



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 45th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BUJ-FLORES (Mexico)

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

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 91: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1980-1981 (continued)

Establishment of the Information Systems Unit in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (continued)

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the General Assembly in document A/35/L.11/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 14

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/35/L.9 concerning agenda item 12

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/35/L.116 concerning agenda item 61 (k)

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolutions submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/35/L.118, as orally revised, concerning agenda item 61 (d)

Revised programme budget of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization for 1981

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR. HAMILTON SHIRLEY AMERASINGHE, PRESIDENT OF THE THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LAW OF THE SEA AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 91: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIAL 1990-1991 (continued)

Establishment of the Information Systems Unit in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (continued) (A/35/7/Add.9; A/C.5/35/32 and Corr.1 A/C.5/35/L.20 and L.20)

1. Mr. ASE (Sweden) said that the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements and the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries had recommended that priority attention should be given to the exchange and dissemination of information. Access to specialized information was necessary for the success of international development programmes, and the demand for information on economic and social development must be met as far as possible. The primary aim of the Development Information System (DIS) was to provide ready access to the wealth of knowledge contained in unpublished reports and studies produced by or for the United Nations. The System should be looked at in terms of the opportunities it offered for conserving other resources by allowing better decisions to be made or problems to be solved more efficiently and economically. His delegation, like that of Canada, felt that the Advisory Committee had dwelt exclusively in its report (A/35/7/Add.9) on the criticisms made by the evaluator appointed by UNESCO. Attention should be directed towards the more positive aspects of the report.
2. Technically, the evaluator had found little wrong with DIS, and had judged the decision to seek compatibility with other systems providing access to literature on development to be technically sound. Furthermore, it was clear that the System enjoyed extensive support. The documents made accessible by DIS represented investigations conducted at considerable expense to the United Nations, and the cost of DIS was only a small fraction of the cost of generating the information to which it provided access - less than 1 per cent, according to the evaluator. Yet the potential for avoiding duplication and redundancy appeared to be substantial.
3. While the current limited scope of the data base and of the Information Systems Unit's mandate restricted the size of the potential audience, the value of the Unit might be greatly enhanced were it to become an integral part of a world-wide network of development information sources. He regretted that the Advisory Committee had chosen to overlook such a crucial point. It also seemed reasonable to assume that a dramatic increase in the scope and value of the data base could be achieved for a marginal increase in annual operating costs.
4. Progress during the first two years of the System's existence had been less than expected and, unfortunately, the achievements of the past six months had come too late to permit a definitive evaluation of the utility of DIS. In the light of the conclusions of ACABQ, the views of the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination on the need for the Unit would be welcome.

(Mr. Asl, Sweden)

5. His delegation, as one of those that had provided extrabudgetary resources for the project, was anxious that the financing of the Unit should be dealt with seriously, so that the considerable investments already made were not wasted. It would therefore be glad to support a resolution calling for the basic staffing costs of the Unit to be charged to the regular budget for 1981.

6. Mr. HANSEN (Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination) said that he wished to correct some of the misapprehensions that the statement by the United States representative at the previous meeting might have caused.

7. It had been suggested that the Information Systems Unit had originally been conceived at an obscure meeting of Secretariat officials. In fact, the decision to create the Unit had been taken by the General Assembly at its thirty-second session as the culmination of a long series of proposals, consultations and discussions dating back to the seventh special session held in September 1975. The matter had come up before CPC at a time when he personally had been its Chairman.

8. It had been implied that the desire to finance the Unit from the regular budget was improper and unjustified. In fact, the Secretary-General's proposals to the Assembly at its thirty-first session had stated that the Unit would be funded from extrabudgetary resources during a trial period, should the project be continued, the costs would then be transferred to the regular budget. In other words, the Secretary-General had made his intentions explicit from the outset.

9. It had been suggested that the legislative mandate contained in resolution 3362 (S-VII) was not broad enough to cover the establishment of the Unit. That point had been raised in CPC, which had been informed that there existed several other mandates for the establishment of information systems.

10. The question of balancing the costs and benefits of the Development Information System had been a primary concern of CPC and, evidently, of the Advisory Committee as well. It was for that reason, he believed, that the Assembly had decided that the project should be evaluated by the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems (IOB). Unfortunately, it had not been possible to comply with that decision for the reasons explained in paragraph 7 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/35/32). Had a special session of IOB been held, it would have cost nearly as much as running the Unit for a year and, in any event, IOB had no experience of evaluating information systems. In the belief, therefore, that delegations wanted a competent technical report rather than merely a document bearing the IOB stamp, the study had been entrusted to UNESCO, which did have experience with information systems. It had been alleged that the Secretariat had tried to withhold the study from the Fifth Committee. That was untrue. Procedures to control and limit documentation had made it impossible to have the evaluation report translated and published in all languages, but the original document was available for inspection by any delegation that was interested.

