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Chairman: Mr. Awni KHALIDY (Iraq).

Scale of assessment for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions (A/2461, A/C.5/548, A/C.5/L.245) (*continued*)

[Item 42]*

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the Philippine draft resolution (A/C.5/L.245), the purpose of which was to invite the Committee on Contributions, in reviewing the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations for 1955 and for subsequent years, to consult with the governments of Member States, particularly those States whose contributions were likely to be increased, before a new scale of assessments was finally formulated.

Mr. LALL (India), Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, said that he had conferred with the rapporteur and with the Philippine representative in order to work out a formula which might satisfy the Philippine delegation, and they had agreed on the following formula: as soon as it has fixed the date of its next session the Committee on Contributions will inform all delegations so that they may transmit any information to the Committee which they may wish to be taken into consideration in the preparation of the scale of assessment; moreover, when considering the scale the Committee will get in touch with those countries whose contributions are likely to be changed significantly and will request them to submit supplementary information to the Committee if they deem advisable to do so.

Mr. IBANEZ (Philippines) was prepared to withdraw his draft resolution if the text read out by the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions was included in the report.

Mr. FENAUX (Belgium) thought it should be clearly understood that the Committee on Contributions should in no circumstances become a negotiating committee.

The CHAIRMAN recognized that a serious problem was involved which required some thought. Per-

* Indicates the item number on the agenda of the General Assembly.

sonally, he doubted whether under its terms of reference the Committee on Contributions could enter into negotiations with delegations.

6. Mr. IBANEZ (Philippines) explained that it was not his delegation's intention that the Committee on Contributions should enter into negotiations with delegations. He merely wanted the Committee, when it was proposing to change the scale, to inform the governments concerned to that they might have an opportunity to submit supplementary information.

7. Mr. ASHA (Syria) and Mr. VAN ASCH VAN WIJCK (Netherlands) shared the Belgian representative's view. Consultations with governments might prolong the work of the Committee on Contributions. The text to be inserted in the report should take account of that committee's terms of reference and should not have the effect of converting it into a negotiating body.

8. In reply to a question from Mr. CHECHYOTKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), the CHAIRMAN explained that in his opinion the Fifth Committee should take a decision forthwith on the question of principle and agree on the text it wished to have inserted in the report.

9. Mr. ASHA (Syria) thought it undesirable to refer in the report to the possibility of consultations between the Committee on Contributions and governments. Governments which considered their quota too high should make available to the Secretariat any relevant information in support of a reduction in their contribution.

10. Mr. KIANG (China) said his delegation had some difficulties with the Philippine draft resolution as it stood, to which his delegation first intended to propose an amendment. The Philippine draft was withdrawn after the Philippine representative had received assurances from the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions. Now objections were raised with regard to the formula of the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions. In order to meet the wishes of the Philippine representative and at the same time to satisfy those representatives who took exception to the agreed formula, he suggested the insertion in the report of a phrase on the following lines: "the Philippine delegation expressed the desire that the Committee on Contributions, in reviewing the scale of assessment for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations, should take into full consideration the views of governments, more especially those whose contributions might be changed". A formula of that type was, he thought, harmless.

11. Mr. IBANEZ (Philippines) would be prepared to accept that wording if it was acceptable to the Committee.

12. Mr. FENAUX (Belgium) also thought the wording proposed by the Chinese representative was acceptable, since it was the statement of an opinion expressed

by a single delegation on its own responsibility, but it would be right to add in the report a statement that, in the view of certain delegations, the Committee on Contributions should not become a negotiating body.

13. Mr. A. K. FAHMY (Egypt) felt it would be better to adopt a more flexible formula such as "the Committee on Contributions may take into account...".

14. Mr. IBANEZ (Philippines) said he could not accept that amendment which severely restricted the scope of the Chinese text.

