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at 3 p.m.  
New York

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 28th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and  
Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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A/C.5/46/SR.28  
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15 P.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

**AGENDA ITEM 114: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/46/11 and Add.1 and 2)**

1. **Mr. ALI** (Chairman, Committee on Contributions), introducing the report of the Committee (A/46/11 and Add.1 and 2), noted that the current year's report contained a recommended new scale of assessments which reflected the changes in the world economic situation and the membership of the United Nations. Despite the General Assembly's explicit wish to decide the period of applicability of the new scale, the Committee on Contributions recommended that it be adopted for the years 1992, 1993 and 1994, in accordance with rule 160 of the General Assembly's Rules of Procedure.
2. In reviewing the proposed scale, it should be remembered that the national income data used in its preparation were those provided by Member States to the Statistical Office of the United Nations. They reflected the changes in the economic situation of Member States between 1980 and 1989. Notwithstanding the changes, the 10 largest contributors would continue to pay 77.69 per cent of the Organization's expenses, which represented an increase of 17 points over the current total. Eighty-two Member States were assessed at 0.01 per cent, eight at 0.02 per cent and seven at 0.03 per cent.
3. It should also be emphasized that the proposed scale was prepared in strict adherence to the instructions contained in General Assembly resolution 45/256 A and C. With the exception of the increase in the per capita income limit of the low per capita income allowance formula from \$2,200 to \$2,600, the methodology used was identical to the one for the current scale of assessments. The effects of the methodology's application to the national income data were shown step by step in annex I of the Committee's report.
4. As a result of the recent admission of several new Member States, the proposed scale was already out of date. However, as the Committee had already made provision for the incorporation of the two Korean States, the proposed scale required only minor adjustments. The United Nations Statistical Office had calculated the assessment rates for the three Baltic States on the basis of the income data provided by them, using the same methodology as for all other Member States and the exchange rates in effect in the Soviet Union during the years 1980 to 1989. It was proposed that the assessments of the three countries, which amounted to a combined rate of 0.30 per cent, should be deducted from the rate proposed for the USSR, effectively reducing the latter rate to 9.11 per cent. The Statistical Office had also calculated assessment rates of 0.01 per cent for the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. It was proposed that those rates should be added to the scale total, thus increasing it to 100.02 per cent. The effect of the increased scale total would be a slight reduction of the actual assessments of all Member States during the scale's period of applicability. It would also be necessary to add the names of the three Baltic States, the Republic of the

(Mr. Ali)

Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of the Committee's recommendation, which dealt respectively with the contribution for the year of admission, the basis of assessment for 1991 and 1992 and the advances to the Working Fund.

5. The Committee on Contributions was also recommending new rates of assessment for non-Member States, which formed the basis for the calculation of the flat annual fees charges to them.

6. In accordance with past practice, the report contained an addendum which provided information on cash payments received during 1989 and 1990 in respect of assessed and voluntary contributions by Member States and non-Member States to each of the organizations within the United Nations system. In an effort to synchronize the publication of that information with the biennial budget cycle now followed by the entire United Nations system, the Secretariat proposed to issue the next addendum during the forty-ninth session for the years 1991 to 1993 and every other year thereafter.

AGENDA ITEM 115: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/46/320 and A/46/377; A/C.5/46/2, A/C.5/46/4 and Add.1, A/C.5/46/7, A/C.5/46/9, A/C.5/46/13, A/C.5/46/16 and A/C.5/46/21)

7. Mr. KABIR (Bangladesh) said that at a time when the United Nations was being recognized and utilized as a major instrument for international peace, security and development, the need to have an efficient Secretariat was greater than ever. In order to enable the staff of the Organization to do its best, it was necessary to improve the environment in which it worked through a system of career development, training, quick, fair and transparent administration of justice and the adoption of modern management practices. However, that was not a substitute for the recruitment of talented personnel with the highest level of competence, efficiency and integrity.

8. As the United Nations was an international organization, it had to recruit its personnel from all Member States and, in that connection, it was to be noted that the number of unrepresented Member States had decreased from 11 in 1990 to nine on 30 June 1991. On the other hand, it had been disappointing to learn that the number of underrepresented Member States had increased from 19 to 24 in the same period. More effort was needed in that area. Nevertheless, as table C of document A/46/370 indicated, the representation of the developing countries in the Secretariat had increased over the period from 1987 to 1991, which constituted a positive development.

