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held on

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at 10.30 a.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIRSON (Belgium)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 104: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

(a) COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)  
(A/34/408)

1. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that, with a staff of almost 15,000 financed from the regular budget and from extrabudgetary funds, it was absolutely necessary for the Organization to have a functional and rational management system that would ensure the proper implementation of Article 101 of the Charter. The provisions of General Assembly resolution 33/143 seemed in that regard to meet the concerns of many delegations with respect to personnel questions. His delegation welcomed the steps taken by the Secretary-General to recruit nationals of under-represented and unrepresented States to posts subject to geographical distribution and hoped that the Fifth Committee would have an updated report and other information before it at the next session of the General Assembly. His delegation agreed, moreover, that, in the absence of qualified candidates from under-represented or unrepresented States, Professionals should be recruited from over-represented States, so as to ensure the implementation of programmes, and it would like to know whether a qualified candidate could be rejected for reasons other than that of being a national of an over-represented State.

2. In that regard, his delegation felt that measures relating to vacancy bulletins and the publicizing of vacancies should be applied more strictly, that the roster of candidates should be updated and should contain, in particular, candidates from under-represented and unrepresented States and that the coding system of the roster should be improved with regard to the recruitment of staff in the regional economic commissions.

3. With regard to the recruitment of women to the Secretariat, his delegation would like to know whether the principle set forth in paragraph 11 of document A/34/408 was strictly applied and how its application was co-ordinated with the implementation of the principle set forth in paragraph 7 of the same document. It looked forward also to the report of the International Civil Service Commission on the classification of occupational groups and would like to know when the Secretariat would finish the statistical breakdown of those groups. His delegation was in favour of greater staff mobility, in the interest both of the Organization and of the staff themselves, and would like to have a more detailed report by the Secretary-General on that question at the thirty-fifth session.

4. With regards to the age of retirement, his delegation would like to know how many staff members had benefited from an exemption enabling them to remain in office beyond the age of 60; the arguments in paragraphs 26 and 27 of document A/34/408 seemed to justify that type of exemption. At the thirty-third session, his delegation had supported the principle of competitive examinations for the

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(Mr. Garrido, Philippines)

movement of General Service staff to the Professional category, and it requested the Secretariat to indicate the number and description of the Professional posts to be made available in that way.

5. The present system of determining desirable ranges no longer accorded with the principle of truly equitable geographical distribution; the system should be reviewed on the basis of fairer and more equitable criteria. His delegation reaffirmed the necessity of promoting career development, in the interests not only of the staff but of the Organization also.

6. Mr. RICHTER (German Democratic Republic) said that his delegation considered that, first and foremost, the Committee should assess to what extent resolution 33/143 had been implemented and establish guidelines to assist in the attainment of the objectives set forth, in particular, in paragraph 1 of section II of that resolution. One of those objectives was to have all countries represented in the Secretariat, within the limits of their desirable ranges by the end of 1980. In that regard, he pointed out that, as an under-represented State, the German Democratic Republic had nominated candidates with a view to reaching the level of representation in the Secretariat that it should have. However, its efforts had met with reluctance on the part of certain heads of units; that was an attitude which his delegation could only deplore, just as it had already done at the thirty-third session. It wished to affirm that it appreciated the efforts made by the Office of Personnel Services, the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services, the Director of the Division of Recruitment and their colleagues, but it nevertheless pointed out that between June 1978 and June 1979, it had been possible to recruit only two nationals of the German Democratic Republic, neither of whom had been appointed to a senior post.

7. His delegation considered, moreover, that it was absolutely necessary to enhance the authority of the Office of Personnel Services and to make better use of existing control mechanisms, such as the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the Joint Inspection Unit and the International Civil Service Commission. He welcomed the trend towards increased recruitment of women to the Secretariat, including their recruitment to senior posts. However, such recruitment should not be effected at the expense of the principle of equitable geographical distribution. He would, moreover, like to know how the roster of candidates was being used, because his country had so far had no opportunity to determine what justified the existence of that costly system. Those comments applied also to the vacancy bulletins, especially when they were transmitted to the permanent missions of Member States after the deadline for the submission of nominations for the vacancies announced.