15. Mr. BRENNAN (Australia) saw no objection to the adoption of the text proposed by the Chinese representative as it was merely a factual statement of the desire expressed by the Egyptian representative.

16. Mr. ASHA (Syria) saw no sense in inserting a text of that kind in the report. It was the responsibility of governments to supply the Committee on Contributions with all the necessary information. He would vote against any text which might produce a change in that committee's terms of reference and asked that his position be recorded in the report.

17. Mr. VANER (Turkey) supported the Syrian representative.

18. Mr. AHSON (Pakistan) said that his delegation, like the majority of the Fifth Committee, thought that the Committee on Contributions should not exceed its functions and convert itself into a negotiating body.

19. Speaking as Rapporteur, he proposed that he should mention in the report both the desire expressed by the Philippine representative and the Fifth Committee's opinion that the Committee on Contributions had no authority to enter into negotiations with governments.

20. Mr. VAN ASCH VAN WIJCK (Netherlands) and Mr. M. I. BOTHA (Union of South Africa) supported that proposal.

The Rapporteur's proposal was adopted.

**Budget estimates for the financial year 1954
(A/2383 and Add.1, A/2403, A/2501, A/C.5/
540) (continued)**

[Item 39]*

First reading (continued)

**SECTION 20A. OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR REFUGEES**

21. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/C.5/540 containing revised estimates for the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the funds requested for that Office being increased to \$743,000. The Advisory Committee recommended in paragraphs 135-142 of its fifth report (A/2501) a reduction to \$685,000, the cut of \$58,000 to be distributed at the discretion of the High Commissioner.

22. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the amount of \$685,000 which the Advisory Committee was recommending for the High Commissioner's Office was 5.5 per cent above the appropriation for 1953, which had been \$650,000. It could not therefore be alleged that the Advisory Committee under-estimated the importance of the humanitarian work so courageously accomplished by the High

Commissioner. There were so many aspects to the refugee problem that the General Assembly during its fifth session, in framing the Office's terms of reference, had sought to define its tasks very exactly and to limit those of its activities which could be financed out of the United Nations regular budget.

23. Although certain representatives had maintained in the general debate that it was not always desirable to try and stabilize the budget, that was not the view of the General Assembly or of the Advisory Committee which, as a subsidiary organ of the Assembly, had to conform to the directives laid down by its parent body. In December 1950 the Assembly had requested the specialized agencies to do their best to stabilize their budgets (resolution 411 (V)) and had recognized that the range of the Organization's activities should be determined (resolution 413 (V)) not only by decisions on actual projects but also by the amount of the appropriations approved. Those were the principles by which all United Nations organs should abide.

24. The Advisory Committee had no authority to pass judgment on the merits of the Organization's various activities. Its only function was to decide whether the total budget was excessive and whether the funds requested for a particular activity were too high having regard to the budget as a whole.

25. The Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/540) had merely reproduced the revised estimates which the High Commissioner felt were required on the basis of a reappraisal of the work to be done in 1954. He had not expressed any opinion. The Advisory Committee recommended that within the limits of the appropriation of \$685,000 the High Commissioner should be given full latitude in 1954 to distribute the funds for the execution of projects already under way or of new projects. It thought that some savings could be achieved under section 20a on travel on official business which, according to the budget estimates, amounted to \$57,000 (\$27,000 for Headquarters staff and \$30,000 for the staff of branch offices). The total expenditure for travel on official business of all Headquarters departments amounted to \$100,000, and even when allowance was made for the special needs of the High Commissioner's Office, it seemed abnormal that expenditure under that head should amount to 57 per cent of that of the Headquarters units.

26. At the General Assembly's seventh session (A/2157) the Advisory Committee had recommended a 3 per cent reduction in the appropriations requested for section 20a. During the financial year 1953, the High Commissioner's Office had succeeded in keeping its expenditure within these limits. As in 1952 he would again assure the High Commissioner that the Advisory Committee would consider favourably any request his Office might find it necessary to submit for authorization to transfer credits from one section to another.

