



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 52nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ABDALLA (Sudan)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 100: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983 (continued)
(A/36/6, A/36/7, A/36/38)

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/36/L.31/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 69 (k) (A/C.5/36/43)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, under draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.31/Rev.1, the Secretary-General would be requested to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session a report on the deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories. The General Assembly had in the past made similar requests of the Secretary-General, who was proposing that a procedure similar to the one used during the current biennium be adopted for the preparation of the requested report. The Advisory Committee accepted the Secretary-General's estimate of \$87,200 as the financial implications of the draft resolution. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.31/Rev.1, an additional appropriation of \$87,200 would be required under section 19 of the regular budget.

2. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) said that his delegation had already expressed its views on the subject during the debate in the Second Committee. He felt that it would be inappropriate to allocate funds in connexion with draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.31/Rev.1 and requested that the matter be put to the vote.

3. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the proposal that, based on the recommendations on the Advisory Committee, the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report direct to the General Assembly that, should draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.31/Rev.1 be adopted, a supplementary appropriation of \$87,200 would be required under section 19 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983.

4. The proposal was adopted by 81 votes to 2, with 14 abstentions.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/36/L.67 concerning agenda item 69 (A/C.5/36/53)

5. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, under draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.67, the Secretary-General would be requested to undertake as a matter of urgency a study of the adequacy of the conference facilities at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and to report the findings of his study to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. The Secretary-General indicated that, if the draft resolution was adopted, he would carry out an

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initial investigation and examination within existing resources and that no additional appropriation would be requested under section 13. Nevertheless, the Secretary-General drew attention to the report of the Advisory Committee (A/36/643) and the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/36/297 and Add.1) on building construction procedures of United Nations organizations. Those reports would not, however, alter the nature of the report requested. The Advisory Committee had asked the Secretary-General to present a progress report on his investigation at its next spring session. Thus, should draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.67 be adopted, no additional appropriation would be required under section 13.

6. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report direct to the General Assembly that, should the draft resolution of the Second Committee be adopted, the corresponding expenses would be covered within existing resources and no supplementary appropriation would be required under section 13.

7. It was so decided.

First-class travel in the United Nations organizations (A/C.5/36/16)

8. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the Committee take note of the Secretary-General's report.

9. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the Secretary-General on first-class travel in the United Nations organizations.

10. It was so decided.

Programme for training English and French translators/précis-writers at the Economic Commission for Africa (A/C.5/36/17)

11. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) observed that, in his report, the Secretary-General reviewed the background of the programme for training English and French translators/précis-writers at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The Secretary-General indicated that no additional translator posts were requested by ECA in its proposed budget for the biennium 1982-1983. He noted that in paragraph 11 of his report, the Secretary-General juxtaposed his comments on the training programmes financed from the regular budget with his comments on those financed from extrabudgetary sources. ECA had indicated that it was considering financing from extrabudgetary sources in the coming years a total of 14 posts - two translator posts for each of its five multinational programming and operational centres (MULPOCs) and four additional MULPOC posts at ECA headquarters. The Secretary-General took the view that, according to current budgetary procedures, resources for training and recruiting

(Mr. Mselle)

candidates for extrabudgetary posts should be provided from extrabudgetary sources. Accordingly, the training of candidates for the posts to be assigned to the MULPOCs would be undertaken when the necessary extrabudgetary resources became available. Since there was no need at the current time to finance the training of English and French translators/précis-writers under the regular budget, the Secretary-General recommended that the amount of \$461,300 approved under section 28J of the programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983 should be deleted. If the Committee concurred in the Secretary-General's recommendation, the appropriation under section 28J would have to be reduced by \$461,300.

12. Mr. GANI (Nigeria) said it was clear from the evaluation report of the Secretary-General that the programme for training English and French translators/précis-writers at ECA had been a success. He recalled that, in 1979, the African countries had expressed concern at the lack of translators in the multinational programming and operational centres (MULPOCs) and had requested the Executive Secretary of ECA to do everything within his power to see that those centres became fully operational. Furthermore, the activities outlined in the Lagos Plan of Action required the strengthening of ECA and the MULPOCs. His delegation felt that the fourth training programme should be financed under the regular budget of the United Nations and it was pleased to see that the Committee had already approved an appropriation of \$461,300 under section 28J of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983.

