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PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1974-1975 AND MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1974-1977

Revised estimates resulting from decisions of the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions, the Trade and Development Board at the second part of its twelfth session and the Industrial Development Board at its seventh session

Tenth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has examined the revised estimates resulting from decisions of the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions, the Trade and Development Board at the second part of its twelfth session and the Industrial Development Board at its seventh session (A/C.5/1521/Rev.1).

2. The additional requirements for the biennium 1974-1975 are estimated by the Secretary-General at \$3.4 million, including \$280,000 for staff assessment under section 34 to be offset by an increase in the estimates of income in the same amount under income section 1.

Section 6. Policy-making organs (Economic and social activities)

3. Under this section, the Secretary-General requests \$72,000 for the translation, typing and reproduction of 800 pages of documentation to be issued in Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish for the World Population Conference to be held in 1974. The Advisory Committee noted that, when the Population Commission considered the documentation for the Conference it recognized the need to reduce such documentation as much as possible, but was informed that a series of background papers was either ready in draft or in a fairly advanced stage of preparation. It would appear, therefore, that the Population Commission was faced with a fait accompli. In the Advisory Committee's opinion, it would have been preferable had the Secretariat ascertained the Commission's views before undertaking the preparation of the background papers in question. The Committee would also point out that the

fact that a paper is in a fairly advanced stage of preparation - or even already drafted - is not a reason why it should necessarily be translated at considerable expense to the Organization. Rather, the criterion should be the potential usefulness of the paper for the Conference. The Committee trusts that, even at this late stage, it will prove possible to eliminate papers of marginal usefulness and that quality will not be sacrificed to quantity. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the estimate be reduced to \$50,000.

4. The Advisory Committee recalled that, in its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975, it looked forward to savings under section 6 pursuant to the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1768 (LIV), paragraph 16 of which deals with the periodicity of sessions of the subsidiary organs of the Council. 1/ The Committee notes that the Council's decisions relating to sessions of the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development and of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control entail savings of \$83,000 for the biennium.

5. The net impact of the Council's decisions relating to section 6 is thus to reduce requirements by \$11,000 for the biennium. The Committee's recommendation in paragraph 3 above would increase the reduction by \$22,000 to \$33,000.

Section 7. Department of Economic and Social Affairs

6. Under this section, the Secretary-General requests \$7,000 for the programme on development planning, projections and policies, and \$207,000 for natural resources, or a total of \$214,000.

7. The former amount relates to the travel and subsistence expenses of five new York-based staff to attend a session of the Committee for Development Planning to be held at Vienna in March-April 1974. As is apparent from paragraph 112 of the report of the Committee for Development Planning, these expenditures flow from an invitation extended to the Committee by the Executive Director of UNIDO. 2/ The Advisory Committee has reservations about the appropriateness of such an invitation, involving, as it does, additions to the United Nations budget. Moreover, the Committee is not convinced that there is need for five staff to attend the proposed session. It recommends that their number be reduced to three, with a consequential saving of \$3,000.

8. The additional appropriation of \$207,000 has been requested for the preparation for a United Nations water conference in 1977, the holding of which was approved by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1761 (LIV). The total cost of the Conference over the period 1974-1977 is estimated at \$591,000 (E/5301, para. 4).

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/9008), chap. III, paras. 6.2 and 6.5.

2/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 5 (E/5293).

9. The additional resources requested for 1974-1975 can be broken down as follows:

	<u>1974</u> \$	<u>1975</u> \$
(i) Temporary assistance	16,000	92,000
(ii) Consultants	-	55,000
(iii) Common staff costs	5,000	29,000
(iv) Travel of staff	-	9,000
(v) General expenses	-	1,000
Total . . .	<u>21,000</u>	<u>186,000</u>

10. While the Advisory Committee agrees that preparatory work for the Conference will call for additional staff resources on a temporary assistance basis, it believes that such a need is unlikely to arise as early as the last quarter of 1974, in view of the fact that the Conference will be held in 1977. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the temporary assistance posts requested by the Secretary-General (one D-1, two P-3 and two General Service) not be filled before the first quarter of 1975, with a consequential saving of \$33,000.