27. Mr. VAN HEUVEN GOEDHART (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) welcomed the General Assembly's decision, taken on the recommendation of the Third Committee, to extend his Office's mandate for a further five years. He was glad to note that the essentially dynamic character of its programme was now better understood. Experience had shown that the fears, expressed by some, of an exaggerated development of its services were groundless.

28. A year ago he had had some difficulty in framing the estimates for 1954, since he had not then known

whether the Assembly would extend the Office's mandate beyond 31 December 1953. Subsequently the recommendation of the High Commissioner's Advisory Committee in favour of the maintenance of this Office, and the interest taken by the Secretary-General in the refugee problem, had given Mr. van Heuven Goedhart ground for hoping for a favourable decision by the General Assembly, and he had therefore presented supplementary estimates which took into account certain fresh factors that had arisen since the first estimates had been prepared.

29. In the first place it was clear that his staff would have to cope with a larger volume of work. His Advisory Committee, on which fifteen countries were represented, would in future hold two sessions a year instead of one. It had also been agreed that his Office should report on its work to the Council of Europe each year. Finally, it maintained close contact with the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) and with the Inter-Governmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe. The consequent increase of work would require a larger staff.

30. The position in the branch offices was more complicated. The Bonn office, which had three administrators, was responsible for more than 220,000 refugees and displaced persons, the great majority of them concentrated in Bavaria. Some 45,000 were in camps, a fact which had caused special concern to the Third Committee. An agency of the Bonn office was badly needed in south Germany to tackle that problem at close quarters.

31. Latin America had agreed to accept large numbers of refugees. Brazil, in particular, was making a considerable effort. During the past eighteen months it had accepted 1,351 refugees from Shanghai. His Office had a representative in Bogotá, but the area with which he had to deal was too large for efficient work. A branch office therefore was needed in Rio de Janeiro. He was prepared to transfer an official from Bogotá to Rio de Janeiro, but that would not provide a complete answer to the problem.

32. The new Egyptian Government took a keen interest in the refugee question. The evacuation of the British forces from the Canal Zone would almost certainly result in an increase in the number of refugees to be cared for by his Office. A liaison office would therefore be wanted in Cairo, if only temporarily. For that purpose he was prepared to reduce the staff of the Athens office.

33. There were between 4,000 and 5,000 refugees in Trieste. It was not necessary to open an agency there, but staff would have to be sent to visit these refugees.

34. In Yugoslavia, the repatriation of refugees and the tracing of Yugoslav children living outside Yugoslavia demanded a considerable effort. The Yugoslav Government was not in favour of having an office in Belgrade but additional staff would have to be recruited for work in Germany and Austria.

35. The Advisory Committee on Budgetary and Administrative Questions were recommending a reduction of \$58,000 in the appropriations for which he had asked; it laid particular stress on the economies that could be effected on travel expenses. But it should be remembered that the functions performed by his services were not comparable with those performed by the Secretariat, and that his officials were obliged to travel frequently. As a token of his readiness to co-operate

he would agree to a reduction of \$21,000, and hoped that the Committee, realizing the difficulty of the tasks with which his Office had to cope, would place at his disposal the funds which were absolutely essential to him for the financial year 1954.

36. Mr. VAN ASCH VAN WIJCK (Netherlands) recalled that the Third Committee had (502nd meeting) recently decided to recommend the renewal of the High Commissioner's Office for a term of five years. The discussion in that Committee had proved that, with only a few exceptions, Member States recognized the need for continued international action on behalf of the refugees. Thus the High Commissioner's Office had received well-deserved recognition of the manner in which it was discharging its duties.

37. His delegation had always maintained that the Fifth Committee was entitled to make a completely objective review of the estimates of expenditure, but that did not prevent its members from taking into account the circumstances in which another committee had decided upon a matter for which the expenditure had to be examined by the Fifth Committee. Without being bound in any way to conform to the views expressed in another committee, they were free to consider them when they had to decide whether or not any specific appropriation was too high in relation to the Organization's total budget.