13. The report of the Secretary-General gave the impression that the trainees who had successfully completed the training programmes were not considered full international civil servants. That should not be the case. They should not be subject to any discriminatory treatment in their assignment and conditions of employment. Finally, he pointed out that the Executive Secretary of ECA had not requested any additional translator posts in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983 simply because he had had to bow to the needs of the existing budgetary policy of zero growth. The MULPOCs, particularly that in Niamey, urgently needed staff, particularly translators.

14. Mr. MONTHE (United Republic of Cameroon) recalled that the Committee had already approved, in first reading, an appropriation of \$461,300 under section 28J. It was unfortunate that, in preparing his report, the Secretary-General had not taken into account General Assembly resolution 34/164 in which the General Assembly had approved the "Glossary of Evaluation Terms" and had laid down precise guidelines for the preparation of internal evaluation reports. In fact, the report of the Secretary-General was not an evaluation report and, had the Executive Secretary of ECA been consulted, his conclusions might have been different. He did not agree with the recommendation of the Secretary-General and proposed that the Committee should confirm its earlier decision to approve funds under section 28J to finance the fourth training programme.

15. Mrs. DORSET (Trinidad and Tobago), referring to paragraph 12 of document A/C.5/36/17, asked whether there was any risk that the programme might be suspended. Even if all the vacancies in the translation service at ECA were

(Mrs. Dorset, Trinidad and Tobago)

currently filled and even if ECA had not been able to employ three qualified African translators, the programme was valuable none the less. What would happen to the programme if the resources necessary to finance it were not found in time?

16. Mr. BEREDJICK (Director of the Division for Personnel Administration) said that the Secretary-General had evaluated the programme and had summarized his point of view in paragraphs 12 and 13 of document A/C.5/36/17. He had no hesitation in recalling, once again, that the Office of Personnel Services was ready to implement a programme in 1982. ECA and the Executive Secretary had been consulted at all stages of the evaluation process.

17. Mrs. DORSET (Trinidad and Tobago), referring to paragraph 13 of document A/C.5/36/17, which recommended approval of the resumption of the training programme as soon as extrabudgetary resources had been identified for that purpose, wondered whether that meant that extrabudgetary resources were available or whether it was expected that it would be easy to find such resources. In fact, paragraphs 12 and 13 gave the impression that the programme was dependent on voluntary contributions.

18. Mr. MONTHE (United Republic of Cameroon) said he was not surprised that certain delegations were puzzled; in fact, the report of the Secretary-General was not an evaluation of the training programme in the true sense of the term. He therefore agreed with the representative of Nigeria that the Committee should confirm its earlier decision to approve funds for that purpose under section 28J of the proposed programme budget. When the Executive Secretary of ECA had visited New York, he had asked him what he thought of paragraph 11, knowing that his viewpoint would be needed when agenda item 100 was considered.

19. Mr. BEREDJICK (Director of the Division of Personnel Administration) said that the end of paragraph 11 clarified paragraph 12. In paragraph 11 it was stated inter alia that ECA was considering financing from extrabudgetary sources certain translator posts; according to current budgetary policy, resources for training and recruiting candidates for extrabudgetary posts should normally also be provided from extrabudgetary sources. That explained the wording of paragraph 12.

20. In reply to Mr. Monthe, he drew attention to paragraph 7 and the subsequent paragraphs of the report which described the results of the technical evaluation. Those paragraphs did not perhaps constitute a complete evaluation but such an evaluation had been carried out by a joint board made up of representatives of the Office of Personnel Services and of the Department of Conference Services. The report of the joint board had been submitted to the Executive Secretary of ECA who had himself transmitted his conclusions to the Office of Personnel Services. He wished to stress that the evaluation had been carried out in full consultation at all levels with the responsible authorities of ECA.

