



Thursday, 18 November 1971,
at 10.50 a.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. E. Olu SANU (Nigeria).

AGENDA ITEM 76

Budget estimates for the financial year 1972 (*continued*) (A/8322, A/8406 and Corr.1 and 3, A/8408 and Corr.1 and 2 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 and Add.2 to 9, A/8428 and Corr.1, A/8446 and Add.1, A/C.5/1320/Rev.1 and Add.1, A/C.5/1362, A/C.5/1364, A/C.5/1365, A/C.5/1366 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 and Add.2, A/C.5/1376, A/C.5/1377, A/C.5/1378 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1380 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1381 to 1384, A/C.5/1388 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1389, to 1392, A/C.5/1396, A/C.5/L.1062/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1063, A/C.5/L.1064/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1065/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1066 to L.1068, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.3 and Corr.1, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.8, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.10 and Add.1, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.11 to 16, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.17/Rev.1, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.18 and Add.1, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.19, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.21/Rev.1, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.22, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.24, E/5038)

*Review and reappraisal of United Nations information policies and activities (continued)** (A/8408/Add.4, A/C.5/1320/Rev.1 and Add.1, A/C.5/L.1066, A/C.5/L.1068, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.10 and Add.1, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.11, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.12, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.18 and Add.1, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.24)

1. Mr. LOGINOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), commenting on the 14-Power draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1068), said that it contained a number of unacceptable provisions. While his delegation had no objection to most of the preambular paragraphs and to operative paragraph 1, it had doubts concerning the second half of the second preambular paragraph. The reference to subsequent resolutions was insufficiently precise: which resolutions did the sponsors have in mind? The Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information had stated that no resolutions adopted by other United Nations bodies should change the fundamental principles set forth in General Assembly resolutions 13 (I) of 13 February 1946, and 595 (VI) of 4 February 1952.

2. While his delegation did not object in principle to the wording of the first half of operative paragraph 2, that wording did not reflect the views of the majority of delegations in the Fifth Committee. A number of delegations had expressed the view that those two resolutions had stood the test of time and required no revision. The draft should therefore contain a reaffirmation of the importance of the fundamental principles governing United Nations

information activities, as set forth in those two resolutions. It was not enough to say that they would "continue to be applied".

3. His delegation objected to operative paragraph 3. Equipment naturally needed replacement from time to time. But in view of both the complexity of modern equipment and the Organization's financial difficulties, the question of replacement should be very carefully reviewed by experts. The Secretary-General might also ascertain the views of the Consultative Panel on Public Information on the subject and submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session. Such a procedure would dispel the doubts expressed by many delegations. Hasty action should not be taken, since the question had substantial financial implications.

4. With regard to operative paragraph 4, his delegation had no objection to the endorsement of the first proposal contained in subparagraph 261 (iii) of the Secretary-General's report on the question under consideration (A/C.5/1320/Rev.1), namely, that the output of publications would be maintained at the present level. His delegation could not, however, accept the second assertion in that subparagraph to the effect that an additional annual allocation might be required "to offset increased operating costs and to permit an increased output of information during the Disarmament and Development Decades". The amount of the allocation had not been stated and no account had been taken of the need for a change in priorities in the field of publications. With regard to the other subparagraphs of paragraph 261 of the report of the Secretary-General mentioned in operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, he had the following observations. Subparagraph (iv), which referred to additional funds to print the French edition of *Objective: Justice*, was acceptable to his delegation, although it felt that those funds should be covered by the regular appropriations under section 11. While he did not object to the proposal contained in subparagraph (xii), which related to funds for travel, fellowships and seminars and conferences, he wished to stress the need for economy. The recommendation contained in subparagraph (x) concerning new colour photo processing equipment was unacceptable. It would entail revised estimates; furthermore, it was not urgent. The recommendation contained in subparagraph (xiii) regarding the proposed Regional Production Bureau at Addis Ababa was also unacceptable. His delegation had already stated its view on the matter and noted that doubts had also been expressed by many other members (1450th meeting). In fact, many delegations had stressed the need to improve the work of information centres, the importance of which was emphasized in the preamble of the 14-Power draft resolution.

