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PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Report of the Committee for Development Planning: criteria
for identifying the least developed countries

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.101

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with
rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. At its 58th meeting, on 11 December 1991, the Second Committee adopted, without a vote, draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.101. A statement of programme budget implications was before the Committee in document A/C.2/46/L.114.

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

2. Under the terms of the operative paragraphs of draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.101, the General Assembly would:

(a) Note with appreciation the new criteria for identifying the least developed among the developing countries and the graduation rules recommended by the Committee for Development Planning, 1/ and request the Committee to consider further possible improvements in the criteria and their applications and report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session through the Economic and Social Council;

(b) Request the Committee for Development Planning to undertake every three years a general review of the list of low-income countries, with a view to identifying which of those countries should qualify for inclusion in, or

should be graduated from, the list of the least developed countries, and to present that review to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council;

(c) Decide that the General Assembly should act on the recommendations of the Committee for Development Planning for the inclusion of a country in the list of the least developed countries, provided the country concerned had signified its consent;

(d) Stress that there was need for a smooth transition of the countries graduating out of the group of the least developed countries, with a view to avoiding disruption in their development plans, programmes and projects, and invite Governments, international organizations and other concerned parties to take appropriate steps to ensure such a smooth transition;

(e) Decide, in that context, that the graduation of a country would be completed following a transitional period of three years, which would commence immediately after the General Assembly had taken note of the finding of the Committee for Development Planning to graduate that country;

(f) Endorse the recommendations of the Committee for Development Planning regarding the inclusion of Cambodia, Solomon Islands, Zaire and Zambia in the list of least developed countries; 2/

(g) Take note of the finding of the Committee for Development Planning to graduate Botswana from the list of the least developed countries and decide that its graduation from the list would be completed following a transition period of three years, in accordance with [paragraph 1 (e) above];

(h) Request the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to report to the Conference at its eighth session on the resource and other implications of the application of the new criteria for identifying the least developed countries for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s;

(i) Request the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to follow his above-mentioned report to the Conference with a report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the same subject.

B. Relationship of the proposed requests to the medium-term plan and proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993

3. The requests contained in paragraph 2 (h) and (i) above relate to subprogramme 1 (Least developed countries) of programme 15 (Least developed, land-locked and island developing countries and special programmes) of major programme IV (International economic cooperation for development) of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 3/, and to section 15 (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. 4/

4. Provision is made under section 1 (Overall policy-making, direction and coordination) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 for travel of representatives of Member States that are least developed countries to sessions of the General Assembly. This activity is not programmed.

C. Activities by which the proposed requests would be implemented

5. As regards the requests contained in paragraph 2 (h) and (i) above, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would request the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to:

(a) Report to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its eighth session on the resource and other implications of the application of the new criteria for identifying the least developed countries for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s;

(b) Follow the above-mentioned report with a report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the same subject.

6. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 1798 (XVII) of 11 December 1962, as amended by Assembly resolutions 2245 (XXI) of 20 December 1966 and 2489 (XXIII) and 2491 (XXIII) of 21 December 1968, travel expenses but not subsistence expenses have been paid by the Organization for not more than five representatives, including alternate representatives, of each Member State attending a regular session of the Assembly and for one representative or alternate representative attending a special or emergency special session of the Assembly. Recommendation 6 of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, however, provided that reimbursement of travel costs for representatives of Member States attending the Assembly should be limited to the least developed countries, 5/ and, by resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, the Assembly decided that the recommendations as agreed upon and as contained in the report of the Group should be implemented. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, the inclusion of Cambodia, Solomon Islands, Zaire and Zambia in the list of the least developed countries would involve the payment of the travel expenses of their representatives and alternate representatives, as indicated above.

D. Modifications required in the proposed programme budget for 1992-1993

7. As indicated in paragraph 3 above, activities in this area have been programmed under section 15 (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

Consequently, no modification would be required should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution.

8. As indicated in paragraph 4 above, provision under section 1 of the proposed programme budget for 1992-1993 for travel of representatives of least developed countries to sessions of the General Assembly is not programmed. Consequently, no modification would be required.

E. Additional requirements at full cost

9. The activities outlined in paragraph 5 above are within the scope of activities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, for which financial provision is made under section 15 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. Consequently, it is anticipated that there will be no additional requirements in this respect.

10. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, Cambodia, Solomon Islands, Zaire and Zambia would be entitled to reimbursement of the travel costs of their representatives to the forty-seventh and forty-eighth sessions of the General Assembly. Based on current air fares, and assuming a full use of this entitlement, estimated additional costs of \$217,300 would arise during the biennium 1992-1993.

F. Potential for absorption

11. The provision under section 1 of the proposed programme budget relates to travel to sessions of the General Assembly by representatives of the 40 Member States that are currently designated as least developed countries and it is not anticipated that the estimated additional cost of \$217,300 could be absorbed within the proposed appropriation.

G. Indication of additional requirements

12. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.101, it is estimated that an additional requirement of \$217,300 would arise.

H. Contingency fund

13. It will be recalled that, under the procedure established by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the proposed programme budget. Under that procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or

modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred to a subsequent biennium. A consolidated statement of all programme budget implications and revised estimates will be submitted to the General Assembly towards the end of its current session.

14. No activity has been identified for termination, deferral, curtailment or modification under section 1 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. Should it not prove possible to meet the required costs from the contingency fund, the implementation of the draft resolution may have to be postponed, as provided for in the criteria for the use of the contingency fund, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 42/211 of 21 December 1987.

I. Summary

15. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.101, it is estimated that an additional appropriation of \$217,300 would be required under section 1 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1991, Supplement No. 11 (E/1991/32), chap. V.

2/ Ibid., para. 256.

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/45/6/Rev.1), vol. I.

4/ Ibid., Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/46/6/Rev.1), vol. I.

5/ Ibid., Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 49 (A/41/49), para. 21.
