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Chairman: Mr. Sharma (Nepal)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Organization of work

1. **Mr. Pulido León** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Committee had earlier decided that all outstanding statements of programme budget implications would be considered together at a single formal meeting. Yet the programme of work included several statements of programme budget implications to be taken up at the current meeting, even though others had yet to be submitted to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). The programme of work for the meeting also included an introduction of the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2004-2005 (A/57/85), although the related report of the Advisory Committee had been issued only hours earlier. It was clear that the Committee would require an additional meeting to conclude its consideration of both those matters. It would be a more rational use of time to wait until full information was available before taking them up, and to use the intervening time in informal consultations on outstanding issues.

2. **Mr. Christiansen** (Denmark) said that it would be useful to at least hear the comments of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

3. **Mr. Kennedy** (United States of America) agreed that it would be useful to hear the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. It was imperative for the Committee to complete its work no later than 12 December; his delegation could agree to any procedure that would allow that deadline to be met.

4. **Mr. Pulido León** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, asked how many statements of programme budget implications had yet to be considered by the Advisory Committee and when they would be introduced in the Fifth Committee. The most rational way to proceed was for there to be a single presentation of all outstanding statements of programme budget implications by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, and for delegations likewise to respond in combined statements.

5. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that there were no statements of programme budget implications currently before the

Advisory Committee, although some would arrive later in the week. There were currently four such statements before the Fifth Committee, relating to Central America, the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, Myanmar, and Cambodia. In the past, the practice had been for the Fifth Committee to proceed on statements of programme budget implications that had already been reported on by the Advisory Committee, but not to take a final decision on using the contingency fund until ACABQ had reported on the consolidated statement. The introduction of the Advisory Committee's reports and the presentation by the Secretariat did not mean that the Fifth Committee would need to finalize its consideration, it could wait until it had comprehensive knowledge of all the budgetary requirements before taking a final decision.

6. **Mr. Sach** (Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that one or two statements of programme budget implications were likely to emerge from the deliberations of the Second Committee on follow-up to the meeting on financing for development held at Monterrey and on commodities. The practice of considering statements of programme budget implications as an aggregate had arisen in the context of amounts chargeable to the contingency fund because of the need to align resources chargeable to the fund, but that was not true of the statements listed for the current meeting, which related to international peace and security.

7. **Mr. Kennedy** (United States of America) said that the General Assembly, in its resolution 34/401, had established a mandatory deadline of not later than 1 December for the submission to the Fifth Committee of all draft resolutions with financial implications. In view of that, he failed to understand how such statements could be submitted and accepted by the Committee after 2 December 2002, the first working day after the 1 December cut-off. Any statements of programme budget implications received later should be held over to the resumed session. He requested clarification.

8. **Mr. Pulido León** (Venezuela) said that the Group of 77 and China, in a spirit of flexibility, could accept the proposal made by the representative of Denmark and supported by the representative of the United States that the Committee should hear an introduction by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, and also by the Secretariat, on the understanding that the Group

would have an opportunity to respond at a subsequent formal meeting.

9. **Mr. Dutton** (Australia) said that his delegation also would welcome clarification regarding the deadline established by General Assembly resolution 34/401. He asked whether the statements of programme budget implications which were expected to emerge from the Second Committee would fall under the provisions relating to the contingency fund. He agreed with the Group of 77 and China that consideration of the statements at a single meeting was preferable, but failed to see how the Committee could meet its 12 December deadline if there were other statements which had not yet even been submitted to the Advisory Committee.

10. **Mr. Sach** (Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division) confirmed that the statements that might emerge from the Second Committee would be subject to the provisions of the contingency fund.

11. **Mr. Acakpo-Satchivi** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, while it was true that there was a 1 December deadline, it had never been observed by the Committee. Moreover, the General Assembly was master of its own procedure. In practice, as long as the Fifth Committee was in session other Main Committees might well adopt draft resolutions with programme budget or programmatic implications.

12. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that there was a need for careful planning to resolve the contradiction between the imposed deadline of 12 December and the need to take decisions in full possession of all relevant information. The Committee should await the submission of all statements of programme budget implications from the Main Committees before taking action.