9. The principle of equitable geographical distribution had been translated into a concrete system of desirable ranges of geographical representation for the Member States which was used for estimating the comparative representation of the nationals of each Member State. That representation could be improved by increasing the number of posts subject to geographical distribution. At the same time, recruitment to the other posts should be done in such a way

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

that the balance achieved in posts subject to geographical distribution was not distorted.

10. With respect to the factors taken into account in establishing the desirable ranges, it was to be noted that the weight of the population factor had been reduced from 7.2 per cent to 5 per cent in 1987. That had not been an equitable step and accordingly General Assembly resolution 42/220 had recommended that the need to increase the weightage of the population factor should be taken into account. His delegation supported that proposal and hoped that the previous weightage would be restored to the population factor. It also believed that in order to give the composition of the Secretariat a more universal character, an effort should be made to decrease the gap between the membership and contribution factors. The Secretary-General had offered several options which constituted a sound basis for resolving that complex issue. It was to be hoped that Member States would enter into negotiations on the issue with an open and flexible mind in order to find a satisfactory solution.

11. His delegation strongly supported increasing the representation of women in the Secretariat, as called for in General Assembly resolutions 45/125 and 45/239. Although the percentage of women in geographical posts had increased slightly from 28.30 per cent in 1990 to 29.19 per cent in June 1991, it had not been possible, unfortunately, to achieve the target of 30 per cent by the end of 1990. It was necessary to recognize that meeting the new target of 35 per cent by 1995 would require further concerted efforts. It was to be hoped that the measures already taken by the Secretary-General would show better results in the coming years. Nevertheless, he urged the Secretary-General to increase the recruitment of qualified women from the developing countries. In the year ending 30 June 1991, only 43.9 per cent of women recruited had been from the developing countries.

12. With regard to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on rotation of staff within the United Nations (A/46/326), his delegation considered mobility within the United Nations system to be very important and felt it needed greater attention. A systematic mobility and rotation programme linked to career development should be instituted. He hoped that the JIU recommendations would receive serious and prompt consideration from the Office of Human Resources Management.

13. As concerned the report of the Secretary-General on respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations (A/C.5/46/4), Bangladesh attached great importance to the matter and regretted that the Secretary-General had had to report that the number of new cases of arrest and detention of officials continued to remain high. It was, however, encouraging to note that there had been positive developments in several long-standing cases. He hoped that the response of the Organization to such cases would continue to be strengthened, and expressed full support for the measures taken

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

by the Secretary-General to ensure the security of international civil servants.

14. Mr. KRYZHANIIVSKIY (Ukraine) said that his country attached great significance to the new ways in which it was participating in the activities of international organizations, on the basis of generally accepted norms of international public administration, particularly Article 101(3) of the Charter. Until recently, Ukraine was one of the countries whose nationals worked for the United Nations Secretariat primarily on fixed-term contracts. On 30 June 1990, for instance, only 8 per cent of them had permanent contracts. Currently, instead, the figure was close to 60 per cent. However, Ukraine would continue to avail itself of secondment. On the one hand, his Government was interested in attracting specialists with experience at the United Nations, especially since the bodies dealing with foreign affairs and foreign trade had expanded as a result of Ukraine's adoption of the Declaration of Independence Act. Moreover, the United Nations as well would benefit from the mobility of Secretariat staff. Although in administrative, budgetary and financial areas, for instance, there had to be a permanent manning table of staff versed in the particularities of the Organization, in the political and public information fields, instead, it was very important to have input from individuals enriched by their direct experience of the changes that had taken place in the contemporary world. Consequently, a certain proportion had to be maintained between the number of Secretariat staff on permanent contracts and those on fixed-term contracts. Perhaps, as recommended by the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts, the ratio should be one to one.

15. He expressed satisfaction at the amendment to the Staff Regulations proposed by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/46/9, since it would simplify the system of secondment and put it on a solid legal footing. Ukraine had for some time been meeting its obligations in that connection. Secondment was an understanding between three parties: the staff member, the administration and the Government concerned, and staffing policies should not undermine the interests of any of the parties. During the last year, without consulting his Government, the Legal Counsel had repeatedly determined that Ukraine had not observed the necessary conditions for a valid secondment. It had to be asked on what basis the Legal Counsel had arrogated the right to decide such cases unilaterally.

