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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1972

Administrative and financial implications of draft resolution II
recommended by the Second Committee (A/8578, para. 44)

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Babooram RAMBISSOON (Trinidad and Tobago)

1. At its 1478th and 1479th meetings, held on 9 and 10 December respectively, the Fifth Committee, in compliance with rule 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, considered the statement of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1399 and Corr.1) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution II recommended for the adoption of the General Assembly by the Second Committee (A/8578, para. 44).
2. Under the terms of operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide to establish a separate section in the United Nations regular budget to provide for a unified system of regional and subregional advisory services earmarked for the operations of the regional commissions and the United Nations Economic and Social Office at Beirut and to transfer to this section the existing regional advisory services at present under section 13 of part VI of the budget estimates for 1972.
3. Under operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, however, the General Assembly would decide that the existing section 13 of part VI of the United Nations budget for the regular programme of technical assistance should be maintained at its current level of \$5,408,000 and that its operations should be

concentrated substantially to support country programmes of the least developed among the developing countries, as well as regional and subregional programmes of special interest to these countries.

4. In the related statement of financial implications (A/C.5/1399 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General indicated that the estimated cost of the existing regional advisory services proposed under section 13 of the 1972 budget estimates amounted to \$1,825,000. The transfer of the costs of these services to a separate section of the budget, as called for under operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, would be a purely technical act and, in itself, would not require additional resources. However, in order to restore the amount of \$1,825,000, which would be transferred from section 13 to the proposed new section, additional resources in an equal amount would need to be provided.

5. In its related report^{1/} the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions observed that the draft resolution contained in document A/C.2/L.1148/Rev.1 was not confined to programme matters but also dealt with the form of presentation of the United Nations budget, a matter which the Advisory Committee felt was within the competence of the Fifth Committee.

6. In this connexion, the Advisory Committee reiterated its view that if a Main Committee is of the opinion that a given activity can best be served by a particular budgetary presentation, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Fifth Committee by means of a recommendation from the Committee concerned. The Fifth Committee could then discuss the budgetary aspects of the matter and recommend action by the General Assembly in the light of over-all budgetary consideration. The Advisory Committee felt that this approach should be adhered to in order to maintain the sound budgetary procedures which are so important to the Organization.

7. In the interest of orderly budgetary procedures, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should ensure that whenever a Main Committee is asked to act upon a proposal which falls within the field of

^{1/} A/8408/Add.19.

competence of the Fifth Committee, the secretariat of that Main Committee should draw the matter to its attention so that the proposal can be referred to the Fifth Committee for its consideration.

8. During its discussion on the subject in the Fifth Committee a number of delegations expressed support for the views of the Advisory Committee as contained in paragraphs 6 to 9 of its report.^{2/}

9. With respect to the mode of financing technical assistance activities several delegations, as a matter of principle, were of the view that such activities should not be financed by the regular budget of the United Nations but by voluntary contributions made to the United Nations Development Programme for this purpose. Some of these delegations further indicated that their Governments would continue to pay their share for these activities in their national currencies.

10. Other delegations expressed the view that the technical assistance activities were an essential function of the United Nations and should thus be properly financed from its regular budget. In this connexion, they recalled that the funds made available for these activities have been maintained at the same level for several years and that this represented a decrease in the real assistance when account is taken of the increase in prices that have since occurred.

11. At the conclusion of its discussion, the Fifth Committee, by a roll-call vote of 61 to 13, with 8 abstentions, decided to inform the General Assembly that should it approve draft resolution II recommended by the Second Committee, an additional appropriation of \$1,825,000 would be required under part VI of the budget for 1972. The Fifth Committee further decided to draw the attention of the General Assembly to paragraphs 6 to 9 of the Advisory Committee's report^{2/} and in particular to paragraph 8.

^{2/} Ibid.