8. Mr. HANZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, since the salaries and allowances paid to the staff of the Organization represented nearly 80 per cent of the regular budget, great attention must be paid to personnel questions. His delegation considered that the principle of equitable geographical distribution should be applied on as broad a geographical basis as possible and that respect for the criterion of the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity

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(Mr. Hamzah, Syrian Arab Republic)

was entirely compatible with that principle, in the case also of posts with special language requirements and UNDP General Service posts. The strict application of that principle was the only valid means of remedying certain current injustices, which affected the countries of the Middle East in particular. His delegation attached special importance to the implementation of the provisions of paragraph 1 of section II of resolution 33/143 and considered that the revision of the criteria governing the determination of a desirable range for each State called for serious in-depth consideration. The principle of determining such a range was a just one, and the exceptions made should remain very limited.

9. With regard to the distribution of senior posts, his delegation considered that the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 2241 (XXI) and 33/143 should be implemented so as to improve the representation of the developing countries in those posts. Table 6 of document A/34/408 showed that the Middle East was represented in such posts by only two Under-Secretaries-General, whereas it should have three Under-Secretary-General posts.

10. The developing countries, which constituted over 75 per cent of the States Members of the Organization, should be represented in the same proportion in senior posts in the Secretariat. In that regard, it should be recalled that no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State or group of States.

11. With regard to the proportion of men and women in the Secretariat, the Syrian Arab Republic, where women held senior posts in all sectors, attached great importance to the appointment of women to the Secretariat, because they had already shown their competence in all areas.

12. His delegation was also in favour of recruiting young persons, who could give the Organization the benefit of their growing experience over a number of years, with regard to the appointment of spouses or relatives to the Secretariat, it believed that only the criterion of professional competence should be applied and that such appointments should be the exception, it hoped that the Secretariat would provide information on such cases (the number and nationality of such persons, the reasons for such appointments, etc.).

13. His delegation supported the measures to promote mobility of Secretariat staff, on the understanding that the measures would be applicable to all categories of staff. It also felt that if a retirement age had to be established, extensions beyond the age could be granted to some staff members who wished to continue working for the Organization, which could then continue to draw on their experience and skills. That should not impair the principle of equitable geographical representation of Member States within the Secretariat. His delegation felt too that promotion prospects were clearly inadequate for many staff members, such as Professionals in the language services. Often a staff member was performing duties at a level above that of his or her actual post, without there being any possibility of reclassifying the post in question. The Secretary-General should consider taking action to remedy such situations.

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(Mr. Hamzah, Syrian Arab Republic)

14. The rights of General Service staff had already given rise to lengthy debate, culminating in the adoption of resolution 33/143, under which the movement of staff from the General Service category to the P-1 and P-2 levels would be permitted up to 30 per cent of the total posts available, on the basis of competitive methods of selection. As had already been pointed out, those methods were giving rise to a number of problems, to which an equitable solution should be found. No one, however, would question the fact that the Secretary-General was making every effort to implement all the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

15. Mr. GODFREY (New Zealand) said that the practice which had developed of concentrating on personnel issues in off-budget years made good sense. The comprehensive nature of General Assembly resolution 33/143 in setting new guidelines for the personnel policies of the Organization was such that the new Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services needed to be given time to implement the resolution.

16. Some delegations had suggested that the principle of geographical distribution should apply to all staff, not only to Professionals. The New Zealand Mission to the United Nations in New York employed almost as many persons recruited locally as were sent from New Zealand. To do otherwise would add enormously to the cost of running the Mission, and the total cost of running the foreign service would rise to such an extent that staff reductions would be inevitable. It therefore seemed to his delegation that the change suggested by some delegations was likely to be prejudicial to the United Nations.

17. With respect to the promotion of General Service staff to the Professional category on the basis of competitive methods, the Committee had heard of the problems which had arisen over the implementation of the relevant proposal in resolution 33/143 and the transitional arrangements for staff acting in Professional posts for whom promotion had already been recommended in terms of the previous procedures. His delegation's fears had been largely allayed by the explanations given by the new Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services, including the suggestion that particular problems in individual cases should be dealt with as they arose. His delegation commended the Assistant Secretary-General for his sympathetic yet firm approach in dealing with the question. Like several other delegations, it would have no objection if more time was needed to implement the relevant section of resolution 33/143.

