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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983

Staff training activities (Headquarters, Geneva and the regional commissions)

Contractual status of language teachers

Twenty-fifth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the contractual status of language teachers (A/C.5/36/63). As indicated by the Secretary-General in paragraph 5, his report is submitted in compliance with the request in General Assembly resolution 36/235. The Secretary-General's report deals with two basic questions - the granting of the status of staff members to full-time language teachers (A/C.5/37/63, paras. 6-13), and superannuation benefits within the existing contractual arrangement (*ibid.*, paras. 14-19); in addition, the financial implications are described in paragraphs 20 to 23 of the report.

A. Granting of status of staff members to full-time language teachers

2. As indicated by the Secretary-General in paragraph 7 of his report, there are 20 full-time teachers at Headquarters in New York and 28 full-time teachers serving at other duty stations. For these 48 teachers, the Secretary-General proposes to establish a separate group of locally-recruited staff to be called "language teachers" to be remunerated in accordance with the best prevailing conditions of employment in the locality. Pending the determination of these conditions the Secretary-General proposes to pay the teachers at Headquarters a salary equivalent to that of the principal (G-5) level of the General Service category. A similar methodology would be followed in determining the interim salary rates for teachers at other duty stations.

3. The Advisory Committee has considerable difficulty with the proposal of the Secretary-General to change the status of full-time teachers to that of staff members. The Committee recognizes that a legitimate basic problem exists - that of providing job security and other employment benefits for full-time teachers, several of whom have devoted many years of service to the United Nations. The proposals in document A/C.5/37/63, however, raise a number of other issues. For example, the Committee is not convinced that the teaching schedule can be effectively adapted to the normal work schedule of United Nations staff. Moreover, the establishment of a separate group of locally-recruited staff for the teachers could give rise to implications which have not yet been identified - and there is also the question, referred to in paragraph 13 of the Secretary-General's report, of the unease of some teachers at not being identified as professionals.

4. The Advisory Committee believes that the necessary job security can be accorded to full-time teachers without changing their status. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the Secretary-General should devise a new contract for full-time teachers which would, inter alia, include the following features:

A term of 1-3 years;

Remuneration to be calculated on an annual basis and to be equivalent to what the teachers are now receiving;

Requirement of a minimum of 15 hours teaching time per week for at least 10 months per year;

Provision for sick and maternity leave within the contractual period;

Provision for post-employment benefits (see paras. 6-7 below).

5. Such a contract would, in the opinion of the Advisory Committee, provide additional job security and other employment benefits for the teachers while avoiding the problems referred to in paragraph 3 above.

B. Superannuation benefits within the existing contractual arrangement

6. The Advisory Committee agrees with the Secretary-General that the most effective solution would consist in direct participation in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. The Fifth Committee has recommended that the proposed supplementary article B of the Regulations of the Pension Fund (on participation of officials who are not staff members) 1/ should be adopted by the General Assembly. If it is determined that supplementary article B will permit full-time teachers to participate in the Pension Fund then the Advisory Committee recommends that the Secretary-General should be authorized to commit an amount equivalent to the 14 per cent United Nations contribution for such participation as from 1 January 1983 (see para. 9 below). In this situation, the contract for the services of these teachers should stipulate that they are to contribute 7 per cent to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (see para. 4 above).

7. If it is determined that the teachers cannot become participants in the Fund then an alternative scheme should be formulated and presented to the Advisory Committee at its spring 1983 session. At such time the Committee could authorize the Secretary-General to enter into the necessary commitments for United Nations participation in any such scheme within the limit of what would have represented the 14 per cent contribution referred to in paragraph 6 above. An appropriate provision could then be included in the teachers' contracts.

C. Financial implications

8. The Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 4 above that a new contract be devised for teachers would base the teachers' annual remuneration on what they would be paid on an hourly basis; consequently, this recommendation would have no financial implications. The recommendation that the contract include provision for sick and maternity leave might involve financial implications but the amount, if any, would be small and should be absorbed from within funds already approved in the 1982-1983 programme budget.

9. The Committee's recommendation in paragraph 6 above with regard to entry of the teachers into the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund would involve a financial implication of \$106,000 (section 28J - \$89,100; section 28M - \$12,300; section 18 - \$2,300; section 19 - \$2,300) based on 14 per cent of the aggregate amount of what the 48 teachers are now paid. As stated in paragraph 7 above, should it not be deemed possible for the teachers to participate in the Fund, an alternative scheme would have to be formulated provided its cost did not exceed the aforesaid amount of \$106,000.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 9 (A/37/9 and Corr.1-3), annex XII.
