

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 52nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BUJ-FLORES (Mexico)

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

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12 December 1980

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The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.

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

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution in document A/35/29 concerning agenda item 41 (A/C.5/35/108)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had asked him to inform the Committee of the following recommendation by the Advisory Committee: the General Assembly should be informed that should it adopt the draft resolution in document A/35/29 no additional appropriations would be needed and that conference servicing costs not exceeding \$2,150,500 would be taken into account in the context of the consolidated statement to be submitted towards the end of the current session.
2. He suggested that the Committee should adopt the Advisory Committee's recommendation.
3. It was so decided.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft decision submitted by the General Assembly in document A/35/L.37/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 27 (A/C.5/35/107)

4. The CHAIRMAN said that he had been asked by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to indicate that that Committee recommended approval of the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General in paragraph 5 of his report.
5. He therefore suggested that the Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft decision A/35/L.37/Rev.1, an additional appropriation of \$519,000 would be required under section 3 of the programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 in respect of the SWAPO office and the United Nations Fund for Namibia.
6. At the request of the representative of the United Kingdom a recorded vote was taken on the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Barbados, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Eyelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Cameroon, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

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Against: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden

7. The Advisory Committee's recommendation was adopted by 70 votes to 6, with 12 abstentions.

8. Mr. FRASER (United Kingdom), speaking also on behalf of the delegations of Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States, said that the five delegations had voted against the Advisory Committee's recommendation to approve the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General. They believed that there was nothing in the draft decision to justify the Secretary-General's contention that an appropriation was required at the current stage for the support of the office of SWAPO in New York. Indeed, the draft decision explicitly referred to the resumed thirty-fifth session as the time when the General Assembly might be required to consider such an appropriation. They were astonished that the Secretary-General had ignored the precise wording of the draft decision and that the Advisory Committee should have let the matter pass without comment. Their negative vote had also been determined by their well-known position of principle regarding the budget.

9. Mr. DUQUE (Secretary of the Committee) announced that the delegations of the Bahamas, Gabon, Iran, the Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kuwait, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mali, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen had informed him that, had they been present during the voting on the Advisory Committee's recommendation with regard to the financial implications of draft decision A/35/L.37/Rev.1, they would have voted in favour.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Third Committee in document A/C.3/35/L.23/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 80 (a) (A/35/7/Add.24; A/C.5/35/73 and Corr.1)

10. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 18 and 19 of its report (A/35/7/Add.24) and its comments and observations in paragraphs 13, 14 and 17. The net effect of the Advisory Committee's recommendations would be to reduce the Secretary-General's estimates by \$164,100.

11. Mr. REIMERS (Denmark) said that, when the matter had been discussed in the Third Committee, his delegation had inquired whether it was the intent of the sponsors that the international information programme should be continued. The representative of Venezuela had replied on behalf of the sponsors that they attached great importance to that programme; thus, the continuation of the programme was implicit in the provisions of the draft resolution. On that understanding, his delegation had not proposed a formal amendment to the draft resolution and had been able to support it. Subsequently, the Secretary-General had issued a corrigendum to the statement of administrative and financial implications, setting out a budget for the information programme. His delegation was concerned that DPI should have

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(Mr. Reimers, Denmark)

adequate resources to plan and carry out an appropriate information programme and understood that the General Assembly might consider the question of an additional appropriation for that purpose in the context of the final performance report for the biennium 1980-1981.

12. Mr. BEGIN (Director, Budget Division) reassured the representative of Denmark that the information programme could be financed from existing resources under section 27 of the budget.

13. Mrs. DORSET (Trinidad and Tobago), supported by Ms. MUCK (Austria) and Mr. EL-SAFETY (Egypt), observed that one of the arguments put forward by the Advisory Committee for reducing the Secretary-General's estimates was that the study by the Administrative Management Service on the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs had not yet been finalized and that the additional posts requested by the Secretary-General should not be granted until it was. While not taking lightly decisions to overturn the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, her delegation favoured authorizing the posts requested by the Secretary-General on a temporary basis, pending a final review of the situation. However, the Programme of Action adopted at the Copenhagen Conference was very important and it was not always easy to quantify the activities which would have to be carried out in integrating women in the process of development and peace. The Fifth Committee had recently decided to reject the Advisory Committee's recommendation in respect of the Information Systems Unit in DIESA, even though the value of the Unit had not yet been clearly established. She believed that the Fifth Committee had acted wisely in that instance, and that it would be even more justified in taking a similar action in connexion with the recommendations relating to the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade for Women, which was of incontestable importance to the developing world. She therefore proposed that the Committee should approve the Secretary-General's estimates in their entirety.