* Resumed from the 1456th meeting.

5. In paragraph 199 of his report, the Secretary-General stated that 11 out of 51 information centres were being maintained in collaboration with UNDP. What did that mean? Professional and technical staff were transferred from the information centres to UNDP; whereas the impression was given that an information centre existed, it had, for all practical purposes, been dismantled. Furthermore, the Administrative Management Service had apparently recommended the transfer of six more information centres to UNDP from 1 January 1972. That was a very dangerous tendency which could severely hamper the dissemination of information on United Nations activities in such fields as racial discrimination and decolonization, since neither UNDP nor UNIDO were concerned with those questions. His delegation considered it absolutely essential to strengthen the information centres; they must not be swallowed up by UNDP or UNIDO. His delegation wished to point out, however, that each regional economic commission had its own information centre, which discharged two functions: on the one hand, it served Member States in the region covered by the commission, and on the other, it carried out information activities for the whole region. In other words, the functions to be assigned to the Bureau at Addis Ababa were already being performed. Was it rational to set up yet another apparatus? Would it not be better to boost the activities of existing information centres and services?

6. Those observations also applied to operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution. An improvement in information activities in the economic and social fields was unobjectionable, but should not be effected at the expense of information on the Organization's political activities. In paragraphs 5 and 6 of the draft resolution, the economic and social fields were given undue prominence; they already received much attention from the Office of Public Information, UNDP, UNIDO and the regional economic commissions. Furthermore, the vague reference in operative paragraph 6 to "shortcomings" served no useful purpose. What were those shortcomings?

7. The proposal in subparagraph 261 (xiv) to resume the practice of holding meetings of information centre directors at Headquarters every five years was not a good idea in view of the need for financial stringency.

8. The USSR delegation endorsed the request contained in operative paragraph 8 for the integration of the Centre for Economic and Social Information within the Office of Public Information. It firmly opposed the Centre's autonomous status: the sole information organ of the United Nations within the Secretariat was the Office of Public Information.

9. His delegation also wished to point out that the 14-Power draft resolution did not reflect the important observations made by several delegations, including his own, regarding the composition and qualifications of the Office of Public Information staff.

10. His delegation wished to request the Secretariat, in dealing with the question of information centres to raise the level of the post of Assistant Director of the Information Centre in Moscow to that of the same post in London and Paris.

11. Commenting on the draft resolution as a whole, he said that, in all its resolutions concerning information activities, the General Assembly either defined or reaffirmed the policy and principles governing those activities. The text before the Committee confused policy and technical matters, whereas they should be clearly separated. His delegation would vote against it.

First reading (continued) (A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.3 and Corr.1)

SECTION 3. SALARIES AND WAGES (*concluded*)
(A/8406 AND CORR.1 AND 3, A/8408 AND CORR.1 AND 2 AND ADD.1 AND ADD.1/CORR.1, A/C.5/1366 AND ADD.1 AND ADD.1/CORR.1, A/C.5/L.1065/REV.1, A/C.5/L.1067, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.13 TO 15, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.17/REV.1, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.19, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.20, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.21/REV.1)

12. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), commenting on the reaction to the USSR draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1065/Rev.1), said it was important to exercise control over the administrative expenditure of the United Nations. In submitting the draft resolution, his delegation had not intended to freeze the economic, social or other activities of the Organization. It was convinced, however, that all United Nations programmes could be implemented without additional posts if the existing staff increased its productivity—which was clearly feasible—and concentrated its efforts on the most important and urgent questions. The Secretary-General should harness all available resources by filling the many vacancies in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional economic commissions. The Controller had said at the previous meeting that some 10 per cent of existing staff could be reassigned to new programmes as soon as current programmes were completed. Furthermore, the USSR draft did not call for the elimination of temporary assistance, although such assistance would be somewhat reduced from the 1971 level. Thus, the Secretary-General could, if necessary, draw upon a reserve of temporary Professional staff for the implementation of economic and social programmes.