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(Mr. Hansen)

11. Fears had been expressed over the apparent profusion of unrelated and unco-ordinated information systems in the United Nations family. That point had been specifically addressed by the evaluator, who had concluded that, since the Unit was already operational, it could play an extremely important role in co-ordinating the information systems used by the various organizations. A great deal of co-ordination had already been achieved among those systems. The Unit in DIESA followed the same guidelines and used the same reference manuals and software as the systems of ILO, ECA, ECLA and other organizations. The software selected could be provided free of charge to developing countries, and was designed to be compatible with many different computer systems.

12. As for whether the data base was worth while, he suggested that delegations should read the file for themselves and form a judgement. The Unit had received a number of expressions of support from actual users of DIS, including the Commission of the European Communities, the Pan-American Health Organization and the Philippine Government. The initial very high level of demand for the System could have been attributable partly to simple curiosity; but the demand, from no less than 91 countries, had remained consistently high. The data base included unpublished studies that had cost the Organization \$60 million at a conservative estimate, and the evaluator had concluded that a search through the data could save the Organization substantial amounts by preventing resources from being wasted on duplicate work. He rejected, moreover, the suggestion that unpublished material was ipso facto likely to be of little value, and pointed out that the "trip reports" mentioned by the United States representative were often compilations of the experience gained in activities conducted on the instructions of the General Assembly.

13. He felt that it would be an unwelcome departure from the practice of other United Nations information systems to charge users for the information provided. Information gathering and dissemination was one of the prime functions of an international organization, and since overcoming its recruitment problems the Unit had been making heartening progress in accomplishing that task.

14. Mr. FAUTEUX (Canada) introduced the draft decision contained in document A/C.5/35/L.28, and announced that Panama had joined the list of sponsors. The sponsors were prompted by their belief in the value of the work so far carried out by the Information Systems Unit and its potential importance in the future. They were aware, however, that not all delegations shared their view. Doubt had been cast, for example, on the long-term value of the documents making up the data base of the Development Information System (DIS). The sponsors believed that, since the documents in the data base would reflect on the quality of the work performed, departments would take care to select only their most worth-while works for inclusion, and they considered that the System's utility as an institutional memory was beyond question.

15. It should be borne in mind that the statistics in the study prepared by the UNESCO evaluator were out of date, the study having been prepared in July 1980, only shortly after the Information Systems Unit had become operational. Since then,

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(Mr. Fauteux, Canada)

almost 1,100 bibliographies had been dispatched to some 400 users, and subscribers to the development information abstracts service currently included private and governmental institutions in 96 Member States. Much of the material in the data base was unsuitable for commercial publication on economic grounds; it was none the less of value to those needing highly specific and technical information. The system comprised essentially studies and project and mission reports which were the result of technical co-operation activities in which the United Nations had invested millions of dollars. To question the quality, relevance and utility of such documents, or to describe them as simply "trip reports", was an extremely serious matter: the sponsors of the draft decision in document A/C.5/35/L.28 strongly dissociated themselves from such a view. They believed that the wording of the draft decision represented an acceptable compromise between the Advisory Committee's recommendation, which formed the basis for draft resolution A/C.5/35/L.26, and the views of those delegations which would have preferred to see the whole system financed from the regular budget. Salaries and common staff costs, which it was proposed to fund from the regular budget, would represent approximately half the operating costs, the remainder being financed from extrabudgetary resources. The sponsors were convinced that the demonstrated success of the Information Systems Unit justified such financing, and that the conclusions of the evaluation report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session would enable it to take an informed decision on the future of a service essential to the United Nations system. He stressed that his delegation would not sponsor a draft decision with financial implications without being absolutely convinced that the expenditure proposed was worth while.

