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PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983

QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION

Administrative and financial implications of the draft  
resolution contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25

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

1. The Special Political Committee at its 48th meeting held on 3 December 1981 adopted the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25. The Committee also had before it a statement of administrative and financial implications, document A/SPC/36/L.30.
2. Under the provision of operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25, the General Assembly would approve the report of the Committee on Information 1/ and its recommendations. 2/ The draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25 also contains, in various operative paragraphs, recommendations which address some of the same issues as may be found in the recommendations of the Committee on Information. The present statement of administrative and financial implications relates, in the first instance, to the recommendations contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25 and, in the second, to those recommendations included in the report of the Committee on Information that are not specifically addressed in the operative paragraphs of the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25.
3. Under operative paragraph 7 of the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25, the General Assembly would request that the Joint United Nations

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1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session,  
Supplement No. 21 (A/36/21).

2/ Ibid., para. 154.

Information Committee (JUNIC), as the essential instrument for interagency co-ordination and co-operation in the field of public information and for the development of a common public information approach covering all aspects of the activities of the organizations of the system, continue with its task and that it be strengthened and be made more effective. The strengthening of JUNIC and the enhancement of its effectiveness would require the establishment of two posts - one at the P-5 level and one at the G-4 level - which would be utilized for undertaking the required research and evaluation work for the preparation of the JUNIC plan of action. The establishment of these two posts would require additional resources in the amount of \$125,800, as follows:

	\$
Salaries and common staff costs	97 500
Common services costs	<u>28 300</u>
Total	<u><u>125 800</u></u>

4. Under operative paragraph 12 (a) of the draft resolutions contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25, the Secretary-General would be requested to ensure that the Department of Public Information make a more strenuous effort to ensure balance in the use of official languages in the publications and programmes of the Department. In this connexion, it is proposed that four issues a year of the Monthly Chronicle be published in Russian with a press run of 2,000 copies. The costs of publishing eight issues during the biennium 1982-1983 is estimated at \$46,000.

5. In operative paragraph 12 (b) of the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25, the Secretary-General would be requested to strengthen the competent unit in the Department of Public Information for the production of United Nations information material in Spanish for dissemination through United Nations information centres and United Nations Development Programme offices located in Spanish-speaking countries.

6. Currently dispatches in Spanish are provided occasionally to United Nations information centres and UNDP offices in Spanish-speaking countries. If these dispatches were to be provided on a daily basis, the establishment of a post for an information officer at the P-3 level would be required, at a cost of \$36,100 for salaries and \$11,600 for common staff costs. In addition, it is estimated that the provision of dispatches on a daily basis would require additional resources in the amount of \$10,000 for cables. Common services costs in respect of the new post are estimated at \$14,800.

7. In operative paragraph 13, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General (a) to present a plan for regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division to the Committee on Information for its decision, at the Committee's next substantive session, keeping in mind resolution 35/201 and following the views expressed and suggestions made in the course of the debate on

this subject; (b) without prejudice to the above plan for regionalization of the Radio and Visual Services Division, to take necessary action for the establishment of a separate Caribbean Unit in the Radio Service, the expansion of its African Unit, and to consider the enlargement of the Arabic Unit in the Radio Service of the Department of Public Information as far as possible through redeployment of existing resources, and to maintain and enhance its functions as the producer of radio and television programmes to the Arabic-speaking countries; and (c) to make specific proposals to the Committee on Information at its next session for the purpose of enabling the Asian Unit to undertake programming at a meaningful level in other major languages of the region.

8. In respect of subparagraphs (a) and (c) above, the Secretary-General would present his proposals to the Committee on Information at its next session. In respect of subparagraph (b), the establishment of a separate Caribbean Unit, which would provide radio programmes in English and French while programmes in Spanish would continue to be produced by the Latin American/Iberian Unit, would require four posts: one chief of unit (P-4), one writer/producer (P-3), one production assistant (G-5) and one secretary (G-4). Of these, the writer/producer would be redeployed from the North American Unit while the other three (one P-4, one G-5 and one G-4) would need to be established. Additional resources would also be required for the production costs of the radio programmes. The establishment of a separate Caribbean Unit would therefore entail additional resources in the amount of \$275,600 as follows:

	\$
Salaries and common staff costs (one P-4, one G-5, one G-4)	126 800
Engineering services	55 600
Supplies	25 100
Distribution costs	26 300
Common services costs	<u>41 800</u>
Total	<u><u>275 600</u></u>