18. His delegation strongly supported some form of staff access to the Fifth Committee and therefore looked forward to receiving proposals in that regard.

19. In his statement at the 29th meeting of the Committee, the representative of Trinidad and Tobago had made some important points and proposals concerning the composition of the Secretariat. All aspects of the question would certainly be carefully studied and evaluated. His delegation looked forward to participating in that process at the appropriate time, bearing in mind the requirement of Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter that "the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff ... shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity."

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20. Mr. EFFIONG (Nigeria) said that generally speaking, the Secretary-General had made substantial efforts to implement the reforms envisaged in General Assembly resolution 33/143. It was encouraging to note that the number of Member States, most of them African, that were not represented in posts subject to geographical distribution had decreased from 23 to 19, and that 60 nationals from 15 of the 20 Member States that had previously been under-represented had been recruited during the reporting period. The Secretary-General's efforts were in line with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, which stressed the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

21. His delegation was, however, concerned that Africa, which accounted for one third of the membership of the United Nations, accounted for only 13 per cent of the posts in the Professional and higher categories of the Secretariat. In section II of resolution 33/143, the General Assembly had reaffirmed that "no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State, or group of States", and had requested the Secretary-General "to ensure that this principle is applied faithfully in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution". It seemed to his delegation that the principle was yet to be fully implemented.

22. While Nigeria's contribution to the regular budget of the United Nations had substantially increased by over 23 per cent, the number of Nigerians recruited to the senior levels of the Secretariat was regrettably small. His delegation hoped that that situation would be rectified in the near future.

23. As to the proportion of men and women in the Secretariat, the increase from 15.2 per cent in 1971 to 18.6 per cent in 1979 in the ratio of female staff in senior posts was minimal. Nevertheless, the action proposed by the Secretary-General to achieve a higher rate of increase in the recruitment of women and, in particular, the measures referred to in paragraph 15 of the report were encouraging. Equality between the sexes within the Secretariat should not be limited to recruitment. Any form of discrimination based on sex should be eliminated and women should be given the same conditions of employment, promotion and training as men.

24. On the question of equitable geographical representation and the recruitment of women, the developed countries, which already had more than their fair share of male recruits, should not step up the recruitment of their women to increase even further their over-all representation. Societies, like those of Africa, which for cultural and developmental reasons had not been able to give their women an adequate education, should not be made to suffer again.

25. With respect to the recruitment of young men and women, his delegation noted with satisfaction that during the reporting period, at least seven candidates below 27 years of age had been appointed to posts subject to geographical distribution. A better age balance in the Secretariat would be achieved only if, in addition to the recruitment of young men and women, the regulations governing the age of retirement were strictly enforced.

26. The Secretary-General might wish to consider fundamentally reforming the

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(Mr. Effiong, Nigeria)

structure of the quota system with a view to (a) ensuring that at every level and every salary scale the quota system was seen to be fair and equitable and (b) ensuring efficiency through uniform standards of recruitment and promotion. The structure should be made up of tiers and should set a minimum quota for each country. Although the proposal raised certain difficulties, they were certainly not insurmountable. The new structure would help to ensure that no region or group of countries remained in the lower or higher echelons of the Secretariat, while the existing quota system prevented further recruitment of their nationals.

27. His delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's decision to adopt the procedure of competitive examinations as the most appropriate and objective method of selection and to discard the previous procedures.

28. Mr. SHRESTHA (Nepal) said that the United Nations was the only organization capable of enlisting international co-operation to solve international problems of a political, economic, social, cultural and humanitarian nature. The current economic and political situation had further enhanced the role and increased the responsibilities of the Organization, whose effectiveness depended largely on the efficiency of its Secretariat. That was why his delegation had always taken a keen interest in the discussion on the composition of the Secretariat and the improvement of personnel policies.

29. As other delegations had noted, it was too early to review the degree of implementation of resolution 33/143 which the General Assembly had adopted in 1978. The Secretary-General should be given sufficient time to implement the guidelines. The action already taken was encouraging and it was hoped that those earnest efforts would continue.

30. To give undue importance in deciding the representation of Member States to the contribution factor alone would be deviating from the principles of equity and justice on which the Organization was based. In that connexion, his delegation endorsed the view expressed by the representatives of Trinidad and Tobago.

