



FIFTH COMMITTEE
46th meeting
held on
Monday, 29 November 1982
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 46th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 103: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983 (continued)

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Third Committee in document A/C.3/37/L.3 concerning agenda item 76 (continued)
(A/37/7/Add.8; A/C.5/37/31; A/C.3/37/L.3)

1. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.3, submitted by the Third Committee, concerning agenda item 76, additional appropriations of \$156,600 and \$15,000 would be required under sections 23 and 28 D respectively of the programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983. An additional appropriation of \$26,300 would also be required under section 31 (Staff assessment), to be offset by an increase of the same amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment).
2. He informed the members of the Committee that the United States delegation had requested that the Advisory Committee's recommendations should be put to a vote.
3. Mr. KELLER (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, recalled that his delegation had strongly opposed the draft resolution in question for substantive reasons when it had been considered in the Third Committee. Moreover, it maintained that additional appropriations were unacceptable in mid-biennium when the United Nations was facing budgetary difficulties. New programmes must be financed through the redeployment of resources released as a result of the elimination of obsolete or ineffective programmes or through the completion of certain projects.
4. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that, in accordance with the position his delegation had set out in the Third Committee, it would oppose the adoption of the proposal concerning the financial implications of the draft resolution because of the wording of the twelfth preambular paragraph and paragraphs 2, 10 and 19.
5. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the recommendations of ACABQ. The substantive question had already been considered in the Third Committee, which had competence for such matters. The Fifth Committee's task was to consider only the administrative and financial aspects of the draft resolution; it was not for the Fifth Committee to oppose the conclusions of another Main Committee. That applied particularly to paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.4, which the Committee would be taking up subsequently.
6. Mr. GRODSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation attached great importance to the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and, in particular, to the holding of a second world conference on that subject. Having regard to the importance of such activities and the high

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(Mr. Grodsky, USSR)

priority which should be given to them, the Secretariat itself should endeavour to find the necessary resources. The additional appropriations requested for temporary assistance and staff travel were not justified, nor were those for office space, furniture and equipment. His delegation therefore would not support the appropriations requested and would abstain in the voting.

7. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that his Government, which was deeply concerned over the plight of the peoples of southern Africa subjugated by the apartheid régime, would support any resolution aimed at securing their freedom and, in particular, the draft resolution under consideration, whatever the financial implications might be.

8. Mr. WILLIAMS (Panama) expressed regret that, for a conference as important as the one under consideration, the Committee was quibbling over an amount of \$171,000, when it had, in many other cases, appropriated similar amounts without batting an eyelid.

9. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee for additional appropriations of \$156,600 under section 23 and \$15,000 under section 28 D for the biennium 1982-1983 were adopted by 69 votes to 14, with 14 abstentions.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Third Committee in document A/C.3/37/L.4, as orally revised, concerning agenda item 76 (continued) (A/37/7/Add.8, A/37/595, para. 13, draft resolution II, A/C.5/37/31 and A/C.5/37/32 and Add.1; A/C.5/37/L.29)

10. Mr. de BURGOS CABAL (Brazil) said that he would vote in favour of draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29. His delegation agreed with the Committee on Conferences that the holding of the Conference in the conditions envisaged would be contrary to the relevant provisions of the General Assembly resolution. His delegation was in favour of the Conference, but, in view of the financial emergency which the Organization was facing, it endorsed the recommendations of ACABQ aimed at reducing the costs (A/37/7/Add.8, annex II).

11. Mr. WILLIAMS (Panama) thanked the Philippine Government for having offered to host the Conference. However, it might be preferable for the Conference to be held in Geneva in order to avoid additional expense and problems for the Philippine Government.

12. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that, as his delegation had explained in the Third Committee, it was opposed to draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.4 because of subparagraphs (b) and (i) of paragraph 6, which provided for invitations to be issued to representatives of certain organizations to participate in the Conference.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft decision contained in document A/C.5/37/L.29.

14. It was so decided.

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15. Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (United Republic of Cameroon) said that, if the draft decision had been put to a vote, his delegation would have abstained. It would not have been able to vote against the draft decision because no valid reason had emerged during the discussion to justify the holding of the Conference in Manila. Nor would it have been able to vote in favour, since the Fifth Committee could not directly oppose a decision taken by another Main Committee. The best course would, therefore, have been to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the consequences of the proposed exception so that it could take a decision with a full knowledge of the facts.

16. Mr. GRODSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had supported draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29 because exceptions to paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV) were unacceptable in any circumstances. That did not mean, however, that his delegation supported the additional expenditure referred to in the draft decision.

17. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) expressed regret that the Conference would not be held in Manila as planned, especially since his Government had agreed to the cost-sharing formula proposed by the Third Committee despite the economic crisis it was experiencing and, in addition, had already incurred expenses in anticipation of the Conference.

