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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1980-1981

Arabic language services

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution
contained in document A/C.5/35/L.19

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with
rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. Under the terms of operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.5/35/L.19, the General Assembly would decide to include Arabic among the official and working languages of the subsidiary organs of the General Assembly, no later than 1 January 1982.
2. By operative paragraph 2, the General Assembly would request the Security Council to include Arabic among its official and working languages, and the Economic and Social Council to include Arabic among its official languages, no later than 1 January 1983.
3. While the present statement is submitted to describe administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution to the extent possible, given the magnitude and complexities involved, many aspects remain to be further examined. It is the intention of the Secretary-General to study these issues further and to address them in the report to the thirty-sixth session that he is called upon to make under operative paragraph 3.

A. Implications at Headquarters

Department of Conference Services

4. The draft resolution calls for the inclusion of Arabic among the official and working languages of the subsidiary organs of the General Assembly no later than 1 January 1982. As a result of its adoption, approximately 600 more meetings

annually would be serviced with Arabic interpretation at Headquarters. Documentation workload in Arabic including summary records would also increase from the current level of 8 million words per annum to approximately 10.3 million words. Verbatim records for two organs, namely, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, would be produced in Arabic. Increases would also be felt in the reproduction and distribution areas by way of more documents to be printed and distributed. The draft resolution would thus affect all the major operation centres of the Department of Conference Services.

5. So far as 1983 is concerned, and assuming that both the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council take steps to include Arabic among their official and working languages, no later than 1 January 1983, there would be further increases in workload.

6. In the event of adoption of the draft resolution, the Department of Conference Services would require a strengthening of its permanent establishment in 1982, as shown in the table below. The figures given for 1983 show the additional requirements associated with operative paragraph 2.

	<u>1982</u>		<u>1983</u>	
	<u>Professional</u>	<u>General Service</u>	<u>Professional</u>	<u>General Service</u>
<u>Section 29A</u>				
Interpretation	9	-	9	-
Verbatim reporting				
Verbatim reporters	5	-	3	-
Revisers	1	-	2	-
Typists	-	6	-	3
Official Records editing	-	-	4	1
Reproduction	-	3	-	3
Distribution	-	2	-	3
Printing	-	-	1	1
<u>Section 29C</u>				
Dag Hammarskjöld Library	-	-	-	1
Total	15	11	19	12

7. The costs of the foregoing posts would be \$997,000 for 1982 and \$2,291,000 for 1983.

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8. As regards translation, revision and typing, it is not anticipated that additional established posts would be required. Provision would have to be made for temporary assistance to cover peakload periods for these units. The extent of these requirements cannot be estimated at this time.

Office of General Services

9. Adoption of the draft resolution by the General Assembly would require that telecommunications wiring and equipment alterations would have to be done in Conference Rooms 7 and 8, the Security Council Chamber and the Economic and Social Council Chamber. While no structural alteration would be necessary as existing booths could be used, costs of replacing existing equipment are preliminarily estimated at around \$900,000. The work could only begin after a design phase lasting several months. As rewiring and re-equipping would result in the unavailability of the rooms for several months, and since all conference rooms are virtually fully committed in 1981 because of the schedule of conferences already planned for that year, it is proposed to carry out this work in 1982. The design phase will be undertaken in 1981, however, at an estimated cost of \$50,000.

10. It would also be necessary to make provision for common services costs in respect of space, furniture, communications, etc. if additional posts were to be established. Requirements in this regard for the additional posts indicated in paragraph 6 above would be \$160,000 in 1982, \$280,000 in 1983 and \$200,000 annually thereafter.

Office of Personnel Services

11. In order to enable implementation of the resolution, should it be adopted, additional Arabic interpreters and verbatim reporters would have to be recruited by the end of 1981. For this purpose, two world-wide recruitment campaigns would have to be launched and two competitive examinations organized. These two campaigns and examinations would add substantially to the workload of the Office of Personnel Services, as regards both recruitment and competitive examinations for posts with special linguistic requirements.

