



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 55th MEETING

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Chairman: Mr. BRODODININGRAT (Indonesia)

later: Mr. GODFREY (New Zealand)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 7.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 1C3: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY CO-ORDINATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS WITH THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (A/36/641)

(a) REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS

1. Mr. ESELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee (A/36/641), said that when the Fifth Committee had discussed the report on co-ordination between the United Nations and the specialized agencies at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, a number of proposals had been made regarding additional topics that delegations considered might be included, as well as a number of additional tables. When the Advisory Committee had reviewed the matter in drawing up its work programme for 1981, it had examined those proposals and concluded that most did not really fall within its competence. Some, for example, touched on the field of competence of the International Civil Service Commission and others on that of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. One suggestion, however, had been implemented: that concerning an additional table on voluntary funds administered by members of the United Nations system of organizations, which appeared in the current report as table G.

2. Hitherto, the Advisory Committee had issued its reports on administrative and budgetary co-ordination on an annual basis. That practice went back to the time when all the members of the system had had annual budgets, but that was no longer the case. The Committee had therefore concluded that the question of issuing annual reports should be reviewed, and the matter had been discussed with the representatives of specialized agencies appearing before it. On the basis of their replies, the Advisory Committee had decided that it would in future be preferable to issue the report every other year, starting in 1982. In 1983, therefore, when the programme budget for the biennium 1983-1984 would be discussed, the Advisory Committee would not issue a comprehensive report but would issue instead a brief report largely confined to statistical material, which was recognized as being particularly useful to delegations and to national Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance, to be supplemented if necessary by special studies. The Advisory Committee's recommendations in that connexion were set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the report.

3. He drew the Committee's attention to a major innovation reported to the Advisory Committee by the International Labour Organisation: the decision to institute merit and long-service awards. Details of the decision were given in paragraphs 35 to 38 of the report. The Fifth Committee might find that information of particular interest in connexion with the item on personnel questions.

4. Regarding the collection of contributions, he noted that paragraph 21 indicated that, as of 30 September 1980, the total of all contributions outstanding, regardless of the year of account, was \$449,333,000. As of 30 September 1981, the total had risen to \$713,617,000. All the specialized agencies affected and their

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(Mr. Mselle)

representatives had expressed concern over that problem. He felt that the Fifth Committee would wish to bear in mind the information in paragraph 21, and in part II of the report, when it considered the reports of the Advisory Committee and the Secretary-General on the question of the financial emergency of the United Nations.

AGENDA ITEM 110: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST (continued)

(a) UNITED NATIONS DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVER FORCE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/36/600, A/36/704, A/C.5/36/L.15)

5. Mr. DUQUE (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Norway had joined the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/36/L.15. He also drew attention to a number of corrections to the English text of part A of the draft resolution. In the second preambular paragraph, the illegible figure in brackets at the beginning of the second line should be 1974. In section I, in the second line, the reference should be to General Assembly resolution 3211 B. In paragraphs 3 and 4 of section II, as announced by the delegation of Canada, the figures should be \$10,000 and \$179,000 respectively.

6. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) said that his delegation's basic position on agenda item 110 (a) applied equally to agenda item 110 (b), the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, which the Committee would be discussing shortly.

7. The Japanese delegation fully supported the peace-keeping operations in the Middle East, which played a valuable role in maintaining peace in that area and occupied a very important place in United Nations political activities in general. It was very grateful to those countries which generously continued to contribute troops to the peace-keeping operations in the Middle East. In that connexion, it stressed the need for maximum efficiency and economy in those operations, as the Security Council and General Assembly had repeatedly emphasized. At the same time, his delegation was convinced that it was the collective responsibility of all Member States to ensure a healthy financial basis for those peace-keeping operations. It was deeply concerned, therefore, at the withholding of contributions by certain Member States, which constituted an increasingly serious problem for the proper financial management of the peace-keeping forces and was one of the main causes of the financial emergency of the United Nations. The total amount of uncollectable contributions was now estimated to be about \$176 million. The Japanese delegation accordingly appealed to the States concerned to reconsider their position. Sooner or later it would be necessary to introduce effective measures that would ensure the payment of the contributions withheld by some Member States.