13. **Mr. Kennedy** (United States of America) said that his delegation reserved the right to comment on the information provided by the Committee secretariat at a later stage. The General Assembly was certainly master of its own procedure, and had established that procedure in its resolution 34/401 providing for a 1 December deadline. It was not the prerogative of a General Assembly committee to overturn that. The President of the General Assembly had recently indicated his support for the 1 December deadline and stated that the Assembly would conclude its work by 18 December; that allowed no time for delay.

14. **The Chairman** said that the Committee must decide whether to await the submission of all statements of programme budget implications and then take a single decision, thereon or decide that statements received after the deadline would be held over to the resumed session. He suggested that the Committee should refer the matter to informal consultations and proceed with its work for the day.

15. **Ms. Buchanan** (New Zealand) agreed that the Committee should proceed with its programme of work. Perhaps the Bureau could consult with the President of the General Assembly to find a solution. Whatever the Committee's practice, she was concerned that that practice might take precedence over resolutions of the General Assembly.

16. **Mr. Moesby** (Denmark) said that, if the Secretariat provided a list of the outstanding statements of programme budget implications, it would help the Committee to determine how best to proceed.

17. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, Controller) said that there were two outstanding statements with the Second Committee, and it was with that Committee that the matter lay, not with the Secretariat.

18. **Mr. Pulido León** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, suggested that the Chairman should consult the Chairman of the Second Committee to clarify the situation, in the interest of ensuring that resources needed for programmes were not denied as a result of any decision to defer.

19. **Mr. Moesby** (Denmark) said that the Committee still needed to know whether it was to complete its work by 12 December.

20. **The Chairman** said that the Committee must choose between meeting the 12 December deadline and awaiting statements of programme budget implications from the Second Committee. The Committee would hold informal consultations with a view to reaching an amicable solution. Meanwhile it should continue its work.

Agenda item 111: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2004-2005 (A/57/16, A/57/85 and A/57/636)

21. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2004-2005 (A/57/85), said that the outline had been prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/213. The preliminary estimate of resources needed to accommodate the proposed programme of activities during the biennium 2004-2005 amounted to \$2,857.9 million, while appropriations and related commitments for the biennium 2002-2003 totalled \$2,699.9 million. A number of factors accounted for the change. The General Assembly had decided that provisions for new posts at the Professional level and above should be costed at 50 per cent. The full biennial provision in 2004-2005 for those posts which had been newly established in 2002-2003 and were currently only partially funded would require an additional \$25.3 million. At the same time, one-time costs in 2002-2003 amounting to \$47.8 million and relating mainly to security enhancements at Headquarters and offices away from Headquarters and substantive and public information support for special conferences and meetings would not be required. The preliminary estimate included a provision of \$29.8 million to ensure that information technology and common services facilities infrastructure were brought to levels that would not prejudice programme delivery. Also, additional resources were foreseen to strengthen peace-building, human rights and humanitarian assistance, the economic and social sector, conference-servicing, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the security infrastructure in Geneva. The projected requirements amounted to \$40.5 million, representing programme resource growth of 1.5 per cent.

22. The General Assembly had initially authorized \$98.4 million to be made available in the biennium 2002-2003 to fund special political missions. Subsequently, additional resources in an amount of \$14.7 million had been approved. It was estimated that \$223.3 million would be required in 2004-2005 to

cover all the special political missions existing in 2002-2003; that represented an increase of \$110.2 million. The Secretary-General suggested, in paragraph 8 of his report, that the General Assembly might wish to consider whether special political missions were susceptible for treatment within the current regular budget procedures for estimating requirements in the budget outline and subsequent programme budgets.

23. It was proposed that the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 should retain the priorities set out in the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 and the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. Excluding special political missions, the preliminary estimate amounted to \$2,634.6 million, which represented an increase of \$47.8 million or 1.8 per cent, compared with the approved appropriations and related provisions for the biennium 2002-2003. Taking into account the requirements for special political missions, the preliminary estimate came to \$2,857.9 million, an increase of \$158 million, or 5.8 per cent. The General Assembly was requested to approve the figure of \$2,857.9 million. The outline requirements would, however, be subject in due course to recosting to biennium 2004-2005 costs. Based on the first performance report, the recosted estimate would amount to \$2,975.1 million. The latter figure had been transmitted to the Advisory Committee. In accordance with established practice, it was recommended that the size of the contingency fund should be set at 0.75 per cent of the overall level of resources for the first outline and for all subsequent ones.

24. He wished to assure the Committee that, when the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 was prepared, regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (PPBME Rules) concerning the identification of activities considered obsolete or of marginal usefulness would be taken fully into account.

25. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of ACABQ (A/57/636), said that, while the Secretary-General had proposed a preliminary estimate of \$2,975.1 million at revised 2002-2003 rates for the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, the Advisory Committee recommended, in paragraph 14 of its report, that the General Assembly should adopt a preliminary estimate

of \$2,920 million, taking into account the observations and comments made by the Advisory Committee in its report.

26. The outline proposed by the Secretary-General followed the practice set out in General Assembly resolution 41/213. The purpose of the outline was to provide Member States with a preliminary indication of the level of resources that was likely to be requested of them for the regular budget to which the outline related. The Advisory Committee had not therefore subjected the outline to the detailed examination it reserved for proposed budgets.

27. The Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the preliminary estimate reflected its view that the provision for special political missions should continue to be included in the outline. In paragraph 9, it recommended that that provision should not exceed \$170 million, a figure which represented an increase of 73 per cent compared with the \$98.4 million initially approved by the General Assembly for special political missions in 2002-2003. Should more resources be required, the procedure set out in resolution 41/213 should continue to be followed.

28. In paragraph 8 of his report (A/57/85), the Secretary-General invited the General Assembly to consider whether special political missions were susceptible for treatment within the current regular budget procedures for estimating requirements in the budget outline and subsequent programme budgets. He noted, in that connection, that it was within the purview of the General Assembly to determine the amount of resources to be provided for implementing activities funded from the regular budget, the way in which the costs of such activities were to be treated in the regular budget and the assessment of those costs among Member States, even when the activities were approved by the Security Council. It was therefore proper for the Assembly to consider whether the time had come to change the current procedures in respect of special political missions. After careful consideration, the Advisory Committee had found no convincing reasons to recommend a change. In that connection, it recalled its view that the outline should provide a greater level of predictability of resources required for the following biennium, promote greater involvement of Member States in the budgetary process and thereby facilitate the broadest possible agreement on the programme budget. While it was true that, at the time that the outline was prepared, it was

not possible to foresee all future special political missions, the initial allocations could be revised, as had been done in 2002; that should meet the concerns expressed in the Advisory Committee that, in the past, the amounts initially approved had not been sufficient.

29. Lastly, the Advisory Committee recommended in paragraph 12 of its report, that the size of the contingency fund should be set at \$21.4 million. However, in the light of experience of the use of the fund during the first year of the biennium 2002-2003, the Advisory Committee might wish to comment further in the context of the consolidated statement of programme budget implications to be submitted shortly by the Secretary-General.

30. **Mr. Dutton** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, welcomed the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the Advisory Committee. Two important factors shaped the Fifth Committee's deliberations. Firstly, there had been considerable growth in the budget outline during the current biennium and, secondly, the Secretary-General had presented proposals for realigning the Organization's activities with the priorities set out in the Millennium Declaration and with the outcomes of other major conferences, as well as for increasing the efficiency of conference services and public information activities. While the delegations on whose behalf he spoke accepted that the level of the regular budget had increased significantly and rapidly to accommodate a combination of new mandates and unavoidable escalations in cost, they continued to believe in the need for fiscal discipline in order to improve the effectiveness and productiveness of the Organization.

31. The Secretary-General's reform proposals assumed even greater importance in the context of a rapidly increasing budget and the delegations on whose behalf he spoke fully expected the effects of reprioritization and efficiency gains to be reflected in the programme budget proposals for the biennium 2004-2005. Reform was not a cost-cutting exercise. It was about getting better value for money and about adapting the Organization to changed circumstances. The realignment of resources arising from reforms should allow the Organization to do more to serve the priorities set by Member States. The challenge during the negotiations on the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 would therefore be for the

Organization to adapt its approaches in order to advance its collective interests.

32. As far as the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2004-2005 was concerned, there was insufficient justification in the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/85) for the amount of \$29.8 million that had been proposed for information technology and common services facilities infrastructure. While the Organization should indeed invest in information technology, it should consider that investment in conjunction with its revised information technology strategy. A more detailed explanation was also needed for the additional requirements that were envisaged for enhancing the Organization's capacity to meet the Millennium Declaration goals, a high priority activity to which additional resources should be devoted.

33. With regard to special political missions, there was no reason to alter the General Assembly's clear decisions that such missions should continue to be funded from the regular budget. The delegations on whose behalf he spoke looked forward to the informal consultations on the Advisory Committee's recommendations on estimating the costs of special political missions in the biennium 2004-2005.

