



**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 66th MEETING**

Chairman: Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 8.45 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 115: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1988-1989 (continued)

Revised estimates: effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation  
(continued) (A/C.5/42/58)

1. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, on the basis of the recommendations made orally by the Chairman of ACABQ, the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should approve an increase of \$137,441,300 under expenditure sections and an increase of \$4,469,200 under income sections.
2. It was so decided.
3. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) recalled that his delegation had expressed a number of reservations on that subject during the meeting of the enlarged bureau. It was unfortunate that one particular idea had not been considered earlier, even if the time available to the Committee was limited. His delegation looked forward to the in-depth study which the Advisory Committee was to carry out and would take that question up again at the next session of the General Assembly.
4. Mr. EIDNY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had not opposed the adoption without a vote of the revised estimates contained in document A/C.5/42/58 since the differences arising from that re-evaluation would be offset, at least in part, under other sections of the budget. His delegation intended to make specific comments on that subject later on.
5. Mr. BOUR (France) said that his delegation shared the reservations of the Japanese delegation, even though it had not opposed the consensus that had prevailed when the revised estimates in question had been adopted. It was unfortunate that the tardy issuance of document A/C.5/42/58 had prevented a detailed study of that document and in-depth consideration of other proposals.

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/C.5/42/L.20)

6. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should adopt draft resolution A/C.5/42/L.20 without a vote.
7. It was so decided.
8. Mr. FIGUEIRA (Brazil) said that his delegation had not objected to the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus; it did, however, have strong reservations about paragraph 3 of section III, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of section IV, and paragraphs 1 and 2 of section V, which created a conflict between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and between the Fifth Committee and the Second and Third Committees in so far as their competence in the economic and social fields was concerned.

(Mr. Figueira, Brazil,

9. In response to questions from his delegation, the Legal Counsel of the United Nations had sent a memo dated 17 December 1987 to the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Finance stating that, from a legal standpoint, there were few instances in which it was necessary for the General Assembly to take action on resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council; such cases were specified in Article 63, paragraph 1, of the Charter, for instance, or arose when the General Assembly submitted recommendations to the Council that required a response from that body, or when the Council itself submitted requests or recommendations to the General Assembly. Apart from those specific cases, the Assembly was under no legal obligation to endorse all resolutions of the Economic and Social Council. His delegation shared that view, holding that, in matters related to the mandate of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination exclusively as a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council, the Council had taken definitive decisions which required no endorsement by the General Assembly. Article 60 of the Charter should be construed as delegating competence.

10. His delegation was also concerned that the Fifth Committee was becoming involved in questions that were the concern of other Main Committees of the General Assembly; such conflicts of competence ought to be avoided. Issues and problems such as women and development, science and technology for development, technical co-operation and other similar problems were the responsibility of the Fifth Committee only when they specifically affected its area of expertise, which was administrative and budgetary questions. His delegation's position on draft resolution A/C.5/42/L.20 derived solely from its desire not to delay the work of the Committee at such a late stage, and should not be referred to in the future as having set a precedent.

11. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba), referring to paragraph 3 of section II of draft resolution A/C.5/42/L.20, said his delegation hoped that the Secretary-General would act promptly in gathering the opinions, comments and suggestions of Member States with a view to preparing a draft introduction to the next medium-term plan.

12. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 116 and asked the Rapporteur to report thereon to the General Assembly immediately.

#### OTHER MATTERS

13. Mr. NGAIZA (United Republic of Tanzania) recalled that his delegation had requested that the conference room paper submitted by the Department of Public Information should be amended in accordance with the views of Member States; the new document (A/C.5/42/L.22) was incomplete in so far as the tables showing the distribution of Professional staff by region, as the term was understood in the United Nations, were concerned. His delegation specifically wished to see all regions shown in table 3 of that document so that an accurate picture of the staffing situation in the Department could be obtained.