18. Mr. ZINIEL (Ghana) said that his delegation attached great importance to the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. He hoped that the Conference would arouse great interest and that neither its dates nor its agenda would be questioned. With respect to draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29, his delegation would have had to abstain if it had been put to the vote. It believed that the Fifth Committee should not take a decision that would run counter to another decision taken by one of the Main Committees or by an intergovernmental body. On the other hand, the decisions of the General Assembly should be respected. The only solution, under the circumstances, would have been to reconcile the two requirements by respecting not only the decisions taken but also established practice and policy, which unfortunately the draft decision did not do.

19. Miss CASTILLO (Dominican Republic) supported draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.4, but believed that conferences should be held at United Nations Headquarters as long as the world economic crisis persisted. She would therefore have voted for draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29 if it had been put to the vote.

20. Mr. EL SAFTY (Egypt) observed that it was a question of procedure and not of substance. Egypt would support all measures and even sanctions proposed against those that were guilty of racism and racial discrimination and would support any country which offered to host a conference away from United Nations Headquarters. Nevertheless, it was for the Fifth Committee to decide. There should be better co-ordination between the Main Committees and the Fifth Committee in order to prevent such problems arising. With respect to draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29, his delegation believed that the reasons that had led the Third Committee to take its decision were not sufficiently convincing. It was for that reason that it would have abstained if the draft decision had been put to the vote.

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21. Mrs. KNEŽEVIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that her delegation, which had been a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.4, would have voted against the draft decision had it been put to a vote.
22. Mr. KAZEMBE (Zambia) said that his delegation had not raised any objection to draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29, even though it had participated in preparing draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.4, because it recognized the validity of that decision. It should be borne in mind, however, that the Third Committee had been aware of the financial implications of the draft resolution but that, in view of the sincerity of the offer made by the Philippines, it had decided to support it. His delegation would therefore have voted against the draft decision if it had been put to the vote.
23. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) said that the problem which the Committee must solve clearly showed the need to improve co-ordination between the Fifth Committee and the other Main Committees so that the opinion of the Fifth Committee would be taken into account when any draft resolution or decision with financial implications was considered. His delegation had been among the supporters of draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.4 in the Third Committee, and for that reason it would have voted against draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29.
24. Mrs. LISBOA (Venezuela) said that Venezuela, which maintained no cultural or other exchange with the racist régimes, attached the greatest importance to the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. She therefore believed that attempts to save money were not justified in view of the political importance of the Conference. She would have voted against the draft decision if it had been put to the vote.
25. Mr. KBAIER (Tunisia) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.4 and would not therefore have supported draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29 if it had been put to the vote. His delegation had raised no objection to the adoption of draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29 for the sole reason that the draft related to budgetary matters as opposed to questions of substance.
26. Mr. SHAHANKARI (Jordan) said that, if the draft decision had been put to the vote, his delegation would have voted against it.
27. Miss ZONICLE (Bahamas) said that her delegation would have voted against draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29 if it had been put to the vote and referred in particular to the explanations given in that regard by the representative of Ghana. While the adoption of the draft decision was justified for budgetary reasons, there were political reasons which justified the opposition of some delegations. First of all, the financial implications of the offer of the Philippine Government to host the Conference had been the subject of a consensus in the Economic and Social Council, which had recommended that the General Assembly should make an exception to the provisions of paragraph 10 of resolution 2609 (XXIV). In addition, it had always been the policy of the Third Committee to organize conferences on racism and racial discrimination in third world countries in order to promote greater awareness of those problems in those countries. Given the crucial importance of

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(Miss Zonicle, Bahamas)

those problems, recognized, for example, by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1982/32, and since the Conference had to be held in a developed country, efforts must be redoubled to promote the necessary awareness.

28. Mr. BANGURA (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation attached great importance to the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, but would have abstained if draft resolution A/C.3/37/L.4 had been put to the vote because of the financial implications of paragraph 4 of that draft, which contravened the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV). It was for that reason that his delegation had joined in the consensus on draft decision A/C.5/37/L.29.

29. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the annexes to the report of the Advisory Committee (A/37/7/Add.8) showed the amount of appropriations that would be required immediately if the General Assembly decided to adopt draft resolution II contained in document A/37/595, according to two alternatives: the financial implications if the Assembly adopted paragraph 4 of the draft resolution were given in annex I; if it did not adopt that paragraph, the amount shown in annex II would apply.

30. In addition, should the Assembly not adopt paragraph 4 of the resolution and should the Conference be held at Geneva, the appropriations required immediately would amount, subject to verification, to \$124,100, instead of the \$160,300 originally proposed by the Secretary-General.

31. In any event, the related conference-servicing costs would be taken into account in the context of the consolidated statement.

32. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should indicate in its report to the General Assembly the amounts of the appropriation required under the various assumptions just referred to by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

33. It was so decided.

Report of the Committee of Governmental Experts to Evaluate the Present Structure of the Secretariat in the Administrative, Finance and Personnel Area (continued)
(A/37/44)

34. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said he was gratified to note that the Committee of Governmental Experts to Evaluate the present Structure of the Secretariat in the Administrative, Finance and Personnel Areas had been able, even though its terms of reference had not been precisely defined, to identify the main issues affecting the structure of the Secretariat as set out in the interim report submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session. It was imperative, if proper administration of the Organization was to be achieved, to deal effectively with those issues, particularly in regard to the capacity of the structure to promote overall policy coherence and clear lines of authority and responsibility within the Organization, and to the adequacy of the structure to undertake in an integrated

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(Mr. Kemal, Pakistan)

way the implementation of personnel reforms and recruitment policies of the General Assembly. Although there could be no doubt that final authority for taking the appropriate decisions in those matters rested with the Secretary-General, the Committee of Governmental Experts had been set up by the General Assembly precisely because of the differences of opinion within the Secretariat concerning the most effective kind of structure.

35. A major change had, however, taken place in the Organization with the appointment of a new Secretary-General having very definite ideas on how the present structure of the Secretariat should function. In the note reproduced in annex I to the Committee's report (A/37/44), the Secretary-General had clearly indicated his preference for the present structure of a unified, closely integrated department of administration. The Committee of Governmental Experts apparently supported the Secretary-General's views in that regard. The delegation of Pakistan was pleased to note that the new Secretary-General, as the Chief Administrative Officer of the United Nations, had stressed the importance he attached to the administrative aspects of the Organization's work and had stated that the application of the recruitment policies of the General Assembly, especially in regard to under-represented and unrepresented Member States, demonstrated that the present system was working well. His delegation therefore supported the conclusion of the Committee of Governmental Experts that there was no need for proposing other forms of structure.

36. Although the Committee of Governmental Experts had made no recommendations concerning the structure of the Secretariat, it had expressed the view that the other issues identified in its interim report required in-depth consideration. It should be noted in that connection that several of those issues were also of interest to other United Nations bodies. For example, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination had made recommendations, which were before the Fifth Committee, on the programme planning and budgeting system.

37. The ability of an organization as complex as the United Nations to cope effectively with its tasks was essentially dependent upon the Secretary-General fully assuming his role as Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization, relying on persuasion rather than compulsion. Autonomy, however, did not mean total independence. That applied not only to relations between the principal organs, especially the General Assembly and the Secretariat, but also to relations between the various units of the Secretariat.

38. Mr. KUYAMA (Japan) said that increased management efficiency, particularly with regard to personnel, was an important matter but the present structure of the Secretariat did not seem to him to present any problems in that connection. With regard to the budgetary implications of recruitment decisions, it was essential to ensure proper co-ordination of the various operational units having responsibilities in the administrative, finance and personnel areas. His delegation accordingly supported the Secretary-General's position that the present structure of a unified, closely integrated department of administration should be continued.

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(Mr. Kuyama, Japan)

39. The Committee of Governmental Experts had identified other issues in its report which merited attention. It was to be hoped that the Secretary-General would give the matter the full attention it deserved with a view to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization's work.

40. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) noted that the general conclusion of the Committee of Governmental Experts was that the Secretary-General, as the Chief Administrative Officer designated by the Charter of the United Nations, was primarily responsible for defining the structure of the Secretariat. The General Assembly had an obligation to concern itself with those questions and to offer the Secretary-General such general guidance as might be necessary. The new Secretary-General, however, should be given the opportunity to take the decisions he considered appropriate.

41. In his delegation's opinion, the work of the Committee of Governmental Experts had introduced a greater measure of precision into the issues identified in the interim report. His delegation also welcomed the establishment of the Programme Planning and Budgeting Board and the Central Monitoring Unit. As those measures must be given time to prove their worth, there was no need for the Fifth Committee to provide additional guidelines in the matter. In conclusion, it was his delegation's opinion that the Fifth Committee should take note with approval of the report of the Committee of Governmental Experts.

AGENDA ITEM 106: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY CO-ORDINATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS WITH THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY
(continued):

(a) REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS
(continued) (A/37/547; A/C.5/37/L.28)

(b) IMPACT OF INFLATION AND MONETARY INSTABILITY ON THE REGULAR BUDGET OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/C.5/37/39)

(c) FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A SINGLE ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/C.5/37/23; A/C.5/37/L.27)

42. Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados), introducing draft resolutions A/C.5/37/L.27 and L.28, said that Cuba and Sweden had become co-sponsors of draft resolution L.28 and that they had agreed to the deletion of the final preambular paragraph of that draft resolution, since it did not relate to administrative and budgetary co-ordination, but only to the financial crisis. He also noted that, contrary to the other documents referred to in the preamble, resolution 37/13, which was referred to in the final preambular paragraph, had not been adopted by consensus and would therefore cause difficulties for certain delegations.

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(Mr. Maycock, Barbados)

43. Referring to paragraph 2 (b) of draft resolution A/C.5/37/L.27, he explained that if the outcome of the consultations referred to in that paragraph did not justify the submission of a written report on the matter, a representative of the Secretary-General might perhaps be able to submit an oral report to the Fifth Committee.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.