8. The Japanese delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation in document A/36/704 for a reduction in the cost estimates for UNDOF requested by the Secretary-General, on the understanding that the reduction would be applied with the necessary flexibility. It would also support draft resolution A/C.5/36/L.15.

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9. Mr. SHAHEED (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation had studied with care the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (A/36/600) and the draft resolution in document A/C.5/36/L.15. It noted from paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's report that \$483.6 million had already been received from Member States as contributions to UNDOF and UNEF, in order to finance troops that were needed because of the aggression and intransigence of Israel, its continued occupation of the Arab territories, and its refusal to fulfil the many United Nations resolutions calling for its complete withdrawal from those territories. The Syrian delegation was aware of the role that those troops could play and of the real need for funds to finance them, but it was convinced that the cost of financing them should be borne by the party whose continuing aggression made them necessary. Israel's violation of the Charter and its refusal to withdraw had created the financial need and it should assume the responsibility for it.

10. Draft resolution A/C.5/36/L.15, however, sought to impose financial obligations on all Member States, including the parties to the conflict, and made no distinction between the aggressor and the countries against which aggression was committed. It was thus an encouragement to aggression and to the continuation of Israel's intransigence and its violation of the humanitarian principles of international law. As such, it was not acceptable to the Syrian Arab Republic.

11. It was the failure of the international community to speak out that had led to the aggressor's continued intransigence. The United Nations must act to see that its resolutions were implemented. The super-Powers should lay the foundation for peace, and the permanent members of the Security Council should shoulder their responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security. States which had been the victims of aggression could not participate in financing the results of that aggression, after the loss of their territory, the despoilment of their industrial, agricultural and urban areas, and the dispersal of their people, for whose daily needs they still had to provide. In refusing to contribute to the financing of United Nations peace-keeping forces in the Middle East, the Syrian Arab Republic was not objecting to the amount but rather to the principle of allowing the usurper to benefit. The Zionist entity and those States which supported it should be required to bear the whole cost.

12. Mr. QUTAIH (Democratic Yemen) said that the presence of an international force in the occupied Arab territories, which his delegation had supported in the belief that it was temporary and would help to bring about the evacuation of those territories by the aggressor, was now becoming permanent because of the intransigent and expansionist policies of Israel. These policies were a serious violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter and of the recommendations of the General Assembly. He wished to reaffirm his delegation's position of principle in rejecting the expansionism and aggression of the Zionist entity. It would accordingly abstain from voting on the draft resolution, and would refuse any financial responsibility for the operations in question, on the ground that the aggressor should pay the costs of the aggression.

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13. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee was now in the process of voting and that statements should be limited to explanations of vote.

14. Mr. ARAPI (Albania) said that his delegation would not participate in the financing of any United Nations forces in the Middle East, including the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, and would vote against the draft resolution.

15. Mr. BENZEITUN (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his delegation had not participated in the discussion of the financing of United Nations peace-keeping forces in the Middle East and did not intend to do so, because of its firm belief that the presence of those forces had not contributed to a solution of the Middle Eastern problem. It would not therefore support any resolution on their financing.

16. Mr. AL-ERYANY (Yemen) said that his delegation could not support any commitment by the United Nations to finance peace-keeping forces in the Middle East, on the grounds that the Zionist entity, which was the aggressor, should pay. The resolution was an endorsement of occupation by force and his delegation would therefore abstain from voting on it.

17. Mr. YOUNIS (Iraq) said that his Government had consistently supported the principle of United Nations peace-keeping forces and had been a contributor to the peace-keeping force in Cyprus. It could not, however, support the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, because it was the Zionist entity that should shoulder the responsibility for the situation in the Middle East and not other countries. Financing that Force would merely bolster the attitude of the aggressor, and his delegation would therefore vote against both parts of draft resolution A/C.5/36/L.15, and would accept no financial burden in that connexion.

18. At the request of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a recorded vote was taken on part A of the draft resolution.