13. His delegation had no doubt concerning the importance of the objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade; on the other hand, it could not understand how 10 more General Service staff and 68 more local staff to serve the economic and social sections of the Secretariat could assist in attaining those objectives—a task which demanded the concerted efforts of countries as a whole.

14. As was well known, the Soviet Union was making great efforts to strengthen the economic independence of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Those efforts were reflected in its political and diplomatic activities and in its broad programme of economic, scientific and technical co-operation with many developing countries. Any change in its approach to the question of appropriations for new activities related to the means of attaining economic and social objectives rather than to the objectives themselves.

15. Despite the devastation of war, the Soviet Union had, in the space of 50 years, risen from an undeveloped country to the rank of a highly industrialized Power. It knew from experience that solution of a nation's complex economic

and social problems did not hinge on whether the Secretariat staff was increased by 100 or reduced by that number. While he did not wish to minimize the importance of the work of every member of the Secretariat, his delegation believed that additional staff would not contribute to the actual process of development.

16. His delegation shared the view expressed by many delegations that there was a direct link between the growth in the budget and the financial deficit. A deficit in some sections of the budget should not be reflected in the level of staff salaries, since all States regularly contributed to that part of the budget. In view of the present financial difficulties, however, unnecessary expenditure must be avoided. As the Controller had stated, new requests would be made during the current session for increases in staff. Those requests might well have substantial financial implications.

17. The USSR delegation was firmly convinced that its approach to the question before the Committee was fully justified. Delegations which opposed the USSR draft resolution would bear some responsibility for continuing difficulties in the administrative and budgetary fields. The draft clearly did not enjoy the support that it deserved; without presenting reasoned arguments, many representatives of developing countries had said that they would oppose it. He regretted the Algerian representative's appeal to the USSR delegation to refrain from pressing for a vote on it. However, his delegation would adopt a realistic attitude and comply with that appeal.

18. Commenting on the United States draft (A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.17/Rev.1), he said that the United States delegation, too, had been motivated by the desire to reduce the appropriations under section 3. However, the USSR delegation had serious reservations concerning paragraph (1), under which appropriations would be authorized only for new posts specifically approved by the Administrative Management Service. First, the United States proposal did not accord with his delegation's firm conviction that the manning table should not be increased. Second, the Administrative Management Service was an internal advisory body whose task was to make recommendations to the Secretary-General; it had no power to legislate or to dictate to Member States how the Secretariat should be organized. His delegation was not convinced that the recommendations of the Service were necessarily well-founded. If the United States draft was put to the vote, the USSR delegation would vote against paragraph (1).

19. Mr. DERWINSKI (United States of America) said that the United States proposal was based on the firm belief that there was a direct relationship between the level of the estimates for 1972 and the possibility of improving the Organization's deficit situation. In the circumstances, an austerity approach was needed, and he believed that the Secretary-General would in any case have to take sterner measures in 1972, thus vindicating the United States proposal. That proposal had been intended as a compromise between the Soviet draft resolution and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and was directed mainly to reducing reliance on consultants, temporary assistance and overtime when many new posts were being added. He understood

that the Secretary-General would propose the addition of 65 additional posts before the end of the session, a fact not known to the Advisory Committee when it had prepared its report. He hoped he had already made it clear that the United States proposal for appropriations for 1972 under section 3 below the level recommended by the Advisory Committee had not been intended as a reflection on that Committee. Its report would have been prepared in June/July 1971, when the financial situation had not been made clear; moreover, it was an expert body, which would not feel able to adopt an austerity approach on behalf of the General Assembly. Government representatives were in a different position.

20. Despite the unassailable logic of the United States proposal, he realized that there was not enough support for it in the Committee, and would accordingly withdraw it.

