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### PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983

#### Child-care services at Headquarters

#### Report of the Secretary-General

#### I. BACKGROUND

1. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report on the establishment of a child-care centre at Headquarters 1/ which also contained a summary of the decisions and recommendations made by various bodies in support of the introduction of child-care facilities for children of the United Nations community since 1975 and requested the Secretary-General to submit a new study on the question at its thirty-sixth session. 2/

2. The Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session a report on the establishment of a child-care centre at Headquarters, having taken into consideration the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the comments and observations made by delegations in the course of the debate during the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. 3/ The report was based on an analysis of the replies to a questionnaire which had been circulated in 1981 to members of permanent missions to the United Nations and staff at United Nations Headquarters, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). The report recommended that a child-care centre be established in the DC-II building, with an operating budget of \$410,000 per year, to be covered for the most part by the fees from parents. The deficit was expected to be covered by fund-raising efforts. The financial implications for the United Nations would have been related to capital-construction

costs (\$804,300) and one-time capital-equipment costs (\$70,000), the latter to be reimbursed to the United Nations over seven years. UNICEF and UNDP were also expected to contribute towards direct and indirect costs of the child-care centre. The centre would have accommodated 120 children from the ages of one to five years.

3. The General Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report and the related report of ACABQ, and endorsed the conclusions of the Advisory Committee that the child-care centre was too costly and that other alternatives should be explored for meeting the most pressing needs of working parents. ACABQ also suggested that arrangements with existing day-care facilities in the vicinity of the United Nations Headquarters building should be explored. 4/

4. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), in its second report on the status of women in the Professional category and above, 5/ indicated its belief that a day-care centre, or suitable alternative arrangements, would facilitate the recruitment and retention of women. The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), in its comments on that report agreed that the organization should provide assistance and, where feasible, financial support for the establishment and maintenance of such facilities in duty stations where the need for them was demonstrated.

## II. DEVELOPMENTS IN 1982

5. In May 1982, the Secretary-General established a task force on child-care composed of representatives of the administration and the staff to review possible options for child-care in New York. The Task Force conducted a survey of 129 existing day-care facilities in the vicinity of the United Nations between 14th and 96th Streets to determine the type of care and space available to children of staff and mission personnel. A total of 48 replies was received; 34 centres had vacancies and would accept children of United Nations staff and delegations.

6. After exploring a broad scope of possibilities for child-care in Metropolitan New York, the Task Force decided that to study effectively all possible options and to design a practical and affordable child-care programme that would meet the needs of the diversified United Nations community, missions and staff, it was necessary for day-care specialists to conduct a professional assessment of needs as a sound foundation and an appropriate first step for future action. In its interim report submitted in September 1982, the Task Force recommended that the United Nations engage the Day Care Council of New York to conduct the survey, prepare a report and submit recommendations. The survey was pre-tested with staff and mission personnel and distributed on 1 October 1982 to members of the permanent missions to the United Nations and the United Nations Headquarters staff, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNITAR. 6/ The Day Care Council of New York presented its report and recommendations to the Task Force in November 1982.

7. A summary of the statistics of the survey indicated that there were 1,575 responses; almost two thirds (65 per cent) came from women and 35 per cent from men, the great majority (69 per cent) were married, 24 per cent were unmarried and the rest were separated, divorced or widowed. Nine hundred and ninety-five

families have a total of 1,758 children. Of the 1,758, the largest number was between 6 and 12 years old (29 per cent). The next largest group was 12 years and older (22 per cent). Almost as many (19 per cent) were from 1 to 3 years old and from 4 to 6 years old (16 per cent). Infants under one year represented 14 per cent of the total. The largest group of respondents with children lived in Queens (29 per cent), and Manhattan (27 per cent). The next largest concentrations were in New Jersey (10 per cent), Westchester (9 per cent), Brooklyn (7 per cent), and Nassau (6 per cent). There were fewer in the Bronx, Suffolk County, Connecticut and Staten Island. Among the respondents with children one year or older, 33 per cent lived in Queens and 23 per cent in Manhattan. Considering modes of transportation to office, 43 per cent traveled completely or partially by subway; 18 per cent made the entire journey by car and 11 per cent by railway. Seventy-nine per cent of the parents with infants needed care all day, 69 per cent of the parents with children 6 years old and older needed after-school care. Almost everyone needed care all year (78 per cent).