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Iraq, Syrian Arab Republic.

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Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Central African Republic, Chad, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mauritania, Mongolia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Viet Nam, Yemen.

19. Part A of draft resolution A/C.5/36/L.15 was adopted by 72 votes to 2, with 17 abstentions.

20. At the request of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a recorded vote was taken on part B of the draft resolution.

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Rwanda, Senegal, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Iraq, Mongolia, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Viet Nam.

Abstaining: Algeria, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Yemen, Mauritania, Mexico, Romania, Yemen.

21. Part B of draft resolution A/C.5/36/L.15 was adopted by 70 votes to 13, with 8 abstentions.

22. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution on the financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. Nevertheless, it felt that the presence of international forces diminished the sovereignty of the countries of the region. That presence had been accepted on a temporary basis after the aggression against the Arab territories, but it was fast becoming permanent. His country could not agree to the renewal of the mandate of UNDOF and UNIFIL year after year, and it urged the international community to work towards erasing all traces of aggression in the Middle East.

23. Mr. ORON (Israel) expressed his delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General and to the Advisory Committee for their reports on the financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, and to the sponsors of the draft

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(Mr. Oron, Israel)

resolution. He also paid a tribute to the officers and personnel of UNDOF and expressed his appreciation of those countries which contributed contingents to the force. He would disregard the rhetorical statements of certain delegations as being irrelevant to the matter.

24. Peace-keeping operations were, by definition, temporary and could not substitute for a peaceful settlement. The seeming permanence of United Nations peace-keeping forces in the Middle East, while on the one hand regrettable, on the other reflected the complexity of the dispute. It was because it was aware of that complexity that the Security Council had renewed the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, with the agreement of all the parties concerned. Imperfect as it might be as a solution, it was better than any alternative in the current circumstances. The Fifth Committee had a duty, therefore, to grant the Secretary-General the means to carry out that mandate.

25. Mr. FALL OULD MAALOUH (Mauritania) said that his delegation had abstained because it doubted whether the peace-keeping forces served any useful purpose.

26. Mr. MARTORELL (Peru) said that his delegation had voted in favour of both parts of the draft resolution because it welcomed the constructive spirit in which it had been drafted. His country, as a lover of peace, and setting aside all political considerations, believed that it was vital to contribute to the peace-keeping forces in the Middle East in whatever way was required.

27. Mr. FARIS (Jordan) said that his country had voted in favour of the draft resolution out of its dedication to the cause of peace in the Middle East and throughout the world. A just and stable peace in that region required the recognition of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to establish a State in the territory from which it had been ousted by the Zionist entity. The stationing of peace-keeping forces in the recognized occupied territories was preferable to the presence of troops in areas occupied by military force.

28. Mr. ARAPI (Albania) said that he had not voted because his delegation had expected the Chairman to put the draft resolution as a whole to the vote. Had it not been for that misunderstanding, he would have voted against both parts.

29. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had now concluded its consideration of agenda item 110 (a).

AGENDA ITEM 105: PATTERN OF CONFERENCES (continued) (A/36/32 and Corr.1)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK (continued) (A/36/199 and Corr.1; A/C.5/36/22)

(b) SUBSIDIARY ORGANS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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AGENDA ITEM 104: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT: REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT
(continued) (A/36/34; A/C.5/36/41)

30. Mr. LAGORIO (Argentina) emphasized the complex and controversial nature of the problem of documentation in the United Nations system and the need to approach it with the greatest possible objectivity. It was not sufficient simply to acknowledge the alarming dimensions of the problem; what was needed was an awareness that there were objective factors which had contributed to the increase in the volume of documentation, together with the determination to find an effective solution. Rationalization of documentation was required, meaning that only those documents vital or useful to the work or the better functioning of the committee or organ in question should be issued.