11. As regards the request for consultants (\$55,000), the Committee is of the opinion that it should be considered in the light of the over-all need for economies, as well as of the findings of the Joint Inspection Unit regarding the use of experts and consultants in the United Nations (A/9112). Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the Secretary-General's estimate for consultants be reduced by \$20,000 to \$35,000.

12. Finally, the Committee hopes that travel funds will be used with circumspection and with due regard for economy.

13. For the reasons stated in paragraphs 7, 10 and 11 above, the Committee recommends that the additional requirements under section 7 can be reduced by \$56,000 to \$158,000.

Section 9. Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East

14. An additional appropriation of \$42,000 has been requested by virtue of Economic and Social Council resolution 1813 (LV). Of that amount, \$14,000 is for temporary conference and documentation staff for the second of two rounds of intergovernmental consultations on timber and oil-palm in 1974. The initial round was held in 1973 and the related costs were charged against vacant posts in the Commission. The Advisory Committee has no objection to this request.

15. On the other hand, for the reasons outlined in paragraph 11 above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the estimate for consultants' services (\$28,000) be reduced by \$8,000 to \$20,000.

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Section 12. Economic Commission for Western Asia

16. The Economic and Social Council, at its 1878th meeting, adopted resolution 1818 (LV) establishing an Economic Commission for Western Asia. 3/

17. The Commission will absorb the functions now discharged by the United Nations Economic and Social Office at Beirut. The Secretary-General expects that the future structure of the Commission will not be dissimilar from that of the existing regional economic commissions. A more detailed picture will emerge only after the first session of the intergovernmental body of the Commission in the early part of 1974.

18. The Advisory Committee appreciates that, under these circumstances, the Secretary-General is not in a position to furnish more precise details concerning the Commission's programme objectives for 1974-1975 and to relate his request for staff and resources to those objectives. The Committee trusts, however, that, in subsequent biennia, the normal requirements of programme budgeting would be observed.

19. In his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975, the Secretary-General requested a manning table for the United Nations Economic and Social Office at Beirut consisting of 20 Professional and 32 local-level posts, that is a total of 52. In paragraph 12.4 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975, 4/ the Advisory Committee recommended a manning table of 50 posts (20 Professional and above and 30 local-level). While some strengthening may be needed before the first session of the intergovernmental body, the bulk of the additional posts - especially in the substantive areas - will be required only after that body has met and decided on the programme. Allowing for normal recruitment delays, it is thus unlikely that all the new posts requested by the Secretary-General for 1974 can be filled before the end of the year. In the circumstances, the Advisory Committee believes that there is room for a larger delayed recruitment factor than has been applied by the Secretary-General. The Committee is also of the view that, at this stage, it is difficult to allocate the new posts to individual programme sectors; such allocation will have to await the decisions to be taken next year by the intergovernmental body. For the same reason, it is impossible to determine in advance which posts will be required in 1974 and which in 1975.

20. Accordingly, and in line with its approach throughout the proposed programme budget that the biennium should be viewed as a whole for the purpose of additions to the manning table, 5/ the Advisory Committee recommends that the size of the manning table for the biennium be set at 100 posts (45 Professional and above and 55 local-level) - as against 89 posts for 1974 and 136 posts for 1975 required by

3/ For the Commission's terms of reference, see A/C.5/1521/Rev.1.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/9008), chap. III.

5/ Ibid., chap. I, para. 42.

the Secretary-General and that a delayed recruitment factor of 50 per cent be applied to the 25 Professional posts and of 35 per cent to the 25 General Service posts which would be added to the manning table recommended for the United Nations Economic and Social Office at Beirut. The resultant saving under the section would be \$567,000.

21. The above recommendation entails a consequential reduction of \$87,000 for rental and maintenance of premises and of equipment, utilities, communications and acquisition of furniture and equipment.

22. The Advisory Committee was also apprised of the question of accommodation for the Commission. It was informed that so far two proposals had been discussed informally with the Government of the host country. Under one of them, the Government would donate the land and the United Nations would build the plot. Under the other option, the Government would offer the plot and also assume financial responsibility for the construction of the Commission's building, against an agreed rent to be paid by the United Nations for occupancy of the building. The Advisory Committee would welcome an early decision on this and other matters which are still pending.