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21. Mrs. DORSET (Trinidad and Tobago) repeated her question as to whether the programme might possibly be interrupted and awaited a precise reply which those familiar with the programme could perhaps give her.

22. Mr. NAGAGGA (Uganda) supported the very pertinent comments of the representative of Trinidad and Tobago. Having read the Secretary-General's report, he tended to think that it was not really an evaluation report. When the Executive Secretary of ECA had been present, his attention had been drawn to the impact of zero growth on the ECA budget and on the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action. Consultations had indeed taken place but they had been inadequate and for that reason the Executive Secretary had stated that, if ECA had been consulted, its reaction would have been different.

23. The impression which emerged from document A/C.5/36/17 was that the Secretary-General did not know whether the necessary resources existed but felt that the programme should be continued. If a vote was taken, he would vote against the Secretary-General's proposal.

24. Mr. EL SAFTY (Egypt) felt that there was a contradiction between the programme budget and the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/36/17). An appropriation of \$461,300 had been made under section 28J of the programme budget for the training of translators (table 28 J.3). However, document A/C.5/36/17 proposed that the appropriation, already approved, should be deleted. The Executive Secretary of ECA had been questioned on that subject and had clearly stated that he was opposed to the deletion. The Committee was now being told that consultations had been held with the Executive Secretary of ECA during which he was alleged to have accepted the deletion of the appropriation. In any case, his delegation did not understand why, having made an appropriation for the training of ECA translators, the Secretary-General was now proposing to go back on the decision taken by the Fifth Committee. Accordingly, if a vote was taken, his delegation would vote against the Secretary-General's recommendation.

25. Mr. BEREDJICK (Director of the Division of Personnel Administration) explained that he had assured the Executive Secretary that it was possible to continue the programme without delay.

26. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) supported the recommendation made by the Secretary-General in his report and that of the Advisory Committee: the translator posts for multinational programming and operational centres should be financed from extrabudgetary funds. He therefore requested that a vote should be taken on the proposal of the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon.

27. Mr. FALL OULD MAALOUM (Mauritania) pointed out that an appropriation of \$461,300 had been made for the training programme and had been approved in first reading; consequently, he supported the Cameroonian proposal.

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28. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) wondered whether the Fifth Committee should vote on the Cameroonian proposal because it had already approved in first reading the appropriation of \$461,300 in section 28J of the programme budget for 1982-1983.

29. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to the representative of Pakistan, said that, although the Fifth Committee had approved in first reading an appropriation of \$461,300 under section 28J of the programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983, the Secretary-General was proposing in document A/C.5/36/17 that the amount should be deleted. If the Secretary-General's proposal was adopted, the total appropriation under section 28J would have to be reduced by \$461,300. If the Secretary-General's proposal was rejected, the appropriation would be maintained and used in the manner proposed by the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon.

30. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) thanked the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for the clarification he had given. He would be grateful if the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon repeated his proposal so that the Committee would know exactly what it was voting on.

31. Mr. MONTHE (United Republic of Cameroon) proposed that the Fifth Committee should confirm the appropriation in section 28J of the programme budget for 1982-1983 of an amount of \$461,300 which had been requested by the Secretary-General and that that appropriation should be used to continue the programme for the training of English and French translators/précis-writers in the Economic Commission for Africa.

32. At the request of the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, a vote was taken by role call on the proposal of the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon.

33. Japan, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados, Burundi, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Austria, Brazil, Burma, Dominican Republic, Finland, Israel, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Viet Nam.

34. The proposal of the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon was adopted by 62 votes to 20 with 17 abstentions.*

35. Mr. MARTORELL (Peru) said that his delegation had intended to vote for the proposal of the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon.

36. Mr. KUYAMA (Japan) said, in explanation of vote, that his delegation had the greatest sympathy for the Cameroonian proposal but that, since the Advisory Committee had approved the proposal put forward by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/36/17 and since the Secretary-General had only followed the normal budgetary practice, his delegation had been unable to support that proposal.

