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Chairman : Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand).

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chap-
ter VIII, section I) (A/1884¹)

[Item 11]*

Co-ordination between the United Nations and the specialized agencies : (a) Administrative budgets of the specialized agencies and the development of common services : report of the Secretary-General; (b) Concentration of effort and resources : report of the Economic and Social Council (A/1812² and Add.1,² A/1956, A/1971, A/C.2&3/97-A/C.5/450, A/C.2&3/99 - A/C.5/456, A/C.2&3/100 - A/C.5/457, A/C.2&3/102-A/C.5/459, A/C.2&3/103-A/C.5/460)

[Item 28]*

1. The CHAIRMAN invited Mr. Hill, before opening the general debate, to make a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General.

2. Mr. HILL (Secretariat) first called attention to the Secretary-General's efforts, together with those of the heads of the specialized agencies, in respect of General Assembly resolutions 411 (V) and 413 (V). In indicating the documents reporting the results achieved in response to resolution 411 (V), he singled out for particular mention the question of co-ordination of services between the United Nations and the specialized agencies, which was the subject of a special report by the Secretary-General (A/C.2&3/103-A/C.5/460). The work done in that connexion, in a restricted field, and in respect of Geneva, had been marked by considerable progress. Good co-ordination of the important interpreting and translating services in Geneva however depended on

the establishment of a relatively stable pattern of United Nations meetings in Europe. The Secretary-General's enquiry would now be extended to certain other services and areas.

3. Work done under the heading of administrative and budgetary co-ordination also included the activities of the International Civil Service Advisory Board and the consultations held between the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The Board had been requested to turn its attention in the near future to standards of professional conduct in the international civil service. A joint meeting of the ACC and the Advisory Committee had been held for the purpose of discussing various questions of mutual concern, including the development of closer and more continuous working relationships between the executive heads of the specialized agencies and the Advisory Committee. The ACC had warmly welcomed that meeting with the Advisory Committee.

4. The major provisions of resolution, 413 (V), on "Concentration of Effort and Resources" and dealing with the review of the 1952 programmes in the light of the criteria for priorities established by the Economic and Social Council, had been communicated to the functional and regional commissions by Council resolution 362 (XII). At its thirteenth session the Council had noted, generally, a good response on the part of the commissions, and had recognized, at the same time, that the establishment of priorities presented problems of different magnitudes for the various commissions. The Council also noted that the specialized agencies had succeeded in working towards the desired objective in using their own individual methods.

5. The action he had described related to the establishment of priorities within the programmes of indi-

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixth Session, Supplement No. 3*.

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly's agenda.

² *Ibid.*, Supplements No. 5 and 5A.

vidual agencies and commissions. The Council believed that its general recommendations relating to broad programmes and objectives would help towards concentration of efforts by guiding the agencies in establishing their own priorities. The Council referred a number of suggestions to the ACC for comment and decided to include an item entitled "United Nations priority programmes" on the provisional agenda of its second regular session in 1952.

6. At the end of its resolution 413 (V) the Assembly had urged that what might be called the routine work of ensuring the fullest co-ordination of programmes and activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies should be vigorously pursued. The ACC was making every effort in that direction, and Mr. Hill indicated what had been accomplished at the session just concluded.

7. He pointed out that he had confined himself to the action taken by the Secretary-General and the ACC, and had made no attempt to assess the development of co-ordination in its wider perspective. The heads of the specialized agencies, like the Secretary-General himself, could and did make suggestions for the co-ordination and concentration of programmes affecting their particular organizations, and in the execution of those programmes they were in a position to take detailed measures to the same end. In so doing, however, they of necessity acted within their constitutions, which were based upon policy decisions taken by governments of Member States. Furthermore, the inter-governmental organs determined programmes and activities, and the success or failure of efforts to achieve real and effective co-ordination and concentration of effort and resources ultimately depended upon the action and policies of governments themselves.

8. Mr. DONS (Norway) said that his Government was particularly interested in co-ordination as vital to national and international administration. Co-ordination was very often faulty at the national level and the consequent inadequacies were, in a sense, indirectly responsible for the continual rise in the budgets of United Nations bodies—which Member States were perfectly able to control.