21. Mr. ESFANDIARY (Iran) said he believed he could speak for all the developing countries in expressing his thanks to the United States and the Soviet Union for the understanding they had shown in withdrawing their proposals. The developing countries were concerned lest the proposed cuts affect the work programme and thus hamper achievement of the objectives of the Second Development Decade. There was no connexion between the level of the budget and the financial crisis. He agreed with those who thought that the productivity of the Secretariat could be increased, but doubted whether such increased productivity could ever fill the gap left by the \$2.5 million or \$3 million reduction proposed by the Soviet Union and the United States for section 3. Those two countries had shown a spirit of co-operation, but so had the developing countries, in accepting the reduction of \$1,757,800 recommended by the Advisory Committee. They had demonstrated their understanding of the position of the developed countries and the major contributors, which had been taken into account by the Advisory Committee in reducing the estimates. He hoped that such a spirit of give-and-take would prevail in the difficult tasks that still lay ahead for the Fifth Committee.

22. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt), Mr. CLELAND (Ghana), Mr. FAROOQ (Pakistan) and Mr. MAKUFU (Zaire) endorsed the comments of the representative of Iran, and expressed their thanks to the United States and the Soviet Union for their spirit of understanding and co-operation.

23. Mr. BENNET (New Zealand) said that his delegation considered that there was nothing more than a psychological link between the level of the budget and the deficit, and thus sympathized with those who regarded the attempt to connect them as an excuse for placing a ceiling on expenditure. Nevertheless, if the United Nations was really to face the fact that it was a bankrupt organization, then, pending new arrangements, it must make a serious effort to cut costs. That was incontrovertible logic. The New Zealand delegation considered that there must always be a responsible approach to financial and budgetary questions. Consequently it would have supported the United States proposal, had it been put to a vote. Since it had been withdrawn, he would vote for the Advisory Committee's recommendations. However, he hoped that the Secretary-General would take note of the views expressed in the debate concerning the need to rely less on temporary assistance.

The recommendation of the Advisory Committee (A/8408 and Corr.1 and 2, para. 136; A/8408/Add.1 and Corr.1, para. 26) for an appropriation of \$92,809,200 under section 3 was approved in first reading by 66 votes to 10, with 1 abstention.

24. Mr. BROWN (Australia) said that he would have supported the United States proposal had it been voted on, but since it had been withdrawn he had voted for the Advisory Committee's recommendations. He had been somewhat surprised at the preceding meeting to hear the comments of some delegations on the subject of support for the Advisory Committee's recommendations, in view of the attitude adopted with respect to the \$2 million originally earmarked for the Headquarters expansion programme. He hoped that the Secretary-General would introduce the necessary austerity measures at the twenty-sixth session, as he had envisaged at the 1427th meeting (A/C.5/1376), if there was no significant change in the deficit situation.

25. Mr. SARAMO (Finland) said that both the Soviet and United States proposals reflected the restraint necessary in the existing financial situation, and he could have voted for either. Since both had been withdrawn, he had followed the traditional procedure of voting for the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

26. Mr. ARBOLEDA (Colombia) said that his delegation had been prepared to give careful consideration to the Soviet proposal, especially after changes had been made in passages that might affect the developing countries. It would also have considered an amended version of the United States proposal. Since both proposals had been withdrawn, he had voted for the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

27. Mr. GUPTA (India) said, in connexion with the Australian representative's comments, that although his own delegation had many reservations about the cuts recommended by the Advisory Committee, in view of the fact that the Soviet and United States delegations had withdrawn their proposals in a spirit of co-operation, he had voted for the Advisory Committee's recommendations, for the reasons given by the Iranian representative.

28. Mr. MORRIS (Liberia) expressed his appreciation to the Soviet Union and the United States for withdrawing their proposals. The choice between an austerity budget and the needs of the developing countries had confronted him with a dilemma, and he had resolved it by voting for the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

29. Mr. AL-QANDI (Kuwait) thanked the Soviet and United States delegations for their co-operation in withdrawing their proposals, and said he had voted for the Advisory Committee's recommendations. He expressed alarm at the increasing inefficiency of the Secretariat staff, and said he would favour any proposal to improve the Secretariat's productivity.