37. Mrs. de HEDERVARY (Belgium) said that her Government was naturally in favour of continuing the training programme of the Economic Commission for Africa but, since neither the Secretary-General nor the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had asked for the programme to be financed from the regular budget, her delegation had not wished to be more royalist than the king.

38. Mr. HAND (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the 10 member countries of the European Economic Community, expressed support for the programme for training translators/précis-writers at the Economic Commission for Africa and accepted the recommendation submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/36/17, which had been approved by the Advisory Committee. However, his delegation could not agree that the training programme should be financed from the regular budget. He recalled that when the Fifth Committee had approved the appropriation requested under section 28J, the Secretary-General himself had explained that that appropriation was subject to the decision the Committee was to take on document A/C.5/36/17.

39. Mrs. SCHERER (Brazil) said her delegation had abstained from voting because it was opposed to transferring to the regular budget activities which should be financed with extrabudgetary funds.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/36/407, A/36/495; A/C.5/36/19, A/C.5/36/31)

40. Mr. GUBCSI (Hungary) said he wished to comment on the composition and work of the Secretariat. At the preceding session, his delegation had joined the consensus on General Assembly resolution 35/210 because it felt that that resolution would enable the Office of Personnel Services and Member States to make desirable improvements. However, much remained to be done in that field.

* See para. 35 below.

(Mr. Gubcsi, Hungary)

41. The application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the United Nations Secretariat was of fundamental importance and Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter was the main guideline in that regard. Regrettably, table B of document A/36/495 and annex II to document A/36/407 showed that the Eastern European States were largely under-represented and that one of them was not represented at all. Furthermore, table 3 in document A/36/495 showed that the number of staff members from the Eastern European States occupying posts subject to geographical distribution had decreased between 30 June 1980 and 30 June 1981. In the case of Hungary, there had been a very slow improvement, but the country was nevertheless still far from its desirable range. Consequently, the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution should be speeded up. That being so, his delegation strongly supported recommendations 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 of the Joint Inspection Unit, as contained in document A/36/407. It supported the first steps taken in that direction by the Office of Personnel Services and wished those steps to be continued.

42. With regard to the question of the ratio of permanent appointments to fixed-term appointments, his delegation strongly supported the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and hence rejected the view that an increase in the ratio of fixed-term contracts was inimical to an independent and impartial career service. On the contrary, such an increase would make it possible to achieve a more equitable geographical distribution of Secretariat staff without any detrimental effect on the quality of their work. Furthermore, an increase in the ratio of fixed-term appointments would have advantages in the case of clearly-defined tasks which could be completed within a specific period of time. If the staff member responsible for such tasks held a permanent contract, he had to be transferred or trained for new activities once his work was completed.

43. His delegation noted that the Secretariat staff was constantly increasing as a result of the creation of new posts and the conversion of extrabudgetary posts to budgetary ones. It was opposed to that trend and considered that better management would enable the existing staff to cope with the increasing workload.

44. Like the Joint Inspection Unit, his delegation considered that steps should be taken to shorten and simplify the recruitment and appointment process and that the Office of Personnel Services should expedite the preparation of an annual work plan for recruitment. It also considered that vacancy announcements should be issued simultaneously for internal and external candidates. With regard to the retirement age, his delegation approved of the current Secretariat practice and could not agree that the retirement age should be raised from 60 to 65 years.

45. Although the training of staff members was a necessity at the beginning of their career, it should not become automatic at later stages, and the United Nations should not be transformed into a free-of-charge training institution.

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(Mr. Gubcsi, Hungary)

46. His delegation was opposed to the proposal submitted by the staff representatives for a 10 per cent increase in the salaries of Secretariat staff. With regard to the question of respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, his delegation, which had joined the consensus on General Assembly resolution 35/212, believed that the State in whose territories the headquarters of the organizations were situated had an important role to play in that regard. However, the provisions of the Charter should in no case be used for purposes of propaganda against Member States.

47. The observations he had made applied equally to the views expressed by the Secretariat staff in document A/C.5/36/19. In that connexion, his delegation would have liked the staff to submit also views and proposals on ways of increasing the efficiency of their work.