16. His delegation did not think that resolution 35/210 I, regarding the possibility of replacement of staff by candidates of the same nationality in the case of underrepresented countries, had lost its timeliness. In particular, it would be premature to terminate that system in the case of Ukraine, whose representation had declined in the last few years. The possibility of external recruitment had diminished in recent years, when preference had been given to internal candidates. While that practice might have been justified in view of the recruitment freeze, equal opportunities should now be given to internal and external candidates.

(Mr. Kryzhanivskiy, Ukraine)

17. With regard to the report of the Secretary-General on alternative options for desirable ranges for the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional category and above (A/C.5/46/2), it was clear that the mid-point for a given State would vary, under the different options, by a few posts at most. Moreover, the admission to the United Nations of new Members made it necessary to review the desirable ranges. Ukraine therefore felt that all the political implications of modifying the desirable ranges had to be weighed carefully, in order to achieve an equitable geographical distribution. Any decision should be taken on the basis of a broad consensus.

18. Ukraine favoured efforts to increase the representation of women in the Secretariat, which should not run counter to the general principle of equitable geographical distribution, and it was prepared to present highly qualified candidates in the competitive examinations for P-3 posts.

19. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that the United Nations must shed its cumbersome and archaic structure and adopt a streamlined organization with well-defined personnel policies and procedures. Her delegation supported the procedures outlined by the Secretary-General in his report on secondment from government service (A/C.5/46/9), on the understanding that those procedures would be universally applied and that all pertinent documentation from all parties would be recognized as sufficient evidence of the validity of the secondment. It should be noted, however, that the amendments proposed did not mention the right of the seconded staff member to be re-employed by his or her home Government. That aspect of secondment must be stipulated in writing to ensure that it was understood. In order to make the conditions of secondment absolutely clear to the three parties concerned, her delegation suggested the following amendment to new paragraph (c) to annex II of the Staff Regulations proposed by the Secretary-General:

"(c) The letter of appointment for a staff member on secondment from government service which is signed by the staff member and by or on behalf of the Secretary-General, and relevant supporting documentation of the terms and conditions of secondment agreed to by the Member State and the staff member, shall be [...] proof for all purposes of the existence and validity of secondment from government service to the Organization for the period stated in the letter of appointment."

Secondment could and should be used to the advantage of the United Nations system as long as it was practised on a limited basis. It could be an effective means of attracting high-calibre staff when state-of-the-art technical skills were needed or when temporary posts had to be filled.

20. The United States agreed with the Secretary-General's conclusion that the replacement procedure should cease. If the paramount consideration in the selection of Secretariat staff was indeed the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, the Secretary-General must be able to select candidates from Member States other than those whose nationals currently encumbered specific posts. The provision

(Ms. Shenwick, United States)

of resolution 35/210 permitting the inheritance of posts by countries whose nationals served primarily on fixed-term contracts was becoming increasingly irrelevant as Member States were moving more frequently to allow their nationals to serve in the Secretariat on permanent contracts.

21. No changes should be introduced to the system of desirable ranges until all Member States had been brought within their currently established ranges. The system had been in effect for three years, not enough time to allow it to make an impact. Also, a further change would create instability in geographical distribution.

22. Her delegation supported the preparation of a comprehensive career development system, the adoption of measures to improve mobility and training opportunities for staff at all duty stations and the continuation of the vacancy management system. It also supported the use of competitive examinations to fill P-3 posts but hoped that that process would not adversely affect the promotion prospects of staff members eligible for promotion from the P-2 level to the P-3 level. Her delegation also hoped that an adequate number of posts would be available to justify the expenses incurred by national competitive examinations.

23. Her delegation remained concerned that, according to document A/46/377, men continued to be recruited and promoted at a higher rate than women. The United States endorsed the Secretary-General's measures to improve the status and representation of women in the Secretariat, and urged Member States to nominate more women candidates, to identify and encourage women to apply for vacant posts, and to establish national rosters of women candidates to be shared with the United Nations Secretariat.

