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FIFTH COMMITTEE
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at 8 p.m.
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at 8 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 53rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GODGREY (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 8.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 100: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983 (continued)
(A/36/6, A/36/7, A/36/38 (chaps. V and VII D))

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolutions submitted in documents A/36/L.20 and A/36/L.21 concerning agenda item 19 (A/C.5/36/58)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the statement submitted by the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolutions A/36/L.20 and A/36/L.21 (A/C.5/36/58) contained details of the activities that would be mandated by the General Assembly with the adoption of those proposals. In all, the expenditures entailed were estimated at \$279,800, of which \$254,800 would relate to section 3 A.2 of the proposed programme budget and \$25,000 to section 27. The Secretary-General drew attention to the amount of \$538,300 under section 3 A.2 which had already been approved by the Fifth Committee in first reading for the activities of the Special Committee on Decolonization during the biennium 1982-1983. Since no additional appropriation would be needed under section 3 A.2, that left only the amount of \$25,000 under section 27. As paragraph 13 of document A/C.5/36/58 was not specific on how that amount had been arrived at, the Advisory Committee had sought clarification on the programmes to be financed from it. It had been informed that a new programme element of public information was called for, involving the publication of two maps on decolonization showing what had been achieved between 1960 and 1980. The maps were to be published in three languages, English, French and Spanish, and 140,000 copies were to be issued. It was estimated that \$25,000 would be needed to pay for the two maps. The Advisory Committee had accordingly accepted the amount proposed, and the Fifth Committee might wish to inform the plenary Assembly that if draft resolution A/36/L.21 was adopted, an additional appropriation of \$25,000 would be required under section 27.

2. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) said that his delegation was unlikely to vote in favour of either draft resolution in the plenary Assembly. Nevertheless, as far as the financial implications set out in document A/C.5/36/58 were concerned, he wished to make it clear that his delegation considered that the \$25,000 under section 27 should and could be absorbed from the resources already allocated to the Department of Public Information. He would therefore ask for a vote to be taken. In addition, while taking note of the statement in paragraph 16 that the \$254,800 associated with the adoption of draft resolution A/36/L.20 would be met out of the amount already approved under section 3A.2, his delegation wished to reiterate its opposition to meeting the travel and subsistence costs of representatives of national liberation movements. It would also appreciate confirmation from the representative of the Secretary-General that the General Assembly's criteria regarding the holding of meetings away from headquarters had been fully taken into account.

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3. Mr. BEGIN (Director, Budget Division) said that the General Assembly had specifically authorized the principle of holding those particular meetings at locations other than headquarters.

4. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

5. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee was adopted by 73 votes to 1, with 8 abstentions.

6. The CHAIRMAN said that the Rapporteur would inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolutions A/36/L.20 and A/36/L.21, an additional appropriation of \$25,000 would be required under section 27.

7. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), speaking in explanation of vote, said that although his delegation had supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, he wished to make clear the underlying thought. It was his delegation's traditional policy to support the Advisory Committee, in whose judgement it had complete confidence. At the same time, it was opposed to all additional appropriations. Accordingly, his delegation's support for the recommendation, in the vote that had just been taken, indicated only its agreement with the Advisory Committee's conclusion regarding the resources required for the activities in question, and did not represent an endorsement of the supplementary appropriation. The additional resources required should be found through redeployment. His delegation's attitude to the budget as a whole would be determined by the General Assembly's success in holding it to zero growth. He would not repeat the points he had just made in any future votes on financial implications, but he wished to make it clear that his statement applied to all such occasions.

8. Mr. GEPP (Brazil) said that if he had been present during the voting, he would have voted in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): preparatory work for bringing the Common Fund into operation (A/C.5/36/37)

9. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that under section 15 of the programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 the General Assembly had appropriated an amount of \$1,750,500 in order to finance an advance required for the preparatory work for bringing the Common Fund into operation. The Secretary-General reported in document A/C.5/36/37 that total expenditure for the 1980-1981 biennium was not expected to exceed \$576,000, thus requiring the balance of \$1,174,500 to be surrendered and to be reappropriated for the biennium 1982-1983. The Advisory Committee accordingly recommended that that amount should be appropriated under section 15 of the proposed programme budget for 1982-1983. The effect would be that, after the appropriation of the money under section 15, general income under income section 2 would have to be increased by \$1,750,500. That amount would

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(Mr. Mselle)

represent the reimbursement that would accrue to the United Nations after the preparatory work had been completed and would be used to reduce Member States' future budgetary assessments. A further effect would be that there would be a reduction under income section 2 for the biennium 1980-1981 of \$1,750,500. That would be shown in the performance report, as would the 1980-1981 expenditure of \$576,000. He noted that provisions for staff assessment estimated at \$96,500 would also be required under section 31 and income section 1 of the 1982-1983 budget.

10. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Fifth Committee should approve an additional appropriation of \$1,174,500 under section 15 of the proposed programme budget for 1982-1983, to be offset by the amount of \$1,750,500 under income section 2, which would represent the reimbursement that would be due to the United Nations from the Common Fund once the Fund was declared operational.

11. It was so decided.

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Trade and Development Board at its twenty-second and twenty-third sessions held in Geneva (A/C.5/36/45)

12. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that the Secretary-General, in document A/C.5/36/45, had not requested that the funds in question should be appropriated immediately. The decisions and resolutions adopted by the Trade and Development Board at its twenty-second and twenty-third sessions would give rise to conference-servicing costs estimated on a full-cost basis at \$1,010,700. No additional appropriation was requested because funding for 1982 would be considered in the context of the consolidated statement on conference requirements.

13. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) asked what the normal procedure was for dealing with such resolutions and decisions. As far as his delegation was aware, there had not so far been any endorsement of the resolutions and decisions of the Trade and Development Board by the Second Committee or the General Assembly. He thought such an endorsement would normally be a prerequisite for acting on revised estimates.

14. Mr. DEBATIN (Under-Secretary-General for Administration, Finance and Management) said that he would obtain a legal opinion on that point and report to the Committee in due course.

15. The CHAIRMAN suggested that for the time being the Committee should take note of the Secretary-General's proposal and the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and should defer its decision on the revised estimates to a later stage.

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16. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) had some further questions on the revised estimates. He noted that the figure for the financial implications of resolution 226 (XXII) on protectionism and structural adjustment provided to the Trade and Development Board had been \$98,000. The amount was almost 50 per cent higher in document A/C.5/36/45 and his delegation would like an explanation of the increase. A number of the resolutions adopted by the Trade and Development Board seemed excessively expensive and he would appreciate an analysis of the cost/benefit relationship.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of the Secretary-General had noted the questions raised by the United States representative and would answer them when the Committee returned to the sub-item.

Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems, 1982 budget estimates: revised estimates under section 28G. Electronic Data Processing and Information Systems Division - Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems (United Nations share) (A/C.5/36/38)

18. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the comments of the Advisory Committee on section 28G, containing an initial estimate of the United Nations share in financing the Inter-Organization Board, had indicated that the amount was subject to whatever decision the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) might take on the question of the Board's continuation (A/36/7, para. 28.80). The report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/36/38 indicated that the question of abolishing or continuing the Inter-Organization Board and the nature of its work in the future would not be definitively decided upon by ACC until 1982. ACC accordingly recommended a contingency budget, amounting to \$674,300, as set out in detail by the Secretary-General in paragraph 4. The amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 28G for the United Nations share of the expenses of the Inter-Organization Board should therefore be reduced by \$247,100, i.e. from \$527,600 to \$280,500 (A/36/7, para. 28.80). The Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General's estimate should be accepted, which would in turn require a reduction in the amount appropriated under section 28G.

19. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should decide to reduce by \$247,500 the amount appropriated under section 28G in first reading.

20. It was so decided.

International Computing Centre, 1982 budget estimates: revised estimates under section 28G. Electronic Data Processing and Information Systems Division - International Computing Centre, Geneva (United Nations share) (A/C.5/36/44)

21. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the 1982 budget estimates for the International

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(Mr. Mselle)

Computing Centre amounted to \$5,343,100. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983 already included a provisional amount of \$3,403,300 for the United Nations share of the cost of operating the International Computing Centre in 1982-1983. The Secretary-General indicated in paragraph 11 of document A/C.5/36/44 that no additional appropriation would be called for. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it approve the budget estimate of \$5,343,100 for the International Computing Centre, drawing to its attention the fact that there would be no need to appropriate additional resources under section 28G.

22. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the approval of the 1982 budget estimates for the International Computing Centre.

23. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/36/495; A/C.5/36/9, 19 and 31; A/C.5/36/CRP.2)

(a) COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

(b) OTHER PERSONNEL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

AGENDA ITEM 104: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT: REPORTS TO THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (continued) (A/36/407, A/36/432 and Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 108: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (continued) (A/36/30; A/C.5/36/26 and 29)

24. Mr. BRYNTSEV (Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the United Nations Secretariat (A/36/407), said that in spite of numerous General Assembly resolutions on the need for strict implementation of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, the situation regarding the distribution of geographical posts in the Secretariat in general remained unsatisfactory. After a painstaking analysis of United Nations documents and statistical data, JIU had concluded that a number of factors were hindering the attainment of equitable geographical distribution. The most important factors were the insufficient efforts made in many divisions of the Secretariat to appoint candidates from unrepresented and under-represented countries to vacant geographical posts, the extensive use of permanent contracts, and the practice of filling vacancies by giving preference to internal candidates over external candidates. The failure to appoint sufficient candidates from unrepresented and under-represented countries was borne out by the fact that the number of such countries in the Secretariat had increased both in absolute terms and in proportion to the over-all number of Member States. That could be seen from an analysis of the data provided in table B of the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/36/495). The recommendation