9. The Norwegian delegation had on a number of occasions advocated the adoption of a consolidated budget for the United Nations and the specialized agencies, which would mean that the General Assembly would be responsible for the level of expenditure of all international organizations. He was confident that the practical obstacles to such a scheme could be overcome. Although, of course, it would be impossible to adopt a consolidated budget at the present session, he would suggest that the Secretariat be asked immediately to proceed to a study of the problem in co-operation with the specialized agencies, and to report to the General Assembly in 1952 or 1953. If his suggestion was well received by the Committees meeting jointly he would submit a formal proposal.

10. Co-operation was not less difficult at the international level, but the reports before the meeting showed that substantial progress in that direction had been made. He felt that that progress should be noted in a formal resolution.

11. Although the task of the Committees meeting jointly was not to give detailed advice on co-ordination, he ventured to draw attention to two fields where detailed attention was required: United Nations publications,

and the recruitment of experts under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance. Recruiting agents from several specialized agencies had recently visited the Norwegian Government, and he wondered whether recruitment could not be conducted by a single agency in each area.

12. The Norwegian delegation had referred in the past to the need for a thorough study of co-ordination questions by a committee to be set up by the General Assembly. He would not press that suggestion at the present time, but reserved the right to revert to it when the agencies had had more time to implement the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council.

13. Mr. HESSEL (France), noting the existence of a large body of recommendations and other texts relating to methods and procedures for the concentration of efforts and resources, considered it important that a certain period should be allowed to elapse during which those texts would have a chance to prove their efficacy, and during which no attempt was made to amend them substantially.

14. It appeared that the Economic and Social Council had very justifiably aimed at a position half way between the two extremes: on the one hand of unlimited planning and expenditure—highly probable in such a field as economic and social affairs, where vast work was waiting to be done—and on the other hand of rigorous budgetary limitation, which might have a very stunting and stereotyping effect in that field.

15. The prudent middle course which the Council had chosen could be practicable only with the goodwill and co-operation of the various bodies and agencies concerned. In concrete terms it consisted of the selection of priorities. The Council's resolution 402 (XIII) in fact placed upon the provisional agenda of its 1952 summer session an item entitled "Adoption of United Nations priority programmes in the economic and social fields". If such programmes were adopted, secondary and wasteful projects would automatically be eliminated and, even more important, an effective link would be created between the programmes of action of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies. To achieve its aim of establishing priorities, the Council required a large mass of information and data. The texts already agreed upon were sufficient for that purpose, and the only need was for each government, each subsidiary body of the Council and each specialized agency to interpret them in a spirit of solidarity and mutual understanding.

16. Miss STRAUSS (United States of America) said that the main purpose of co-ordination was to ensure the most advantageous use of all available resources. The problem could be viewed in four principal aspects. Two of those—the organization of the Economic and Social Council and its commissions, and the co-ordination of activities between the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the economic and social fields—did not come strictly within the purview of the present meeting. The other two aspects—concentration of effort and resources, and administrative and budgetary co-ordination—should be the true subjects of the meeting's deliberations, and for the first time there existed sufficient factual data to support sound judgments.

17. As a result she hoped that at the present session the Committees meeting jointly would be able to elaborate specific measures of co-ordination. She proposed to submit detailed statements on those aspects at appropriate later stages in the discussions.

18. Mr. ADARKAR (India) felt that the need for co-ordination between the United Nations and the specialized agencies had already existed for such a long time that it required no emphasis or advertisement. Co-ordination must, however, be regarded as dynamic rather than static, and should be adapted to varying conditions annually.

19. The documentary material before the Committees indicated that there were three main types of co-ordination: first, administrative co-ordination, involving more or less mechanical provisions relating to personnel and other matters; second, financial and budgetary co-ordination; and third, operational co-ordination, covering the whole range of work programmes, projects, studies, etc. He would confine his remarks to the second type, and speak on the other two later.

20. The Fifth Report of 1951 of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/1956) showed that for the problem of budget stabilization, in which India was naturally keenly interested, the Advisory Committee had suggested three alternative solutions. His delegation did not believe that those three methods were necessarily exclusive; indeed, the second and third methods were basically dependent upon the first, which provided for the imposition of budgetary ceilings.