30. Mr. BERTRAN (Uruguay) thanked the Soviet and United States delegations for their co-operative attitude and understanding of the position of the developing countries.

The United Nations was indeed facing a very serious financial crisis; on the other hand, it was primarily the developing countries which were adversely affected by the present international monetary instability, and they were grateful to all who understood their concern.

SECTION 4. COMMON STAFF COSTS (A/8406 AND CORR.1 AND 3, A/8408 AND CORR.1 AND 2 AND ADD.1 AND ADD.1/CORR.1, A/C.5/1366)

31. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General in the budget estimates for the financial year 1972 (A/8406 and Corr.1 and 3) had requested an initial appropriation under section 4 of \$21,356,000. In his revised estimates resulting from decisions of the Economic and Social Council at its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions (A/C.5/1366) he had proposed an additional amount of \$30,000, making a total request of \$21,386,000. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in paragraphs 137-147 of its first report (A/8408 and Corr.1 and 2) on the budget estimates, had recommended a reduction of \$209,000 in the initial estimates resulting in an appropriation of \$21,147,000. In its second report (A/8408/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1) the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of \$6,000 in the additional amount of \$30,000 requested by the Secretary-General. The grand total recommended by the Advisory Committee for section 4 was thus \$21,171,000.

32. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the figures for section 4 were consequential upon those for section 3, and the reductions proposed by the Advisory Committee were consequential on the reductions proposed for section 3.

The recommendation of the Advisory Committee (A/8408 and Corr.1 and 2, para. 147; A/8408/Add.1 and Corr.1, para. 26) for an appropriation of \$21,171,000 under section 4 was approved in first reading by 69 votes to 7, with 1 abstention.

INCOME SECTION 1. INCOME FROM STAFF ASSESSMENT (A/8406 AND CORR.1 AND 3, A/8408 AND CORR.1 AND 2 AND ADD.1 AND ADD.1/CORR.1, A/C.5/1366/ADD.1 AND CORR.1)

33. The CHAIRMAN said that in his budget estimates (A/8406 and Corr.1 and 3) and in revised estimates resulting from the decisions of the Economic and Social Council at its fiftieth and fifty-first sessions (A/C.5/1366/ Add.1 and Corr.1) the Secretary-General had estimated that income from staff assessment in 1972 would amount to a total of \$24,979,700. The Advisory Committee in its first report (A/8408 and Corr.1 and 2) on the budget estimates and in its second report (A/8408/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1), had recommended that that amount be reduced by \$414,700 to \$24,565,000.

The estimate of \$24,565,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee (A/8408 and Corr.1 and 2, para. 317, A/8408/Add.1 and Corr.1, para. 26) under income section 1 was approved unanimously in first reading.

SECTION 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES
(concluded) (A/8406 AND CORR.1 AND 3, A/8408
 AND CORR.1 AND 2 AND ADD.1 AND ADD.1/
 CORR.1, A/C.5/1366, A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.22)

34. Mr. SILVEIRA DA MOTA (Brazil) said that his delegation had examined in detail the new proposal by the Secretariat (A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.22) regarding the records of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. Brazil would vote for the proposal, and congratulated the Advisory Committee for calling attention to the high cost of the service in question. Brazil had had some misgivings about changing the procedure, but it appeared that the proposed new system would not adversely affect the functioning of the Committee.

35. He wished to place on record his delegation's displeasure concerning the way the consultations that had led to the proposal had been conducted. Apparently only certain members of the Committee had been consulted, which appeared to create a situation of undue privilege for those members. If consultations were required in future, they should not be held on a basis that would prevent some members of an organ from participating in decisions affecting the procedures of that organ.

36. Mr. MERIGO AZA (Mexico) said that he could accept the new proposal, and was glad to see that it would result in savings. He endorsed the Brazilian representative's comments concerning the unsatisfactory manner in which consultations had been conducted. It had been announced that the members of the Committee on Disarmament had been consulted and had agreed to the new proposal when, in fact, a number of members had not been consulted. In future, any such consultations should include all the parties concerned.