38. The High Commissioner encountered numerous difficulties in framing his estimates. He had to face a constantly changing situation. That was why he was now presenting supplementary estimates to the Fifth Committee.

39. The Advisory Committee considered that the appropriations requested by the High Commissioner were too high in relation to the total budget of the Organization. His delegation had invariably argued against a constant increase in the volume of work and in the staff of the Secretariat; it upheld the view that priorities should be established and a measure of budgetary stability ensured. There were, however, certain fields where that principle could not be applied. Such was the case with assistance to refugees, a duty that the Organization could not shirk. In that respect, as in the field of technical assistance, it had an opportunity to put the fundamental principles of the Charter into practice.

40. The Advisory Committee was proposing a reduction of \$58,000 in the appropriation requested by the High Commissioner. That was a reduction of 8 per cent, a bigger cut than any other recommended by the Advisory Committee. The High Commissioner was prepared to reduce his estimate by \$21,000. He considered that any heavier reduction might hamper him in his work. The Netherlands delegation entirely concurred in the High Commissioner's comments on that point, and would be prepared to submit a formal proposal to that effect.

41. The Advisory Committee had stated (A/2501, paragraph 142) that the reduction it was proposing would not prevent the High Commissioner from carrying out "a large part" of his programme. The Netherlands representative, however, was anxious for the High Commissioner to be able to fulfil his entire programme for 1954. There could be no question but that the High Commissioner would manage the funds entrusted to him in the most judicious manner. The Netherlands delegation would therefore press the mem-

bers of the Fifth Committee to allow the High Commissioner the appropriations he had requested.

42. Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom) recalled that his delegation, in agreement with certain others, had sponsored in the Third Committee the draft resolution (A/C.3/L.355/Rev.2) calling for the maintenance of the High Commissioner's Office for a further five-year term. His Government, ever anxious to alleviate human suffering, appreciated the remarkable work done by the High Commissioner's Office hitherto.

43. He did not feel that the cut of \$58,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee would detract from the Office's efficiency. As a matter of fact, even after allowing for the reduction recommended by the Committee, the appropriations for the Office for 1954 would show an increase of \$35,000 over 1953.

44. It was the Fifth Committee's settled policy to try to stabilize the United Nations budget, and, in the view of most delegations, the economies effected should help to increase the efficiency of the various services. On the administrative side, the High Commissioner, instead of being overambitious, should make a principle of austerity. The headquarters services should not be expanded *pari passu* with the branch offices. To be sure, the function of the branch offices needed careful consideration, but if it was decided to adopt a policy of decentralization then there should be a corresponding contraction in the headquarters staff. If that was impossible, the personnel of the branch offices should be reduced. The Advisory Committee's view was that measures of that sort could be adopted at the discretion of the High Commissioner.

45. The Office should likewise practise a policy of strict austerity in regard to travel expenses on mission. For the foregoing reasons his delegation would support the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

46. Drawing attention to the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 25 C (iii) of document A/2501 for a review of the administrative relationship between the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner, he suggested that that task should be assigned to the Advisory Committee, with instructions to consult the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General. He intended to submit a draft resolution to that effect during the present meeting.

47. Mr. GAVIRIA (Colombia) said that in maintaining the Office of the High Commissioner for five years, the General Assembly had acknowledged the value of its work. It would be illogical to pass a vote of confidence in the High Commissioner and then refuse him the funds he was requesting to enable him to carry out his programme. The Colombian delegation would accordingly support the compromise suggestion put forward by the High Commissioner.

48. Mr. STRAUCH (Brazil) had listened with satisfaction to the High Commissioner's explanations. Brazil had always taken a keen interest in the refugee problem; it had signed the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and was represented on the High Commissioner's Advisory Committee.