31. At least two of the contributory factors noted by the Joint Inspection Unit in document A/36/167 (para. 8), namely, the tendency to establish new bodies and the desire to reinstitute certain meetings, were matters which the Committee could and should tackle in the context of the programme budget; since the proliferation of documentation was not an evil in isolation but a reflection of deeper-seated problems, it should be related to the issue of the identification of priorities under programme planning. Once the necessary rationalization of meetings or conferences had been achieved, it might be possible to implement the recommendations on control of documentation put forward by the Joint Inspection Unit, and in particular the proposed procedures to ensure the efficient use of the programme and budget in limiting the volume of documentation (A/36/167, para. 18).

32. In connexion with the problem of distributing documents on time, it was important to try to put into effect resolution 1979/69 of the Economic and Social Council. The target of distributing all documentation relating to an agenda item at least six weeks in advance of the opening of a regular session was rarely achieved, with the result that delegations frequently had to tackle an item in the absence of the necessary information.

33. Another subject of importance was that of the calendar of conferences. In view of its support for General Assembly resolutions 35/5 and 35/10 on the possibility of shortening the sessions of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly, his delegation was gratified by the observation of the Committee on Conferences that for the first time practical results of the Committee's efforts in that area had materialized, which could be reflected in the draft calendar for 1982-1983 (A/36/32, para. 23). That could only be the first step towards a more effective distribution of the time available, in which meetings which were particularly important for the fulfilment of the principles of the Charter should have priority and be allocated a greater proportion of resources. He stressed the need, when considering the question of shortening sessions, to bear constantly in mind the needs of developing countries.

34. Lastly, he wished to draw the Fifth Committee's attention to the unequal treatment accorded to the various official languages of the General Assembly. As the representative of Uruguay had said, that did not appear to be just a

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(Mr. Lagorio, Argentina)

budgetary or administrative anomaly, and was a matter for grave concern. His delegation would continue to raise the matter until it was given the attention it deserved.

35. Mr. ZINIEL (Ghana) said that his delegation was happy to note from the report of the Committee on Conferences (A/36/32) that it had responded in a positive and imaginative manner to General Assembly resolutions 35/5 and 35/10. The Committee's recommendations, if adopted and implemented faithfully, would minimize the concerns of Member States about the problems of documentation and the high costs resulting from the proliferation of conferences.

36. However, if the objectives of those recommendations were to be achieved, the active co-operation of all United Nations organs and specialized agencies would be required. His delegation welcomed the dialogue established between the Committee's Chairman and the chairmen of other subsidiary organs, and particularly the resultant decision by the Committee on Contributions to hold a four-week session only in years when considering a new scale of assessments and a two-week session in all other years, an example which should be followed by other bodies which did not take substantive decisions annually.

37. On the question of the draft calendar of conferences, one of the most common complaints concerned the late issuing of documents. In that respect, the request of the Economic and Social Council, reflected in paragraph 31 (a) of the report and involving alteration of the dates of the sessions of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme seemed legitimate; it would appear possible to meet it without any full-scale disruption of conference dates, if the Committee on Conferences was prepared to modify the calendar of conferences for 1982-1983 as a result of decisions by the General Assembly at its current session, as implied in paragraph 33.

38. Given the disturbing assertion in the report of the Committee on Conferences that the late distribution of conference documents was attributable in part to the poor quality of many Secretariat reports, he agreed with the view expressed in paragraph 44 that the possession of drafting skills should be an important factor in the recruitment and promotion of Secretariat staff and urged all departments to comply with directives on the early submission of documents to the Department of Conference Services so as to ensure that they were distributed in good time.

39. Turning to the recommendations in paragraph 84, which were on the whole acceptable to his delegation, he expressed a reservation about the draft resolution contained in recommendation 6 as it related to the documentation requirements of treaty bodies. Since some of those treaty bodies were expected to carry out detailed research and data collection on intricate issues, he cautioned against any action which would prevent them from effectively discharging their duties. Further, in the light of the consultation envisaged in operative paragraph 1 of that draft resolution, he was not sure whether operative paragraphs 2 and 3 could also be valid.

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(Mr. Ziniel, Ghana)

40. His delegation also had some reservations about recommendation 7, which was not only redundant but also effectively challenged the authority of the organs which organized special conferences to determine the types and nature of documentation required for the attainment of the goals of those conferences. Since the principal function of conferences was to provide a forum where Member States could meet to exchange views, no action should be taken by the Committee which would directly or indirectly deprive Member States of the necessary resources or materials.