37. Mr. GUPTA (India), Mr. HOLLIST (Nigeria), Mr. FAROOQ (Pakistan) and Mr. JEREMIĆ (Yugoslavia) endorsed the comments by the representatives of Brazil and Mexico.

38. Mr. TURNER (Controller) pointed out that no agreement had been made during the consultations in question. Furthermore, the Secretariat had followed the appropriate and customary procedure by consulting the delegations which were Co-Chairmen of the Conference. That was the proper procedure and the Secretariat would continue to follow it in future.

39. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said, in reply to a question put by the representative of Pakistan, that, given the arrangements proposed for the servicing of the Conference, there would no longer be any need for the review of those arrangements suggested in paragraph 85 of the Advisory Committee's first report (A/8408 and Corr.1 and 2) on the budget estimates for 1972.

40. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation would support the appropriations under section 2 as a whole but, as it had already stated in the Economic and Social Council, it opposed the convening of the Third World Population Conference. Consequently, it regarded the expenditure

under chapter IX as unjustified and, if that chapter was put to a separate vote, would vote against it.

The recommendation of the Advisory Committee (A/8408 and Corr.1 and 2, para. 97; A/8408/Add.1 and Corr.1, para. 26; 1457th meeting, para. 1) for an appropriation in the amount of \$2,026,100 for section 2 was approved in first reading by 81 votes to none.

Report of the Special Committee for Review of the United Nations Salary System (A/8408/Add.6, A/8428 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1388 and Corr.1)

41. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take up the report of the Special Committee for the Review of the United Nations Salary System (A/8428 and Corr.1). The Secretary-General had presented revised estimates (A/C.5/1388 and Corr.1) under section 2 of the 1972 budget estimates in the total amount of \$524,485 to provide for the requirements of the Special Committee. He drew attention to the Advisory Committee's related report (A/8408/Add.6).

42. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that it was for the Fifth Committee to decide, first, whether the mandate of the Special Committee should be extended and, second, what funds should be authorized to enable that Committee to carry out an extended mandate. The Advisory Committee's report was concerned with the second question. Without minimizing the work of the Special Committee, the Advisory Committee had felt that the original estimate of roughly \$525,000 was too high and had decided to adopt a critical approach to it. The two major components were the provision for detailed minutes and the field visit. The cost of minutes was virtually the same as that of full summary records, the servicing required to provide minutes of the kind the Special Committee had in mind being practically the same as that required for summary records. The Advisory Committee questioned the necessity for either the detailed minutes or the field visit and wondered whether alternative arrangements might not be made at little or no extra cost. It also wondered if a further visit by the Special Committee to Geneva was essential. Savings would result if all its meetings were held in New York and if it met in continuous session rather than adjourning for five or six weeks while the Secretariat drafted its report. The Advisory Committee questioned that arrangement too; other Committees drafted their reports concurrently with the discharge of their tasks. The Advisory Committee was also of the opinion that the Secretary-General and the specialized agencies might be more forthcoming in providing secretariat and other assistance to the Special Committee in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2743 (XXV). For the reasons stated in detail in its report, the Advisory Committee felt that the expenditure in question could be reduced to approximately \$225,000. At the same time, it recognized that the variables in the equation included the venue and duration of the Special Committee's meetings and the nature of its records. It also recognized that the Special Committee might wish to review its procedures in the light of the financial implications, of which it had not been informed when it had adjourned. The Advisory Committee had therefore decided to allow the Special Committee a degree of latitude by

recommending a contingency provision of 20 per cent, thereby reducing the appropriation to a maximum of \$270,000.

43. Mr. GUPTA (India) requested the Chairman to defer the vote on the Advisory Committee's recommendations to allow his delegation time for consultations with the Chairman of the Special Committee.