16. In his statement at the 44th meeting, the representative of the United States had clearly revealed his delegation's intention of putting the Information Systems Unit out of existence. The draft resolution proposed by that delegation in document A/C.5/35/L.26 gave the impression that the Unit could carry on solely on the basis of extrabudgetary resources, but the sponsors of the draft decision in document A/C.5/35/L.28 had it on good authority that such funds would be insufficient to meet operating costs for 1981. The utility of the Unit could not be demonstrated to everyone's satisfaction unless it was able to pursue its activities for another year. If delegations wished to give it a chance to prove itself, he urged them to vote in favour of draft decision A/C.5/35/L.28.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General's statement of administrative and financial implications relating to draft decision A/C.5/35/L.28 would shortly be submitted to the Committee, which would then be in a position to take a decision.

18. Mr. KUYAMA (Japan) said that his delegation recognized the value of a development information system, and had therefore supported General Assembly resolution 34/233, authorizing the extension of the pilot phase. It was unfortunate that because of the somewhat slow progress the system had been evaluated in terms rather of promise than of actual accomplishments. Indeed, as stated in the annex to document A/C.5/35/32, its value might be greatly enhanced if it were to become an integral and central component of a world-wide network of sources of development information. At the present stage, the Secretary-General

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(Mr. Kuyama, Japan)

had no such ambitions, but in view of the statement made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination that some 60 per cent of the material related to technical co-operation activities, his delegation felt that continued financing of the Unit in support of those activities might be justified as suggested by the Advisory Committee in its tenth report (A/35/7/Add.9). However, should the majority of members of the Committee feel that a further review should take place on the basis of additional experience, his delegation could also support that approach.

19. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) announced that his delegation wished to introduce some amendments to the draft resolution in document A/C.5/35/L.26.

20. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Moroccan delegation should consult with the United States delegation informally.

21. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States) said that his delegation was already aware of the amendments that the Moroccan delegation wished to introduce, and had them under favourable consideration. Some further time was, however, required for consultations.

22. Mr. BRODODININGRAT (Indonesia) requested information from the Assistant Secretary-General as to how many users could consult the system free of charge and how many reimbursed the Unit, and what proportion of the over-all costs was covered by such reimbursements. Should the Committee adopt the draft resolution in document A/C.5/35/L.26, he wondered whether it would still be possible to provide users with services at lower cost than other units could. On the other hand, should the Committee decide to adopt the draft decision in document A/C.5/35/L.28, he wondered whether those users currently consulting the system free of charge would still be able to do so.

23. Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (United Republic of Cameroon) requested clarification from the Assistant Secretary-General as to whether there would be any conflict or competition between the co-ordination suggested by CPC and that carried out by the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems (IOB). Secondly, he wondered what was the actual extent of the contribution of experts from developing countries and of regional commissions to the information system, and what criteria were used for document selection. If it was intended to charge users from the developing countries, he inquired whether that would not mean that they were buying back information they themselves had provided. The Committee needed to have the fullest possible information before it took a decision.

24. The CHAIRMAN said that the Assistant Secretary-General would reply at a later stage.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the General Assembly in document A/35/L.11/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 14 (A/C.5/35/56)

25. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, should the General Assembly decide to adopt the draft

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resolution in document A/35/L.11/Rev.1, it would be convening a United Nations conference for the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy in 1983 and would be establishing a preparatory committee in that connexion.

26. Pursuant to paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, the preparatory committee would hold an organizational session at Vienna for a period not exceeding two weeks during the second half of 1981. He drew attention to the fact that the statement of administrative and financial implications contained in document A/C.5/35/56 had been prepared before the revision of the draft resolution, and that the conference-servicing requirements had therefore been based on the assumption that the preparatory committee would meet in New York. On a full-cost basis, those requirements totalled \$139,970. The representatives of the Secretary-General had subsequently informed the Advisory Committee that the holding of the meeting at Vienna would involve additional requirements for the travel and subsistence of staff from New York to service the preparatory committee. They had not yet been able to obtain an exact estimate of conference-servicing costs from Vienna. If there were any additional requirements as a result of holding the conference in Vienna, they could be considered at a later stage in the context of the performance report for the biennium 1980-1981.

27. Mr. PAPPENDORF (United States) expressed his delegation's hope that the Secretary-General would be able to absorb whatever costs were involved, including any additional requirements resulting from holding the preparatory committee meetings at Vienna. If not, his delegation would abstain in any vote on appropriations in connexion with the draft resolution.

28. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/35/L.11/Rev.1, conference-servicing costs not exceeding \$139,970 would be taken into account in the context of the consolidated statement of conference-servicing costs to be submitted to the General Assembly towards the end of the current session.