9. In respect of the expansion of the African Unit, the addition of one writer/producer (P-3) and one secretary (G-4) and additional resources for production costs would increase the capacity of the Unit with regard to its programmes in Swahili. The expansion of the African Unit would therefore entail additional expenditures of \$192,900 as follows:

	\$
Salaries and common staff costs (One P-3, one G-4)	77 600
Engineering services	42 800
Supplies	14 200
Distribution costs	30 000
Common services costs	28 300
Total	<u>192 900</u>

10. In operative paragraph 14 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to implement fully his proposals contained in document A/AC.198/36 and endorsed by the Committee on Information, for the expansion of United Nations short-wave broadcasts.

11. In the report on expansion of United Nations short-wave broadcasts (A/AC.198/36) a first stage had been envisaged which would consist of the introduction of a five-days-a-week broadcast schedule throughout the year instead of only during the session of the General Assembly. Such an expansion would require the establishment on a year-round basis of 9 posts, 7 for writer/producers and 2 for secretaries, and funds for individual contractors for daily short-wave broadcasts in Portuguese, Swahili, Somali, Greek, Hebrew and Japanese, both of which are currently made available only for sessions of the General Assembly for the daily five-days-a-week short-wave broadcasts by the Radio Service. The cost of implementing the first stage of expansion of United Nations short-wave broadcasts are estimated as follows:

	\$
Salaries:	
7 P-3 Writer/Producers	252 700
2 G-4 Secretaries	45 400
Common staff costs	95 600
Engineering services	480 000
Rental of transmitters	345 000
Individual contractors	240 000
Common services costs	130 600
Elimination of temporary assistance during the General Assembly	<u>(204 000)</u>
Total	<u>1 385 300</u>

12. In view of the redeployments that would need to be made to implement the establishment of a separate Caribbean Unit, further redeployments on the scale required to give effect to this proposal are no longer feasible. The advice of the General Assembly is requested in determining the priority of this item.

13. In operative paragraph 16 of the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would be requested to ensure that the Department of Public Information continues and further strengthens its co-operation with the non-aligned countries in the field of information, particularly with the pool of non-aligned news agencies as well as with regional news agencies of developing countries and that in this regard, the Department of Public Information should be adequately equipped to supply the pool of non-aligned news agencies of the developing countries with information on the activities of the United Nations system which they are disseminating.

14. The pool of non-aligned news agencies is already provided with up to 500 words of news dispatches daily in English or French. In order to respond to the needs of the pool, it is proposed that news dispatches be sent daily to the pool in both English and French. The material for the pool could be produced by existing staff. In order however to ensure timely news dispatches, a post for a bilingual typist (G-4) would need to be established and funds for telexes would be required to provide news dispatched in another additional language. The estimated cost would amount to \$63,400, as follows:

	\$
Salaries and common staff costs	29 900
Communications	20 000
Common services costs	<u>13 500</u>
Total	<u><u>63 400</u></u>

15. In operative paragraph 20 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General (a) to take appropriate steps to strengthen the capacity of the information centres where needed; (b) to present, on the basis of consultations between the Department of Public Information and other concerned United Nations bodies, and drawing on the findings of the Joint Inspection Unit in its report (A/34/379), the Secretary-General's comments thereon (A/34/379/Add.1), and in document A/36/218, a study on the ways and means to enhance the role of the information centres and, along policy guidelines set by the General Assembly, aiming at measures increasing their functional flexibility and enabling them to adjust their work to the needs and wishes of the countries concerned, as well as increasing the effectiveness of their work and improving the co-ordination of their activities as the decentralized part of the structure of the Department of Public Information.

16. The Secretary-General is of the view that the strengthening of the information centres and the enhancement of their role are inextricably linked and will address these issues in the study that is being requested in paragraph 20 of the resolution. At this stage, a marginal increase is proposed which would provide each of the 62 centres an additional \$1,000 for local publications and an additional \$500 for travel, for a total of \$93,000.

17. In addition to the recommendations contained in the operative paragraphs of the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25, the following recommendations which are contained in the report of the Committee on Information but which are not addressed in the draft resolution would give rise to administrative and financial implications.

