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Forty-second session  
FIFTH COMMITTEE  
Agenda items 115 and 67

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1988-1989

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN  
AS A ZONE OF PEACE: REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE  
ON THE INDIAN OCEAN

Programme budget implications of the draft resolution  
contained in document A/42/29

Observations submitted by the Committee on Conferences  
pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 35/10 A

1. In accordance with paragraph 6 of resolution 35/10 A, by which the General Assembly decided that all proposals affecting the schedule of conferences and meetings made at sessions of the General Assembly should be reviewed by the Committee on Conferences when administrative implications are being considered under the requirements of rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, the Committee on Conferences met to review the conference-servicing implications of the draft resolution contained in document A/42/29.

2. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 13 of the draft resolution contained in document A/42/29, the General Assembly would:

(a) Renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee as defined in the relevant resolutions and request the Committee to intensify its work with regard to the implementation of its mandate;

(b) Request the Ad Hoc Committee to hold three preparatory sessions in 1988, each of a duration of one week, one session of which could be held at Colombo in accordance with a decision to be taken by the Ad Hoc Committee at its first session in 1988;

(c) Request the Secretary-General to continue to render all necessary assistance to the Ad Hoc Committee, including the provision of summary records, in recognition of its preparatory function, as well as verbatim transcripts for a possible meeting at Colombo.

3. The Committee was informed that it was the understanding of the Secretary-General that, should the Ad Hoc Committee decide to accept the offer of the Government of Sri Lanka to hold one session at Colombo, the host Government would defray the actual additional costs directly or indirectly involved in meeting at Colombo rather than New York in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 40/243, section I.

4. The Committee was also informed that a statement of the related programme budget implications was submitted to the First Committee during its consideration of this matter in document A/C.1/42/L.80. A further statement was submitted to the Fifth Committee in document A/C.5/42/44.

5. The matter was brought to the attention of the Committee on Conferences because of the request of the Ad Hoc Committee for verbatim transcripts for the possible meeting at Colombo. Under the terms of General Assembly resolution 41/177 D, the Ad Hoc Committee is entitled to receive summary records. In paragraph 9 of its resolution 37/14 C, the Assembly decided that subsidiary organs entitled to written meeting records should receive them when meeting away from recognized United Nations conference centres only when there was a specific decision by the General Assembly for each case. Should the Ad Hoc Committee decide to hold one session at Colombo, therefore, the General Assembly would have to specifically authorize the Ad Hoc Committee to receive written meeting records for that session and explicitly decide that such records should be in verbatim, rather than summary form.

6. At the outset, the Secretariat explained the differences between summary and verbatim records, and it was made clear that the Ad Hoc Committee would require official verbatim records in all languages in respect of its meeting in Colombo, should it decide to go there. The Secretariat explained further that this would be a cost-saving move, in that only seven staff, that is, six verbatim monitors and a sound technician, would need to be sent to Colombo to help prepare the records in advance. The records could then be produced in full at Headquarters later by permanent staff.

7. In response to a question from a delegation, the Secretariat replied that if the Ad Hoc Committee had requested summary records to be produced on site during the proposed meeting, some 68 staff members would have had to be sent, at correspondingly greater expense. In response to another question, the Secretariat also stated that every effort was being made to utilize effectively the resources made available to the Ad Hoc Committee.

8. After a short discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that, in the event that the Ad Hoc Committee accepted the invitation from the Government of Sri Lanka to meet in Colombo, the difference in the cost of holding the meeting in Colombo as opposed to New York would be met by the

Government of Sri Lanka; and secondly, that the Ad Hoc Committee's request for official meeting records for its Colombo meeting, should it decide to go there, should be granted on the understanding that these would be produced at Headquarters after the session by permanent staff as official verbatim records of the Ad Hoc Committee.

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