34. A number of current uncertainties complicated the Committee's consideration of a draft resolution on the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2004-2005. While previous resolutions had invited the Secretary-General to prepare a budget at a specific level, it might now be preferable to adopt a slightly different formulation that built on the recommendations contained in paragraph 26 of the report of CPC (A/57/16). Under the new formulation, the Secretary-General could be invited to prepare a budget that took into account existing and new mandates, the Organization's priorities, the need for fiscal restraint and the decisions of the General Assembly on the Secretary-General's reform proposals. Should that approach be consistent with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 41/213 and sufficient for the Secretary-General's purposes, it might be possible to avoid a premature discussion of issues that remained uncertain. All of those matters could then be properly addressed when detailed proposals were made available in the context of the full budget proposals.

35. **Mr. Kennedy** (United States of America) said that his delegation fully endorsed the observations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC)

on the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2004-2005. In that connection, it wished to reaffirm the views it had expressed on the outline at the forty-second session of CPC. Copies of the statement made by his delegation on that occasion had been circulated informally.

36. His delegation had been concerned that the outline gave no indication that programme managers would comply with regulation 5.6 of the PPBME Rules, which required them to identify activities that were obsolete or of marginal usefulness. It had seemed that the budget for 2004-2005 would simply add a layer of resources to the existing budget rather than shift resources from low-impact activities to new priorities. However, since the issuance of the outline, the Secretary-General had set out his vision for an improved Organization in his report on the strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change (A/57/387), which placed a strong emphasis on focusing United Nations activities in areas where they would have the greatest possible impact. His delegation fully endorsed that approach and looked forward to the submission of a thoroughly revised budget for 2004-2005 reflecting the highest priorities of Member States. The time had come for programme managers to make difficult and unenviable decisions on how best to use the resources they currently had. In that connection, he welcomed the assurance just provided by the Controller that regulation 5.6 would be applied.

37. Concerning the report of ACABQ (A/57/636), his delegation wished to know what the basis was for the Advisory Committee's recommendation regarding the preliminary estimate of resources for the biennium 2004-2005. It appeared that the Advisory Committee was recommending increases for unspecified programmes, while proposing a reduction of the allocation for special political missions, a core activity of the United Nations. Moreover, it made no recommendations for reductions to be achieved through efficiency gains and the phasing out of obsolete mandates.

38. The resources of Member States were not unlimited, and the projected rate of growth for the regular budget was unsustainable for many of the largest contributors. However, his delegation believed that, through prioritization and streamlining and with the adoption of a diligent and disciplined approach, the current level of expenditure should be sufficient for the

Organization to implement its most important activities.

39. **Mr. Moesby** (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey, and, in addition, Iceland, said that the European Union endorsed the priorities set out in the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2004-2005. It welcomed the review of the medium-term plan conducted by CPC and, in particular, the high priority given to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. One of the main goals of the European Union was to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations and provide effective assistance to Member States in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and other mandates, including the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, 2002) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002). The budget for 2004-2005 must also reflect the Organization's increased focus on Africa. The commitment to the New Partnership for Africa's Development must be strengthened and be reflected in reprioritization within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. In that connection, there was a need to clarify the division of labour between Headquarters and the field. Special political missions, which had become one of the most important elements in the regular budget, must continue to be given high priority. The European Union concurred fully with the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee in that regard.

40. Over the past 10 years, the budget of the United Nations had remained at more or less the same level. At the same time, Member States had added more priorities to the medium-term plan. The previous year the General Assembly had acknowledged that some modest growth was needed in 2002-2003 to allow the Secretary-General to cope with new mandates, and the European Union recognized that that trend was likely to continue. The Assembly had emphasized, however, the continuing importance of reform and enhanced efficiency in the Organization. In that connection, the European Union welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change (A/57/387), and it trusted that the reforms proposed therein would produce tangible results, including efficiency gains that would

be identified in forthcoming biennial budget proposals. In order to ensure that the Organization's resources were well spent, results-based budgeting must be fully implemented and obsolete activities identified and discontinued. The Secretary-General recommended in the budget outline the restoration of certain funding proposals that had been rejected by the General Assembly in December 2001; that would be possible only if evidence of need was adduced. The European Union considered that all programmatic activities, even those identified as high priorities, would require scrutiny before funding could be agreed to in the context of the budget for 2004-2005. In that connection, he proposed that the Secretary-General, when presenting new activities in the next biennial budget, should give an indication of their expected duration.

