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Agenda item 119

### PATTERN OF CONFERENCES

#### Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mrs. Flor Acconciamesa de RODRIGUEZ (Venezuela)

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1988, the General Assembly decided to include in the agenda of its forty-third session, and to allocate to the Fifth Committee, the item entitled "Pattern of conferences".
2. The Fifth Committee considered this item at its 3rd to 6th, 45th and 46th meetings, on 30 September, 4, 6 and 11 October and on 12 and 13 December 1988. Comments and observations made in the course of the discussion of the item and replies to queries raised are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/43/SR.3-6, 45 and 46).
3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Committee on Conferences <sup>1/</sup> and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 42/207 C (A/43/628).

#### II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

4. At the 45th meeting, on 12 December 1988, following informal consultations, the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Seyed M. Arastou (Islamic Republic of Iran), introduced document A/C.5/43/L.9 containing draft amendments to the draft resolutions proposed by the Committee on Conferences in paragraph 1 of its report.

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<sup>1/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 32 (A/43/32 and Corr.1 and 2).

5. No changes were proposed in document A/C.5/43/L.9 to draft resolutions A and C as contained in the report of the Committee on Conferences.

6. Two additional texts were submitted in that document for approval by consensus by the Fifth Committee as draft resolutions D and E. They read as follows:

"D

"The General Assembly,

"Requests the Secretary-General to submit information to the Committee on Conferences at its organisational session in 1989 to assist the Committee in establishing its work programme on a biennial basis in line with the programme budget and the medium-term plan of the United Nations, taking into account the views expressed by delegations during the forty-third session of the General Assembly."

"E

"Implementation of resolution 42/207 C

"The General Assembly,

"Reaffirming its resolution 42/207 C of 11 December 1987,

"Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/43/628,

"1. Requests the Secretary-General to continue his valuable efforts to implement resolution 42/207 C of 11 December 1987;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to report on this matter to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session."

7. It was also proposed in document A/C.5/43/L.9 that the Fifth Committee adopt by consensus paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 of draft resolution B as submitted by the Committee on Conferences in its report.

8. Also at the 45th meeting, the delegation of Argentina proposed a draft amendment to paragraph 2 of draft resolution B as submitted by the Committee on Conferences in its report. That draft amendment, contained in document A/C.5/43/L.10, read as follows:

"Delete paragraph 2 of draft resolution B contained in paragraph 1 of the report of the Committee on Conferences.

"Replace with the following wording:

"2. Decides that the Committee on Conferences shall be composed of twenty-one members to be appointed by the President of the General Assembly,

after consultations with the chairmen of the regional groups, for a period of three years, on the basis of the following geographical distribution:

"(a) Six members from African States;

"(b) Five members from Asian States;

"(c) Four members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

"(d) Two members from Eastern European States;

"(e) Four members from Western European and other States."

9. At the 46th meeting, on 13 December 1988, the Fifth Committee adopted without a vote draft resolutions A, C, D and E as contained in document A/C.5/43/L.9 (see para. 16).

10. At the same meeting, the Committee voted on the proposal of Argentina contained in document A/C.5/43/L.10. The proposal was adopted by 89 votes to 13, with 7 abstentions. Explanations of vote before the vote were made by the representatives of the United States of America, Chile and Algeria, and after the vote by the representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Denmark, Australia, Spain, Austria, New Zealand, the United Republic of Tanzania, Brasil, Mexico, Canada, Cameroon, Greece, Ghana, Kenya and the Federal Republic of Germany.

11. At the same meeting, the representative of Uganda made the following proposal:

"That the Fifth Committee inform the Assembly that action on draft resolution B in the report of the Committee on Conferences was being taken on the understanding that nothing in paragraph 4 (c) of that draft resolution should be construed as giving the Committee on Conferences any role in the budgetary process or authority to override decisions on programmes and on meetings and conferences duly decided upon by legislative organs of the United Nations."

12. The representative of the United Kingdom proposed to add at the end of the Ugandan proposal the words "subject always to paragraph 10 of resolution 40/243."

13. The proposal of the United Kingdom was rejected by a recorded vote of 68 to 28, with 3 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

**Against:** Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brasil, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swasiland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

**Abstaining:** Brunei Darussalam, Madagascar, Sierra Leone.

14. The proposal of Uganda was then adopted by a recorded vote of 78 to 14, with 15 abstentions (see para. 17). The voting was as follows:

**In favour:** Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brasil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swasiland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

**Against:** Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, France, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

**Abstaining:** Austria, Bahamas, Canada, Csechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden.

15. Draft resolution B as a whole, as amended by the vote on the proposal contained in document A/C.5/43/L.10, was then adopted by a recorded vote of 91 to 3, with 13 abstentions (see para. 16). The voting was as follows:

**In favour:** Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brasil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia,

Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

**Against:** Germany, Federal Republic of, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

**Abstaining:** Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Turkey.

Statements in explanation of vote were made by the representatives of Argentina, Algeria, Bulgaria, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Tunisia.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

16. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

#### Pattern of conferences

##### A

#### The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on Conferences, 2/

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Committee on Conferences;

2. Approves the draft revised calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations for 1989 as submitted by the Committee on Conferences; 3/

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2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 32 (A/43/32 and Corr.1 and 2).