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(Mr. Bryntsev)

contained in General Assembly resolution 1436 (XIV) and reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 35/210 that the Secretary-General's endeavours to increase the number of the Secretariat staff appointed on fixed-term contracts should be continued and encouraged was being implemented at a very slow rate. As of 30 June 1981, the proportion of Secretariat staff appointed on fixed-term contracts amounted to 38.5 per cent, while in many other organizations of the United Nations system the number of such staff was seventy to eighty per cent and higher of the over-all number of staff members. Paragraphs 30 to 39 of document A/36/407 analysed the positive aspects of the use of fixed-term contracts as opposed to permanent contracts. If the General Assembly was committed to the complete and speedy solution of the problem of unrepresentation and under-representation, which affected more than 25 per cent of all States Members of the United Nations, it was necessary to take steps to reduce the number of permanent contracts and increase the number of fixed-term contracts. The current practice of filling vacancies preferably by internal promotion and transfer, particularly at senior and policy-formulating levels, was contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and decisions of the General Assembly. A number of other factors hindering the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution were analysed in paragraphs 46 to 70 of the JIU report.

25. JIU had made ten recommendations to improve the geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat. Recommendation 1, which was the most important, called for the strict application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution in all entities of the Organization. In that regard, however, the Inspectors were not suggesting that decisions taken by the General Assembly to permit the recruitment of 75 per cent of the staff of the regional commissions from countries of those regions should be amended. Recommendation 2 proposed that, during the period 1982-1984, at least three out of every five candidates appointed to vacant geographical posts in each entity should be nationals of unrepresented and under-represented Member States. Recommendation 3 stated that the number of permanent contracts should be reduced and the number of fixed-term contracts increased, so that in future the majority of the staff subject to geographical distribution would have fixed-term appointments. Recommendation 4 called for consideration of the question of introducing a new type of interruptible (rotation) fixed-term contract. Recommendation 5 proposed that vacancy announcements should be issued simultaneously for internal and external candidates and the consideration and selection of the best candidate should be made strictly in conformity with the Charter and the relevant resolutions and Staff Regulations adopted by the General Assembly. The remaining recommendations dealt with, *inter alia*, the improvement of the representation of unrepresented and under-represented countries in senior and policy-formulating posts, the reduction in the number of posts which were not subject to geographical distribution, and the need to take measures to shorten and simplify the recruitment and appointment process.

26. Mr. WILSKI (Poland) said that table B of the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat showed that the number of staff from the region of Eastern Europe had declined from 317 in 1977 to 296 in 1981. Table 4 in the annex to that document showed that during the period from 1 July 1980 to

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(Mr. Wilski, Poland)

30 June 1981 there had been a total of 70 appointments of nationals from Eastern Europe and 77 separations, resulting in a net loss of seven staff members. It was, therefore, no surprise that that region had no over-represented Member States and as many as five under-represented Member States out of a total of 11. His delegation expressed its disappointment and concern at that situation and could not share the opinion of the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services that a turning-point had been reached in meeting the recruitment targets set by the General Assembly. The adoption and strict implementation of measures along the lines of recommendation 2 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/36/407) could be extremely important in redressing the current totally unacceptable and discriminatory imbalance. In that regard, he took note of the statement by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services that, for an unspecified period of time, 50 per cent of all available vacancies, other than those that were to be filled from inside the department or office concerned, would be earmarked for recruitment of nationals of unrepresented and under-represented Member States or of women and that a national of an over-represented or under-represented Member State or Member States within their desirable ranges but below mid-point was available. His delegation appreciated that effort, even if it fell short of its legitimate demands and expectations. The information provided in tables 9 and 12 of the annex to the report of the Secretary-General (A/36/495) showed a net gain of only 2 Polish nationals during the year under review. He requested information on the grades of the posts of the five Polish nationals who had been separated from service, as indicated in table 12, in order to make a qualitative comparison with the grades of the appointments in table 11. It was hoped that that situation would further improve and that his delegation would have no cause for complaints at the next session of the General Assembly. He noted with satisfaction the statement in paragraph 94 that extensions beyond the age of 60 years had been granted since 1979 up to six months only and solely for the purpose of finding replacements for retiring staff and that no difficulties had been experienced in the application of that policy.

27. His delegation rejected both the form and the substance of the report submitted by the Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations Secretariat in document A/C.5/36/19, particularly the statements made in paragraphs 4 and 5 that as the number of political appointees had increased a sense of pessimism and cynicism had descended on the staff of the Secretariat and that politicization of the management of the Secretariat inevitably led to a decline in professional standards. He had himself served as a political appointee for three years in the Organization. That fact had not prevented him from adhering strictly to the relevant provisions of the Charter and the Staff Regulations. He, therefore, felt ashamed that the Organization employed people who not only had the audacity to write lines like the ones just quoted, but also, as was indicated in paragraph 8 of the report, threatened to inform on their colleagues and superiors when the latter made political appointments. In his day staff representatives were guided by a different morality.