14. Mrs. SANDIFER (Portugal) said that her delegation favoured adopting the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

15. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) welcomed the assurances from the Director of the Budget Division that the information programme could be financed from the resources already available under section 27, but said he hoped that the money would not be diverted from the weekly radio programmes, which his delegation thought particularly effective.

16. Among the posts which the representative of Trinidad and Tobago wished to have approved despite the Advisory Committee's recommendation, a distinction should be made between the three for the Centre in Vienna and the two for the liaison Unit to be established in New York. The Advisory Committee was recommending against the posts for the unit on the ground that the co-ordination activities in question could be undertaken by the parent department. He was not convinced of the need for the liaison unit either, and felt that the question could be discussed more profitably at the following session when the Committee would have before it the results of the study by the Administrative Management Service. He therefore called on the representative of Trinidad and Tobago to revise her proposal to cover only the posts requested for the Centre in Vienna.

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17. Mrs. DORSET (Trinidad and Tobago) regretted that she was unable to modify her proposal.
18. Mr. BROTDININGRAT (Indonesia) asked whether any group responsible for liaison with the Centre already existed within the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.
19. Mr. BEGIN (Director, Budget Division) said that he was not aware of the existence of a group within the Department responsible for such liaison. The proposed unit not only would handle communications with the Centre but would also perform substantive functions.
20. Mr. VISLYKH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in keeping with his delegation's position on the question of supplementary appropriations during the budgetary cycle, he would be unable to support the proposal made by the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago, especially since it involved overturning the Advisory Committee's recommendations.
21. Mr. PAFENDORP (United States of America) said that his delegation had been obliged to vote against the adoption of the Programme of Action at the Copenhagen Conference because of the unwarranted introduction of political considerations, particularly in paragraph 244. It would likewise vote against the proposal now before the Committee, both because of its position on the question of supplementary appropriations and because of the almost casual way in which members of the Committee attacked the detailed and painstaking work of ACABQ.
22. Miss MILGROM (Israel) said that her delegation had voted against draft resolution A/C.3/35/L.23/Rev.1 in the Third Committee because it included politically-oriented references that made it unacceptable: for example, an allusion to the controversial Declaration of Mexico where a reference to the World Plan of Action would have been sufficient, and the endorsement of the Programme of Action in its entirety. Israel had already indicated its support for most of the provisions of the Programme of Action and its willingness to take part in their execution; but her delegation would vote against the request for supplementary appropriations now before the Committee.
23. Mr. LÖSCHNER (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the importance of the Programme of Action was undeniable; he was concerned, however, at the Committee's manner of dealing with the Advisory Committee's recommendations, and at the Secretary-General's request for additional funds under the current programme budget. His delegation could have supported the amounts advocated by the Advisory Committee but would have to vote against the proposal by Trinidad and Tobago.
24. Mr. FRASER (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had made clear its reservations on draft resolution A/C.3/35/L.23/Rev.1 in the Third Committee. It would vote against the proposal to restore the Secretary-General's estimates since it could not subscribe to the overturning of the Advisory Committee's recommendations.
25. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that out of recognition for the importance of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade he would support the proposal

(Mr. Kemal, Pakistan)

by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, although he still felt that to establish the liaison unit before the need for it had been clearly demonstrated was not in the Organization's financial interests.

26. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada) said that his delegation had voted against both the Programme of Action and draft resolution A/C.3/35/L.23/Rev.1 because of the unnecessary and objectionable political references made in the Programme of Action, which the draft resolution endorsed. It supported most parts of the Programme of Action, however, and would have voted in favour of the appropriations recommended by the Advisory Committee; but it would vote against approval of the amount requested by the Secretary-General.

27. Mr. HOUMA GOLO (Chad) said that he would support the proposal of Trinidad and Tobago, even though he had reservations about the need for a liaison unit.