24. She expressed concern at the administration of justice in the Secretariat and believed that the rules and regulations governing the administration of justice should be amended. The current rules and regulations fostered the filing of staff grievances and discouraged management from taking initiatives for fear of reprisal. The Secretary-General should submit a report on the subject to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. Her delegation had reservations regarding the conclusions of paragraph 25 of document A/C.5/46/7, which stated that the increased number of allegations of maladministration did not mean a deterioration in the quality of administrative decision-making but rather that staff might have developed a greater confidence in the redress procedures. The underlying causes for the large number of grievances must be addressed through a review of the procedures for filing grievances as well as a review of the personnel management system, and corrective action should be taken as appropriate.

25. With respect to official and private travel of United Nations officials in the United States (A/C.5/46/4, paras. 13 and 14), her delegation stressed that the provisions governing private travel did not restrict official travel of international civil servants. The United States had always ensured the freedom of travel of staff members on official business and it would continue

(Ms. Shenwick, United States)

to do so. There was no contradiction between the obligations of the United States as host country and its inherent right to take necessary legal steps to safeguard its national security.

26. Her delegation was deeply concerned at the high number of cases of arrests, detentions and abductions staff members of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and, in particular, cases in which immediate access to detained staff members, and explanation for their arrest or detention were not being provided. Her delegation wholeheartedly supported the proposals put forward by the ad hoc inter-agency meeting on security matters, held at Geneva in June 1991, particularly with respect to the need and right of detained staff to receive adequate medical care, and the need to maintain a legal link with the detained or arrested staff members through the continued renewal of their contracts until the matter was legally resolved.

27. With respect to future reporting, her delegation requested that instances that occurred after the reporting period should be verbally communicated to the Fifth Committee, as had been done in the current year, and called upon all Member States to support the Secretary-General's efforts in that area.

28. Her delegation had no objections to the proposed amendments to the Staff Rules and Regulations as contained in documents A/C.5/46/13 and A/C.5/46/16.

29. Mr. SAEED (Pakistan) said that, in order for the Organization to undertake a growing number of new tasks, it was essential that the Secretariat should recruit and retain persons with the best professional qualifications and who were adequately motivated, always bearing in mind the fundamental principles contained in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, namely, the need to secure "the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity" with due regard for "the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible".

30. According to paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report (A/46/370), only 2,600 of the 29,246 existing posts in the entire United Nations system were currently subject to geographical distribution. That was a matter of some concern, particularly since that figure was below the base figure of 2,700 referred to in paragraph 18 (a) of document A/C.5/46/2; moreover, that figure had not been revised since 1987. It would be useful to know how many new posts had been created in the United Nations system since 1987 and how many of those new posts had been added to the list of posts to be filled on the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The Secretariat should also indicate how many of the 81 new posts proposed by the Secretary-General in the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 were subject to geographical distribution.

31. In its resolution 42/220, the General Assembly decided to review at its forty-fifth session the desirable ranges for the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional category and above, taking into account the concept of parity between the membership and contribution factors and the percentage



(Mr. Saeed, Pakistan)

weight of the population factor. At the current session, the Committee should consider increasing the weight of the population factor, whose progressive reduction over the years had adversely affected the most highly populated countries. The Secretary-General's report on desirable ranges (A/C.5/46/2) should facilitate the task of arriving at a more balanced and objective combination of the three criteria.

32. The Secretary-General's report (A/46/377) indicated that progress had been achieved in improving the status of women in the Secretariat. Nevertheless, the Secretariat should intensify its efforts to ensure that, by the end of 1995, 35 per cent of Professional posts would be held by women. As several delegations had already indicated, the objectives of a higher representation of women at all levels and a more equitable geographical representation were compatible and should be pursued simultaneously.

33. Mr. AL-DOSARI (Bahrain) said that, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 25/239 and previous resolutions, there was a need to continue efforts to ensure the equitable representation of countries that were underrepresented or unrepresented in the Secretariat. His delegation was pleased with the progress that had been made in the area of cooperation among States but stressed the need to intensify that cooperation, which should be based on the principles of equity and justice, in order to increase the representation of those countries, especially in higher posts.

34. According to paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report (A/46/370), Bahrain was one of the unrepresented Member States. In order to ensure a more equitable geographical distribution, in accordance with the provision of Article 101 of the Charter, it was necessary to recruit more staff from underrepresented or unrepresented countries. To that end, when the Secretariat sent vacancy announcements to the permanent missions, it should allow sufficient time for those announcements to be sent to capitals and for appropriate candidates to apply.