41. Some of the recommendations were reminiscent of the attempts in recent years to introduce a quota system for the allocation of conference resources in the United Nations system; his delegation had always opposed such a system because it might prevent the Organization from convening conferences to discuss unforeseen but important world issues as and when they arose. The question of development, in particular, was of such importance to developing countries that the role of the United Nations in that area should not be circumscribed by the adoption of any such restriction.

42. Mr. GODIAL (Kenya) welcomed the recommendations in paragraph 84 of the report of the Committee on Conferences (A/36/32), which contributed constructively to the thinking on rationalization of United Nations activities and identified possible areas where savings might be feasible.

43. He supported the suggestion that the General Assembly might look into the possibility of expanding the mandate of the Committee on Conferences to include the examination of certain draft resolutions submitted at sessions of the Economic and Social Council; the Economic and Social Council might benefit from the advice of the Committee regarding areas of possible savings and draft resolutions having a direct bearing on the utilization of conference facilities.

44. He was happy to note the efforts of the Committee on Conferences to try to control the burden of documentation in the United Nations system. The application of the principle of cost-effectiveness would cut down on the volume of documents, improve their quality and expedite their distribution. In that context, the idea put forward by the delegation of Venezuela of creating an expert group sounded attractive, and his delegation would find it acceptable. He was in total agreement with the Committee's observation that the possession of drafting skills should be an important factor in the recruitment and promotion of Secretariat staff, and that the improvement of skills should be viewed as a continuous management task (A/36/32, para. 44). Lastly, the recommendations in paragraph 48 concerning the documentation of subsidiary organs could only improve the performance of the Organization and should be implemented in full.

45. Mr. HAND (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the delegations of the ten States members of the European Communities, supported the proposals made by the representative of Japan in his statement at an earlier meeting of the Committee, and formally proposed that the consideration of the draft standard rules of procedure for United Nations conferences put forward by the Secretary-General in

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(Mr. Hand, United Kingdom)

his report in document A/36/199 should be deferred to the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. The draft rules were many and complex and Governments needed time to study them carefully; they gave rise to a number of difficult problems, including the question of whether or not they should be mandatory, and the desirability of adopting one set of rules to cover all the very different types of United Nations conferences.

46. It might also be considered whether the draft standard rules might be more appropriately considered in the Sixth Committee; that was a matter which the General Committee would have to decide at the beginning of the thirty-seventh session.

47. Mr. GREN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the recommendations made by JIU in its report on the control and limitation of documentation (A/36/167) should be closely studied in the Committee on Conferences before a final decision on the subject was taken by the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session. His delegation regarded the suggestion of a quota system for limiting the over-all volume of documentation at the United Nations as a valuable one; as JIU indicated, the system was working well in UNESCO. Indeed, the experience of UNESCO, FAO and WHO went to show that, given determination, limiting the volume of documentation was quite feasible.

48. The 32-page limit for documents produced by the Secretariat should be extended to other United Nations organizations, and different limits ought to be imposed on different types of documentation; such an approach had been successfully applied at ILO since 1977. It must be stressed, however, that effective monitoring of the rules on documentation was also essential; that was a subject requiring greater attention.

49. Significant potential economies could be realised if the deadlines for processing and issuing documents were strictly adhered to, since the late circulation of documents led to extended meeting sessions and staff overtime. Many United Nations organizations already used document submission schedules; the important thing was to make sure that the rules were obeyed, and to make those responsible accountable for the documentation required for any future meeting. Savings could likewise be made by reducing the number and duration of meetings. So far, the Committee on Conferences had paid scant attention to the idea, but his delegation felt it could play a major role. In addition, wider use should be made of document summaries, highlighting points for action and decision.

50. He had misgivings over the attitude taken in the report to verbatim records for the principal organs of the United Nations. The issues discussed in the Security Council, the Plenary Assembly and the First Committee were of exceptional importance, and it would not be wise to discontinue verbatim record coverage of the meetings held by those bodies.