48. Mrs. EERSEL (Suriname) said that the question under consideration was controversial because the legitimate interests of the developing countries were not taken sufficiently into account. Personnel questions, in all their aspects, were interrelated with many other issues before the Fifth Committee and were, in addition, very complex. It was therefore unfortunate that the documents before the Committee did not facilitate the understanding of the problems to be solved or the assessment of successes or failures with regard to the attainment of the targets set by the Secretary-General in accordance with the mandate given him by General Assembly resolutions 35/210 and 35/211. It was also hard to determine what course the Office of Personnel Services should follow in order to comply with Articles 100 and 101 of the United Nations Charter. In one set of documents, for example, it was stated that the equitable geographical distribution of staff should not be a goal in itself and might even in some ways constitute an obstacle, whereas another document stated that everything possible was being done to attain that goal. In yet another document, the unsatisfactory results obtained with regard to personnel questions and the equitable geographical distribution of staff was attributed to a lack of over-all personnel policies.

49. Suriname, which was one of the countries not represented in the United Nations Secretariat, naturally supported affirmative action in favour of unrepresented and under-represented countries. It welcomed the fact that competitive examinations would be held in Suriname in January 1982 for five P-1/P-2 posts, but was looking forward to the setting of national targets for senior and policy-formulating posts, for it considered that the quality of posts was far more important than their quantity.

50. Her delegation had serious misgivings about the policy followed by the Secretariat with regard to under-represented and unrepresented developing countries. It was unfortunate that the position of certain over-represented countries had remained unchanged or had even been strengthened, while unrepresented countries did not even receive an answer to their applications. In other cases, vacancy announcements had been issued although the posts in question had already been filled, and the candidatures of nationals of developing countries

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(Mrs. Eersel, Suriname)

had been rejected on the ground that the candidates lacked experience of the United Nations system.

51. Her delegation was fully aware of the economic and financial constraints faced by most Member States, which for that reason were advocating a policy of strict budgetary restraint. It could not, however, support the principle of zero real growth, for it was of the opinion that the nationals of the developing countries would become the victims. Her delegation's position was the same with regard to the United Nations pensions system and to the proposal to raise the age of retirement to 65, although it acknowledged that other ways should be found to rectify the actuarial imbalance of the Fund. With regard to the language training programmes for staff members and the members of permanent missions, her delegation wholeheartedly endorsed the efforts made by those developing countries that were represented. As for the representation of women, although there was a need to distinguish between their representation in the United Nations system and the representation of Member States, she noted with satisfaction the efforts made by the Office of Personnel Services to reach the target set by the Secretary-General.

52. Her delegation wished to call attention to a number of problems that must be solved, since they were impeding the attainment of the objectives of the new international economic order. Despite the yawning economic gap between the industrialized and the developing countries, no serious problem could be solved without concerted international action. The United Nations system, being the largest multilateral system of assistance, had the capacity to co-ordinate that action. It was therefore essential to ensure the proper functioning of the system at the administrative level, for which the co-operation of all Member States was needed. Even if their opinions differed on certain points, it was in their interest to have a well-organized and efficient United Nations Secretariat based on the world as it was today.

53. Mrs. LOPEZ ORTEGA (Mexico) said that it was clear from the documents on the item under consideration that the Secretary-General had done his best to ensure the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session; her delegation considered, however, that the staff recruitment procedures should be expanded by the issuance of vacancy announcements not only within the Secretariat but also externally, as proposed in recommendation 5 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) (A/36/407). With regard to the filling of vacant posts, it emerged from the reports before the Committee that the Secretariat had encountered difficulties in ensuring equitable geographical distribution of posts at the senior levels. The Secretary-General should pursue his efforts to promote staff members; when the situation required, however, he should apply the provisions of JIU recommendation 5. Having carefully studied JIU recommendations 4 and 7, relating respectively to certain posts of a permanent nature and posts occupied by technical advisers, regional and interregional advisers not yet subject to geographical distribution, her delegation considered that more intensive consultations concerning those recommendations were needed between Member States and the regional commissions concerned.