35. Recruitment should be based principally on the criteria of efficiency, competence and integrity. It was therefore necessary to establish procedures for evaluating the competence of staff in order to avoid cases of corruption and to ensure that uniform criteria for promotions were applied.

36. While the General Assembly in its resolution 45/239 had addressed the need to ensure a broad and equitable geographical distribution of staff, high-level posts continued to be the exclusive domain of certain countries. The Secretary-General should therefore be encouraged to continue his efforts to improve the composition of the Secretariat in order to ensure that States that were currently underrepresented or unrepresented were adequately represented in future.

37. Mr. WIBISONO (Indonesia) said that the Organization must provide its staff with appropriate conditions of service if it wished to attract and

(Mr. Wibisono, Indonesia)

retain individuals with the professional skills needed to carry out the important tasks entrusted to it.

38. The report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/46/370) indicated that less than 10 per cent of the total number of United Nations posts were subject to geographical distribution; that proportion should be reviewed in the light of the provisions governing recruitment of staff contained in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter. The report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/46/2 provided a good basis for reviewing the system of desirable ranges, since it presented various options for desirable ranges for the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional and higher categories. In that regard, due consideration should be given to the proposal by the Indian delegation, which his own delegation fully supported, that the weight of the population factor should be restored to its earlier level, namely, 7.2 per cent, to ensure that Member States with large populations were treated fairly in the application of the principle of desirable ranges.

39. He regretted to note that the number of underrepresented States had increased; since, as of 30 June 1991, his country had been one of the 24 such States the Secretariat should explain why two of the four candidates who had taken the national competitive examination at Jakarta two years earlier still had not been recruited, and it should expedite the recruitment process.

40. With regard to the status of women in the Secretariat, his delegation was encouraged that the 35 per cent target had been reached at the lower levels in posts subject to geographical distribution; however, progress in the representation of women in posts at higher levels left much to be desired. His delegation appreciated the efforts being made by the Secretary-General to remedy that imbalance and hoped that further progress would be made.

41. Lastly, his delegation wished to convey its readiness to assist the Secretariat in staffing the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC) since, according to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, the level of staffing needed for the Mission greatly exceeded the capacity of the Secretariat.

42. Mr. JIN Yongjian (China) welcomed the efforts by the Secretariat to improve the composition of its staff but regretted that they had not been as fruitful as had been expected; the number of underrepresented countries had even increased. Furthermore, even though the number of high-level posts in the Secretariat held by developing countries was greater than in 1990, the percentage of posts occupied by the developing countries at the D-2 level and above remained very low.

43. The report of the Secretary-General in document A/46/377 showed that progress had been made in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 45/125 and 45/329 C, which had called for an overall participation rate for women of 30 per cent by the end of 1990 and 35 per cent by 1995: in fact, by

(Mr. Jin Yongjian, China)

the end of June 1991, the rate had reached 20.2 per cent. Nevertheless, much remained to be done to ensure the more equitable distribution of posts between men and women throughout the various organizational units of the Secretariat. Member States should be encouraged to cooperate with the Secretariat, which in turn should be urged to take positive and effective measures to correct the imbalance, while taking fully into account the fact that the fundamental criteria for recruitment must be efficiency, competence and integrity and the need to ensure equitable geographical distribution.

44. With regard to secondment, he recalled that in its resolution 45/239 A II, the General Assembly had recognized that there were differences inherent in the secondment of staff from government service to the United Nations and secondment between agencies of the United Nations common system. Accordingly, his delegation believed that the regulations concerning the two types of secondment should be guided by different principles. Specifically, the first type of secondment should result from a contract between the three parties concerned (the United Nations Secretariat, the Government of the country concerned and the staff member), and any alteration in the contract must be made with the express agreement of each of the three parties; any secondment arrangement that was not based on that principle would be absolutely unacceptable.

45. The principle of equitable geographical distribution was one of the fundamental criteria governing the recruitment of United Nations personnel. To ensure the implementation of that principle, the system of secondment and replacement of staff of the same nationality from government services should be applied to posts subject to geographical distribution. Accordingly, his delegation could not support the proposal by the Secretary-General in paragraph 7 of document A/C.5/46/9, that, by virtue of the application of the provisions of section IV of General Assembly resolution 37/126 and in view of recent admission of a number of States to membership in the United Nations, the General Assembly might wish to consider whether the replacement procedure established by resolution 35/210 should cease. Despite the fact that the Secretary-General emphasized in his report that the demise of that exceptional procedure would not prejudice his commitment to ensure equitable geographical distribution, it was evident that once the provision guaranteeing that equity ceased to exist, the principle itself would exist in name only.