8. The results of the survey indicated a clear need for child-care assistance for various age groups. The greatest need and appeal for assistance was from 214 respondents, with a total of 239 infants, who were the least experienced and had the most limited financial resources, particularly nursing mothers. Forty per cent of the respondents with infants reported dissatisfaction with their child-care arrangements. The most frequent sources of dissatisfaction were cost, hours of service and location of the child-care arrangements. Among those with older children, nearly the same extent of dissatisfaction was expressed (36 per cent). The major source of their dissatisfaction was the cost of child-care, followed by the lack of flexibility of hours and the location and transportation to and from the child-care site. Thirty-five per cent of the parents who answered the question regarding their child-care arrangements expressed dissatisfaction with their baby sitters or the after-school programmes. Among the parents with older children, there was a need for after-school activities located near the school rather than near the United Nations. The greatest sources of dissatisfaction with after-school facilities were the hours of operation, the location, the means of transportation, the safety and cleanliness and the educational and recreational programmes. Seventy-two respondents indicated their their children between the ages of 6 and 12 were left at home with no adult supervision.

9. To address those immediate and pressing needs the Day Care Council recommended a number of proposals which were reviewed by the Task Force. Based on their review, the Task Force recommended to the Secretary-General that he endorse the following proposals:

(a) For infants

A crèche, on site or in the immediate vicinity of the United Nations Headquarters, primarily for nursing mothers, should be established. The proposed crèche would be a limited facility and would facilitate mothers' return to work when their maternity leave ended. The crèche would be limited to 50 infants and would operate at a cost not expected to exceed the average payment for infant care made by United Nations families, which, is currently between \$50 and \$100 a week. Local codes require a space of 2,500 square feet for 50 infants.

(b) For pre-school and school-age children

- (i) Given the distance that many parents with children in this age group travel to work it would not be possible to plan a centralized service for them, and most would be unlikely to use a Manhattan-based programme were it available. Therefore, it is proposed that a network of family day-care homes should be developed. Family day care is care given in the home of a responsible adult who is both licensed and supervised on a regular basis in accordance with New York state law. Under such a system, day mothers would be recruited in the home communities of United Nations families, trained and assisted in becoming licensed. The cost of care would most likely be less than the current child-care costs already borne by United Nations families as reported in the survey. The expense to the United Nations would be the co-ordination of the development of the programme. It is recommended that the project should be concentrated at the outset in Queens, the area with the greatest concentration of dissatisfied parents. It could then be followed by networks in other communities drawing on the experience gained from the Queens project.
- (ii) To reinforce and expand the network, it is further proposed that a directory which the Task Force on Child Care has already developed on day-care centres located in Manhattan be expanded to include listings in all five boroughs and the suburban areas, and community facilities and resources for after-school programmes in the home neighbourhoods of United Nations parents. The expanded directory would be made available to the parents and their comments and evaluations would be reflected in the list. To develop the directory, it would be necessary to identify all community facilities and resources for after-school programmes in the home neighbourhoods of United Nations parents. It is likely that many communities have existing after-school programmes; however, parents may have difficulty finding such programmes.

10. The Secretary-General has endorsed the two proposals, subject to the approval of the General Assembly.

### III. ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS

11. The crèche would be organized under the appropriate laws of the State of New York for non-profit child-care centres; the relationship between the incorporated entity and the United Nations would be contractual with the liability of the United Nations limited. The link between the United Nations and the corporation would be through a board of directors and the structure would be comparable to the existing United Nations after-school programme for United Nations children or the United Nations International School (UNIS).

#### Crèche

12. The operating budget for the proposed crèche would include the costs of salaries, expendable equipment and supplies, buildings occupancy and insurance. In

view of the long hours that the crèche would be open each day (approximately from 9 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.), staffing patterns would need to be staggered to some extent. At present it is anticipated that the annual salary costs, including fringe benefits, of a director, 4 caretakers, 12 aides and 1 part-time bookkeeper/clerk would amount to approximately \$257,100. The New York law requires one assistant for four children. The salary costs have been calculated taking into account the salaries and conditions of service of caretakers in the City of New York. The staff of the United Nations crèche would be employed by the crèche and would not be United Nations employees.

13. Other operational costs would include the rental of 2,500 square feet of space. If the space were to be rented at the prevailing rate of approximately \$35 per square foot, including utilities, the cost would be \$87,500. It may be possible, however, to rent space in the immediate vicinity of the United Nations at a much lower cost than the prevailing rate, in which case the operating costs of the crèche could be reduced by up to \$50,000, on the basis of a rate of \$10 per square foot plus the cost of utilities.

14. The estimated cost of insurance for the crèche is expected to be approximately \$2,000. The crèche, as a non-profit organization, would take out its own insurance and, as at UNIS, this insurance would cover third-party liability. In addition, in order to cover the monitoring and evaluation of the programme by a professional consultant specializing in child-care, an estimated \$1,500 would be required for consultancy fees.