41. Inflation, currency fluctuations and unforeseen expenditure for such items as security enhancements had necessitated sharp increases in the level of the budget for 2002-2003 in the course of the biennium. Those increases had been exceptional, however, and must not be seen as setting a precedent. In that context, the European Union wished to emphasize the need for Member States and the Secretary-General to find ways of better matching resources and priorities.

Agenda item 112: Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/57/L.27: United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (A/57/7/Add.21; A/C.5/57/30)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.48: The situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/57/7/Add.23; A/C.5/57/27)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/57/L.20: The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development (A/57/7/Add.20; A/C.5/57/28)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.70: Khmer Rouge trials (A/57/7/Add.22; A/C.5/57/29)

42. **Mr. Sach** (Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division) introduced the statements submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/57/L.27 concerning the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (A/C.5/57/30); draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.48 concerning the situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/C.5/57/27); draft resolution A/57/L.20 concerning the situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development (A/C.5/57/28); and draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.70 concerning Khmer Rouge trials (A/C.5/57/29).

43. With regard to the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/57/L.27, he said that, should the draft resolution be adopted by the General Assembly, an amount of \$11.6 million would be required for the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) for 2003; that represented a reduction of 21 per cent compared with 2002 owing to a reduction in the number of staff from 271 to 233 and the downgrading of certain posts.

44. Concerning draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.48, the estimated costs of continuing to provide the good offices of the Secretary-General through his Special Envoy for Myanmar for a one-year period, from 1 January to 31 December 2003, would amount to \$307,400. That sum would provide for the salary and travel of the Special Envoy, as well as the salaries and common staff costs for two staff who would provide support to the Special Envoy. Out of the total appropriation for 2002, an unencumbered balance of \$143,500 was expected to remain at year-end. Taking that balance into account, additional provisions in the amount of \$163,900 would be required under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the activities of the Special Envoy in 2003.

45. The full cost of implementing draft resolution A/57/L.20, should the General Assembly adopt it, would amount to \$202,800. That sum would finance one Professional post at the P-4 level and one General Service post. The P-4 political affairs officer would monitor the Guatemalan peace process and provide backstopping and political guidance for MINUGUA post-conflict peace-building activities. Out of the total appropriation for 2002, an estimated \$19,900 was

expected to remain unencumbered at the end of the year. After taking that balance into account, additional provisions in the amount of \$182,900 would be required under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the two staff members for the period 1 January to 31 December 2003.

46. Under paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.20, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General, if necessary, to send a team of experts to Cambodia. The related cost would be \$44,800.

47. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introduced the related reports of the Advisory Committee. In its report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/57/L.27/Rev.1, on the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (A/57/7/Add.21), the Advisory Committee recommended additional appropriations in the amount of \$11,631,400 under section 3, Political affairs, and an amount of \$1,359,000 under section 32, Staff assessment, to be offset by the corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

48. In its report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.48, on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/57/7/Add.23), the Advisory Committee recommended an additional appropriation of \$163,900 under section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for 2002-2003.

49. With respect to the situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development, the Advisory Committee, in its report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/57/L.20 (A/57/7/Add.20), recommended an additional appropriation of \$182,900 under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003.

50. Lastly, in its report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.70, on the Khmer Rouge trials (A/57/7/Add.22), the Advisory Committee recommended that the additional requirement of \$44,800 should be met from within existing resources under section 8, Legal affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. Any

requirement for an additional appropriation could be indicated in the second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1: Future operations of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (continued) (A/57/7/Add.18, A/57/330; A/C.5/57/24)

51. **Mr. Alarcón** (Costa Rica), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that, after a great deal of work and numerous meetings with representatives of relevant departments of the Secretariat, the Working Group established by General Assembly resolution 56/125 to make recommendations on the future operations of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) had recommended in its report (A/57/330) that, inter alia, the Economic and Social Council should be mandated to amend the statute of INSTRAW, in accordance with paragraphs 52, 53 and 55 of the Working Group's report; an amount of \$500,000 should be allocated from the regular budget to finance the core activities of the Institute, so as to give it the same status as other institutes of the United Nations system; the Institute's location should be maintained in the Dominican Republic; the post of Deputy Director with specific fund-raising responsibilities should be created; and the Secretary-General should be requested to appoint a Director to be based at INSTRAW headquarters in the Dominican Republic.