29. It was so decided.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/35/L.9 concerning agenda item 12 (A/C.5/35/60)

30. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, at its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Arab territories. However, for a number of reasons, that report had still not been submitted. At the thirty-fourth session, a similar statement of administrative and financial implications had been submitted to the Advisory Committee, which had recommended that the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$77,750. However, since it had not been possible to undertake the preparation of the report, no commitment had been entered into in connexion with that authorization. At the current session, the Advisory Committee was recommending a

(Mr. Mselle)

similar procedure. It therefore recommended that the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into commitments for an amount not exceeding \$76,100, and that any decision on an additional appropriation would be taken by the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session.

31. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States) explained that his delegation had voted against the draft resolution contained in document A/C.2/35/L.9 in the Second Committee. For the reasons it had explained at that time it would oppose the recommendation of the Advisory Committee should it be put to the vote.

32. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.2/35/L.9, it would be necessary to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$76,100, on the understanding that the actual costs would be reflected in the report on the performance of the programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 which would be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session.

33. It was so decided.

34. Miss HILGROM (Israel) said that her delegation had voted against draft resolution A/C.2/35/L.9 in the Second Committee, and had made clear its position on the issue on the occasion of that and every previous vote on the subject. It was strongly opposed to any appropriation in connexion with that draft resolution.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/35/L.116 concerning agenda item 61 (k) (A/35/7/Add.18; A/C.5/35/72)

35. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew the attention of the Committee to paragraphs 7 and 9 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/35/7/Add.18).

36. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in the light of the Advisory Committee's recommendations, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.2/35/L.116, no action on an additional appropriation for the biennium 1980-1981 would need to be taken at the current session.

37. It was so decided.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolutions submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/35/L.118, as orally revised, concerning agenda item 61 (d) (A/35/7/Add.20 (sect. B); A/C.5/35/66)

Revised programme budget of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization for 1981 (A/35/7/Add.20 (sect. A); A/C.5/35/44)

38. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that section A of the Advisory Committee's report

(A/35/7/Add.20) dealt with the revised programme budget of UNIDO, while section B dealt with the financial and administrative implications of the draft resolutions in document A/C.2/35/L.118.

39. The Secretary-General's revised estimates for UNIDO were based on the decisions taken at the Third General Conference and the subsequent decisions of the Industrial Development Board. The Advisory Committee was recommending approval of all the additional posts requested by the Secretary-General, with the exception of one P-5 post, for the reasons given in paragraph 5 of its report. Accordingly, it recommended the approval of an appropriation of \$358,500 under section 17 of the programme budget for 1980-1981 and an amount of \$70,800 under section 31 (Staff assessment), to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1.

40. With regard to the draft resolutions in document A/C.2/35/L.118, as orally revised, the Advisory Committee was recommending approval of the Secretary-General's staffing requests for the co-ordination unit to be established within UNIDO in connexion with the proclamation of the 1980s as the Industrial Development Decade for Africa.

41. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in accordance with the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolutions contained in document A/C.2/35/L.118, as orally revised, an additional appropriation of \$93,900 would be required under section 17 of the programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981, together with an appropriation of \$15,000 under section 31 (Staff assessment), to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1.

42. It was so decided.

43. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) said that had the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the financial implications of the draft resolutions in document A/C.2/35/L.118 been put to a vote, his delegation would have voted against it. His delegation maintained that costs arising from the implementation of the draft resolutions should be met from resources already approved for the biennium.

44. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that the delegations of the socialist countries of Eastern Europe had made a joint statement in the Second Committee on the draft resolutions in document A/C.2/35/L.118, and said that his delegation's position remained unchanged. If the Advisory Committee's recommendation had been put to a vote, his delegation would not have been able to support it, since it believed that the draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee could be implemented with resources already approved for the biennium and since it was firmly opposed to the recruitment of additional staff.

45. Mr. LÖSCHNER (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation attached great importance to the Industrial Development Decade for Africa. It had nevertheless hoped that the funds required for the Decade would have been found by diverting resources from programmes of lesser priority.

46. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco), referring to the revised estimates for UNIDO, said that the Secretary-General's request for a new P-5 post for the System of Consultations was justifiable. The System of Consultations was carried on by four sectoral groups, only one of which, the group concerned with the metallurgical industry, was not headed by an official at the P-5 level. The work of that group was of great importance to the developing countries and its head should be of the same rank as the heads of the other three groups. He therefore proposed that the Committee should approve the Secretary-General's request in its totality.

47. Mr. BAMBA (Upper Volta) asked the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to elaborate on the reasons which had led the Advisory Committee to oppose the Secretary-General's request for the P-5 post.

48. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had questioned the representatives of the Secretary-General at length regarding the request for the P-5 post and had found the reasons advanced to be somewhat unclear. The Advisory Committee had been told that the proposed P-5 post was needed to provide team leadership for one of the groups responsible for the System of Consultations, but the Committee had found that argument unconvincing. The Advisory Committee had been prepared to approve everything requested by the Secretary-General but, in the absence of solid evidence justifying the establishment of a new post, it had been technically impossible to do so.

49. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) said that he appreciated the clear and convincing reply of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to the question asked by the representative of the Upper Volta. He wondered whether the representative of Morocco would consider withdrawing his proposal in the light of the information just presented.

50. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) said that he maintained his proposal since he was not convinced by the reply of the Chairman of ACABQ. His concern was to rectify a structural imbalance.

51. Mr. BOUZARBIA (Algeria) endorsed the Moroccan proposal. The metallurgical sector was of great importance to the developing countries, and the difference between the cost of a P-4 and a P-5 post was relatively modest.

52. Mr. LÖSCHNER (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation. The Fifth Committee should not make a habit of overturning the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, as it had already done on several occasions at the current session. Moreover, the question of leadership, to which the Secretary-General referred in his report, was not a matter of rank or grade. His delegation would therefore vote against the Moroccan proposal.

53. Mr. PAL (India) said that, if the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee had related to any other programme of UNIDO, his delegation would have been happy to support it. However, among the various programmes evaluated by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, the System of Consultations had received almost unanimous praise. He would therefore vote in favour of the Moroccan proposal.

54. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation's position with regard to additional appropriations was well known. He was opposed to any additional appropriations for UNIDO and would therefore vote against not only the Moroccan proposal but also the Advisory Committee's recommendations, if they were put to a vote.

55. Mr. BRODODININGRAT (Indonesia) said that, as its Chairman had stated, the Advisory Committee had rejected the request for a P-5 post because of a lack of clarity in the arguments adduced by the representatives of the Secretary-General. That did not mean, however, that the request was not justified. Given the great importance of the System of Consultations, his delegation would support the Moroccan proposal.

56. Mr. FRASER (United Kingdom) said that it was not logical or justified, merely because a programme had been praised in CPC, to approve an additional P-5 post which the Advisory Committee had concluded was unnecessary. He endorsed the appeal made by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany not to overturn recommendations of the Advisory Committee on technical matters within its competence. His delegation would therefore vote against the Moroccan proposal.

57. Mr. ZINIEL (Ghana) observed that the Advisory Committee itself seemed to be doubtful about its decision to reject the Secretary-General's request for a new P-5 post. In view of the importance of the System of Consultations in the context of the Lima Declaration, his delegation endorsed the proposal made by the representative of Morocco.

58. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the Moroccan proposal to restore the P-5 post. That did not mean, however, that his delegation questioned the judgement of the Advisory Committee in general.

59. The CHAIRMAN said that adoption of the Moroccan proposal would mean that the Committee would be approving an additional appropriation of \$396,300 under section 17 of the programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 and an amount of \$78,100 under section 31 (Staff assessment), to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1.

60. The representative of the United States had requested a vote on the Moroccan proposal.

61. The Moroccan proposal was adopted by 57 votes to 29, with 13 abstentions.

62. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) said that, even if the Moroccan delegation had not proposed overturning the Advisory Committee's recommendations, his delegation would have had to vote against approval of the additional resources requested by the Secretary-General, since those requests were inconsistent with the overriding need to restrain budgetary growth. The Secretariat should make a greater effort to reprogramme the activities of UNIDO, focusing its efforts on the energy programme and refraining from activities which were outside its mandate.

(Mr. Papendorp, United States)

The United States wished to work closely with UNIDO to attenuate the adverse impact of energy constraints on industrial development.

63. Mr. AWOKOYA (Nigeria) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the Moroccan proposal since it did not wish anything to impede the work of UNIDO in behalf of developing countries. The Fifth Committee was entitled to overrule the Advisory Committee if it deemed it necessary to do so.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR. HAMILTON SHIRLEY AMERASINGHE, PRESIDENT OF THE THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LAW OF THE SEA AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

64. The CHAIRMAN said that it was his sad duty to inform the Committee of the death that morning of His Excellency Mr. Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe, President of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and former President of the General Assembly. The details of Mr. Amerasinghe's brilliant career were well known to members of the United Nations community, where he had spent a great part of his professional life. His death was an irreplaceable loss to the Organization.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.