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28. Mr. BENZEITUN (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that, in recent years, the subject of personnel had aroused the concern of all Member States, because of the growing complication of the problem, which was caused, in his delegation's view, by the fact that the self-interest of some Member States had prevailed over the general interest of the Organization and by increased political pressures. It seemed that the only person who could be expected to deal with the situation was the Secretary-General, and it was to be hoped that he would give the problem special priority. His delegation emphasized the need for a coherent administrative structure with clear-cut personnel relations between the various departments.

29. With regard to the geographical distribution of the Secretariat and the representation of Member States, it was clear from the report of the Secretary-General (A/36/495) and from the tables contained in it that the gap still remained between the industrialized States and the developing States. The Secretary-General's report stated that 19 Member States were not represented in the Secretariat and that 26 were represented inadequately. His delegation believed that the time had come to consider the traditional criteria guiding recruitment because the circumstances in the light of which those criteria had been laid down had now changed. His delegation fully respected the application of the provisions of the Charter relating to personnel questions, in particular Articles 100 and 101. It considered however that some of the provisions of those two Articles had been abused either by the Secretariat or by Member States. Paragraph 3 of Article 101 was very clear, and he had no objection to its observation. However, that principle had been applied at the expense of the other principle complementary to it, namely the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

30. His delegation was extremely concerned at the statement in the Joint Inspection Unit's report on the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the United Nations Secretariat (A/36/407) that one of the most serious factors hindering the proper application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution was deficiencies in recruitment planning. His delegation also objected to the fact that a large number of countries were over-represented in the Secretariat. Scrupulous implementation of the Charter (Art. 101, para. 3) was essential to ensure proper representation of non-represented and under-represented countries. The Joint Inspection Unit's recommendations in that regard were extremely important, if they could be implemented.

31. His delegation welcomed the considerable increase in the proportional representation of nationals of developing countries in senior posts, particularly those related to economic and social activities. That trend must be continued, in order to bring about a just balance. It appreciated also the measures taken to achieve an average age of 35 years for staff at the P-1 and P-2 levels, in order to give opportunity to youth. That trend too must be increased. He was sure that most of the young people so employed would make effective contributions to the work of the Organization.

(Mr. Benzeitun, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

32. With regard to the announcement of vacant posts, the issuing of circulars about them and the roster of candidates, his delegation welcomed the progress achieved. It hoped that further efforts would be made to announce vacancies well ahead of the time set for recruitment. It noted with interest the statement in paragraph 32 of the Secretary-General's report (A/36/495) concerning the establishment of lists of research institutions and universities that could serve as possible sources of candidates and the sending of vacancy announcements to them.

33. His delegation welcomed the increase in the number of women recruited to posts subject to geographical distribution and the fact that the recruitment of women had become one of the major goals of the Secretariat. However, discrimination against women still existed in the Secretariat, and no significant progress had been made, in spite of the measures taken.

34. It was clear from the report of the Secretary-General (A/36/495) that a number of nationals had been recruited from Member States whose ranges had been exceeded, in disregard of all the necessary criteria of efficiency, competence and integrity. That was an injustice to non-represented and under-represented States and in total contradiction with the provisions of the Charter.

35. He expressed his delegation's satisfaction at the statement in paragraph 54 of the Secretary-General's report (A/36/495) concerning compliance with the request of the General Assembly to ensure that candidates from outside were recruited whenever a post subject to equitable geographical distribution became vacant for any reason, so that no post would become the preserve of any one State. His delegation was strongly opposed to inheritance of posts.

36. His delegation hoped that more efforts would be made by the Secretariat and by Member States to find ways of establishing fruitful co-operation and co-ordination to overcome the difficulties standing in the way of the solution of personnel problems.

37. Mr. JONAH (Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services) said that in table E in document A/36/495 the number of staff from the region of Africa for the year 1981 was 400.

38. Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados) expressed his delegation's satisfaction at the assurance given by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services that the recruitment procedures set out in the annex to General Assembly resolution 35/210 had been followed and that the degree of co-operation between the Office of Personnel Services and the substantive departments had been increasing. On the basis of the statistics provided in document A/36/495, his delegation felt that it was unlikely that the specific targets set would be achieved, but was prepared to respond favourably to the Assistant Secretary-General's appeal for patience. It was hoped that a very positive report on progress could be made to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session.

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(Mr. Maycock, Barbados)

39. The only logical approach would be to defer taking a decision on personnel questions until the following year. That would permit the Committee of Governmental Experts to examine the questions and issues highlighted in its report (A/36/44), consider the recommendations of the JIU reports on equitable geographical distribution and personnel questions (A/36/407 and A/36/432) and make recommendations on that subject to the Fifth Committee. Such a delay would also enable the Office of Personnel Services to test in greater detail the soundness of the measures already agreed. The results of the wider consultations held by the Committee of Governmental Experts, ICSC and JIU should enable the Fifth Committee to decide with greater assurance whether to continue along the path on which it had already started or to seek new approaches.