28. Mr. BAMBA (Upper Volta) said that he would vote in favour of the proposal, as he thought that the liaison unit was necessary to the work of the Centre.

29. Mr. GUBSCI (Hungary) said that his delegation would reluctantly have accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendation, on account of the importance it attached to the Decade; but it was not convinced of the necessity for the proposal from Trinidad and Tobago and would vote against it.

30. Mrs. SANDIFER (Portugal) said that her delegation saw no need for the liaison unit, and would accordingly abstain during the vote.

31. A recorded vote was taken on the proposal made by the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Benin, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mexico, Mozambique, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

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Abstaining: Ethiopia, Greece, Malaysia, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Singapore

32. The proposal was adopted by 67 votes to 24, with 7 abstentions.

33. Mr. BROTOBININGRAT (Indonesia) said that he had supported the proposal but hoped that the establishment of a liaison unit for the Centre within the Department would not lead to the establishment of a liaison unit for the Department within the Centre.

34. Mr. WILSKI (Poland) said that his delegation's vote had been determined by the principles which the Fifth Committee had a duty to uphold, and not by his country's stand at Copenhagen or in the Third Committee.

35. Mr. MARTORELL (Peru) said that his delegation had voted against the proposal to overturn the Advisory Committee's recommendations, and he expressed concern at the growing tendency towards ignoring that Committee's views.

36. Mr. FALL (Senegal) said that his delegation normally supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. However, the Fifth Committee always had the option of rejecting a recommendation and, in the light of the eloquent statement made by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, his delegation had decided to vote in favour of her proposal.

37. Mr. RUGWIZANGOGA (Rwanda) said that his delegation had recognized the concerns expressed by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago and had therefore voted in favour of her proposal. Nevertheless, it wished to record its reservations on the establishment of a liaison unit.

38. Mr. TANIC (Turkey) said that his delegation too had voted in favour of the proposal but shared the concerns expressed by other delegations at the growing tendency to disregard the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

39. Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (United Republic of Cameroon) announced that his delegation had voted in favour of the proposal, but it would have reserved its position had the appropriation for the liaison unit been put to the vote separately.

40. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that his delegation's vote in favour of the proposal of Trinidad and Tobago had been made in over-all recognition of the major concerns expressed, although it was somewhat reluctant to accept the notion of liaison offices at Headquarters. His delegation's affirmative vote was based on the understanding that no duplication of work would result from the establishment of the liaison unit.

41. Mr. PAL (India) said that if the appropriation for the liaison unit had been put to the vote separately, his delegation would have reserved its position.

42. Mr. DUQUE (Secretary of the Committee) announced that the delegations of the Bahamas and Qatar had informed him that, had they been present during the voting, they would have voted in favour of the proposal by Trinidad and Tobago.

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Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Third Committee in document A/C.3/35/L.28 concerning agenda item 71 (A/35/7/Add.25; A/C.5/35/67)

43. The CHAIRMAN said that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had asked him to inform the Fifth Committee that the Advisory Committee had nothing to add to the information contained in its report (A/35/7/Add.25).

44. Mr. DENIS (France) asked the Director of the Budget Division what the distinction was between the elderly and the aged.

45. Mr. BEGIN (Director, Budget Division) said that he believed the distinction to be that made in France between the "troisième âge" and the "quatrième âge".

46. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/C.3/35/L.28, additional appropriations in the amount of \$386,200 would be required under sections 4, 8, 27 and 28 of the programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981, consisting of \$241,600 under section 4, \$3,600 under section 8, \$119,900 under section 27 and \$21,100 under section 28. Furthermore, an additional appropriation of \$51,100 would be required under section 31, to be offset by an increase in the same amount under income section 1. He suggested that the General Assembly should also be informed that conference servicing costs not exceeding \$1,185,900, calculated on a full-cost basis, would be considered in the context of the consolidated statement to be submitted before the end of the current session.

47. It was so decided.

48. Mr. MAL'KO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, had the recommendation been put to the vote, his delegation would have voted against it on the basis of its position of principle that any additional appropriations for the current biennium should be met through savings and redeployment of resources. Moreover, he could not support appropriations to finance additional posts for an already overstuffed Secretariat.

49. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that, in a spirit of co-operation, his delegation had joined the consensus, but was somewhat concerned about the presentation of the facts in the Secretary-General's statement of administrative and financial implications (A/C.5/35/67). While reference had been made to resolution 1980/26 of the Economic and Social Council, it had not been made clear that that resolution had in turn made specific reference to General Assembly resolution 34/225 on the identification of activities that had been completed or were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective. Operative paragraph 2 of resolution 1980/26 had specifically requested that every effort should be made to absorb the costs. He had no wish to claim that there had been any kind of manipulation; it might merely be that something had got overlooked in the rush. However, he believed that any statement of administrative and financial implications should contain a fair statement of the relevant facts. In the case at issue, he wondered whether it might be possible for the Secretariat to issue an addendum or corrigendum ex post facto



(Mr. Abraszewski, Poland)

stating what steps had been taken to meet the requirements set forth in the resolution of the Economic and Social Council in respect of the concurrent implementation of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 34/225.

50. The CHAIRMAN said that, if possible, the representatives of the Secretary-General would issue the addendum or corrigendum requested.

AGENDA ITEM 92: MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1980-1983 (continued)

Identification of activities that have been completed or are obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective (continued) (A/35/709; A/C.5/35/40 and Add.1; A/C.5/35/L.36)

51. Mr. FRASER (United Kingdom) introduced on behalf of the sponsors a number of oral revisions to the draft resolution in document A/C.5/35/L.36.

52. Mr. BROTDININGRAT (Indonesia) welcomed the fact that his delegation's concerns had been taken into account, and said that it would be able to support the draft resolution as orally revised.

53. Mr. PAL (India) said that his delegation had some difficulties with the new wording proposed for operative paragraph 3 but would be prepared to await the outcome of the CPC study, which might provide a basis for a more emphatic formulation at a subsequent session.

54. Mr. GRODSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the draft resolution in document A/C.5/35/L.36 was in keeping with the letter and spirit of his delegation's approach to the identification exercise, and he hoped that its adoption would serve as a stimulus to work in that field. However, insufficient account had been taken of a very important principle, to which his delegation attached great significance, namely that decisions on the termination of the activities referred to in operative paragraph 2 should be taken by the relevant intergovernmental organs. The annex to the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/35/40 and Add.1) indicated that decisions had been taken by such bodies on some programme elements but not on others. The Fifth Committee had no right to discuss the substance of or to take decisions on activities which did not fall within its competence. The inclusion of appropriate wording in operative paragraph 2 would preclude any accusation that the Fifth Committee had exceeded its powers. However, he noted that there was no reference to completed activities in that operative paragraph, for the obvious reason that no decision was required by the General Assembly to reallocate resources upon the completion of an activity.

55. As his delegation had already requested, the Secretariat should submit to CPC at its twenty-first session and to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session complete information on all staff resources released as a result of the elimination of obsolete, marginally useful or ineffective activities, expressed in work-months and in dollar terms, and covering all categories of staff. The decision on the redeployment of those resources was one to be made by the General Assembly.

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(Mr. Grodsky, USSR)

56. He had noted with satisfaction the assurances given by the Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services that the Secretariat would continue its identification efforts and would submit the results within the framework of the preparation of the programme budget for the next biennium. Indeed, it was hoped that that task would be undertaken at the preparation stage of all future programme budgets. His delegation wished to propose an amendment to that effect to operative paragraph 6. It hoped that both its suggestions would be favourably considered by the sponsors and would be incorporated in the revised version of the draft resolution.

57. Mr. DENIS (France) said that he had some difficulty following the logic of the Soviet delegation, whose ideas seemed to be based on a wish to subordinate the General Assembly to decisions taken by intergovernmental organs. That was a curious concept, given that Member States represented in those organs were also represented in the General Assembly, which surely had supreme authority.

58. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation would like to see operative paragraph 2 amended along the lines suggested by the representative of the Soviet Union, and also had an amendment to propose to the second preambular paragraph.

59. The CHAIRMAN suggested that all interested delegations should submit their amendments in writing and discuss them with the sponsors, so that a revised version of the draft resolution could be prepared in time for the next meeting.

60. Mr. FRASER (United Kingdom) said that, because of the great importance his delegation attached to achieving a consensus on the draft resolution, he proposed to hold further consultations with interested delegations and therefore welcomed the Chairman's suggestion.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.