15. A fee has been calculated taking into account the average cost of child-care which United Nations parents are currently paying according to the survey, that is, \$50 to \$100 per week. The fee for participating parents would be in the order of \$85 per week per child. The income from fees has been calculated taking into account six weeks of annual leave, during which no fee would be payable.

16. The detailed estimated annual operating budget for the crèche (in 1983 dollars) based upon the two possibilities for rented space indicated in paragraph 13:

	<u>Option I</u>	<u>Option II</u>
	\$	\$
<u>Expenses</u>		
Salaries (para. 12)	257 100	257 100
Rental of space on a full-cost basis (para. 13)	87 500	-
Rental of space at \$10 per square foot plus utilities	-	35 000
Insurance (para. 14)	2 000	2 000
Telephone, cleaning services, laundry	14 000	14 000
Supplies	3 000	3 000
Consultancy (para. 14)	1 500	1 500
Capital-equipment costs plus start-up costs (repayment to the United Nations of approximately \$7,500 (para. 17))	<u>7 500</u>	<u>7 500</u>
	372 600	320 100
<u>Income</u>		
Fees at \$85 per week for 50 children on average of 44 weeks each	<u>187 000</u>	<u>187 000</u>
Estimated deficit	<u><u>185 600</u></u>	<u><u>133 100</u></u>

Based on the considerations in the above table, it is expected that the crèche would suffer an operating deficit of either some \$185,600 or \$133,100 per year, depending on the space to be rented. As indicated in paragraph 13, however, the deficit could be reduced considerably if space were rented at a substantially lower cost. On the other hand, if enrolment should fall below 100 per cent, the deficit would rise. A reduction in enrolment, however, would result in a corresponding reduction in support personnel to be hired with consequent savings which may offset, in part, the increase in the deficit.

17. As indicated in the table above, in order to provide for working capital including the start-up costs of the non-profit corporation, it may be expected that an advance of \$75,000 would be sought from the Working Capital Fund, to be reimbursed from the operating budget over a period of 10 years.

18. If the General Assembly approves in principle the establishment of the crèche and the underwriting of its operating deficits, it would be the intention of the Secretary-General to proceed with the search for suitable space, the establishment of the non-profit corporation and the approach to ACABQ for an advance from the

Working Capital Fund under the provisions of paragraph 5 (c) of General Assembly resolution 36/242. At the same time, if extensive alterations are required, approval would be sought under Assembly resolution 36/241 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses to have the United Nations incur the costs.

19. A full-scale operating budget would be presented to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, at which time an estimate would be made of the contributions which could be expected from UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP.

#### Family day-care network

20. A co-ordinator would be needed to assist staff members in finding child-care facilities for children one year old or older in the five boroughs. A significant element of the project would be the development of a directory of child-care facilities; but the co-ordinator would also be expected to visit existing facilities in order to evaluate programmes and staff and subsequently, to hold briefing and training sessions for United Nations parents.

21. In addition to providing advice to staff members, the co-ordinator would be expected to have a sufficient understanding of the needs of families in the United Nations community to be able to identify areas in the five boroughs where existing facilities were inadequate to meet their needs. In such areas, the co-ordinator would assist in the development of family day-care homes which would be licensed and supervised in accordance with New York state law.

22. In order to maintain continuity, it is considered essential that this co-ordinator would be available to assist staff members and other members of the United Nations community as and when problems arise. Consequently, it is proposed that funds be made available for six months of temporary assistance at the P-3 level together with six months of clerical assistance. The co-ordinator would also require \$7,500 of general operating expenses to cover the costs of travel within the metropolitan area. This provision would also cover incidental costs relating to the development of a directory of child-care facilities.

23. Should the General Assembly approve the request for six work-months of temporary assistance at the P-3 level and six work-months at the General Service level, the costs would amount to \$36,600 in respect of salaries and common staff costs. In addition, an amount of \$7,600 would be required under section 31, Staff assessment, which would be offset by the same amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

#### IV. SUMMARY

24. In summary, should the General Assembly approve the proposals contained in the present report, the following actions would be needed:

(a) Approval in principle of the establishment of the crèche and the underwriting of its operating deficits (para. 18).

(b) An appropriation in the amount of \$44,100 under section 28C, Office of Personnel Services, together with \$7,600 for staff assessment under section 31, offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1 (paras. 22 and 23).

25. In addition, following approval of the proposal by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General would seek the concurrence of the ACABQ for advances from the Working Capital Fund, as described in paragraphs 17 and 18.

Notes

- 1/ A/C.5/35/76.
- 2/ See A/C.5/35/L.48 (part II), pp. 21-22 and A/C.5/35/SR.61.
- 3/ A/C.5/36/73.
- 4/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 7, (A/36/7/Add.19) and A/C.5/36/SR.78.
- 5/ A/37/469.
- 6/ ST/IC/82/64.

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