23. The Advisory Committee's recommendations in paragraphs 20 and 21 above reduce the additional requirements under section 12 by \$654,000 to \$937,000.

Section 14. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

24. The estimate of \$275,000 under this section relates to the establishment by the Trade and Development Board - pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1734 (LIV) - of an intergovernmental preparatory group, under the auspices of UNCTAD, to elaborate a preliminary draft of a convention on international intermodal transport. The estimate includes \$205,000 for the preparation of documentation in four languages for the two sessions of the Group, to be held in 1974 (230 pages pre-session, 150 pages in-session and 250 pages for final reports); \$60,000 for 24 man-months of consultants and \$10,000 for travel. The Secretary-General estimates that, should a plenipotentiary conference be convened in 1975, there would be additional requirements under the section in an amount of \$168,000.

25. In the Committee's view, the request for consultants' services should be seen in the light of the findings of the Joint Inspection Unit regarding the use of consultants and experts in the United Nations (A/9112), as well as in the light of general considerations of economy. It recommends, therefore, that the estimate for consultants be reduced by \$15,000 to \$45,000.

26. The Advisory Committee has reservations about the proposed "fact-finding" missions at a cost of \$10,000 in travel and subsistence. It recommends that the necessary information be obtained to the maximum extent possible from Member Governments, through the specialized agencies concerned and the regional economic commissions. Accordingly, it recommends that the estimate for travel and subsistence be reduced by \$3,000.

27. As regards documentation, the Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will make every effort to reduce its volume; the Committee is not, however, recommending any reduction in the estimate of \$205,000.

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28. Accordingly, the Committee recommends a revised estimate of \$257,000 for section 14.

Section 15. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

29. The amount of \$28,000 requested under this section consists of \$15,000 for documentation and conference-servicing costs for one session of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Follow-up of the Report of the Group of High-level Experts on a Long-range Strategy for UNIDO, and \$13,000 for the conference-servicing costs arising out of the decision to hold the tenth session of the Committee for Development Planning at Vienna.

30. The Advisory Committee concurs in the former request. As regards the latter, however, the Committee recalls that it arises from an invitation extended to the Committee for Development Planning by the Executive Director of UNIDO. As stated in paragraph 7 above, the Advisory Committee has reservations about this procedure. In the Advisory Committee's opinion, UNIDO should now make an effort to absorb, at least in part, the costs attributable to the change of venue. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of \$4,000 under this item.

31. On that basis, the additional requirements under Section 15 would amount to \$24,000.

Section 18. International narcotics control

32. The amount of \$117,000 requested under section 18 consists of \$41,000 for convening, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1778 (LIV), a special session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 1974; \$69,000 attributable to the Council's decision to postpone until February-March 1975 the session of the Commission initially scheduled for January 1975; and \$7,000 for travel related to the work of the Sub-Commission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East.

33. The Commission's special session in 1974 will be a departure from the normal biennial cycle of that Commission's sessions, as approved by the Economic and Social Council. The Advisory Committee trusts that the Commission will find it possible in the future to abide by the Council's basic decision on the calendar of conferences as contained in paragraph 16 (b) of resolution 1768 (LIV).

34. The Advisory Committee understands that the decision to postpone the 1975 session of the Commission was owing to the likelihood that the necessary documentation would not be ready by January of that year. The additional requirements are attributed by the Secretary-General solely to the need to recruit more staff for in-session and post-session translation and documentation. The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will be able to make greater use of full-time translators for this work, perhaps by rescheduling less urgent translations. It recommends that, on this basis, the estimates be reduced by \$25,000.

35. Accordingly, the requirements under section 18 would amount to \$92,000.

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Section 19. Regular programme of technical assistance

36. The additional requirement of \$0.5 million under section 19 is contingent on approval by the General Assembly of a recommendation made by the Industrial Development Board at its seventh session that the Assembly "increase the planning level and budget of the regular programme of technical assistance of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization from \$1.5 million to \$2 million as of 1975". 6/ For the reason given in paragraph 19.7 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975, 7/ the Advisory Committee has no comments to offer on this request.