18. Under recommendation 3 of the Committee on Information, all the activities of the Department of Public Information would be guided by and carried out on the principles of the United Nations Charter and the aspirations for a new world information and communication order, as well as conforming to the consensus reached among States in resolutions 21C/4/19, 21 and 22 as adopted at the twenty-first General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It would therefore be necessary for the Department to be represented at all major meetings and conferences on this subject held under the auspices of UNESCO. In the biennium 1982-1983 the Department of Public Information would need to send at least one representative to each of the following meetings:

- (a) Special session of the UNESCO General Conference, 1982;
- (b) Regular session of the UNESCO General Conference, 1983;
- (c) Four sessions of the Intergovernmental Council for the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC);
- (d) Four sessions of the Inter-Agency Working Group for IPDC. Attendance at these meetings is estimated to cost \$22,000.

The Secretary-General is hopeful that the travel requirements relating to attendance at the above-mentioned meetings could be met from existing resources.

19. Under recommendation 18 of the Committee on Information, the role of non-governmental organizations and educational institutions and groups should continue to be stressed as important constituencies to which public information materials on United Nations issues should be directed, and their relations with the Department of Public Information should be strengthened, including the strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section as part of the External Relations Division of the Department. The establishment of a General Service post (G-4) would be required to enable the Non-Governmental Section to increase the production of information materials on the United Nations at an estimated cost of \$43,400, broken down as follows:

	\$
Salaries and common staff costs	29 900
Common services costs	<u>13 500</u>
Total	<u><u>43 400</u></u>

20. Recommendation 25 of the Committee on Information requests that:

(a) The Department of Public Information should urgently undertake a survey among potential recipients to ascertain their interest in receiving a weekly 10-minute United Nations programme via satellite in the appropriate language, as well as their willingness to pay the downlink costs of reception;

(b) As a first stage, on the basis of the survey, the Radio and Visual Services Division should prepare a weekly, 10-minute news broadcast on the activities of the United Nations during the General Assembly, beginning with the thirty-seventh session;

(c) This weekly broadcast should be transmitted through the Atlantic satellite INTELSAT with the United Nations covering the costs of the uplinks and the receiving nations those of the downlinks. In the case of the least developed countries, the downlink cost of the process would also be covered by the United Nations;

(d) In a second stage, the Radio and Visual Services Division should prepare a weekly, 10-minute news broadcast in the six official languages for transmission to all Member States throughout the year;

(e) These broadcasts on the activities of the United Nations system should be transmitted through all three satellites of the INTELSAT system and, if possible, through the INTERSPUTNIK system as well;

(f) The reception costs for these broadcasts should be covered by the United Nations in the case of the least developed nations.

21. Currently, three weekly magazines in Arabic, French and Spanish are being produced during the present session of the General Assembly. These magazines are being airmailed on an experimental basis to interested television organizations in the Middle East and North Africa, in French speaking Africa and in Latin America. The interest of potential recipients to receive programmes via satellite and their willingness to pay for the downlink costs of reception will be ascertained as requested under recommendation 25 (a). With respect to the costs of the uplink transmissions through the Atlantic satellite INTELSAT, which the United Nations would be asked to bear as requested in recommendation 25 (c), it is estimated that an amount of \$76,000 would be required for four weekly programmes in four languages for the duration of a session of the General Assembly.

22. The United Nations would also cover, in accordance with recommendation 25 (c), the downlink costs in respect of the least developed countries. At present only two recipients (Haiti and Sudan) would qualify for United Nations-paid downlink costs of satellite transmission at an estimated cost of \$43,400 for a weekly programme during a session of the General Assembly. Pending completion of the survey of the willingness of the recipients requested in recommendation 25 (a), no additional resources are being requested at this stage. A report on the full costs of the first stage as well as that of the second stage will be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session for its consideration.

23. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/36/L.25, additional appropriations totalling \$912,600 would be required in the programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983 - \$772,400 under section 27, Public Information, and \$140,200 under section 28D, General Services, Headquarters. These amounts may be summarized as follows:

	<u>Section 27</u>	<u>Section 28</u>	<u>Total</u>
	\$	\$	\$
Paragraph 2	97 500	28 300	125 800
Paragraph 3	46 000	-	46 000
Paragraph 5	57 700	14 800	72 500
Paragraph 7	233 800	41 800	275 600
Paragraph 8	164 600	28 300	192 900
Paragraph 13	49 900	13 500	63 400
Paragraph 15	93 000	-	93 000
Paragraph 18	<u>29 900</u>	<u>13 500</u>	<u>43 400</u>
Total	<u><u>772 400</u></u>	<u><u>140 200</u></u>	<u><u>912 600</u></u>

24. An amount of \$98,600 would also be required under section 31 in respect of staff assessment which would be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1.

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