52. To deny financing for INSTRAW would be to ignore the draft resolution adopted by the Third Committee (A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1). Three other institutes in the United Nations system currently received funding from the regular budget to cover their operating and personnel costs. The Rio Group therefore supported the recommendations contained in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/57/7/Add.18) for the financing of the core activities of the Institute and for the provision to be charged against the contingency fund.

53. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that the General Assembly had time and again acknowledged the critical financial situation of INSTRAW and had established a Working Group in 2001 to make recommendations on the Institute's future operations. She noted that other United Nations institutes received

financing from the Organization's regular budget for their operating expenses and core activities. Her delegation therefore supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the additional requirement of \$500,000 should be appropriated under section 9, Economic and social affairs, and that the provision should represent a potential charge against the contingency fund.

54. **Mr. Padilla Tonos** (Dominican Republic) said that the Working Group established by the General Assembly in resolution 56/125 to make recommendations on the future operations of INSTRAW had held numerous meetings with representatives of the relevant departments of the Secretariat and, in fulfilment of its mandate, had submitted a comprehensive and objective report to the General Assembly (A/57/330).

55. The report concluded that, if properly reformed and revitalized, INSTRAW could continue to make a valuable and substantive contribution to the advancement of women within the United Nations system; that some of the reports on the critical situation of the Institute, including the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, lacked balance, as the representatives of that Office had themselves acknowledged; and that certain attitudes on the part of the Secretariat, such as the failure to appoint a Director of INSTRAW for long periods of time, had affected the Institute's image and credibility, leading to a decline in voluntary contributions and to its current financial crisis.

56. Based on the Working Group's report, the Third Committee had by a large majority adopted draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1, in which the General Assembly would endorse the recommendations made by the Working Group concerning the preservation, restructuring and revitalization of INSTRAW, including the allocation of an amount of \$500,000 from the regular budget of the United Nations to finance the core activities of the Institute and to give it the financial and institutional infrastructure it required to carry out its mandate. In its report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1 (A/57/7/Add.18), the Advisory Committee had recommended the allocation of the amount of \$500,000 to INSTRAW. It was now for the Committee to give INSTRAW the same status as other institutes that were funded from the regular budget of the United Nations, particularly since INSTRAW was

the only Institute dedicated exclusively to the advancement of women and to research in that field, and one of only three United Nations institutes located in a developing country. The Committee should ensure that the United Nations did not deny the modest economic assistance being sought to contribute to the advancement of women, particularly women in the developing world, which was and must continue to be a priority issue on the agenda of the Organization. Above all, the Committee should ensure that the recommendations that had been made by the Working Group and endorsed by the Third Committee were effectively implemented. Failure to do so would call into question the utility of the Working Group established by the General Assembly.

57. **Mr. Ham** Sang-wook (Republic of Korea) said that, as one of the few Member States that had a Ministry of Gender Equality, his country attached great importance to INSTRAW and its work. It was nevertheless concerned about the serious financial and managerial problems that the Institute faced and did not believe that support from the regular budget would constitute a viable long-term solution to those problems.

58. **Mr. Kramer** (Canada) said that his delegation wished to associate itself with the statement just made by the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.7: Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (continued) (A/57/7/Add.19; A/C.5/57/26)

59. **Mr. Alarcón** (Costa Rica), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was an innovative United Nations mechanism to promote the exchange of experience between multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual societies and to serve as a link between indigenous communities and the United Nations system. The General Assembly now faced the urgent task of establishing a secretariat for the Forum and providing it with the human and financial resources required for its proper functioning.

60. The Rio Group supported the proposal regarding the modification of the narrative of subprogramme 3, Social policy and development, of section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. The Group was also in favour of

the two-stage approach to the establishment of the secretariat of the Forum, as proposed in paragraph 16 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/57/26). The establishment of three posts in 2003 would facilitate the holding of the meeting scheduled for May 2003.

61. **Mr. Kramer** (Canada) said that his delegation wished to associate itself with the statement just made by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Rio Group.

62. **Ms. Merchant** (Norway) said that her delegation also wished to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Costa Rica. In particular, it supported the establishment in 2003 of three posts for the secretariat of the Forum.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.