51. On the other hand, he could only applaud the suggestion that the production of redundant documents should be discontinued, while other documents might be

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(Mr. Gren, USSR)

issued at less frequent intervals. The various secretariats of the United Nations system should consult the intergovernmental bodies concerned on the question. Also, he would like to know how much might be saved by restricting the number of copies of any document in any distribution category - "General", "Limited" or "Restricted" - to be circulated.

52. Document A/36/167 said nothing new about the use of modern document processing methods; he believed it should have delved further into the Organization's experience with such methods to date and assessed their economic effectiveness. He failed to understand the reason for recommendation 16, which called for an analysis of the "costs incurred ... for translation and typing of documents" and the selection of the most cost-effective method without sacrificing basic quality. The Joint Inspection Unit had already reported, in document A/35/294, that contractual translation and typing was the most economical means available, and it was incorrect to assert that the quality of contractual translation was not always acceptable. It was necessary, when contracting out work, to be more selective, to tighten controls and, perhaps, to write into the contract harsher penalties for work that was below the acceptable standard. The Committee should call on the Secretary-General to make more extensive use of contractual services, since they were the cheapest means of producing translations.

53. A shortcoming of the JIU report was that it failed to indicate the potential savings to be made by adopting the recommendations.

54. Mr. MAL'KO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the Committee on Conferences was gradually emerging as an authoritative body whose recommendations were viewed with respect both by the Secretariat and at the intergovernmental level. Not all aspects of conference organization could be regarded as satisfactory, however. The constantly growing number of conferences, sessions and meetings was deeply disturbing, and many countries were already having difficulty in covering them all effectively. Even the Secretariat departments concerned seemed to be at the limits of their physical capacity. The request by the Economic and Social Council to adjust the calendar of conferences to the servicing capacities within the Secretariat reported by the Committee on Conferences (A/36/32, para. 31 (b)) provided implicit confirmation of that assertion. The best way out of the situation would be to act upon previous decisions, for example by drawing up recommendations on the optimum apportionment of conference resources, services and facilities as called for in resolution 32/72, paragraph 3 (c), but the Committee on Conferences still declined to undertake that task. It should also take a far stricter attitude to the organization of special conferences instead of confining itself to such placid remarks as were contained in paragraph 30 of its report. In short, it should become involved in efforts to cut down on the number of sessions, conferences, meetings and other gatherings, special conferences in particular. Conference servicing resources must be frozen at their current level. His delegation therefore supported recommendation 3 (A/36/32, para. 84) on the understanding that any additional meetings and conferences would be funded out of resources released owing to revised priorities and the elimination of obsolete, marginal and ineffective activities.

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(Mr. Mal'ko, Ukrainian SSR)

55. The Joint Inspection Unit was right in its assertion that the excessive volume of documentation hampered the effective and economic operation of the United Nations. Section XI of its report (A/36/167) contained a number of thoughtful recommendations in that regard which merited the support of the Fifth Committee. Since such recommendations had been made before, however, the Committee must ensure their strict application by making its decisions binding.

56. The late appearance of many United Nations documents was a serious hindrance to the work of the Organization. The Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had all but forgotten when the documents for the General Assembly or other international gathering had last reached it on schedule. The Committee on Conferences should become more actively involved in the question of limiting the volume of documentation and ensuring that documents were produced on time - which should not mean a further spate of reports, studies and information on the subject, but simply the application of decisions and recommendations already approved and the extension to all parts of the United Nations system of methods which had already proved their usefulness.

57. His delegation was prepared to endorse the report of the Committee on Conferences and the recommendations it contained. It felt, however, that the contents of document A/36/199, on the draft standard rules of procedure for United Nations conferences, were more suited to discussion in a legal body than in the Fifth Committee.