3/ Ibid., annex II.

3. Authorises the Committee on Conferences to make adjustments in the calendar of conferences for 1989 that may become necessary as a result of action and decisions taken by the General Assembly at its forty-third session;

4. Notes with appreciation that there has been a considerable improvement in utilisation of conference resources by a number of United Nations organs;

5. Urges those United Nations organs which have failed to make adequate use of the conference-servicing resources provided to them to consider reducing the number of meetings they request in their future programmes of work;

6. Requests the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences and the Secretary-General to maintain their contacts with United Nations organs that have failed to make adequate use of the conference-servicing resources provided to them in order to assist those organs to make better use of their services;

7. Requests the Committee on Conferences to remain seized of the matter on the basis of further reports from the Secretary-General.

B

Status of the Committee on Conferences

The General Assembly

1. Decides to retain the Committee on Conferences as a permanent subsidiary organ;

2. Decides that the Committee on Conferences shall be composed of twenty-one members to be appointed by the President of the General Assembly, after consultations with the chairmen of the regional groups, for a period of three years, on the basis of the following geographical distribution:

- (a) Six members from African States;
- (b) Five members from Asian States;
- (c) Four members from Latin American and Caribbean States;
- (d) Two members from Eastern European States;
- (e) Four members from Western European and other States;

3. Decides that one third of the Committee's membership shall retire annually and that retiring members may be reappointed;

4. Decides that the Committee on Conferences should have the following terms of reference:

(a) To advise the General Assembly on all matters pertaining to the organization of conferences in the United Nations;

(b) To plan and co-ordinate conferences and meetings in close consultation with the Secretariat and all relevant bodies in the preparation of the draft calendar, in particular by staggering conferences and meetings throughout the year, and to avoid to the maximum extent possible the overlapping of meetings related to the same sector of activity in the same conference location;

(c) In this connection, to examine the Secretary-General's proposals on the draft calendar prepared on the basis of his budgetary proposals and to recommend to the General Assembly a draft calendar of conferences and meetings designed to meet the needs of the United Nations and to ensure the optimum utilization of conference-servicing resources. With respect to the proposed departures from the approved calendar of conferences that have administrative and financial implications, to act on behalf of the Assembly, in conformity with the budgetary process in force and with full respect for the mandates of other bodies;

(d) To determine the ways and means that might ensure the optimum utilization of conference facilities and services, including documentation, and to present appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly;

(e) To advise the General Assembly on the current and future requirements of the Organisation for conference services, facilities and documentation;

(f) To make recommendations as appropriate to the General Assembly on means to ensure an improved co-ordination of conferences within the United Nations system, including conference services and facilities, and to conduct the appropriate consultations in that regard;

(g) To monitor the implementation of all General Assembly resolutions on the organization, servicing and documentation for meetings and conferences;

(h) To monitor the Organisation's policy on publications, with the assistance of the Publications Board and taking into account positions adopted by the Committee on Information and other relevant bodies;

(i) To report annually thereon to the General Assembly.

C

Control and limitation of documentation

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2292 (XXII) of 8 December 1967, 2538 (XXIV) of 11 December 1969, 3415 (XXX) of 8 December 1975, 34/50 of 23 November 1979, 35/10 B of 3 November 1980, 36/117 of 10 December 1981, 37/14 C of 16 November 1982, 40/243, section III, of 18 December 1985, 41/177 D of 5 December 1986 and 42/207 of 11 December 1987,

1. Renews its appeal to Member States to exercise restraint in their requests for the circulation of communications as United Nations documents;
2. Appeals to Member States making such requests to endeavour to keep the length of the communications to a minimum;
3. Requests the Committee on Conferences to keep this matter under review and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session;
4. Requests the Secretary-General to establish a standard format for final reports of special conferences of the United Nations and to provide guidelines for the preparation and editing of those reports;
5. Again requests that subsidiary organs should strive to keep their reports to the General Assembly within the desirable limit of thirty-two pages;
6. Invites the Committee on Conferences to remain seized of this matter on the basis of further reports from the Secretary-General.

D

The General Assembly

Requests the Secretary-General to submit information to the Committee on Conferences at its organizational session in 1989 to assist the Committee in establishing its work programme on a biennial basis in line with the programme budget and the medium-term plan of the United Nations, taking into account the views expressed by delegations during the forty-third session of the General Assembly.



E

Implementation of resolution 42/207 C

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 42/207 C of 11 December 1987,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 42/207 C, 4/

1. Requests the Secretary-General to continue his valuable efforts to implement resolution 42/207 C;
2. Requests the Secretary-General to report on this matter to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session.

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17. The Fifth Committee also decided to inform the General Assembly that action on draft resolution B in the report of the Committee on Conferences 2/ was being taken on the understanding that nothing in paragraph 4 (c) of that draft resolution should be construed as giving the Committee on Conferences any role in the budgetary process or authority to override decisions on programmes and on meetings and conferences duly decided upon by legislative organs of the United Nations.

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