Section 20. Human Rights

37. Additional net requirements under this section, after taking account of the saving of \$25,000 resulting from the Council's decision that the Yearbook on Human Rights should be issued henceforth every two years, are estimated by the Secretary-General at \$264,000.

38. The bulk of that requirement relates to the activities of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts established under resolution 2 (XXIII) of the Commission on Human Rights, including two sessions at Geneva of two weeks each, and a five-week field mission to Africa. The Advisory Committee was informed that one of the principal reasons for the fairly substantial cost of the mission (\$166,000) is the need to provide interpretation from and into three languages (English, French and Spanish), with a consequential addition to the staff of six interpreters, who will accompany the experts. While the Advisory Committee agrees with the Secretary-General that such provision must be included in the estimates, it trusts that, should some of the experts be unable to participate in the mission, the Secretary-General would review the language requirements accordingly and interpreters would not be automatically assigned to the mission if their services were not required.

39. The estimate under section 20 also includes an amount of \$63,000 for further studies on racial discrimination under the auspices of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. Of that amount, \$43,000 relates to temporary assistance (1 P-4 and 1 General Service for 18 months) and \$16,000 to the contractual translation, typing and reproduction of the studies (360 pages).

40. The balance of the request consists of \$18,000 for a study of special problems relating to human rights in the developing countries and \$9,000 for convening the Working Group on Model Rules of Procedure for United Nations bodies dealing with violations of human rights.

6/ Ibid., Supplement No. 16 (A/9016), annex II, decision I (VII).

7/ Ibid., Supplement No. 8 (A/9008), chap. III.

41. The revised estimates -- like section 20 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975 -- have been drawn up on the assumption that the Division of Human Rights will be located at Geneva. In its examination of those estimates, the Advisory Committee noted that they include \$37,000 for documentation; the Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will make every effort to reduce those costs through more succinct drafting and greater reliance on established language staff. The Committee noted also that the travel and subsistence costs have been included in full, that is, without reference to the possibility that some entitlements will not be utilized. For these two reasons, the Advisory Committee recommends that the estimate for section 20 be reduced by \$10,000 to \$254,000.

Section 33. Construction, alteration, improvement and
major maintenance of premises

42. The additional requirement of \$100,000 under this section relates to the proposed remodelling of the Economic and Social Council chamber, for which the Secretary-General included an amount of \$100,000 in his proposed programme budget for 1974-1975 and on which the Advisory Committee commented in paragraph 33.12 of its first report. 8/ The revised plan, which was approved by the Council at its 1876th meeting, would involve total expenditure of \$200,000. The Advisory Committee was informed that the plan in question meets the Council's concern that the design of the Chamber befit the dignity and importance of the Council, and that it provides an adequate number of seats. The Committee has no objection to the Secretary-General's request under Section 33.

Section 34. Staff assessment

43. The reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 20 above involve a consequential reduction of \$123,000 under Section 34 (i.e. from \$280,000 to \$157,000).

Income section 1. Income from staff assessment

44. If the General Assembly approves the revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1521/Rev.1) as reduced by the Advisory Committee's recommendations in the present report, there will be additional income from staff assessment in an amount of \$157,000.

8/ Ibid.

Recapitulation

	Estimate submitted by Secretary- General	Reduction recommended by Advisory Committee	Estimate recommended by Advisory Committee
	\$	\$	\$
Section 6. Policy-making organs . . .	(11,000)	22,000	(33,000)
Section 7. Department of Economic and Social Affairs	214,000	56,000	158,000
Section 9. Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East	42,000	8,000	34,000
Section 12. United Nations Economic and Social Office at Beirut	1,591,000	654,000	937,000
Section 14. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	275,000	18,000	257,000
Section 15. United Nations Industrial Development Organization	28,000	4,000	24,000
Section 18. International narcotics control	117,000	25,000	92,000
Section 19. Regular programme of technical assistance	500,000	-	500,000
Section 20. Human Rights	264,000	10,000	254,000
Section 33. Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance of premises	100,000	-	100,000
Section 34. Staff assessment	<u>280,000</u>	<u>123,000</u>	<u>157,000</u>
	3,400,000	920,000	2,480,000
Income Section 1. Income from staff assessment	280,000	123,000	157,000