14. Mr. MUDHO (Kenya) thanked the Secretariat for having prepared document A/C.5/42/L.22 and asked to have the meaning of the phrase "multi-media approach" in paragraph 10 clarified. His delegation was pleased to note in paragraph 11 that the regional units would continue to produce their own regular programming, as in the past. With regard to the question of equitable geographic distribution referred to in paragraph 13, his delegation, like the Tanzanian delegation, believed that table 3 of the document was unsatisfactory and should be more complete. The annex to document A/C.5/42/L.22 did contain answers to questions raised by some delegations, but where the number of anti-apartheid programmes was concerned, the response varied depending on whether it came from the Department of Public Information or the Department of Administration and Management. According to the former, there were in all 39 programmes a year, while the latter indicated that that figure was in addition to existing programmes and referred only to centrally produced programmes. His delegation hoped that that point would be clarified before a final decision was taken.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretariat would take all necessary steps to answer delegations' questions, even though the questions were being asked on a Friday evening and the Secretariat would have to answer them before the following afternoon.

16. Mr. MOUSSAKI (Congo), referring to section 27, said he was surprised that a staff member of the Department of Public Information had taken it upon himself to speak to the Ambassador of the Congo about questions which he himself had raised in previous meetings, particularly as he was duly authorized to do so by the Congolese Government. As a sovereign State, the Congo was free to ask any question in the Fifth Committee and would not stand for any such comments in the future. His delegation also shared the concerns expressed by the representatives of the United Republic of Tanzania and Kenya.

17. The CHAIRMAN said he would take note of the protest lodged by the representative of the Congo.

18. Mr. MUDHO (Kenya) said that, before scheduling a meeting for the following day, it should be ascertained whether the necessary services and information would be available; if not, it would be preferable to postpone the next meeting until the following week.

19. Mr. GOMEZ (Controller) said he thought it would be possible to deal with questions other than those concerning table 3. While no computer services would be available, the Secretariat would do its best to provide delegations with a version of table 3 based on the classification of regional groups employed by the Secretariat.

20. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda), referring to draft resolution A/C.5/42/L.23, asked whether it would be possible to honour the request for an official legal opinion on paragraph 10, as had been agreed the day before.

21. The CHAIRMAN said that he himself had been in contact with a representative of the Legal Counsel and was preparing a statement which he would read out when the draft resolution was adopted.

22. Mr. NGAIZA (United Republic of Tanzania) suggested that, in order to avoid any confusion, the classification of regional groups understood by Member States should be used instead of the one employed by the Secretariat.

23. Mr. GOMEZ (Controller) said he thought that the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management would be better equipped to answer that question, since it concerned his area of responsibility.

24. Mr. CHACON (Costa Rica), referring to document A/C.5/42/L.22, deplored the fact that the answers provided by the Secretariat on that subject had been too general and applied to only a few delegations, thereby avoiding, in a manner of speaking, the specific questions raised by his own delegation. He once again asked the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information to explain why the recommendation of the Group of 18 to reduce senior staff posts by 25 per cent and Professional and General Service staff posts by 15 per cent had not been applied and to tell exactly how many D-2 and D-1 posts currently existed in the Department of Public Information, how many she planned to include in her new organizational scheme, how many Professional posts she intended to create and abolish, as numerous special source agreements had been terminated, thereby jeopardizing a number of United Nations programmes, particularly in the Hebrew language. His delegation also wished to know why costly consultancy services had been retained, in blatant disregard of the recommendation of the Group of 18 that the first recourse should be to the internal resources of the Secretariat.

25. Mr. MUDHO (Kenya) said that the only regional classification with which Member States were familiar comprised the five regional groups - Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and Western Europe and other States - and not the seven regions shown in tables 1 and 2. It would be useful for the Secretariat to explain where that classification had come from.

26. Mr. NOTTIDGE (Office of Human Resources Management) said that the system of regional distribution used was the one used by the Secretariat since the Organization's inception; it was also the system used for elections in UNIDO. Delegations had all the necessary information in paragraphs 171-178 of the staffing table which appeared at the beginning of the year. Nevertheless, it would be possible to devise another classification system, but delegations would have to furnish the necessary information.

27. Mr. MUDHO (Kenya) said that, to the best of his knowledge, there were only five regional groups; he had never heard of groups for the Middle East or North America, and thought it deplorable that the representative of the Office of Human Resources Management had not answered his question.

28. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management would provide all relevant information at the next meeting.

The meeting rose at 9.45 p.m.