31. More should be done than merely drawing the attention of heads of departments and offices to the need for further steps to increase the representation of developing countries at senior and policy-making levels referred to in paragraph 9 of the report of the Secretary-General. On the question of inheritance of posts, he wished to reiterate his delegation's conviction that high-level posts should not be the exclusive preserve of any one Member State or group of States. He was confident that the Secretary-General would spare no effort to translate the Assembly's request into action.

32. Progress on the issue of the equitable representation of women in the Secretariat was clearly inadequate. The alleged dearth of qualified women in the developing countries could not be accepted as a factor hindering progress in that sphere. There were a large number of well-qualified women in the developing countries who could make a contribution to the Organization if they had the proper opportunities.

33. Finally, his delegation welcomed the introduction of examinations for the movement of staff from General Service to Professional posts at the P-1 and P-2

(Mr. Shrestha, Nepal)

levels and for the new recruitment of staff at those levels, as well as the introduction of a mobility factor in the annual review for promotion.

34. Miss GUIMARAES (Brazil) said that, in the view of her delegation, the paramount consideration in recruiting personnel of the highest level of efficiency, competence and integrity, was not incompatible with the criterion of equitable geographical distribution of Secretariat posts, the adequate representation of Member States in high-level posts and the recruitment of young staff and women. Those criteria were, however, subsidiary to the fundamental principle. The desirable ranges should necessarily be flexible and should not be construed as rigid quotas. Notwithstanding the efforts of the Secretariat to correct the imbalances in the geographical distribution of posts, the situation was far from ideal. Latin America, in particular, was still under-represented in the senior-level posts of the Secretariat, as could be seen from table 6 of document A/34/408.

35. As other delegations had indicated, it would be premature to pass judgement on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 33/143. A comprehensive report from the Secretary-General would be welcome before the next session of the General Assembly.

36. The Brazilian delegation attached great importance to the development of a career service structure within the Secretariat and therefore took special interest in competitive examinations for recruitment and promotion. It was a healthy practice used in many administrative systems. A career service with rigid standards for promotion would be a further incentive for recruiting qualified permanent staff, in compliance with the objectives of Article 101 (3) of the Charter.

37. Special attention should be given to a clear definition of standards for promotion. A lack of precision in the criteria used at present was professionally discouraging and led to certain practices which should be abandoned. It was significant to note that of 71 requests for reclassification of posts presented in the proposed programme budget for 1980-1981, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had been able to recommend approval of only 33.

38. The criteria for determining the desirable ranges for representation of Member States in the composition of the Secretariat should be re-examined. Those criteria had not kept pace with new realities, especially the significant increase in the membership of the Organization. For example, a number of developing countries were being repeatedly penalized by an increasingly unfair and discriminatory budgetary burden without a corresponding increase in the participation of their nationals in the composition of the Secretariat. Her delegation therefore called for the revision of the desirable ranges in order to bring about an aggregate increase in the representation of the third world in the high-level posts of the Secretariat.

39. Mr. HOUNA GOLO (Chad) noted with regret that the mechanisms used to solve personnel issues were complex, inadequate and unfair. Nevertheless, he realized that there were forces that wished to keep the advantages they had acquired despite the growth of the Organization and were preventing the establishment of an integrated and effective international civil service.

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(Mr. Houna Golo, Chad)

40. The equation of the "desirable range", developed in 1974, was completely out of line. It had three parameters: the fact of membership, population and capacity to pay of the Member State. In the case of Chad, which paid the minimum assessment of 0.01 per cent, those three parameters represented, respectively, the following percentages: 25.3 per cent, 8.8 per cent and 65.9 per cent. The two factors of population and capacity to pay were not favourable to Chad, which was poor and underpopulated. Thus, its desirable range of two to seven posts was virtually based solely on the fact of its membership. It was therefore deprived of two thirds of its rights; that was contrary to Article 2 (1) of the Charter, which stipulated that the Organization was based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members. Membership should therefore be an equalizing factor; from that standpoint, Chad deserved just as much as, if not more than, those countries which paid the largest contributions. Although it had to make a sacrifice to pay its assessment, his country was proud to honour its obligation and share the financial burden of the Organization. Although his delegation did not radically question the principle of desirable ranges, it requested a change in the weighting of the percentages in the interests of equity. After 17 years of participation in the work of the United Nations, Chad had only three Secretariat staff members in the Professional category, and those were at P-2 level, whereas countries paying large assessments were greatly over-represented.

