



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
LIMITED

A/C.5/L.489
6 December 1957

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Twelfth session
FIFTH COMMITTEE
Agenda item 40

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1957

Draft Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Jaime de PINIES (Spain)

1. At its 633rd meeting, the Fifth Committee considered reports of the Secretary-General (A/3720) and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/3750 and Add.1) on the supplementary estimates for the financial year 1957.
 2. The Secretary-General submitted supplementary estimates for 1957 involving an increase of \$2,432,200 over the appropriations voted by the General Assembly (resolutions 1083 (XI) and 1100 (XI)). At the same time, he estimated increases of income for 1957, over the amounts approved, of \$550,000 for miscellaneous income and \$200,000 for income from staff assessment.
 3. The Secretary-General indicated that of the increased requirements for 1957, \$712,300 pertained to commitments relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses entered into under General Assembly resolution 1084 (XI). The balance of \$1,719,900 pertained to regular budgetary items. The Secretary-General detailed the several areas of expenditure where a short-fall was apparent and gave the reasons for his request for supplementary requirements.
 4. The Advisory Committee expressed particular concern at the magnitude of the additional requirements for items covered by the regular budget. It drew attention to the fact that while surpluses had been realized on the 1953, 1954 and 1955 original appropriations, substantial deficits had arisen in 1956 and 1957; those deficits should not be allowed to create a precedent whereby over-spending becomes an accepted practice. Accordingly, while referring to certain specific points in
- 57-34018 /...

the supplementary estimates and making recommendations on those estimates, the Advisory Committee devoted its attention largely to the revision of existing practices for dealing with supplementary estimates with a view to increased control in the future. To this end, as well as on certain other specific points, the Advisory Committee made a number of recommendations which were summarized in paragraph 21 of its report. While recognizing that over-expenditures might be justified in certain accounts, major deficits represented, in the Advisory Committee's opinion, an abrogation of the intent of the General Assembly as expressed in the budget appropriations for any one year.

5. As regards the 1957 supplementary estimates, the Advisory Committee felt that there was still scope for reductions of the order of \$107,200, which should be achieved to the greatest extent possible by actual savings. In so far as savings in the last month of 1957 fell short of \$107,200, the required balance should be found by deferring certain expenditures until 1958. The Advisory Committee further recommended, on the basis of information available after the Secretary-General's estimates had been prepared, that the estimated increase for miscellaneous income should be raised from \$550,000 to \$625,000. In connexion with these points, the Advisory Committee presented a draft resolution for the consideration of the General Assembly.

6. Delegations taking part in the discussion in the Fifth Committee shared the Advisory Committee's concern at the magnitude of the supplementary estimates. It was recognized that 1957 had been a year of heavy activity, with the extension of the eleventh session of the General Assembly and the consequent compression of the other work of the Secretariat; nevertheless, the amount was large and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee for a reduction were supported. One delegation stated that as the supplementary estimates included provision for expenditures which it considered unjustified it would vote against the supplementary appropriations for 1957.

7. Delegations also emphasized the necessity to ensure that large supplementary estimates for regular budget items were avoided in the future, and that the experience in 1956 and 1957 should not create a precedent. The annual appropriations were voted by the General Assembly after detailed review by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee, and were intended to cover the items included in the budget

/...

for that year. While it was recognized that unforeseen and extraordinary expenses might arise - and separate provision was made for such expenses - and while some over-expenditure on regular budget items might prove to be unavoidable, serious over-spending tended to nullify the efforts of the Committee and the General Assembly. Attention was also drawn to the difficulties which members encountered with their legislative bodies in financing budgetary expenditures at a level significantly above that which had been previously approved. The Secretary-General was urged in consequence, by more precise planning, estimating, budgetary control and accounting, to do his best to maintain the regular expenditures within the amounts appropriated.

8. The general recommendations made by the Advisory Committee were supported. Particular note was taken of the Advisory Committee's recommendations relating to revised procedures for considering supplementary requirements, and it was believed that these procedures, which would involve in future years early consideration of the supplementary estimates by the General Assembly after a careful mid-year examination of current expenditures by the Advisory Committee, should be adopted.

9. The representative of the Secretary-General assured the Committee that the Secretary-General had also been concerned at the magnitude of the supplementary requirements for 1957. However, due consideration had to be given to the conditions that had existed during the year. The fact that the General Assembly had been in session for over five months during 1957 had placed a great strain on the staff and resources of the Secretariat, and accounted in itself for about \$500,000 of the supplementary expenditures. Further, there had been a tendency in the past to justify reductions in the estimates on the ground that if it should prove necessary the Secretary-General could request a supplementary appropriation the following year. Sincere efforts had been made to keep the supplementary requirements as low as possible, but it was also necessary to ensure that minimum services and facilities were provided for the work of the Organization.

10. Notwithstanding these facts regarding the 1957 supplementary estimates, the Secretary-General agreed that further efforts should be made to prevent similar situations in the future. Several of the general recommendations made by the Advisory Committee had originally been proposed by the Secretary-General, and the support of the Advisory Committee for these proposals was encouraging. As regards

/...

the contemplated reduction of \$107,200, every effort would be made to achieve that reduction by savings, but it would probably be necessary merely to defer some expenditures to 1958.

11. The Fifth Committee approved the draft resolution (A/3750 and Add.1) submitted by the Advisory Committee as follows:

- (a) the preamble and paragraphs 1 and 2, unanimously;
- (b) paragraph 3, by 51 votes to 8 with no abstentions;
- (c) paragraph 4, unanimously;
- (d) paragraph 5, by 51 votes to 8 with no abstentions.

The Committee approved the draft resolution as a whole by 51 votes to 8 with no abstentions, and accordingly recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution set out in the annex to the present report.

The annex would consist of the draft resolution recommended
by the Advisory Committee (A/3750 and A/3750/Add.1)