58. Mr. YOUNIS (Iraq) said that his delegation normally supported JIU and encouraged it to make recommendations on how best to approach the financial and administrative problems that confronted the United Nations. There could be no justification, however, for the Unit's producing cursory, vague and incomprehensible "studies" and following them up with recommendations which created needless problems: it only reflected poorly on the Unit's normally good reputation. Yet that was exactly what had happened in the case of self-revision in the translation process, and the recommendations made by JIU in that respect had acquired legislative force by means which his delegation regarded as most irregular. As stated in paragraph 10 of document A/C.5/36/41, it had been "presumed" that the Assembly accepted the Secretary-General's observations regarding the JIU report on the evaluation of the translation process in the United Nations system (A/35/294), whereas, as acknowledged in the same paragraph, the Assembly had merely taken note of the report.

59. Self-revision was actually being introduced on that spurious legislative basis, although the Assembly had requested the Secretary-General "to apply self-revision on a provisional and experimental basis, to the extent that it does not affect the quality of United Nations documents, whatever the official or working language used" (resolution 35/225, para. 2). Forty-six translation posts were to be abolished at Headquarters, and a further 21 at Geneva. The Secretary-General's unwarranted presumption had thus led to a deeply unjust situation, which it was the duty of the Fifth Committee to put right. The Committee must recommend to the Plenary Assembly that it should state that it had adopted no decision to

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(Mr. Younis, Iraq)

justify the presumption referred to in document A/C.5/36/41, paragraph 10, and should confirm the terms of resolution 35.225, paragraph 2. His delegation wished to make that a formal proposal, which he hoped the Committee would adopt by consensus.

60. Mr. FRASER (Guyana), referring to the JIU report on the subregional offices for Central America and Panama and for the Caribbean of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) (A/36/102), said that, although the work of the subregional office for the Caribbean in Port-of-Spain had led to greater economic co-operation among the Member States of that subregion, his delegation considered that the office was not adequately equipped to fulfil its mandate. Since it was opened in 1966, the office had acquired increased responsibilities, in particular as an arm of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee.

61. He supported the JIU view that there was an urgent need for delegation of authority to the Director of the subregional office and believed that the decentralization referred to in the Secretary-General's comments (A/36/102/Add.1) would bring benefits to the 10 Member States being served that would far outweigh the costs.

62. In welcoming the intention of the Administrative Management Service to carry out a survey of the subregional offices of ECLA in 1982, he explained that there were several specific administrative problems which were adversely affecting the work of the Caribbean subregional office. One was the failure to recruit a Spanish and a French translator. His delegation was not fully convinced by the Secretary-General's argument that contractual services should be used because of wide fluctuations in the workload. The recruitment of a Spanish translator should not present difficulties in Latin America, and it would certainly assist communication with ECLA headquarters in Santiago and the subregional office for Central America and Panama in Mexico City. Though it would not insist on French translation facilities as a priority at the present stage, his delegation was nevertheless amazed at the failure to secure the services of a French translator after three years of recruitment efforts.

63. The second urgent problem was in the area of budgeting and finance. In view of the distance between Santiago and Port-of-Spain and the communications difficulties in the region, the subregional office should be allowed to maintain its own financial accounts and payroll. The Administrative Management Service would no doubt address itself to that problem but, in the meantime, implementation of recommendation 9 of the JIU report would adequately meet the present needs of the office in that regard.

64. He earnestly hoped that the Caribbean subregional office would soon be upgraded to permit a level of efficiency comparable with that of the Mexico City office. The recommendations of JIU certainly provided a good basis, and his delegation was ready to give full support to their implementation.

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(Mr. Fraser, Guyana)

65. Finally, he commended the Governments of Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago for their unstinting support to the work of the subregional offices located in their respective capitals; without such support, the successes achieved to date would have been impossible.

66. Mrs. HOUSHOLDER (United States of America) reiterated her delegation's support for the impartial, thorough, informative and useful work of JIU as a means of achieving more efficient management and thereby increasing the percentage of funds available to those for whom they were really intended. JIU helped managers, the Secretary-General, and the Fifth Committee, by providing them with expert advice based on impartial evaluation.