40. His delegation expressed satisfaction at the efforts of the Secretariat to develop a computerized roster of internal candidates and its attempt to link that roster with the roster for external candidates. It was hoped that it would be possible at some stage to develop an internal roster of General Service staff. That might provide an opportunity for making fundamental changes in the dreaded competitive examinations for the passage from General Service and related categories to the Professional category and might even lead to the development of an alternative method of competition for that purpose. The available posts for that examination were listed under five occupational categories in paragraph 99 of the report (A/36/495). Those categories did not correspond with the occupational descriptions listed in paragraph 90, yet it would seem to his delegation that any grouping of posts by occupation for the purpose of an examination designed to promote staff members to the Professional category ought to parallel as closely as possible the occupational groupings formulated in respect of that category.

41. With regard to the report submitted by the Staff Unions and the Associations of the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/36/19), his delegation was particularly struck by the statement in paragraph 75. If the efforts and energies of staff members were directed towards the improvement of their careers, the efficiency of the Organization and, indeed, the system was bound to be adversely affected. His delegation felt that it was necessary to take immediate steps to correct that situation.

42. Lastly, he supported the statement made by the representative of the Netherlands and other representatives who had voiced their disapproval of the infringement of the privileges and immunities that had been accorded by the Charter to officials of the United Nations. His delegation urged all Member States to comply with their commitments and obligations and was prepared to join with like-minded delegations in formalizing that appeal.

43. Mr. DITZ (Austria) said that his delegation attached particular importance to the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 35/210 and followed with keen interest the measures taken by the Secretariat to apply that resolution to practical personnel policies. The report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/36/495) showed that some progress had already been achieved in a number of areas in the implementation of that resolution, and particularly of its annex on

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(Mr. Ditz, Austria)

recruitment procedures. It would not be possible to measure the results achieved in that regard until the following year. His delegation would be particularly interested to see if the use of competitive examinations for the recruitment of junior professionals was ready to be generalized at the end of the transitional period. General competitive examinations for the junior professional grades were of extreme importance to an organization striving for an efficient civil service. In that regard, his delegation had taken note of the remarks made by the representative of the staff and felt that the organization of the examinations should be improved and that any inequities in the current promotion procedure from the General Service category to the Professional category should be eliminated.

44. The concept of career and career development was of fundamental importance to Member States, the staff and all the specialized agencies of the United Nations system. His delegation hoped to receive in due course the final reports of JIU and ICSC containing the necessary recommendations for consideration at the next session of the General Assembly. The report of ICSC on that subject should be submitted sufficiently in advance in order to permit Member States to study it thoroughly.

45. Although it could be said that, thanks to the progress achieved in the area of recruitment, the first step towards a complete reorganization of the existing personnel system had been taken, that step must be accompanied by measures to promote career development. It was necessary, not only to find and employ excellent candidates, but also to provide them with incentives to work to the best of their ability. That could only be achieved through the establishment of a coherent system of career development which offered young civil servants prospects for advancement and promotion. The Austrian Civil Service was based on objective recruitment methods, with a probationary period leading to a permanent contract; anyone who lived up to the standards laid down in its staff rules and regulations could be promoted up to a certain grade. That system had provided Austria with a qualified and politically independent civil service. Since the civil services of most Member States were organized along the same lines, the United Nations should be able to adopt a similar system, bearing in mind that its current mixed career system with recruitment at all grades was obviously not conducive to the morale of the staff. There was currently no systematic career development. Many staff members were forced to conclude, therefore, that in the long run the quality of their work was less important to their careers than the cultivation of a network of personal contacts within the Secretariat and with delegations. The recent statement made by the staff representative was quite clear in that respect. There was an urgent need, therefore, to establish a more reasonable and methodological system of career development in which promotion was granted on the basis of merit and not because of political pressure. Furthermore, ensuring equitable promotion opportunities and reasonable job security would promote efforts to achieve the goal of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, as set out in Article 101 of the Charter.

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(Mr. Ditz, Austria)

46. On the question of a desirable proportion between fixed-term and permanent contracts, he said that his delegation was fully aware of the arguments in favour of the former and recognized their advantages. Nevertheless, in view of the need to ensure career development and the independence of the staff in accordance with Article 101 of the Charter, it believed that the majority of contracts in the United Nations Secretariat should be permanent.

47. Since the concept of occupation and occupational groups was already being used to draw up the annual recruitment plan, it was only logical to apply it to career development and to use occupational groups as standard career paths. Transfer from one occupational group to another would have to be governed by detailed rules in order to ensure that the staff members in question had the necessary professional qualifications for carrying out their new work assignments.