41. His delegation generally endorsed the new personnel policy. The increase from 15 to 21 per cent in the number of new staff recruited from under-represented and non-represented countries was significant. Nevertheless, greater efforts should be made to attain the target established by the General Assembly in resolution 33/143, which seemed reasonable.

42. With regard to vacancy notices, his delegation noted that the first notice published by the Secretary-General on 1 June 1979 only mentioned posts subject to geographical representation. In future, the notices should list all vacancies, including those to be filled by promotion or transfer of Secretariat staff, and specify the number and nature of posts to be filled by competitive examination. The notices should also explain the implications of the goal of 30 per cent recruitment from under-represented or non-represented countries for the over-all geographical distribution of Secretariat posts.

43. His delegation was very much aware of the importance of General Service staff and therefore had a great interest in the competitive examination for promotion to Professional category of staff from other categories. At the thirty-third session, his delegation had objected to the idea of requiring candidates to have a university degree. Nevertheless, the mechanism set up seemed flexible and he was confident that it would not be harmful to anyone. In that regard, his delegation was prepared to agree that staff members should be heard on questions which concerned them, provided that their representations were made through the Secretary-General.

44. It could not be over-emphasized that no post, particularly at the senior level, should be the preserve of any Member State. It was evident from table C of the

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(Mr. Houna Golo, Chad)

report of the Secretary-General (A/34/408) that Africa was still the poor relative of the Organization from the standpoint of geographical representation and that the position of developing countries in general was even more alarming. He hoped the Secretary-General would make every effort to correct that situation.

45. With regard to the recruitment of women in the Secretariat, he supported the efforts made to implement the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 33/143, but noted that much remained to be done. If the Secretary-General and Member States worked together, it should be possible to achieve and even go beyond the goal set by the General Assembly. Only by pursuing the ideal of justice, particularly with regard to the developing countries, could the United Nations make progress towards universality.

46. Mr. PHOLOMA (Malawi), referring to table 9 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/34/408), said he was pleased that his country, which had been represented by a single staff member in 1978, had had three staff members in June 1979. Malawi therefore came within the desirable range, which in its case was from two to seven posts. However, it had not reached the upper limit of that range; it hoped that one day it would be fully represented, especially since a study of the same table showed that some Member States, both developed and developing countries, were considerably over-represented. The Secretariat should step up its efforts to rectify the situation. For that reason, his country's delegation believed that the General Assembly should have set aside more than 40 per cent of the vacancies subject to geographical distribution for the appointment of nationals of unrepresented and under-represented countries. Future reports by the Secretary-General on the matter would quite probably show a decline in the number of staff members who were nationals of Group B countries (developed countries with a market economy) and a marked increase in the number of nationals from Group A countries (developing countries in Asia and Africa). No post occupied by a national of an over-represented country should, if it became vacant, be filled by a national of another over-represented country. The effects of that policy would take long to make themselves felt, and it was therefore all the more essential to lose no time in implementing it.

47. His delegation believed that the Secretary-General should review the question of posts subject to geographical distribution with a view to increasing their number, which would result in a proportionate increase in the number of Member States with representation in the desirable range and thereby make for a better distribution of staff members serving the international community. Some of the under-represented or unrepresented countries had to contend with serious problems, and the international community must help them acquire the means to gain their proper representation one day.

48. One of the strong points of the Secretary-General's report was the part relating to the proportion of men to women in the Secretariat. The progress made in recruiting women was encouraging. Women clearly should be invited to play a part in the affairs of the international community at a moment when the United Nations

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(Mr. Kholoma, Malawi)

was engaged in preparing a major conference on the United Nations Decade for Women. The Secretariat should set an example as an administration in which considerations of race, belief or sex had no influence.

49. His delegation also welcomed the efforts made to recruit more young people and improve the age distribution in the Secretariat. Staff members who began their careers while young probably would, as the years passed, acquire experience which would make them all the more effective when they reached maturity. It might also be a good way of making savings.