49. The High Commissioner had stated, quite rightly, that it was impossible for his representative at Bogotá to carry out his duties adequately in the very extensive area for which he was responsible. A sub-office in Rio de Janeiro was, therefore, absolutely essential.

50. The Brazilian delegation could not support the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Ad-

ministrative and Budgetary Questions for a cut of \$58,000 in the amount requested by the High Commissioner; it feared a cut of that magnitude might prevent the execution of essential projects. It would therefore vote for the High Commissioner's compromise suggestion.

51. In conclusion, he thought that in future the budget estimates for the High Commissioner's Office should be presented by the Secretary-General, and that the General Assembly should take a decision on that question.

52. Mr. A. K. FAHMY (Egypt) commended the High Commissioner and his assistants on the manner in which they carried out their duties. The High Commissioner's staff had gained so much experience that an increase in its work-load did not necessarily imply additional staff or funds.

53. The Secretary-General was to be congratulated on having refrained from contesting the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning the 1954 budget estimates. It was a pity that there had not been similar agreement concerning a section of the budget over which the Secretary-General, quite illogically, did not exercise the control that was his prerogative as the highest official of the United Nations. The High Commissioner's Office should be an integral part of the United Nations Secretariat and it should be the Secretary-General's responsibility to present the budget estimates for the Office. Any other procedure was contrary to the provisions of Article 97 of the Charter. He therefore supported the United Kingdom representative's remarks concerning paragraph 25 C (iii) of document A/2501, and thought that the General Assembly should study during the current session the question of the administrative relationship between the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner.

54. Mr. KIANG (China) said that, although during the general discussion he had stated that his delegation would, generally speaking, support the Advisory Committee's recommendations, it did not share the Advisory Committee's views on section 20a. The efficiency of the High Commissioner's Office must not be impaired by reducing the credits for which it was asking. His delegation could not, therefore, support the Advisory Committee's recommendation and proposed that the Fifth Committee should agree to the amount finally requested by the High Commissioner, viz. \$37,000 more than the total recommended by the Advisory Committee.

55. Mr. RYBAR (Czechoslovakia) reminded the Committee that during the general discussion the Czechoslovak delegation had pointed out that the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees was contrary to the Charter and in conflict with several General Assembly resolutions, and that its activities were harmful to the prestige of the United Nations. He therefore proposed that section 20a, with the budget estimate of \$743,000, should simply be deleted.

56. Mr. TRANOS (Greece) appreciated the important work performed by the Office of the High Commissioner and congratulated the High Commissioner on the way in which he was fulfilling his task. His delegation thought that the Office of the High Commissioner could with advantage make a wider application of the principle of the geographical distribution of posts. For liaison between any State and the High Commissioner's Office it would be desirable that the

High Commissioner should call upon the services of officials who were nationals of that State. That would increase the Office's effectiveness.

57. Mr. HALL (United States of America) paid a tribute to the fine qualities the High Commissioner had shown in carrying out his duties. He pointed out that the High Commissioner had not been present during the general debate on the budget, at which time there had been general agreement on the need for budgetary stabilization. Because his delegation shared this point of view, it had intended to propose that the 1954 budget estimates for section 20a should be reduced to the 1953 level. As a result, however, of the discussion that had taken place in the Third Committee and the explanations given by the High Commissioner, it was prepared, like the United Kingdom and Egyptian representatives, to approve the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee.

58. With regard to the administrative relationship between the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner, he again shared the Egyptian and United Kingdom representatives' views and he hoped that, as a result of the Advisory Committee's comments (A/2501, paragraph 25 C (iii)), those concerned would study the matter during the coming year.

59. Mr. CHECHYOTKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had stated its position in detail both in the Third Committee (498th meeting) and in the 453rd plenary meeting. It had shown that the activities of the so-called Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees were neither satisfactory nor in keeping with the provisions of the Charter and the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in 1946. It supported the Czechoslovak proposal that section 20a should simply be deleted and would vote against any other proposal for the allocation of funds under that section.