21. The Assembly would have to come to a decision on the important matter of the division of budgets into administrative and operational sections, but first a clear understanding of what constituted administrative expenditure was required. Document A/C.2&3/100-A/C.5/457 set forth those categories of expenditure which the World Health Organization regarded as administrative.

22. It was suggested, on page 133 of the report of the Economic and Social Council, that, as some of the major agencies had not adhered strictly to the procedures for the establishment of priorities laid down by the General Assembly, those procedures were not entirely satisfactory and might require modification.

23. Mr. AGHNIDES, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, drew attention to the Advisory Committee's report on the "Administrative Budgets of the specialized Agencies for 1952 and the Development of Common Services" (A/1971), and in particular to paragraphs 6 to 28. As regards common services, it was the Advisory Committee's view that further efforts to improve the situation were necessary, and the Secretary-General's report on the co-ordination of services in Geneva (A/C.2&3/103-A/C.5/460) showed that such efforts would be made during 1952.

24. The Advisory Committee, in considering concentration of effort and resources, had been faced with two difficulties. The first arose from the recommendation of the Co-ordination Committee of the Economic and Social Council annexed to resolution 402 B (XIII) inviting the Advisory Committee to provide the Council at its second regular session each year with any general observations on administrative and budgetary co-ordination between the United Nations and specialized agencies which in its opinion would assist the Council in its task. The Advisory Committee had reported that it would be glad to make such observations if so requested by the General Assembly, but could not see what observations it could usefully submit to summer sessions of the Council, since its terms of reference precluded it from examining programmes as such and determining whether existing co-ordination machinery for substantive work was operating successfully. The second difficulty arose

from the same resolution, in which the Council had gone on record as opposed to the application of budgetary ceilings and had decided to consider, at its second session in 1952, the "adoption of United Nations priority programmes in the economic and social fields".

25. The Advisory Committee's basic aim was clearly the same as the Council's, and in paragraphs 12 to 13 of its report it argued, like the Indian representative, that each of the three different methods referred to in paragraph 12, if scrupulously applied, might well produce roughly-equivalent budgetary consequences. Nonetheless, the Advisory Committee had adopted the principle of imposing a general ceiling on expenditures, under which substantive bodies would decide which projects to finance, as against the principle of compiling a list of priority projects and financing only projects included in the list.

26. Mr. DE MEDEIROS (Brazil) said that the material before the Committees meeting jointly suggested that real co-ordination and concentration of effort and resources could be achieved by merely following the path already mapped out. The true picture was not so rosy. The United Nations and specialized agencies employed some 8,000 permanent staff, and a glance at the *Catalogue of Economic and Social Projects* would show the multiplicity of their admittedly important tasks. On the other hand, the very existence of several of the agencies was imperilled by their precarious financial situation; but the economies they had had to introduce had not led to reduction of their budgets. Even for the United Nations, which had so far been the only organization in a healthy financial state, the Secretary-General had been obliged to request that the Working Capital Fund be further increased by special contributions. The Brazilian delegation considered that the Committees had better face the situation realistically and objectively, remembering that governments, over and above their mandatory contributions to the regular budgets of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, were called upon to make increasing voluntary contributions to the technical assistance programmes and also to defray the cost of the additional civil servants they needed to put their international undertakings into effect, of their permanent delegations to the United Nations, and of their representatives to the ever-increasing number of international meetings.

27. The system of decentralization of the work of the United Nations and specialized agencies required the Economic and Social Council to exercise a permanent responsibility for the co-ordination of their activities. But that part of the ACC report dealing with administration should be submitted to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions rather than to the Council, which could not give it the expert consideration it needed and was at present duplicating the Advisory Committee's work on it. That part should, moreover, be divided into two as the Council itself had recommended at its ninth session: a factual review of progress made, and a list of points on which agreement had not been reached.

