in 1972 and commended the steps taken by the Secretary-General to improve the efficiency of the Secretariat. Through that policy, it had become apparent that there was plenty of room for improvement in efficiency in making use of the capacity released as a result of the completion of earlier tasks. Whatever the final outcome of the manpower survey, the Hungarian delegation felt that much more could have been achieved had that policy of restraint been introduced at the time that the Administrative Management Service was established.

44. The statistics presented in the Secretary-General's report on the results of the Administrative Management Service survey of manpower utilization in the Secretariat (A/C.5/1446) did not provide adequate information. No distinction was made therein between major recommendations and relatively unimportant ones. It was stated in paragraph 15 of that report that the average increase of the regular establishment had been slowed down from 7 per cent per year to less than 2 per cent per year in the three years since the survey had been launched and that if the pre-survey growth rate had continued, the size of the establishment in 1972 would probably have increased by more than 1,000 posts, which in terms of staff costs could be estimated to total some \$16 million per year. Nevertheless, there was no evidence in the report that either the slow-down or the estimated cost avoidance could in any way be attributed to the activities of the Administrative Management Service. Far from reducing or even stabilizing the size of the staff, the Adminis-

trative Management Service had done nothing but recommend substantial increases.

45. The Hungarian delegation recognized that the request for new established posts in 1973 at the Professional and higher levels was a modest one, but it concurred with the Advisory Committee's view that even that limited request was questionable at a time when so many existing posts remained unfilled. It therefore supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that, with the exception of one additional post at the level of Assistant Secretary-General and the abolition of one post in the Office for Inter-Agency Affairs, there was no need to change the establishment at the Professional and higher levels under section 3.

46. As to the allocations requested for individual experts and consultants, the Hungarian delegation considered that that question should be viewed in the light of the high salaries paid to the Professional staff and of the ratio between the fixed-term and permanent contracts. If staff employed at the level of P-3 and above were not experts in their particular fields, why should they receive salaries some 20 to 30 per cent higher than those of their counterparts in the United States Administration? If such high salaries had to be paid, the ratio between fixed-term and permanent contracts should be changed to make it possible to employ more experts with shorter fixed-term contracts.

47. In conclusion, while the Hungarian delegation appreciated the efforts of the Secretary-General to improve the efficiency of the Secretariat and welcomed his intention of continuing the policy of budgetary restraint, it still considered that many requests under different chapters of section 3, and particularly chapter III, could not be justified. The reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee did not go far enough. Accordingly, while it supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, it could not vote for the appropriations requested under section 3.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.