44. Mr. SILVEIRA DA MOTA (Brazil) said that his delegation concurred generally in the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, which was to be congratulated for adopting a very critical attitude towards the financial implications of the Special Committee's meetings and programme of work.

45. He had been surprised to note, from paragraph 4 (e) of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1388 and Corr.1), that the United Nations was to pay rent to WHO for offices for the Special Committee. It was clear from paragraph 6 of its related report (A/8408/Add.6) that the Advisory Committee, too, wondered whether that arrangement was appropriate in respect of a committee enquiring into a matter of common concern to the United Nations system.

46. His delegation would vote in favour of all the Advisory Committee's recommendations and hoped that, by the end of 1972, the Special Committee would have submitted a full report on the completion of its mandate.

47. Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania) said that his delegation's position was similar to that stated by the Brazilian representative. It fully supported the Advisory Committee's critical attitude towards the estimates of expenditure. He also wondered whether it was customary for WHO to charge rent in such circumstances. At the same time, he wished to stress the importance of the work done by the Special Committee, which was entitled to maximum support from the secretariats of the United Nations system. Its task was not easy; it should be able to draw upon the expertise available in the secretariats of the common system.

48. Dr. COIGNEY (World Health Organization), replying to the representatives of Brazil and the United Republic of Tanzania, said that WHO had not asked for any rental for premises to be used by the Special Committee. It was a routine administrative practice in Geneva to seek reimbursement of the cost of services such as electricity and telephone or cable communications. Such charges did not constitute a rental, properly speaking.

49. Mr. ALWAN (Iraq) associated his delegation with the remarks of the representatives of Brazil and the United Republic of Tanzania. He concurred in the Advisory Committee's findings but doubted that the 20 per cent contingency allowance was really necessary. He doubted whether detailed minutes, which would be extremely expensive, were really necessary or likely to be of great moment to future generations. Nor was he convinced that the cost of the field visits would be justified by the amount of information which the Special Committee would gain from them.

50. He had not found the remarks of the representative of WHO entirely convincing. The Secretary-General's report

stated plainly that rent was to be paid to WHO for a conference room and five offices. The Special Committee, as a body serving the common system, should not be charged rental.

51. Mr. TURNER (Controller) said that the term "rent" in the Secretary-General's report was perhaps unfortunate. As the representative of WHO had indicated, the sums involved represented a charge for services and facilities. The arrangements between WHO and the United Nations with regard to the use of premises were reciprocal. WHO paid for office space which it rented in the Palais des Nations for the World Health Assembly and if such charges were abolished the United Nations would be a heavy loser.

52. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) observed that the Advisory Committee's report could only be as accurate as the information provided to it by the Secretariat. Whether the amounts involved were rental or a charge for services, the Advisory Committee's remarks still applied. The Special Committee was working on behalf of the common system as a whole and it was with that in mind that the Advisory Committee had made its comments.

53. Mr. SILVEIRA DA MOTA (Brazil) endorsed the remarks of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. The circumstance that the Special Committee was working in the WHO building was not connected with the reciprocal arrangements which the Controller had described because the entire United Nations system stood to benefit from the work of the Special Committee.

54. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to the Indian request that the vote on the Advisory Committee's recommendations should be deferred.

It was so decided.

FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)*

Statement by the Chairman of the Group of 77

55. The CHAIRMAN read out a communication which he had received from the Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations, Chairman of the Group of 77, who had requested that it should be circulated as a document of the Fifth Committee. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to circulation of the communication as a Conference Room Paper.¹

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

56. Mr. FAROOQ (Pakistan) requested that, as the Moslem Feast of Bairam would fall on 19 November, the Committee should hold no meeting that day.

* Resumed from the 1436th meeting.

¹ Subsequently issued in document A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.25.

57. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Committee would not meet on Thanksgiving Day, which fell during the following week. If the Committee was not to meet on 19 November, he would be obliged to propose that it should meet on Saturday, 27 November, because it could not afford to lose two working days. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to the request

of the representative of Pakistan and, consequently, to the proposal by the Chair.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.