(Mrs. Lopez Ortega, Mexico)

54. Her delegation was particularly interested in the question of the employment of women. It was convinced that the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the organizations within the United Nations system would pursue their efforts to put an end to all discrimination in that field and to raise the proportion of women in senior posts, taking account of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, as well as in the advisory and administrative bodies concerned with personnel matters, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/143 and resolution 24 adopted by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women. Having noted that the executive secretaries of the regional commissions had had difficulty in filling certain vacant posts, she wished to know whether recourse had been had to the practice of transferring staff from one regional commission to another and whether efforts had been made to recruit women staff.

55. With regard to the Secretary-General's report concerning respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies (A/C.5/36/31), her delegation regretted that violations continued to be committed. The United Nations Charter, the constituent instruments of the specialized agencies and the conventions and agreements on privileges and immunities guaranteed to staff members the essential conditions for the smooth and efficient functioning of the international civil service. All States Members having acceded to the constituent instrument of an organization must respect the guarantees established in the staff rules. In the cases mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, the three considerations which defined the United Nations position, and which the specialized agencies had adopted, had not been observed. She wished to know in that regard whether more detailed information was available concerning the officials of ECLA who had been arrested. Her delegation would be prepared to support a proposal inviting the Secretary-General to issue an appeal on that question and had good hopes that, in all cases where violations had occurred, the Governments concerned would make an effort to solve the problem.

56. Mr. GEBRE-MEDHIN (Ethiopia) said that his delegation would deal with only one subject, to which it attached great importance, namely, the subject dealt with in the Secretary-General's report on "Respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies" (A/C.5/36/31).

57. Ethiopia, as a host country to several international and regional organizations, had unfailingly demonstrated its will to guarantee the independence of the international civil service; however, experience had shown that that independence was guaranteed not only by the manner in which Governments treated international officials, but also by the behaviour of the latter in relation to the laws and regulations of the host country. That was why, when considering the question of the privileges and immunities of international civil servants, account should also be taken of their responsibilities, for there was a cause-effect relationship. In his report, the Secretary-General had failed

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(Mr. Gebre-Medhin, Ethiopia)

to reflect the problems faced by the Governments of host countries, and his delegation was therefore compelled to make certain comments.

58. First, he noted that the status of international civil servants was governed by the United Nations Charter, particularly Article 100, and the other constituent instruments of the organizations of the United Nations system, the Conventions on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, of the specialized agencies and of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the various Headquarters Agreements and the Standard Basic Assistance Agreements of the United Nations Development Programme. Over the years, however, international civil servants had with increasing frequency violated the standards of conduct expected of them, by becoming involved in substantive activities, illegal trade practices, currency speculation, and so on. In order to maintain the prestige of the international organizations, the usual practice had been to resolve those problems amicably in consultations between the organizations and the Governments concerned. Recently, however, there had been a tendency to criticize Governments publicly and to accuse them of violating the privileges and immunities of international officials.

59. Since the level of abuse by some staff members had reached such intolerable proportions in the form of subversive activities, espionage, etc., the Secretary-General, as the chief administrative officer of the United Nations under Article 97 of the Charter, must take appropriate disciplinary measures to prevent such occurrences. International civil servants should be aware of their responsibilities: in that connexion, he read out the provisions of paragraphs 19 and 20 of the report on standards of conduct in the international civil service, as well as United Nations Staff Regulations 1.4 and 1.8. Those rules of conduct should balance what was expected of Governments. Some people did not understand that privileges and immunities were granted not for the personal benefit of the individuals but for the effective performance of their duties. By abusing their privileges and immunities, staff members were often a source of conflict and misunderstanding between the international organizations and the host country.

60. Ethiopia had consistently respected its international obligations towards United Nations staff in accordance with the relevant Conventions. As a developing country, it was also aware of the need to safeguard law and order and to protect the national interest from the activities of certain individuals who, under the cover of their privileged status, might try to interfere in the country's internal affairs.