46. It also should be pointed out that secondment of staff from government services of Member States helped to maintain a proper ratio between staff members on fixed-term contracts and permanent staff. Fixed-term contracts enabled the United Nations to recruit excellent professionals who could not serve with the Organization on a permanent basis and gave the Secretariat a degree of flexibility to make adjustments of its staff in the light of actual needs. In comparison, permanent contracts provided the United Nations with a stable nucleus of staff members who were fully conversant with their duties. Accordingly, it was essential to ensure a proper ratio between the two types of contracts.

(Mr. Jin Yongjian, China)

47. With regard to the question of desirable ranges, his delegation, having carefully considered the various options presented in document A/C.5/46/2, fully supported the proposal by the delegations of India and Pakistan that the percentage weight of the population factor should be raised. In addition, steps should be taken to ensure the gradual implementation of the principle of parity between the membership and contribution factors.

48. Mr. VALEV (Bulgaria) said that the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity and the equitable geographical representation of Member States in the Secretariat were two mutually complementary principles whose consistent implementation would ensure a truly independent, qualified and committed Secretariat. It was important to continue streamlining the Secretariat in accordance with the recommendations of the Group of 18 and, in that connection, his delegation would welcome all constructive proposals for rationalizing the structure of the Secretariat, avoiding unnecessary duplication of activities and improving the utilization of human and financial resources.

49. Regrettably, as could be seen from the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/46/370), no significant progress had been achieved during the past year with respect to improving the representation of Member States in the Secretariat. Although the number of unrepresented Member States had decreased, the number of underrepresented and overrepresented States had increased. His delegation had been very surprised that, of 170 appointments to posts subject to geographical distribution, only 28, or 16.5 per cent, had been of nationals of unrepresented or underrepresented States. That small percentage was insufficient to meet the requirements of General Assembly resolution 45/239 A. His delegation understood the difficulties involved in attaining the established targets and was ready to consider any viable proposal that could facilitate a more balanced representation of Member States in the Secretariat. To that end, it might be desirable to increase the number of posts subject to geographical distribution.

50. His delegation supported the holding of national competitive examinations, which had proved a useful method of identifying and recruiting young, well-qualified staff. His delegation was pleased that the examinations for posts in the P-1, P-2 and P-3 categories had yielded satisfactory results and that the practice would continue and be expanded to other countries and occupational groups. His delegation supported the Secretariat's plans to strengthen the Examinations and Tests Section and looked forward to the national competitive examinations scheduled for the first half of 1992 in his country. It also hoped that appointments of successful candidates would be expedited.

51. With regard to the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat, although the results could have been more encouraging, the 35 per cent target could still be reached by 1995, provided some additional measures were

(Mr. Valev, Bulgaria)

implemented. The gradual but persistent increase in the percentage of women in posts subject to geographical distribution justified such expectations. As for the representation of women at D-1 level and above, the situation did not invite optimism. In order to reach the 25 per cent target, it would be necessary almost to treble the number of women staff members in the upper echelons within four years' time. That very ambitious, although not impossible, goal could be attained only through strict application of the measures described in the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/377) and with the full support and cooperation of the Member States. It should be noted that, of all the regional groups, Eastern Europe had the lowest number and the lowest percentage of women in posts subject to geographical distribution - a situation that should be borne in mind when the appointment of new women staff members were being considered. His delegation believed that the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat should not become an end in itself or be achieved at the expense of the quality of the staff and it was confident that the Secretariat would identify highly qualified and able women recruits without compromising the requirements valid for all United Nations staff.

