



UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
GENERAL

A/10490  
11 December 1975

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirtieth session  
Agenda items 30 and 96

THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1976-1977  
AND MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1976-1979

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution  
contained in document A/L.782

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Ahmed ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt)

1. At its 1767th meeting, on 11 December 1975, the Fifth Committee considered, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, a statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1738 and Corr.1) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution A/L.782. It also had before it the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.23).

2. Under the terms of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would:

(a) Approve the convening of the next session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea for the period from 15 March to 7 May 1976 at New York and the convening of a fifth session in 1976, if such decision is taken by the Conference;

(b) Recall, in this connexion, that it had noted, in paragraph 4 of resolution 3334 (XXIX), the decision of the Conference to accept the invitation of the Government of Venezuela to meet at Caracas at an appropriate date for the purpose of signing the Final Act and related instruments adopted by the Conference, and had authorized the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements to that end.

3. The Secretary-General estimated additional requirements related to the draft resolution at a total of \$2,283,200. Of this amount, \$1,327,400 related to the

convening of the fourth session of the Conference; \$948,800 to the maintenance of the secretariat of the Conference and to two additional posts (P-4, P-2) and one reclassification from D-1 to D-2; and \$15,000 to travel of staff to Geneva to a meeting of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, originally scheduled to be held at Headquarters, but which now, because of the holding of the Conference at Headquarters, would have to be held at Geneva. Offsetting savings of \$8,000 arise in respect of travel of staff from Geneva to New York to attend a meeting of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which, for the same reasons, would now be held at Geneva.

4. In respect of the holding of a fifth session of the Conference for eight weeks in 1976 prior to the convening of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General estimated that the total costs at Headquarters could be estimated at up to \$2,731,200, if the fifth session were to require the same level of services. In the event that the signing of the Final Act and related instruments would take place in 1976, the Secretary-General would seek the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to enter into commitments under the terms of the General Assembly resolution providing for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. Should the signing of the Final Act take place in 1977, the Secretary-General would submit the cost estimates of such a session to the Assembly at its thirty-first session.

5. In its related report (A/10008/Add.23), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions stated that it concurred with the estimates submitted in respect of the holding of the fourth session of the Conference. With regard to the secretariat, the Advisory Committee stated that, since a P-2 vacancy existed, it should be used to accommodate the new P-2 post requested by the Secretary-General. It further stated that it was unable to recommend approval of the proposed reclassification from D-1 to D-2, as sufficient justification had not been presented for this action. Therefore, the Advisory Committee recommended an additional appropriation of \$2,265,400 for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

6. Most of the delegations participating in the debate expressed the view that, in view of the importance and scope of the Conference, and the resulting need for an effective secretariat, the Fifth Committee should approve the resources requested by the Secretary-General in their entirety. The representative of Sri Lanka, supported by those delegations, formally proposed that the Committee approve the full amount of \$2,283,200 requested by the Secretary-General in his statement (A/C.5/1738 and Corr.1).

7. One delegation felt that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee had been generous, and another delegation stated that it would prefer to vote on those recommendations.

8. The Fifth Committee adopted the proposal of Sri Lanka by a recorded vote of 66 to 17, with 8 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Greece, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Mozambique, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Yugoslavia, Zaire.

Against: Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany (Federal Republic of), Hungary, Iran, Israel, Italy, Mongolia, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Barbados, Ghana, Japan, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey.

#### DECISION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

9. The Fifth Committee decided, without objection, to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution in document A/L.782, an additional appropriation of \$2,283,200 would be required as follows:

#### United States dollars

Section 2. Political and Security Council affairs; peace-keeping activities	
A. Policy-making organs	15,000
B. Special meetings and conferences	2,269,300
Section 18. Human rights	(8,000)
Section 21. Public information	6,900
Section 25. Staff assessment	432,600
Income Section 1. Income from staff assessment	(432,600)
Total	2,283,200

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10. One delegation stated that, had the proposal of the Advisory Committee been put to the vote, it would have abstained. Another delegation stated that it would have voted in favour of the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee. A delegation of a land-locked country expressed the hope that its affirmative vote on the proposal of Sri Lanka would be given due recognition.

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