50. With regard to the issuing of vacancy bulletins, he said that whenever the Secretariat received no acknowledgement it should inquire of the Member State concerned whether a bulletin had been received. Without such precautions, there was reason to fear that the bulk of recruitment would continue to be from over-represented countries, thereby nullifying all the efforts made by other methods.

51. His delegation regarded competitive methods for promotion to the Professional category from other categories as a good way to ensure a more just application of the principle of geographical distribution, provided that the procedures established were enforced strictly and with the same rigour for all candidates.

52. Mr. JONAH (Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Personnel Services) informed the representative of Morocco, who had wanted the report of the Secretary-General (A/34/408) to provide exact figures rather than merely percentages for the posts subject to geographical distribution, that table C gave the numerical distribution by group of countries for staff members in the posts concerned. The figures in the table were a synthesis of data from table 9 of the same document, which, in addition, showed the nationalities of staff members and the grades of the posts in question. He gave a detailed breakdown of the groups of countries used in preparing the tables. Group A consisted of developing countries of Asia and Africa, Group B of developed countries with a market economy, Group C of developing countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, and Group D of socialist countries. He pointed out some exceptions to the system of grouping according to geographical location alone.

53. In reply to the Soviet delegation's question whether it had really been necessary for the Secretary-General to recruit 93 nationals of over-represented Member States, he assured the Committee that every effort was being made to find qualified candidates from under-represented or unrepresented countries. Where such efforts were unsuccessful or where candidates reject the conditions of employment offered, the Secretary-General was forced to accept a candidate from an over-represented country. It should be noted that the 93 posts in question constituted 30.7 per cent of all recruitment for the period under consideration, as against 37.6 per cent for the preceding period.

54. The Soviet delegation had also asked whether it was a practice of the Secretariat to fill all senior positions by promotion or by reassignment of

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(Mr. Jonah)

Secretariat staff members without issuing a post vacancy bulletin. That was indeed the normal practice of the Secretariat, which was thus in a position to select from among staff members with experience in United Nations administration. He did not have with him any statistics on the recruitment of chiefs of section, but he believed that such staff was most often recruited from outside. Table 11 showed that during the past year the Secretary-General had appointed 41 staff members to grade P-5 and 67 to grade P-4. Strictly enforcing the provisions of staff regulation 4.4 in filling vacancies, the Secretary-General reviewed the list of Secretariat staff members to find a qualified candidate, and only thereafter, if necessary, did he advertise the vacancy outside.

55. The Soviet delegation had also wondered about the fact that 27 nationals of a State not a member of the United Nations were employed in the Secretariat. It should be noted that the State in question took part in the work of the International Court of Justice, the International Narcotics Control Board, ECE, UNCTAD and UNIDO. On the basis of that participation, it made contributions which had amounted to 0.96 per cent in 1978-1979 and would amount to 1.05 per cent for the following biennium. In the case of that State the desirable range would be from 18 to 24 posts. He added that 17 nationals of that State were employed by UNCTAD and UNIDO, having been appointed under the relevant discretionary powers of the Secretary-General.

56. He stated that a working document to be issued shortly would show the number of P-5 and higher posts filled by recruiting procedures; the representative of Japan would then be in a position to know what proportion of nationals from under-represented and over-represented countries were appointed to such posts.

57. With regard to competitions to recruit candidates from over-represented countries, it should be recalled that the procedures for such competitions antedated General Assembly resolution 33/143. On that subject, reference could be made to the Secretary-General's report A/C.5/33/2. The Secretary-General had the firm intention of calling on nationals of under-represented countries to fill posts that became vacant through retirement.

58. The Austrian delegation had expressed the view that little progress had been made in the definition of occupational groups requested in section I, paragraph 1 (f), of General Assembly resolution 33/143. That was an enormous task; the International Civil Service Commission had started work on it, but its findings had not been ready until July 1979 and had been approved only in August. ICSC had defined 450 different occupational groups, and the Secretariat was now engaged in classifying all posts in the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies according to that system. Naturally, the task could not be finished before the end of 1979. Any excessive haste in that area, which affected staff career prospects, could have negative consequences, and it might in fact delay the solution of the problem. Work on defining occupational groups at Geneva had been held up by negotiations between the staff there and the administration.