12. For the Division of Recruitment, additional staff resources, under general temporary assistance, of three work-months at the P-3 level and six work-months at the G-4/2 level would be required, for an estimated cost of \$17,800. Wide-coverage advertising will be necessary, not only in Arab countries but also in Europe, Africa, Canada and the United States. Based on the high rates experienced in 1980, it is estimated that an amount of \$57,000 would be required for advertising and promotion in connexion with this recruitment effort.

13. Temporary assistance resources in the amount of \$17,800 for three work-months at the P-3 level and six work-months at the G-4/2 level will be needed for the Training and Examinations Service in order to assist in the organization of the above-mentioned examinations at Headquarters and at examination centres away from Headquarters, to service the relevant Board of Examiners and co-ordinate the actual administration of the written and oral parts of the examinations. Four

staff members would be required to travel from New York to examination centres in the Middle East to administer the examinations including the interviews of candidates in the area, for an estimated cost of \$13,500. It is also foreseen that rental of tape recorders and stenotype machines would be necessary at examination centres away from Headquarters. Appropriate premises would also have to be rented at these centres. The total outlay for these two items is estimated at \$4,000.

14. Thus, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution an additional appropriation in the amount of \$110,100 would be required for the Office of Personnel Services, consisting of \$74,800 for the Division of Recruitment and \$35,300 for the Training and Examinations Service.

B. Implications at other duty stations

15. Adoption of the draft resolution would affect conference servicing activities at all other duty stations. In Geneva, approximately 120 meetings of the International Law Commission each year would be provided with Arabic interpretation together with its documentation workload of 500,000 words in Arabic. In respect of the Governing Council of UNDP which alternates its annual session between New York and Geneva, Arabic interpretation would be provided to approximately 80 meetings with approximately 200,000 words of Arabic documentation. The workload arising from the summer session of the Economic and Social Council would be 80 meetings and 120,000 words. In Vienna, 330 UNIDO meetings and 1.5 million words of documentation would be serviced in Arabic, not to mention non-UNIDO meetings requiring Arabic services, such as sessional meetings of UNCITRAL. In Nairobi, meetings and documentation of UNEP Governing Council would be affected. At these locations as well as at other offices away from Headquarters there may be expected to be further implications on conference servicing workloads depending on decisions the Economic and Social Council may take concerning the introduction of Arabic language services for its subsidiary bodies.

16. Preliminary evaluation shows that adequate conference facilities already exist at Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi to accommodate the addition of Arabic interpretation. The question of availability of office space in locations away from Headquarters would have to be addressed in the context of specific proposals which may be made for additional staff at a later stage.

17. It would be the intention of the Secretary-General to further examine the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution in the course of 1981 with a view to formulating concrete proposals to best implement the draft resolution and also taking into account decisions to be made by the Economic and Social Council. Those proposals would be included in his report to the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Summary

18. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, the total additional costs 1/ at Headquarters, in so far as they can be quantified at this time, would amount to approximately \$160,100 in 1981, \$2,057,000 in 1982 and \$2,571,000 in 1983. Accordingly, an additional appropriation of \$160,100 would be required in section 28 for the biennium 1980-1981. Of this amount, \$50,000 would be for the Office of General Services in respect of a design work to be contractually undertaken for telecommunications wiring and equipment alterations in Headquarters conference room facilities. The remaining amount of \$110,100 would be required for the Office of Personnel Services to organize recruitment campaigns and exams in relation to the new posts envisaged as in paragraph 6 above. A further provision of \$10,500 would be required for additional staff assessment under section 31, offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1.

19. Any other requirements which may arise from the adoption of the draft resolution, would be reviewed during 1981 in the light of ensuing decisions of the Economic and Social Council and related appropriations would be requested through the Secretary-General's report on this matter to the thirty-sixth session.

1/ See paras. 7, 9, 10 and 14.