67. The report on assistance by the United Nations system to regional inter-country technical co-operation institutions (A/36/101 and Corr.1), by suggesting guidelines for the co-ordination and pooling of information and experience of regional intercountry technical co-operation institutions, would stand the United Nations and the regional institutions in good stead for many years. However, in her delegation's view, United Nations assistance to promote technological development and self-reliance should supplement, not supplant, country contributions to the development, management and funding of regional institutions.

68. The report on the subregional offices for Central America and Panama and for the Caribbean of ECLA (A/36/102) had been prepared with care and sensitivity. However, on travel of staff, her delegation noted that, according to the Secretary-General (A/36/102/Add.1), resources had been increased since the drafting of the report, especially for the staff of the Port-of-Spain office. Any further increase which might prove necessary should therefore be met through the re-allocation of existing resources. Likewise, her delegation could not support any increase in resources for decentralization.

69. The report on the application by the United Nations system of the Mar del Plata Action Plan on water development and administration (A/36/411) contained many worth-while suggestions which would prove useful to all those concerned with the implementation of plans for the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, which her Government supported. The conclusion that more would have to do within present resource levels by the technical co-operation machinery of the agencies concerned and that improvement of their output capacity should come about mainly through new efforts for better planning and internal management, together with interorganizational co-operation, was particularly welcome.

70. The comprehensive report on management services in the United Nations system (A/36/296) noted that most organizations did not appear to give high priority to management services. As an important tool in improving efficiency, a management service unit should motivate critical and well thought-out change. Like JIU, her delegation believed that the majority of such a unit's time should be devoted to basic and continuing functions including, but not limited to, rationalization of policies and procedures, determination of staff requirements, encouragement of

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(Mrs. Housholder, United States of America)

participative management, analysis of an organization's functions and character, and the giving of advice on substantive problems which impeded efficient execution of technical programmes. The use of management service units as troubleshooters should be entirely secondary; indeed, if they functioned as they should, there should be less and less occasion for such emergency action.

71. Her delegation would comment on some of the other JIU reports under other agenda items.

72. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) praised the high quality of the JIU reports and said that his delegation always endeavoured to take its recommendations into account. However, it should not be forgotten that its purpose was to provide the necessary intellectual input to a system which was sometimes lacking in imagination and innovation. It should not take over the role of the various organs and specialized agencies, but work in close co-operation with them to produce the best results.

73. He would comment on the reports on personnel policies under agenda item 107. As far as the report on assistance by the United Nations system to regional inter-country technical co-operation institutions (A/36/101 and Corr.1) was concerned, JIU had put its finger on the need to rationalize the management of resources in order to prevent the waste that had undoubtedly occurred in the past. Nevertheless, he failed to understand how JIU could imply that the resources being invested by the United Nations system in technical co-operation were sufficient.

74. The report on evaluation of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) (A/36/73) had unfortunately confirmed that, too often, it failed to alert the international community to impending disasters and to respond promptly enough to be effective.

75. Turning to the control and limitation of documentation (A/36/167), he believed that the ideas advanced by the representative of Venezuela would provide a good basis on which to proceed. He had nothing to add to the pertinent comments made by the representative of Guyana on the JIU report contained in document A/36/102.

76. As for building construction procedures, the JIU report (A/36/297) showed that there were serious shortcomings. He was at a loss to understand why it was the Organization and not the contractor that had to bear the cost of overruns or of failure to complete the work as planned. He certainly supported the JIU recommendation on the use of specialized consulting firms at the design and construction stages.

77. The report on internal evaluation (A/36/181) merely reiterated long-standing problems; that showed that nothing had been done to remedy them.

78. He considered it inappropriate for the Inspectors to mention in their annual report (A/36/34) such a minor problem as the inadequacy of facilities provided for them in New York. Obviously, they should be furnished with proper office

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(Mr. Lahlou, Morocco)

accommodation and all the supplies they required, but there was no need to have raised the matter in the Fifth Committee.

79. Reference had been made to the difficulties of self-revision. As his country had sponsored resolution 35/225 on job classification and career development of language staff, he was very concerned about that matter, but thought that it might more appropriately be discussed in connexion with Arabic language services and reclassification of language posts.

The meeting rose at 10.05 p.m.