52. His delegation shared the Secretary-General's belief (A/C.5/46/2, para. 34) that membership, population and contribution were the main criteria necessary to ensure an equitable distribution of posts among Member States. As for the relative weight of each factor, it thought that full parity between the membership and contribution factors should be established gradually. Option J in the report could serve as a final goal. The increase in relative and, consequently, absolute terms of posts distributed according to the membership factor was justified by the increase in the number of Member States. Although there was a need for a certain degree of flexibility in calculating the desirable ranges, a more uniform criterion should be used to determine the relationship between the mid-point and the upper and lower limits. Under the present methodology, for most States, the 15 per cent flexibility factor was replaced by a fixed number of 4.8 posts that, in many cases, was equal to about 70 per cent of their respective mid-points. His delegation believed that, in assessing the level of representation of individual Member States, a more accurate criterion would be the number of staff in relation to the mid-point rather than to the desirable range.

53. Bulgaria supported the suggestion made by other delegations that the item on personnel questions should be considered biennially, in years when the Committee was not required to examine the proposed programme budget.

54. Mr. BAZABIDILA (Congo) said that personnel questions were of particular importance in the current post-cold war era in which the United Nations was at the forefront of international action in various spheres. Its ability to carry out the new tasks depended above all on the competence, integrity and dedication of its staff and administrative organization.

55. Too little had been done to remedy the situation of unrepresented or underrepresented States, most of which were developing countries. The Congo

(Mr. Bazabidila, Congo)

was one of the Member States underrepresented in the Secretariat. As of 30 June 1991, there had been only seven Congolese officials in the United Nations, concentrated for the most part in posts at the P-5, P-4 and P-3 levels. The Congo was not represented in posts at the D-1 and D-2 levels and above, and there were no Congolese women in the Secretariat. It was important to correct that imbalance and to ensure the presence of Congolese nationals at all levels of the Secretariat, in particular in posts at the D-1 and D-2 levels and above. The issue was not one of training, since the Congo had amply demonstrated its ability to provide the Organization with highly qualified personnel.

56. In its recruitment activities, the Secretariat should give particular attention to the principle of equitable geographical distribution, which was perfectly compatible with the Organization's need for staff with the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. It was also important to ensure strict compliance with the established procedure for the preparation and issuing of vacancy notices in order to ensure the same recruitment opportunities for nationals of all Member States, whether or not they were already United Nations staff members. The Congo fully supported the principle of holding competitive examinations, provided that the candidates selected were given posts in the United Nations system without delay. Priority should be given to developing countries, in particular the African countries.

57. Despite the measures taken, the current level of representation of women in the Secretariat was still short of the 30 per cent target set for the end of 1990. There was also a risk that the target of 35 per cent by 1995, established in General Assembly resolution 45/239 C, might not be reached. While the number of women in posts at the D-1 level and above had increased in 1991, greater progress was necessary. His delegation thought that women were still underrepresented in the Secretariat and attached great importance to the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 45/239 C and 44/185. It therefore requested the Secretary-General to draw up a programme for the period 1991 to 1995 aimed at improving the situation and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

58. As for the representation of Member States, his delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that the problem lay not with finding a new methodology for determining desirable ranges, but with the introduction of appropriate adjustments to the various factors in order to ensure a geographical distribution more in line with the spirit of the Charter. The Member States should opt for a system of desirable ranges based essentially on solidarity and the will to reach the established objectives, with the responsible and effective participation of all Member States. A very marked imbalance between the coefficients assigned to the various factors (membership, population and contribution) would be out of keeping with the desire to establish a new world order based on equality among States and division of responsibilities. Consequently, of the options suggested by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/46/2, his delegation unquestionably preferred option J, but it could accept option F if that would facilitate consensus.

(Mr. Bazabidila, Congo)

59. Staff morale had a definite impact on the functioning of the Organization. For that reason, career development, the improvement of the conditions of service, training and rotation should always be fundamental concerns of the Secretary-General. High mobility would be desirable in certain occupational groups in the United Nations system in order to diversify the experience of staff members and broaden their career opportunities. His delegation therefore requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session a structured, coherent career development plan that would guarantee to United Nations staff respect for the Staff Regulations, as well as promotion and salary increases.

60. In the view of his delegation, it was necessary to put an end to the abuse of authority and disregard of the rules of staff-management relations at certain duty stations. Such practices created tensions and hindered the implementation of United Nations programmes.

61. His delegation had noted with regret the cases of violations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of international officials mentioned in document A/C.5/46/4. It strongly supported the Secretary-General's ongoing efforts to promote the observance of international agreements relating to the privileges and immunities of international organizations and their officials and hoped that all Member States would support them as strongly.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.