



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 52nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden)

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

CONTENTS

AGFND A ITEM 121: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONTRIBUTIONS (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 121: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONTRIBUTIONS (continued) (A/C.5/42/L.8)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited those members of the Committee who wished to do so to speak in explanation of their position on draft resolution A/C.5/42/L.8, which had been adopted by consensus at the preceding meeting.
2. Mr. LINDER (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation fully endorsed the statement made on the draft resolution by the delegation of Denmark at the preceding meeting.
3. Mr. RAHAM (Oman) said that although he had joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/42/L.8, he hoped that the Committee on Contributions would, in preparing the scale of assessments for 1989-1991, take into consideration the principles of equitable sharing of the burden of relief and of capacity to pay, as well as the views expressed by delegations in the discussion of the item and the current world economic situation.
4. Mr. MONAYAIR (Kuwait) said that, although he had joined the consensus, he believed the draft resolution adopted was too general and failed to address many issues. The Committee on Contributions had a clear mandate to avoid past mistakes and to ensure that the assessments of certain countries did not continue to be increased while certain other countries were spared their fair share of the financial burden.
5. Mr. MARRON (Spain) said that since his delegation regarded the Committee on Contributions as a technical advisory body and not a political organ, it shared the interpretation given to paragraph 1 (b) by the delegations of the Soviet Union, Denmark and others.
6. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that he trusted the Committee on Contributions would prepare the next scale of assessments on the basis of the methodology and criteria used for the current scale, in order to ensure its approval by consensus.
7. Mr. DRAKAKIS (Greece) observed that any change in the methodology used to prepare scales of assessments required the prior approval of the General Assembly. Consequently, it was Greece's understanding that the Committee on Contributions would not be able to apply the results of the review called for in paragraph 1 (b) in preparing the next scale of assessments since there would not be enough time for the General Assembly to approve them.
8. Ms. EMERSON (Portugal) said that her delegation had not blocked a consensus on the draft resolution on the understanding that the results of the review called for in paragraph 1 (b) would be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration and approval at its next session.

9. Ms. WILBERG (New Zealand) said that her delegation had joined the consensus on the understanding that the next scale of assessments would be prepared on the basis of the current methodology as specified in paragraph 1 (a), without prejudice to the basic aim of a more transparent and simplified scale of assessments in future years. It expected that any conclusions reached by the Committee on Contributions after the review called for in paragraph 1 (b) would be submitted for the approval of the General Assembly at its next session before they were applied.
10. Mr. TAN (Singapore) said that while his delegation would have preferred a less ambiguous resolution which contained more precise guidelines for the Committee on Contributions, the text adopted was delicately balanced. It would be recalled that the methodology mandated in paragraph 1 (a) distinguished between developed and developing countries in the redistribution of the burden of relief on the basis of both the low per capita income allowance formula and the debt factor. However, since the Committee on Contributions had already done a detailed study of the indebtedness factor, it was all the more disappointing that it had not conducted a systematic study of the distinction made between developed and developing countries in redistributing the burden of relief.
11. Singapore feared that unless the results of the review called for in paragraph 1 (b) were incorporated in the Committee on Contributions's next recommended scale of assessments, the majority of countries in the Group of 77, particularly those whose rates of assessment were below 1 per cent, would once again experience the largest increase in their contributions. Over the past few three-year periods, the contributions of a certain group of countries had steadily declined owing to the different system of national accounts they used, and the undue advantage they had enjoyed had been at the expense of the Group of 77. That disturbing trend was expected to continue into the next three-year period. Since the Committee on Contributions had so far done nothing to correct that anomaly, the only practical solution was the review in question, with a view to lowering certain limits in the preparation of a new scale of assessments that would be politically acceptable to all.
12. It was Singapore's understanding that paragraph 2 did not constitute a mandate for the Committee on Contributions to undertake studies that were political in nature, as would be a review of the ceiling and floor rates.
13. Mr. LI Yong (China) observed that the Committee on Contributions should be able, on the basis of the current methodology, to formulate a more equitable scale of assessments.
14. Mr. GITSOV (Bulgaria) said that the Committee on Contributions should in its future deliberations carry out a careful study of the difficulties encountered by those countries which had to obtain convertible currency at unfavourable market rates in order to pay their assessments.
15. Mr. CABRIC (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution although it was not convinced that it provided guidelines for a truly equitable scale of assessments. In the absence of any detailed

(Mr. Cabric, Yugoslavia)

instructions to the Committee on Contributions, Yugoslavia wished to emphasize certain points. First, the capacity to pay was still the basic criterion for calculating the new scale of assessments but account should also be taken of the specific economic situation of each country, particularly the developing countries. Secondly, the Committee on Contributions should take into account any data submitted by Member States in addition to the annual questionnaire. Thirdly, particular emphasis should be put on the final 3 to 5 years of the 10-year statistical base period in order to reflect the usually deteriorating economic situation of many countries. Fourthly, the national income estimates for 1986 should be used in the next scale of assessments. Fifthly, the upper limit of the low per capita income allowance formula should be adjusted to take inflation into account. Lastly, the external debt-service burden must remain a fundamental criterion for calculating the scale of assessments. The draft resolution just adopted showed that new options must be explored for sounder financing of the United Nations.

16. Mr. GUPTA (India) said that the current methodology for preparing the scale of assessments had not served the United Nations very well and that the search for alternative criteria must continue.

17. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) endorsed the statements of Yugoslavia and India.

18. Mr. ALI (Chairman of the Committee on Contributions) paid a tribute to the retiring Secretary of the Committee on Contributions, Mrs. Mary Lee.

19. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the entire Fifth Committee, said he wished to join the many delegations which had paid special tribute to the work of the retiring Secretary of the Committee on Contributions.

20. He said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 121.

#### ORGANIZATION OF WORK

21. Mr. GUPTA (India), supported by Mr. CABRIC (Yugoslavia) and Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria), observed that the Committee must allow sufficient time for a full debate of the important report of the Secretary-General on the current financial crisis of the United Nations (A/42/841), just issued under agenda item 43.

22. The CHAIRMAN said that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions intended to give priority to its consideration of that report and the Secretary-General himself intended to introduce it in the Fifth Committee. As much time as was needed would certainly be allowed for its discussion.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.