48. He recalled that his delegation had already made a statement on the question of job classification and reclassification under agenda item 108. In that regard, he had still not received satisfactory answers to the questions he had posed to the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services. The rigid rank-in-the-job method as currently applied not only had adverse effects on the staff whose promotion was impeded or left to chance but also caused grade creep. He inquired whether it would not be more sensible to combine that method with the rank-in-person method. He also requested the Assistant Secretary-General to inform the Committee of his views on the compatibility of a system of linked grades and the job classification system.

49. Lastly, his delegation would welcome an initiative by the Secretariat designed to provide information on the situation of current international schooling facilities at United Nations Headquarters and the various duty stations so that appropriate action could be taken if necessary. Any suggestions by the Secretariat on how to improve the existing arrangements would be greatly appreciated. It was hoped that all the members of the Committee who had shown an active interest in the question of adequate schooling for the children of United Nations staff members would support that initiative.

50. Mr. MONTHE (United Republic of Cameroon) said that the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat showed that progress had been made in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 33/143 and 35/210. If that trend continued, the various objectives set out in those resolutions could be achieved in the near future. He welcomed the statement in paragraph 41 of document A/36/495 that the procedure for rationalizing recruitment was functioning without the need to have recourse to the higher stages of the procedure. The information on the improvement of the roster of candidates, the active policy of recruiting candidates from unrepresented and under-represented countries and the commitment of the Secretary-General to ensure that the countries which were already well-represented would so remain was encouraging, as was the effort made to improve the situation of women. He noted with great interest that many internal and external competitive examinations were being organized to recruit young professionals at the P-1 and P-2 levels. The experience gained

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(Mr. Monthe, United Republic of Cameroon)

would improve the methods, organization, setting and correcting of the competitive examinations. In several years time it would perhaps be appropriate to call upon JIU to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the system of competitive examinations. At the current stage, however, it would not be advisable to consider applying that system of recruitment to Professional posts other than at the P-1 and P-2 levels.

51. In spite of the progress made, attention should be focused on certain areas. Table E in paragraph 19 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/36/495) showed that the average age of staff at the P-1 and P-2 levels had tended to rise in 1981 as compared with 1980, in spite of the General Assembly's recommendation that it be lowered to 35 years as quickly as possible. With regard to D-1 and higher posts, much still remained to be done to implement the principle of equitable geographical distribution; corrective measures must be taken to redress the marked imbalance in that regard.

52. Career development was one of the basic questions on which neither the Secretary-General, ICSC nor JIU had submitted recommendations to enable the General Assembly to take a decision. His delegation had listened attentively to the statements made by the representatives of JIU and ICSC and had studied carefully the report submitted by the Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/36/19). It was still too early to take a decision on such an important question without the in-depth studies promised by ICSC, JIU, ACC and FICSA. Nevertheless, his delegation felt that the schedule proposed by JIU, which would mean that the General Assembly would be able to take a decision on the question at its thirty-seventh session, should be approved, since that would allow all the interested parties to express their views on the subject. Furthermore, the submission of two separate reports on the subject to the Assembly, as already recommended in resolution 35/210, would provide a better basis for its decision. The various issues relating to career development were at the very core of the concept of the international civil service as defined by the Charter and the Staff Regulations, and the complexity of those issues certainly warranted a more in-depth analysis by ICSC and JIU.

53. The question of the immunities and privileges of international civil servants was essential to the security and good working conditions of staff members. His country intended to respect all the legal instruments in force in that regard and expressed the hope that international civil servants would strictly observe the regulations which guided their professional conduct. That should be understood by Member States and staff members in the interests of both the international civil service and Governments.

54. Mr. ANDRIANONY (Madagascar) said that he would confine his remarks to two issues of particular importance to his delegation. The first related to the principle of the equitable distribution of Secretariat posts on as wide a geographical basis as possible. What emerged from the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/36/407) and the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/36/495) was that it was a major concern of the General Assembly to make the Secretariat genuinely an international civil service.

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(Mr. Andrianony, Madagascar)

The relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly since 1979 also reflected that concern, and he noted that there had been some improvement in the situation since the adoption of resolution 35/210 at the preceding session.

55. The imbalance which persisted in the representation of Member States, in terms of numbers of Secretariat staff, was eloquently expressed in table B of document A/36/495 and required no comment. He would stress that the un-represented States were principally developing countries, and particularly countries of Africa, of which six were still unrepresented and seven under-represented in 1981. The distribution was not better from the qualitative point of view, as was amply demonstrated by tables 2 and 4 of the annex to the report of the Secretary-General (A/36/495). The number of higher-level posts held by nationals of developing countries, especially African countries, was relatively low; of a total of 366 Higher-level staff, only 47 were African nationals. He wished to stress once again the need to correct that imbalance.

