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PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983

Access to the language training programme by accredited staff
of permanent missions at Headquarters

Note by the Budget Division

1. At the 38th meeting of the Fifth Committee, the representative of Panama requested a statement of financial implications concerning the access of members of permanent missions to the United Nations at Headquarters to the language training programme free of charge on the same basis as United Nations staff. The representative of Trinidad and Tobago asked whether a quota of students would be established for each mission if a new policy was adopted in this matter.

2. The total enrolment in language classes at Headquarters in 1981 amounted to 4,499, of whom 3,973 were staff members, 390 were participants from permanent missions (see annexed table) and 136 were participants in the "other" category, i.e., personnel from the non-governmental organizations or the press. The number of persons attending classes represents the maximum number that may be accommodated within the present space limitations and without requesting additional resources for the language programme.

3. In order to answer the questions raised on the possibility of permanent missions attending language classes free of charge, two basic options may be considered, to serve as a basis for such a financial statement:

Either:

(a) Accredited staff of permanent missions at Headquarters would be able to enrol free of charge during the established registration periods; no quota per mission would be set, as it would be very difficult for the Secretariat to evaluate the needs of each of the 156 permanent missions. However, access would be on a first-come first-served basis and would be limited to enrolment on a

space-available basis, as is the case now. Enrolment of mission staff would therefore in effect be limited to a range of 80 to 150 per term depending on internal enrolment. Abolition of fees for members of permanent missions at the present rate of participation would result in a loss of revenue of approximately \$106,000 for the biennium under income section 2. Under the provisions endorsed by the Fifth Committee at its 38th meeting, a fee would be charged for repeating any level except for reasons certifiably attributable to illness or missions assignment.

Or:

(b) Accredited staff of permanent missions would no longer be limited to enrolment on a space-available basis as has hitherto been the case, but would be able to enrol free of charge on demand on the same basis as staff members. It should be noted that under present procedures Secretariat staff are subject to certain restrictions related to their contractual status and their eligibility for certain courses. For example, access to accelerated courses is subject to written authorization by the supervisor as it is reserved to staff members whose functions specifically require a knowledge of a second language. Also enrolment requires an appointment of at least six months' duration at the time of registration. The same restrictions would be applied to mission personnel. Under the provisions endorsed by the Fifth Committee at its 38th meeting, a fee would be charged for repeating any level except for reasons certifiably attributable to illness or mission assignment.

4. While it is difficult to forecast precisely the impact of option (b) i.e. the unlimited access free of charge of members of permanent missions to the United Nations language training programme on the future demand for enrolment in the programme, it is tentatively estimated that such a policy change would result in a 100 per cent increase in the enrolment of missions personnel for all languages. Thus some additional 150 students from permanent missions would be expected to enrol in the programme in January 1982. This in turn would normally require opening seven additional classes per term in English, two in French and one in Spanish. It is also probable that one additional class would have to be opened in one of the less requested languages. As a result of opening these new classes, additional language teachers, one additional English language co-ordinator and one support staff member would be needed, as well as additional laboratory equipment, classroom equipment and classrooms. It is estimated that two additional classrooms would have to be provided to the Training and Examinations Service to accommodate these new classes.

5. The financial implications of each of the above options on a full biennium basis would be as follows:

	Option (a)	Option (b)
	<u>Access on space- available basis</u>	<u>Unlimited access</u>
Loss of revenue (income section 2)	\$106,000	\$106,000
Additional expenses (section 28J):		
Temporary assistance (language teachers)	-	72,900
1 P-2 English Language Co-ordinator	-	76,100
1 G-2/G-4 Clerk-Typist	-	45,900
Laboratory equipment	-	9,300
Classroom equipment	-	4,900
Rental of office and classroom space (including moving costs)	-	72,500
Subtotal	-	281,600
Total	<u>\$106,000</u>	<u>\$387,600</u>

6. Therefore, if option (a) were selected, there would be a loss of revenue under income section 2 of approximately \$106,000. If option (b) were selected, however, in addition to the loss of revenue, an increased appropriation of \$281,600 would be required under section 28J of the 1982-1983 proposed programme budget.

7. The administrative implications and financial estimates concerning option (b) are obviously tentative and the situation would have to be reviewed in 1982 in the light of the experience gained by the Training and Examinations Service in dealing with a new situation. Therefore, a report could be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session.

8. In this connexion it should also be noted that it would probably be difficult to restrict the implementation of such a new policy to New York alone since representatives of Member States at other duty stations may insist on receiving the same treatment. Should requests be received from other major duty stations, their implications would be presented to the General Assembly in due course.

Annex

COUNT OF ENROLMENT OF STAFF OF PERMANENT MISSIONS

ACADEMIC YEAR 1981

COURSE	JAN. - MARCH	APRIL - JULY	SEPT. - DEC.	TOTAL
ARABIC	3	4	3	10
CHINESE	3	2	1	6
ENGLISH	117	87	60	264
FRENCH	38	31	11	80
RUSSIAN	2	-	2	4
SPANISH	9	10	7	26
Total	172	134	84	390