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Agenda item 41

BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1958

(Note by the Secretariat)

The following summary is issued pursuant to the request of the Fifth Committee at its 611th meeting, held on 23 October 1957. It lists in tabular form the proposals made by delegations during the general discussion of the 1958 estimates at the 607th to 611th meetings, although the proposals were in most cases not presented for formal action nor embodied in a draft resolution. Each of the proposals listed is ascribed to the delegation which first made it. In a number of cases other delegations supported the proposal or made a suggestion on similar lines. The latter delegations are not listed; neither are those which expressed a reservation on certain of the proposals or took a contrary view, unless it was expressed in concrete terms. The points on which the Committee has already taken preliminary action are marked with an asterisk (\*).

(a) Pattern of Conferences

Number of summary  
record

\*The Committee decided at its 612th meeting  
to establish a Sub-Committee to consider  
a new pattern of conferences

\* A/C.5/SR.612

Meetings of United Nations bodies should  
not be held away from Headquarters unless  
prior agreement is reached with the host  
Government concerned that it should pay  
all extra costs

(United Kingdom)

A/C.5/SR.607

(a) Pattern of Conferences (continued)Number of summary  
record

The General Assembly should take steps to avoid in future the holding of two major conferences in a single year, in addition to the normal programme

(China)

A/C.5/SR.609

A clear distinction should be drawn between regular and ad hoc conferences and meetings. Temporary staff should be recruited only for the latter

(Ceylon)

A/C.5/SR.610

In view of the Conference on the Law of the Sea and the Second Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, the programme for 1958 at least, should be kept as light as possible.

(Union of South Africa)

A/C.5/SR.610

(b) Documentation

The Fifth Committee might recommend to the General Assembly that it direct the Secretary-General to reduce in 1958 the length of the documents produced by the Secretariat by an average of 25 per cent compared with that of 1957.

(United Kingdom)

A/C.5/SR.607

Reach the objective of reducing documentation in stages over two years. First study the possible methods of achieving a reduction.

(Egypt)

A/C.5/SR.609

Summary Records might be replaced by Rapporteur's reports.

(Cuba)

A/C.5/SR.607

Summary Records need not be printed

(Argentina)

A/C.5/SR.608

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(c) Public Information ActivitiesNumber of summary  
record

A considerable number of delegations have commented on the two aspects of the question:

- (i) the immediate problem
- (ii) the long-range policy

The Committee has currently under consideration a draft resolution on (i).

A/C.5/L.468/Rev.1  
A/C.5/L.469

(d) Organization of the Secretariat

Specific views have been expressed on the top-level structure of the Secretariat by the United Kingdom and the USSR (A/C.5/SR.607), Iraq (A/C.5/SR.608), India (A/C.5/SR.609) and France (A/C.5/SR.610). The Secretary-General will issue a separate report on the question.

\*The recommendation of the Advisory Committee (A/3624, paragraph 45) that an inspectorate might be set up to deal with general problems of organization both at overseas offices and missions and at Headquarters was commented on by many delegations.

The Committee agreed that its report to the General Assembly should endorse this recommendation and that the Secretary-General should work out in consultation with the Advisory Committee the practical measures for its implementation in 1958. \* A/C.5/SR.611

The Technical Assistance Administration should be merged with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs with consequent increase in the staff of the regional economic commissions.

(USSR)

A/C.5/SR.607

(e) Form of the Budget

The following sections of the budget in its new form should be included in Part III - The Secretariat: Section 10 (Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees), Section 11

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(e) Form of the Budget (continued)Number of summary  
record

(Permanent Central Opium Board and Drug Supervisory Body), Section 12 (Joint Staff Pension Board and United Nations Staff Pension Committee) and Section 16 (Technical Assistance Administration).

(United Kingdom)

A/C.5/SR.607

Full knowledge of three factors should be available: the amounts requested, the agreed programmes and the order of priority fixed by the General Assembly and the Councils. The Secretariat should furnish the Fifth Committee each year with a general survey of all the agreed programmes with a tentative estimate of their cost.

(The Netherlands)

A/C.5/SR.610

The new form of the budget should be adopted permanently.

(Argentina)

A/C.5/SR.608

(f) Priorities

Criteria should be worked out for assessing the effectiveness of projects both before and after their execution, to be applied through a general survey of all activities of the United Nations.

The Fifth Committee should accept direct responsibility for fixing all priorities in consultation with other organs of the General Assembly.

(Israel)

A/C.5/SR.611

(g) Level of the 1958 Budget

Some delegations reserved specific comment until the first reading of the budget sections; others stated they would support the recommendation of the Advisory Committee; others stated that additional measures to stabilize the budget were required.

Certain items of non-urgent expenditure might be postponed; e.g. the replacement of equipment, the construction of a television studio, one of the two special conferences planned for 1958.

(Liberia)

A/C.5/SR.610

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(g) Level of the 1958 Budget (continued)Number of summary  
record

Where there was doubt as to the amount proposed for a specific item, the Secretary-General's figure should be given the benefit of the doubt. Where there was obvious necessity for reduction or re-appraisal of the item, the Fifth Committee might either reduce the amount to a level permitting flexibility or while leaving it unchanged, invite the Secretary-General to make appropriate adjustments.

(Philippines)

A/C.5/SR.610

(h) Capital Improvement and Maintenance

Long-range planning for capital improvement is desirable; the Secretary-General should develop a plan covering the next five or ten years.

(United States)

A/C.5/SR.608

\*The Committee endorsed the above suggestion and agreed that its report to the General Assembly should recommend that a plan should be submitted in conjunction with the budget estimates for 1959.

\*A/C.5/SR.611

(i) The Post-adjustment System

There was need for adequate machinery for dealing with all personnel questions where uniformity between the United Nations and the specialized agencies was desirable. In particular, organizations participating in the common salary system should apply uniform criteria in determining the appropriate post adjustment for a given duty-station.

(United States)

A/C.5/SR.608

The Committee should make it plain that the relevant provision of General Assembly resolution 1095(XI) B would apply to decisions taken by the specialized agencies solely on the basis of cost of living and not on any other consideration whatsoever.

(Israel)

A/C.5/SR.611

(j) Payment of Contributions

The payment of contributions as early as possible should be ensured.

(France)

A/C.5/SR.610