60. Mr. BRENNAN (Australia) regretted that, as at the previous session, he was obliged to vote against the allocation of the sum requested for section 20a and was unable to accept the compromise proposal put forward by the High Commissioner. The fact that the Australian delegation denied the Office a small proportion of the sum for which it had asked did not mean that it disapproved of the use that the Office might make of it. The High Commissioner had very eloquently expounded the increasing needs of the Office at Geneva and the branch offices, but the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee should allow the High Commissioner to meet their needs. In that connexion, he drew attention to the statement of 1953 budget expenses to 30 September 1953 (document A/C.5/547) bearing in mind the footnote at the bottom of the first page, the figures given for section 20a showed that there was likely to be a surplus of appropriations over expenditure which would no doubt more or less make up the difference between the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee and that requested by the High Commissioner; the difference was \$37,000, and the surplus might even be much higher. To judge by that document it would appear that the sum requested for travel on official business could easily be reduced, both for the Headquarters office and for the branch offices, as could also the contributions to the Staff Pension Fund, which did not vary according to season, and several other items.

61. Mr. CARRION (Nicaragua) congratulated the High Commissioner on his achievements and agreed

that more branch offices would be needed to enable him to carry on his work. The Fifth Committee should, of course, not reject the Advisory Committee's recommendation without due reflection, but in examining the budget estimates for section 20a it should remember that the problem had become more acute and should heed the High Commissioner's appeal.

62. Mr. HEMSLEY (Canada) thanked the High Commissioner for his lucid and eloquent explanations. The Canadian delegation had nothing to add to the statements it had made in the Third Committee (501st meeting). It would not like the Committee to adopt any measures that might hamper the work of the High Commissioner's Office. While he understood the Netherlands delegation's position, he was inclined, in view of the remarks made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and the assurances he had given, to vote in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendation. His final decision, however, would depend upon the particulars to be given by the High Commissioner in reply to the remarks of the different delegations.

63. Mr. HORVAT (Yugoslavia) stated that his Government saw no need for a branch office in Belgrade. He asked whether the supplementary estimates for chapter II (Branch Offices) amounting to \$45,600, included the cost of such an office.

64. Mr. VAN HEUVEN GOEDHART (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), referring to paragraph 25 C (iii) of the Advisory Committee's report (A/2501), thought that it would certainly be useful to review the administrative relationship between the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner, but that it would be dangerous to come to hasty conclusions. There did not appear to be any ground for invoking the Charter: Article 101 said that the staff of the Secretariat was to be appointed by the Secretary-General, but under the Statute of the Office of the High Commissioner it was the High Commissioner who appointed the staff of the Office. That situation was the result of the compromise approved by the General Assembly at its fifth session: in order to avoid establishing either a new branch of the Secretariat or a specialized agency, the General Assembly had appointed a High Commissioner to be directly responsible to the General Assembly and had adopted a clause to the effect that the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General were to make appropriate arrangements for liaison and consultation on matters of common interest (article 17 of the Statute). Apparently, therefore, the Statute would have to be amended before any change could be made in the present administrative relationship; as long as the Statute remained in force, it was only natural that the High Commissioner, being directly responsible to the General Assembly, should present his own budget estimates and have an opportunity of saying what, in his opinion, was the minimum sum upon which his programme could be run.

65. The travel estimates for his Office should be compared not with the corresponding figure for Headquarters alone, but with the figure for the entire Organization (\$260,000 instead of \$100,000). Contrary to what the Australian representative believed, the excess of appropriations over expenditure on travel would not be very high, first, because there was always a delay in the accounts of the branch offices' expenditures and, secondly, because, owing to travel between Geneva and New York for the General Assembly and the trips

which the branch representative recently appointed at Bangkok would have to undertake, the expenditure in the fourth quarter would be relatively much higher than in the first three. As for contributions to the Pension Fund, it should not be forgotten that many employees held temporary contracts and would be entitled to become members of the Fund after one year's service.

66. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee had, to be sure, given an assurance that in case of difficulty it would give favourable consideration to a request for a transfer of funds, but the High Commissioner had not received a similar assurance concerning a possible request for supplementary credits, and he did not believe that a simple transfer would suffice to cover the Office's basic needs. The Fifth Committee could in any case be sure that he did not intend to waste the funds placed at his disposal, but would use them very economically. After a further examination of the estimates, he was prepared to accept a reduction of \$21,000, viz., \$15,000 on travel and about \$6,000 under chapter II (Branch Offices) since Yugoslavia did not want a branch office at Belgrade. He wished incidentally to assure the Yugoslav representative that he had never intended to act against his Government's wishes.

67. He concluded by asking the Fifth Committee to give consideration to all the reasons he had expressed. He repeated that if, in 1954, his forecast should prove to have been on the pessimistic side, he would not for that reason incur expenditure exceeding what was strictly necessary.

68. Mr. A. K. FAHMY (Egypt) drew attention to paragraph 1 of document A/C.5/540. If the Statute were amended, the High Commissioner would still be able to submit his budget estimates but would defend them in the name of the Secretary-General.

69. Mr. VAN ASCH VAN WIJCK (Netherlands) and Mr. STRAUCH (Brazil) supported the Chinese proposal and, in the light of the assurances just given by the High Commissioner, urged the Committee to adopt it.

70. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the Czechoslovak proposal to delete section 20a.

The Czechoslovak proposal was rejected by 40 votes to 5, with 3 abstentions.

71. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the Chinese proposal to approve the last estimates requested by the High Commissioner, i.e., to increase the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee by \$37,000.

The Chinese proposal was rejected by 26 votes to 12, with 8 abstentions.

72. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the Advisory Committee's recommendation for an appropriation of \$685,000 for section 20a.

The Advisory Committee's recommendation was adopted on first reading by 40 votes to 5, with 4 abstentions.

73. The CHAIRMAN read out the United Kingdom draft resolution concerning the administrative relationship between the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner:

"The Fifth Committee,

"Having considered the comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary

Questions on the special position occupied by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees within the framework of the European Office (A/2501, paragraph 25 C),

"Agrees to request the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in consultation with the High Commissioner for Refugees and the Secretary-General, to review the administrative relationship between the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Refugees and to make recommendations accordingly."

74. In reply to a question by the CHAIRMAN, Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom) explained that the Advisory Committee would submit its recommendations to the Fifth Committee at the present session.

75. Mr. ASHA (Syria) felt that it would be difficult for the Advisory Committee to submit recommendations at the eighth session, and asked the United Kingdom representative not to press the point.

76. Mr. VAN HEUVEN GOEDHART (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) also thought that it would be difficult to revise at the present session any instrument so complicated as the Statute.

77. Mr. BRENNAN (Australia) pointed out that the United Kingdom draft resolution nowhere referred to a revision of the Statute.

78. Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom) explained that the United Kingdom delegation was not proposing a revision of the Statute. After noting the observations contained in A/2501, paragraph 25 C (iii) his delegation had merely considered it advisable to embody them in a draft resolution. It was obvious, however, that the Advisory Committee would have to refer to the Statute.

79. Mr. FRIIS (Denmark) recalled that, in the Advisory Committee's view, the existing working arrangements between the High Commissioner's Office and the European Office appeared to be satisfactory, and that neither the High Commissioner nor the Secretary-General had so far drawn the Fifth Committee's attention to that problem. The High Commissioner had made a statement, but the Fifth Committee did not yet know the Secretary-General's opinion. The Danish delegation was not, in any case, convinced that there was any urgency and would abstain if the United Kingdom draft resolution was put to the vote.

