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MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1980-1983

Report of the Fifth Committee (Part II)

Rapporteur: Mr. Carl C. PEDERSEN (Canada)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Fifth Committee continued its consideration of this item at its 49th, 50th, 52nd and 54th meetings, on 8, 9, 10 and 11 December 1980. It had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the identification of activities that have been completed or are obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective (A/C.5/35/40 and Add.1) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/35/709).

2. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's consideration of this question are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/35/SR.49, 50, 52 and 54).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.5/35/L.36

3. At its 50th meeting, on 9 December, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland submitted a draft resolution (A/C.5/35/L.36) which was subsequently also sponsored by the Federal Republic of Germany. The draft resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 3534 (XXX) of 17 December 1975, 31/93 of 14 December 1976, 32/201 of 21 December 1977, 33/204 of 29 January 1979 and 34/225 of 20 December 1979,

"Reaffirming the importance of identifying activities that have been completed or are obsolete, of marginal usefulness, or ineffective, in order to redeploy resources to finance new United Nations activities,

"1. Takes note of the report 1/ of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at the request of the Economic and Social Council, and the corresponding report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions; 2/

"2. Decides to terminate forthwith the activities identified in the Secretary-General's report as obsolete, ineffective or of marginal usefulness;

"3. Approves the finding of the Secretary-General that an integrated and comprehensive procedure for the identification of completed, obsolete, ineffective and marginally useful activities should be incorporated in the planning, programming and budgeting cycles of the United Nations;

"4. To this end requests the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its twenty-first session to undertake, in the context of its consideration of programme priority setting, an in-depth study of this subject and to submit its conclusions to the Economic and Social Council at its second session in 1981 and to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session;

"5. Transmits the report of the Secretary-General to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination for further consideration in the context of this study;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General in the meantime to identify obsolete, marginally useful and ineffective activities in the preparation of the Programme Budget for 1982-1983, for the consideration of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination in its examination of the Programme Budget proposals;

"7. Endorses the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that the submission of a full and comprehensive report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 3534 (XXX) and subsequent resolutions affirming it, requested in General Assembly resolution 34/225, be deferred until the thirty-seventh session."

4. At its 52nd meeting, on 10 December, the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, on behalf of the sponsors, orally introduced the following revisions to draft resolution A/C.5/35/L.36:

(a) In the first line of operative paragraph 2, the word "forthwith" was deleted;

(b) In the first line of operative paragraph 3, the word "finding" was replaced by "proposals"; in the same paragraph, the words "incorporated in" were replaced by "established within the framework of";

1/ A/C.5/35/40 and Add.1.

2/ A/35/709.

(c) In operative paragraph 4, the words "an in-depth" were replaced by "a comprehensive";

(d) At the end of operative paragraph 5, the words "in the context of this study" were replaced by the words "at the twenty-first session".

5. At the same meeting, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics orally proposed the following amendments to draft resolution A/C.5/35/L.36:

(a) At the end of operative paragraph 2, add "on which there are decisions adopted by the competent intergovernmental organs";

(b) At the end of operative paragraph 6, add "for the purpose of transforming the analyses of the programmes in the preparation of the programme budget into one of the basic instruments for ensuring effective implementation of General Assembly resolutions 3534 (XXX) and 31/93 and subsequent reaffirmations thereof".

6. On the suggestion of the Chairman, it was agreed that informal consultations should take place between the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/35/L.36 and delegations wishing to propose other amendments to that draft resolution.

7. At the 54th meeting, on 10 December, the representative of the United Kingdom, on behalf of the sponsors, orally presented the following additional revisions to draft resolution A/C.5/35/L.36, which were agreed on as a result of informal consultations:

(a) At the end of operative paragraph 2, the words "taking into consideration the opinions of competent bodies" were inserted;

(b) In operative paragraph 6, the words "in its" were replaced by the words "and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in their".

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/35/L.36, as orally revised, without objection (see para. 9).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

9. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Identification of activities that have been completed or are obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3534 (XXX) of 17 December 1975, 31/93 of 14 December 1976, 32/201 of 21 December 1977, 33/204 of 29 January 1979 and 34/225 of 20 December 1979,

Reaffirming the importance of identifying activities that have been completed or are obsolete, of marginal usefulness, or ineffective, in order to redeploy resources to finance new United Nations activities,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General 3/ submitted to the General Assembly at the request of the Economic and Social Council, and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions; 4/
2. Decides to terminate the activities identified in the Secretary-General's report as obsolete, ineffective, or of marginal usefulness, taking into consideration the opinions of competent bodies;
3. Approves the proposals of the Secretary-General that an integrated and comprehensive procedure for the identification of completed, obsolete, ineffective and marginally useful activities should be established within the framework of the planning, programming and budgeting cycles of the United Nations;
4. Requests to this end, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its twenty-first session to undertake, in the context of its consideration of programme priority setting, a comprehensive study of this subject and to submit its conclusions to the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1981 and to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session;
5. Transmits the report of the Secretary-General to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination for further consideration at its twenty-first session;
6. Requests the Secretary-General in the meantime to identify obsolete, marginally useful and ineffective activities, in the preparation of the Programme Budget for 1982-1983, for the consideration of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in their examinations of the programme budget proposals;
7. Endorses the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that the submission of a full and comprehensive report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 3534 (XXX) and subsequent resolutions affirming it, requested in its resolution 34/225 by the Assembly, be deferred until the thirty-seventh session.

3/ A/C.5/35/40 and Add.1.

4/ A/35/709.