56. It was evident that the action taken thus far to ensure equitable distribution had been inadequate, even though some progress had been achieved. His delegation endorsed the recommendations made by earlier speakers that priority in recruitment should be given to nationals of unrepresented or under-represented Member States, and fully supported the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in document A/36/407, and in particular recommendations 1 and 5.

57. The second important issue was that of the recruitment of women to the Secretariat. His delegation fully endorsed the principle of equality of opportunity and of access to the international civil service, free from discrimination on the ground of sex. It was pleasing to note from table D of the report of the Secretary-General (A/36/495) that the proportion of women staff members had risen significantly over the last 10 years. His delegation strongly endorsed the provision in resolution 35/210 which requested the Secretary-General to continue to take the necessary measures to implement fully the provisions of resolution 24 adopted by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women. To that end, it was necessary to step up efforts to recruit women while taking care to give priority to nationals of unrepresented or under-represented States. As far as the distribution of posts was concerned, his delegation viewed with favour the principle that women could and should occupy high-level posts on the same conditions as men.

58. In conclusion, he reaffirmed his delegation's wish to see all the provisions of resolution 35/210 applied strictly and as fully as possible. For that purpose, it would be desirable to see close collaboration between the secretariats of the United Nations system and the Member States.

59. Mr. ARTAN ADAN (Somalia) said that his delegation understood the many factors to be considered in the recruitment process and appreciated the efforts of the Secretary-General to conform to the General Assembly's guidelines; it commended the progress which had been made, especially in the area of the recruitment of women. In the awareness that the major responsibility for increasing the number

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(Mr. Artan Adan, Somalia)

of female candidates for service with the United Nations lay with Member States, which did not always encourage or support their women nationals sufficiently, his Government was actively engaged in a policy of including women in national administration at all levels, believing that that process would lead to the wider involvement of women in the international field.

60. However, the Secretariat still had a clear responsibility to step up the recruitment of women and to increase sharply the proportion of women in senior and decision-making positions, and he was especially gratified that progress had been achieved without sacrifice of the merits or ideals of the international civil service. The greatest anomalies in the geographical composition of the staff seemed to be at the level of the regional commissions; it was significant that they had a relatively higher rate of vacancies, a lower proportion of women and a disproportionate level of recruitment from a few countries of the region. The Committee might wish to consider guidelines to correct those anomalies.

61. Several of the conclusions of the International Civil Service Commission appeared not to take full account of recruitment difficulties. Given those difficulties, which made it necessary for some Governments to adopt the practice of making supplementary payments to their national staff, it was reasonable to question the conclusion of the Commission that there was no evidence to suggest that the United States Federal Civil Service should be replaced as the comparator (A/36/30, para. 78).

62. Attention should be given to the increasing signs of disillusionment among the staff; whilst the various personnel issues might not individually warrant fundamental changes, an accumulation of specific problems in time tended to erode conditions of service in general. His delegation believed that improving conditions of service and improving the geographical distribution of the international civil service were equally important steps towards increasing the effectiveness of the United Nations system.

63. His delegation reaffirmed its respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations system and hoped that Member Governments would rapidly find solutions in cases where United Nations personnel were reportedly being detained.

64. Mr. GANI (Nigeria) emphasized his delegation's conviction that without a well-organized, dedicated and efficient staff, no organization could function effectively to its fullest capacity, and affirmed its support for the personnel reforms and recruitment policies initiated by the General Assembly.

65. The General Assembly had been right to call in resolution 35/210 for increased representation of developing countries in the Secretariat, especially in senior and policy-formulating posts. In 1980, nationals of developing countries, the numerical majority in the membership of the United Nations, had comprised 38.1 per cent of the total staff and 40.7 per cent of the senior staff. That state of affairs was not satisfactory, and there had to be an improvement in

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(Mr. Gani, Nigeria)

the employment prospects for nationals of developing countries. His delegation was confident that there was no conflict between equitable geographical distribution and the other criteria, including the need for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, provided that those criteria were applied in the right spirit.

66. It would be premature to request any figures in connexion with the new desirable ranges which the General Assembly had asked the Secretary-General to calculate and to apply from 1 January 1981. It was, however, necessary to emphasize that the under-representation of developing countries in senior and policy-formulating posts was unacceptable; the existence of third-world candidates of first-rate professional calibre must be taken into greater account.

67. In connexion with the question whether the Office of Personnel Services should operate as an autonomous department, his delegation commended the Secretary-General for his prompt and efficient compliance with the directives of General Assembly resolution 35/211, which had established the Committee of Governmental Experts to Evaluate the Present Structure of the Secretariat in the Administrative, Finance and Personnel Areas. That resolution, and the interim measures which it recommended, had created the right atmosphere for the management of those important sectors.