80. Mr. VAN HEUVEN GOEDHART (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) felt sure that the administrative relationship could not be reviewed without involving the Statute, of which he cited articles 14, 15, 17, 18 and 21. It was true that in its report the Advisory Committee had contemplated a revision of the Statute, but the Third Committee had not amended that instrument, and to embark on a fresh debate on that point would not be desirable. There was all the less reason for doing so, since in practice his Office was an integral part of the United Nations Secretariat. He wished incidentally to express his gratitude to the administrative and financial services of the European Office, which, with his authority, took care of the administrative and financial affairs of his Office. With regard to supplementary estimates, the Secretary-General's attitude had been entirely correct, the High Commissioner alone being directly responsible to the General Assembly in respect of administrative as well as substantive matters.

81. Mr. ANDERSEN (Secretariat) stated that very little more could be done within the Statute to co-ordinate the actions of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General within their respective fields. Since a particular question had been raised, however, the Secretary-General had consulted further with the High Commissioner and both were agreed that, to the extent any improvement could be brought about under the Statute, that would be done.

82. Mr. LIVERAN (Israel) was of the same opinion as the Danish representative. If the purpose of the United Kingdom proposal was a revision of the Statute, it would have been better to table it in the Third Committee. If the proposal was intended merely to define the administrative relationship arising from the Statute on the one hand and the Charter on the other, then there was nothing urgent about it since, according to the Advisory Committee, the working arrangements governing that relationship appeared to be satisfactory. If it was a question of considering the possibility of simplifying the relationship between the Secretariat and the High Commissioner's Office, the general proposals to be submitted by the Secretary-General at the ninth session concerning the reorganization of the Secretariat might also deal with the question; in that case a reference to that fact in the Rapporteur's report would suffice.

83. Mr. FENAUX (Belgium) shared the opinion of the Danish and Israel representatives and requested the United Kingdom representative not to press for a decision by the Fifth Committee on his proposal. If the United Kingdom representative did so, the Belgian delegation would reluctantly vote against, or in any case would abstain from voting on, a proposal that was fundamentally of interest. The problem was an important one and presented such a variety of aspects that the Committee could not review it at the next meeting. For example, the role which the Third Committee would necessarily play had not yet been discussed. It would be far better to consider the problem in connexion with the reorganization of the Secretariat.

84. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that the Statute of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, which had been

adopted by the General Assembly after consideration by the Fifth Committee, and the Charter, an instrument which the General Assembly itself could not modify, could not be put on the same plane. The Fifth Committee could amend the Statute or could interpret it without amending it. The purpose of the United Kingdom draft resolution was not to amend but rather to interpret the Statute. It was not unusual for States, particularly in continental Europe, to modify provisions of the kind by the method of interpretation.

85. The Fifth Committee was thus obviously competent. He therefore proposed that the Fifth Committee should adopt the United Kingdom draft resolution, but that the Advisory Committee should not submit its recommendations until the ninth session. That would allow time for all the necessary consultations and would save the Fifth Committee from the need to adopt any recommendations precipitately.

86. Mr. FENAUX (Belgium) was in full agreement concerning the question of competence, but did not feel that the Fifth Committee was at present in a position to consider the problem.

87. Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom) explained that his delegation had not intended to limit the scope of the review or to specify the procedure to be followed by the Advisory Committee. Nor did it wish to impose an additional burden on the Advisory Committee at the present session and thus cause it to neglect more urgent and important matters. He asked whether the Secretary-General contemplated considering the matter in connexion with the proposals for the reorganization of the Secretariat to be submitted at the ninth session.

88. Mr. ANDERSEN (Secretariat) said that the Secretary-General was prepared to include that subject in his proposals.

89. Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom) withdrew the United Kingdom draft resolution, on the understanding that the question of the administrative relationship between the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General would be given special attention in the Secretary-General's proposals for the reorganization of the Secretariat.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.