61. The best way to ensure the protection of the rights in question was to establish a mechanism by which the host country and the Secretary-General could work closely together to see that such rights were exercised solely for the performance of the work of the organizations. Ethiopia would do its best to ensure that any dispute pertaining to the privileges and immunities of international staff was settled amicably through the procedure provided for under the relevant Conventions.

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(Mr. Gebre-Medhin, Ethiopia)

62. In conclusion, he expressed his delegation's deep concern at the manner in which certain personnel questions were dealt with in the Fifth Committee, and at the consequences of that state of affairs; it was ready to co-operate with the delegations concerned with a view to solving that problem.

63. Mr. SITUSI (Malawi) said that the international civil service was a matter of interest both to Governments and to their nationals who were in its employ. It was therefore essential to strive for the creation of a genuinely unified international civil service. While his Government's complaint related to the delay in the achievement of equitable geographical distribution of posts, the problems of the international civil servants concerned were extremely varied. His delegation wished to make proposals on the various issues under consideration; it realized that some of those proposals would not please the international civil servants, but it believed in approaching problems realistically.

64. Firstly, his delegation generally supported the recommendations made by the Joint Inspection Unit in its report (A/36/407), and in particular recommendation No. 5. In their report (A/C.5/36/19) the Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations Secretariat opposed that recommendation, but his delegation was convinced that when international and personal interests conflicted, international interests must prevail. He emphasized that the Administration should continue to accord top priority to recruitment of candidates from unrepresented or under-represented top priority to recruitment of candidates from unrepresented or under-represented Member States; on 30 June 1981, those countries had numbered 19 and 26 respectively. The Secretary-General should nevertheless be commended on his efforts in that respect, and particularly on the recruitment of nationals of Mozambique and Cape Verde, which had previously been unrepresented. His delegation sincerely hoped that the new desirable ranges introduced in January 1981, to which the Secretary-General had referred in his report (A/36/495), would help to improve the situation. In view of the importance attached by his Government to the advancement of women, it urged the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to recruit more women, paying due regard to the principles of equal pay for equal work and equality of opportunity.

65. In order that new staff members could be fully informed of their conditions of service, all posts should be classified at their proper levels and the conditions of service should be set out in a booklet circulated to all staff members. Most of the questions could be answered during an induction course. His delegation looked forward to the application of the Master Standard of job classification, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/214. The proper grading of posts and the existence of promotion prospects could eliminate unnecessary requests for reclassification, which was a commonly used way of promoting staff. His delegation was not in favour of the proposed grade-linking system, since such a system would make it considerably more difficult to promote staff members from other departments or agencies. Promotions should be awarded to the most highly-qualified candidates, through competitive examinations or interviews. The practice with respect to the retirement age should be standardized, without necessarily raising the limit above the age of 60.

(Mr. Situdi, Malawi)

66. With respect to the movement of staff from the General Service to the Professional category, his delegation considered that such movement should take place through competitive examination. The complaints in paragraphs 47 to 54 of the report submitted by the Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/36/19) mainly concerned procedural matters, which could be dealt with administratively. It should, however, be made clear to the Administration that the General Assembly resolution on the subject was a directive that must be implemented to the letter and according to the spirit in which it was formulated. There should therefore be no manoeuvres and no frustration of that directive.

67. With respect to the staff development programme, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to organize occupational training courses and management seminars. The Secretary-General should be encouraged in that task, but it was also essential that staff members following the courses should take them seriously. In the case of the language programme, his delegation would have no difficulty in accepting the Secretary-General's recommendation that the staff members concerned should pay fees if their performance did not improve.

68. The question of the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies was a difficult and complex problem. The United Nations and specialized agencies should therefore continue their efforts to negotiate directly with the various States concerned. The problem should have been brought before the Sixth Committee rather than the Fifth Committee. With respect to the safety of United Nations personnel in the field, his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation in document A/36/7/Add.6, which the Committee had adopted a few days earlier.

69. In conclusion, his delegation urged international civil servants to be patient, since the International Civil Service Commission and the Joint Inspection Unit were considering the relevant problems. It also requested ICSC to speed up its work so that certain problems could be solved rapidly.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.