28. The Brazilian delegation—whose views were broadly shared by the Australian delegation and, apparently, by the Advisory Committee—thought it urgent and important that expenditure on the secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies should be stabilized, except for the increases called for by increments and cost-of-living adjustments. All other methods of budgetary control had proved unavailing. The

Secretary-General and the chief executive officers of the specialized agencies should then allot priorities where necessary, as they alone could appraise needs realistically and objectively and know how much work their staffs could undertake. Each other project calling for funds should be carefully considered in the light, not of its academic interest, but of its practical value to those who would be called upon to finance it; if approved, its cost should be met, not as at present by supplementary credits subsequently chargeable to the regular budget, but by credits voted specially for the purpose. The flexible procedure he had outlined would be well suited to the differing activities and organizational arrangements of the various agencies, and would be far more likely to lead to results than the course the Economic and Social Council had chosen, that of endeavouring itself to allot priorities throughout the economic and social fields, which could only lead to serious difficulties and useless debates.

29. Mr. CALDERON-PUIG (Mexico) recalled that Mr. Hill had reminded the meeting of the importance attached by the ACC to the need for each government to co-ordinate its own policy towards the United Nations and the various specialized agencies. He agreed that co-ordination must begin at the national level.

30. The specialized agencies had often been criticized for their steadily-increasing expenditure. The Mexican delegation agreed on the need for economy, provided that it did not hamstring the specialized agencies. Their work was of the utmost importance to the common man, of more importance perhaps than that of the United Nations, whose endless discussions rarely ended in agreement on any point affecting him directly. Yet the strict application of several of the many resolutions on co-ordination adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council would in effect paralyze the work of the specialized agencies. Real co-ordination of their activities required a detailed knowledge of all the fields they covered, which very few delegations could possess; he thought, therefore, that full consideration should be given to the information which the policy-making organs of the various agencies could provide. Co-ordination could not be imposed on those from above, but must spring from their own intimate and expert knowledge of the fields in which they worked.

31. In many ways, however, better use could be made of the available funds. The policy of decentralization, for example, was a wise one, but he suggested that, in future, the cost of regional offices should be borne by those countries who benefited from their operation, instead of being added to the regular headquarters budget of the agency.

32. He praised in particular the International Labour Organisation; it had extended its operations considerably in recent years without substantially increasing its budget and hence the contributions it had to ask from governments, which at present had great difficulty in finding all

the funds they needed to pay their contributions to international organizations.

33. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) recalled that at the fourth session of the General Assembly the Brazilian delegation had introduced a draft resolution (A/1012) on the proliferation and overlapping of the programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, and had since submitted a practical solution to the Economic and Social Council. He requested an opportunity to explore the subject farther after the closure of the general debate, particularly in view of the observations presented by various delegations.

34. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) remarked that he would study the positions adopted by the Brazilian, Mexican and other delegations before participating in the general debate.

35. Mr. ADARKAR (India), referring to the last sentence in paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/1956), suggested that some directive might be required from the General Assembly to clarify the respective positions of the Council and the Advisory Committee.

36. Mr. AGHNIDES, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, explained that the Advisory Committee, in accordance with its terms of reference, could consider concentration of efforts and resources only from the administrative and financial aspects. Its conclusions were therefore likely to differ from those of the Council, which dealt with the substance of the matter. The Advisory Committee had never requested the General Assembly to grant it wider powers; in 1950 he had suggested that the General Assembly might be asked for a clear definition of the respective fields of competence of the Council and the Advisory Committee in dealing with co-ordination between the United Nations and the specialized agencies.

37. Mr. MACHADO (Brazil) agreed that the responsibilities of the two bodies were distinct. Yet the General Assembly, in its resolution 413 (V), had requested the Council to seek, in reviewing the programmes, the assistance of the Advisory Committee on the administrative and financial aspects. There was, of course, no question of asking the Advisory Committee to consider the substance of the programmes. The Council, a body of eighteen members whose session he had attended as an observer, had decided in its resolution 402 (XIII) to endeavour to avoid the application of budgetary ceilings, an approach which the French representative had qualified as prudent.

38. The existing machinery, however, obviously needed revision, and his delegation proposed that it should be revised. The Committees meeting jointly could therefore approach the problem from the point of view of the Council on the one hand, or of the Brazilian and Australian delegations on the other.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.