68. Mr. SIHERMAN (Liberia) emphasized the enduring importance of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, as embodied in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter. However, that principle had not been adhered to; as of 31 December 1980, 20 Member States were unrepresented in the Secretariat and as many as 25 were under-represented and, despite General Assembly resolution 33/143, which had established a target for the appointment of nationals of unrepresented and under-represented countries, vacancies continued to be filled from over-represented countries. He would appreciate an explanation from the Secretariat of the instances cited by the Joint Inspection Unit in document A/36/407 of candidates submitted by unrepresented and under-represented Member States who were considered suitable upon interview yet had not been appointed: that situation was unacceptable under the terms of Article 101.

69. Furthermore, the Secretary-General was appointing an increasing number of nationals from States which were not members of the United Nations, on the pretext that they had special qualifications. That practice should cease until all Member States were represented in the Secretariat.

70. The procedure used to establish the desirable ranges for Member States in terms of the geographical distribution of staff had always been of concern to his delegation. Even though new criteria had been established in General Assembly resolution 35/210, his delegation believed that the weight assigned to the contribution factor was too great. The study undertaken by the Swedish Government of the contributions of United Nations Member States, which had obtained three quite different rankings by using three different yardsticks, served to illustrate the fallacy of the use of assessments as a major factor in calculating the desirable ranges.

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(Mr. Sherman, Liberia)

71. He noted with satisfaction the increase in the number of women in posts subject to geographical distribution but stressed that additional efforts were necessary to achieve the targets set by General Assembly resolution 35/210.

72. The debate concerning permanent as opposed to fixed-term contracts had generated valid arguments on both sides. His delegation supported the principle of career development but believed that a balance should be maintained between the two types of contract so as to ensure adequate responsiveness to changes in priorities and an equitable geographical distribution of staff.

73. The practice whereby senior and policy-formulating posts had been treated as the exclusive preserve of a select group of Member States, thus enabling them to dominate the Organization, could not be allowed to continue, since it was contrary to the spirit of Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter. The phrase "as wide as geographical basis as possible" should apply to all levels of the Secretariat and, in view of the present proportion of developing countries in the Organization, it was urgently necessary to increase significantly the representation of those countries in the higher-level posts of the Secretariat.

74. A further issue of importance to his delegation was the increasing frequency of infringements by certain Member States of the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. The arrest and detention of international civil servants contravened Articles 100 and 105 of the Charter, as well as the Conventions on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and of the Specialized Agencies. His country appealed to all Member States to be mindful of their obligations and to permit officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to discharge their duties without hindrance.

75. Mr. HAKIM (Afghanistan) emphasized the importance of ensuring the effective representation of all United Nations Member States within their assigned quotas and supported the Joint Inspection Unit's report (A/36/407), which stressed the need for the achievement of a fairer geographical distribution.

76. Recruitment from unrepresented or under-represented countries continued to be a major problem for the Secretariat, and in that context permanent contracts were an impediment to the recruitment of highly-qualified professional staff. His delegation therefore agreed with the Joint Inspection Unit that there must be a reduction in the number of permanent appointments and an increase in the number of fixed-term contracts. It opposed the practice of appointing personnel in large numbers from over-represented countries, which would inevitably lead to the perpetual under-representation of other Member States. In the context of recruitment, vacancy announcements and publicity were very important factors.

77. The resolutions concerning the employment of women should be implemented in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

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(Mr. Hakim, Afghanistan)

78. His delegation agreed with the Joint Inspection Unit about the need for a strong and effective recruitment programme, a job classification strategy which made allowance both for organizational requirements and for greater staff mobility, the expansion of training facilities, incentives for the acquisition of new skills, more flexible study-leave entitlements, an updated performance-evaluation reporting system and a positive programme to eradicate the discriminatory practices encountered by women in appointment and promotion.

79. As indicated by the report of the Joint Inspection Unit in document A/36/407, most of the entities of the Organization had not fully observed the principle of equitable geographical distribution. As a result, many Member States were unrepresented and under-represented, while a significant number remained over-represented.

80. In connexion with the report of the Secretary-General on respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies (A/C.5/36/31), his delegation supported General Assembly resolution 35/212, believing that it would strengthen the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Charter. An international convention on the subject would contribute to the development of friendly relations among nations, irrespective of their differing constitutional and social systems. He agreed with the Secretary-General (para. 7) that the distinction between acts performed in an official capacity and those performed in a private capacity lay at the heart of the concept of functional immunity. However, the reference to the incident involving Mr. Tawakal in paragraph 15 of that report required correction; Mr. Tawakal was not a locally-recruited official of a United Nations agency but a driver recruited by UNICEF on a temporary contract. As such, he had been legally detained by the security forces of the country on charges of subversive and terrorist activities. If, as was evident, a locally-recruited service employee was first of all a national of his country, then the State's jurisdiction over that person could not be disputed. Legal proceedings had already been instituted in the case and the competent authorities of his country had indicated their willingness to arrange a meeting between UNICEF staff and Mr. Tawakal as soon as the process of interrogation had been completed.

The meeting rose at 11.15 p.m.