



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fourth session

Item 39 of the agenda

BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1950:

Financial implications of the decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council in regard to the regional economic commissions

Thirteenth report of 1949 of the

Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. In accordance with a decision taken by the Fifth Committee at its 205th meeting on 21 October 1949, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has examined the supplementary estimates for the financial year 1950 submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/324.

2. The estimates are set out below:

	Original estimates recommended by the Advisory Committee	Supplementary estimates (A/C.5/324)	Revised estimates submitted by the Secretary General
	\$	\$	\$
Section 22. Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East	598,850	88,000	686,850
Section 23. Economic Commission for Latin America	450,500	75,000	525,500

3. The Advisory Committee desires to offer the following observations on the above supplementary items:

4. The resolutions (233 (IX) A and 234 (IX) A) in which the Economic and Social Council took note, at its ninth session, of the annual reports of the above Commissions contain the following paragraph:

"[The Economic and Social Council] Recommends that the necessary funds be allocated for the purpose of implementing decisions of the fourth session* of the Commission.....which require undertaking new studies and activities, should the budget for 1949 prove inadequate."

* Second session of the Commission in the case of ECLA.

/The Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee believes that it was not the intention of the Council to recommend that the Economic Commissions concerned should do otherwise than make a cautious and selective start with new studies and activities.

Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East

5. Thirteen additional posts are requested for 1950 at an estimated cost of \$88,000. In this connexion, the Advisory Committee notes that the projects outlined in the report by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/324) for the most part represent an expansion of work already initiated by the Commission. It seems doubtful to the Committee whether an expansion of the order of 40 per cent in a single year can in the present circumstances be justified. It is therefore recommended that the proposed new posts be reduced from 13 to 10, a number which should be sufficient for the more urgent aspects of the work programme, at a saving of approximately \$16,000.

6. As regards the staffing pattern of ECAFE, the Advisory Committee was informed that since the engagement of consultants had not proved wholly satisfactory, it was considered desirable to add to the establishment of the Commission's secretariat. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that \$24,000 of the cost of the additional established posts be offset by savings on the item for consultants in the original estimates (\$40,000), and that the supplementary estimates be approved at a figure of \$48,000. The total of the revised estimates for section 22, as recommended by the Advisory Committee, is thus \$646,850.

7. The amounts for salaries in connexion with the 10 new posts recommended are gross, and revenue in respect of contributions under the Staff Assessment Plan is estimated at \$10,000.

Economic Commission for Latin America

8. In examining the supplementary estimates for section 23, the Advisory Committee has had regard to the fact that, since the Economic Commission for Latin America is in an early stage of development, an extensive use of consultants may be justifiable over a limited period of time. The Committee is, however, of opinion that it should be possible by prudent recruitment to secure an expert staff capable of preparing working papers for the use of ECLA.

9. As regards the meeting of 24 trade experts, for which provision is requested in an amount of \$27,000, the Advisory Committee calls attention to the General Assembly's decisions concerning the payment of travelling and subsistence expenses (resolution 231 (III)), and in particular to paragraph 5 (b) of part I, which reads:

/ "The General Assembly

"The General Assembly

"Decides that neither travelling nor subsistence expenses shall be paid out of United Nations funds in respect of representatives to:

.....

"(b) Organs or subsidiary organs, the Members of which have a particular local interest in the region served."

The Committee believes that, on a correct interpretation of this principle, the estimated costs of the meeting of trade experts should be borne by the Governments concerned, and not on the United Nations budget. Even if the Fifth Committee should decide that these costs could, under the above resolution, properly be carried on the latter budget, the Committee doubts whether a conference of this size can appropriately perform functions normally assigned to a small working group of the Commission, and it recommends a 50 per cent reduction in the proposed appropriation.

10. The Committee notes that in connexion with the series of studies listed in paragraph 3 (2) of document A/C.5/324, it is proposed to engage 15 consultants, one-third of the estimated cost being absorbed within the existing provision of \$35,000 for consultants in section 23.

11. It is the view of the Committee that 6 consultants, rather than the 10 requested, would be sufficient to carry out the studies (a), (b) and (c) of the aforementioned series. In this connexion, the Advisory Committee draws attention to the amounts already provided for consultants both in section 23 and section 10 of the Budget Estimates, and particularly to the explanatory data in the latter section (A/903, page 81).

12. The Committee accordingly recommends that the supplementary estimates for section 23 be approved at a figure of \$33,000, comprising the following provision:

Meeting of trade experts	*
Engagement of consultants for studies (a), (b) and (c) - paragraph 3 (2) of document A/C.5/324	\$33,000

The total of the revised estimates for section 23, as recommended by the Advisory Committee, is thus \$483,500.

13. Revenue from contributions under the Staff Assessment Plan in respect of consultants' fees, which are calculated on a gross basis, is estimated at \$6,000.

* See paragraph 9 above.