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59. With regard to the concern expressed by the Italian delegation, he explained that, as a result of rounding off figures and taking weighting coefficients into account, it could happen that the figures in the various tables relating to desirable ranges, either as averages or as absolute totals, did not coincide. The fact that recently recruited Italian nationals were occupying P-1 and P-2 posts also produced a relative disadvantage for Italy's representation in the weighted calculation, but its position would improve as the staff concerned were promoted within the hierarchy.

60. In reply to the question posed by the representative of Benin with regard to the number of posts on which the desirable ranges of individual Member States were based, he said that for 1962-1967 the figure had been calculated on the basis of 1,500 posts, a figure which had been increased to 2,000 for the period 1968-1972, to 2,200 in 1973, to 2,400 for the period 1974-1975 and to 2,600 in 1976 and which since then had been 2,700.

61. With regard to the remarks of the United Kingdom delegation, he said that the desirable number of posts for each region was calculated by adding together the median values of the desirable ranges for the Member States in the region, adding to that figure the number of posts reserved to take account of the population factor, and increasing or reducing the resulting figure by 15 per cent in order to arrive at the upper and lower limits of the desirable range. Those limits were then rounded off to the nearest whole number. Only very rarely was the median value exactly midway between the resulting rounded figures, and that was why a disparity appeared.

62. Replying to the representative of Romania, who had asked what was the total number of nationals of each country in the Secretariat, he said that the Committee would be given the figures later in a conference room paper.

63. The representative of the Federal Republic of Germany had asked what efforts were being made by the Secretariat to find qualified candidates among unrepresented and under-represented countries and had also asked whether it was difficult to find such candidates, whether there was any observed resistance to change, whether there were any obstacles in the departments and services concerned and, if so, how such obstacles could be removed. In his own view, all those factors played a certain role; the Secretariat was now trying to work out a set of guidelines to improve the situation, and those would be submitted to the Committee for consideration at a later stage.

AGENDA ITEM 107: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST (continued)

(b) UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/C.5/34/L.12)

64. The CHAIRMAN said that under draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12, the General Assembly would authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for the period from 1 November to 18 December 1979 inclusive.

65. Draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12 was adopted by 93 votes to 14, with 1 abstention.

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66. Mr. WANG Chengwei (China), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation, maintaining its position of principle, had not taken part in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12. Moreover, his Government would not assume any financial obligation with regard to UNIFIL.

67. Mr. GRODSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) reaffirmed his Government's position that all expenditure to eliminate the consequences of the armed aggression perpetrated by Israel against Lebanon should be the responsibility of the aggressor. His delegation had therefore voted against draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12, and his Government would, as in the past, refuse to take part in financing any expenditure connected with the creation and maintenance of UNIFIL.

68. Mr. AGOSSOU (Benin) said that his delegation had not taken part in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12 and that the Government of his country would not take any responsibility for expenditure connected with the financing of UNIFIL.

69. Mr. ROHEEN (Afghanistan) said that his delegation had always supported measures taken in implementation of the mandate of the United Nations in the field of the maintenance of international peace and security. However, so far as the financing of UNIFIL was concerned, his country believed that those responsible for the aggression, in the present case Israel, should bear the financial consequences of their expansionist policy. Moreover, UNIFIL had been established on an interim basis and should not impose permanent obligations on Member States. His delegation had therefore voted against draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12, and his country would not contribute to financing the maintenance of UNIFIL.

70. Mr. JAWAD (Iraq) said that if UNIFIL had intervened even once to maintain peace in southern Lebanon, it would deserve to be called a peace-keeping force. His Government had no objection to United Nations forces which maintained a just and genuine peace; on the contrary, it contributed to the financing of such forces, as in the case of the United Nations Force in Cyprus, for which Iraq in fact paid voluntary contributions. The purpose of UNIFIL, on the other hand, was indisputably to protect the aggressor and the occupying forces rather than to ensure the maintenance of peace. Proof of that lay in the daily attacks perpetrated in southern Lebanon by the Zionist forces, who were rounding up numerous residents of the villages in the region, with the full knowledge of United Nations forces stationed on the spot. It was therefore clear that the forces in question were being used for purposes very different from those for which they had been established and thus were betraying their humanitarian mission. The aggressor alone should bear the financial consequences of its actions, and so long as Israel pursued its racist aims and its policy of occupying land belonging to others, the presence of United Nations peace-keeping forces in that area must be regarded as illegal and as a means of justifying the aggression. Those were the reasons why his delegation had voted against draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12.

71. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, in accordance with its position

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(Mr. Hamzah, Syrian Arab Republic)

of principle regarding the financing of United Nations peace-keeping forces, his delegation had voted against draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12. His country would not contribute to the financing of UNIFIL, since it believed that such expenditure should be borne solely by the aggressor.

72. Mr. DUNG (Viet Nam) said that his delegation had not participated in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12, for reasons which he had already expressed at the 25th meeting during consideration of draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.11 on the financing of UNDOF. He took the opportunity to reiterate that Viet Nam was not responsible for financing the United Nations peace-keeping forces in the Middle East.

73. Mr. MAKOSSO (Congo) said that his delegation had not participated in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12, for reasons which it had expressed the previous week during consideration of the financing of UNDOF, since his country's actual ability to pay did not permit it to assume such expenses.

74. Mr. MINCHEV (Bulgaria) said that, in accordance with its position of principle, his delegation had voted against draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12 and that, as a result, Bulgaria would continue to withhold contributions to the financing of UNIFIL. It felt that all the consequences of the aggression should be assumed solely by the aggressor or by those who assisted him.

75. Mr. HILLEL (Israel) expressed regret that the discussions, which should have been of a purely technical nature and should have concerned only the financing of UNIFIL, had been turned into an exchange of polemics which were out of place. When the Fifth Committee sought to ensure the financing of peace-keeping operations, the States which opposed the restoration of peace in the Middle East had once again made their dissonant voices heard.

76. Although Syria had an occupation force in Lebanon, it had felt obliged to accuse Israel, which it had no right to do. Similarly, Iraq was hardly in a position to criticize Israel, in view of its own disastrous role in the Middle East.

77. His delegation recalled that Israel sought to establish peaceful relations with Lebanon, whose territorial integrity it respected. Furthermore, Israel was in favour of maintaining UNIFIL and noted with satisfaction that the Committee had approved the necessary interim appropriations to ensure the uninterrupted functioning of peace-keeping operations in that region.

78. Mr. GUBCSI (Hungary) said that, in accordance with its position of principle, his delegation had voted against draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12, since it felt that the expenses incurred by UNIFIL should be borne solely by the aggressor. His country had not participated in the past and would not participate in the future in the financing of UNIFIL.

79. Mr. RICHTER (German Democratic Republic) said that his delegation's position had already been expressed by the Permanent Representative of the German Democratic Republic at the eighth special session of the General Assembly and remained

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(Mr. Richter, German Democratic Republic)

unchanged. The creation of UNIFIL was a direct result of Israeli aggression and the maintenance of that force should be financed exclusively by the aggressor. For that reason, his delegation had voted against draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.12; as in the past, his country would not participate in the financing of expenditure related to the maintenance of UNIFIL.

80. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, although the Committee was currently considering a technical question, the representative of the Zionist enemy had used that occasion to attack his country. The entire people of Syria had expressed its compassion for the millions of Jews tortured and massacred by the Nazis. Nevertheless, when a group of human beings had undergone such suffering, that should make them show more indulgence and generosity than others, instead of making another innocent people suffer, using even more cruel and sophisticated weapons. By its intransigence and its refusal to conform to United Nations resolutions, Israel had only aggravated the unstable situation in Lebanon. Its goal was not to restore peace, and the policy of aggression of the Zionist régime constituted a threat to that region.

81. The whole world should force Israel to implement the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council which called for its immediate withdrawal from Lebanon and the occupied Arab territories. There could be no peace in that region without recognition of the inalienable right of the Palestinian Arab people to return to their homeland. Furthermore, certain Zionist leaders, such as Mr. Moshe Dayan, had recognized that right.

82. Mr. JAWAD (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, expressed regret at having to take the floor again to reply to the comments of the Zionist representative, who had attacked his country. Everyone knew of the massacres committed daily by the Zionist entity against the sons of the Palestinian people and of the Arab nation. While it was true that every draft resolution on that question adopted by the Fifth Committee was of a technical nature, it also had political aspects. If the representative of the Zionist entity was offended by the use of the word "racist", it should be pointed out that the same adjective appeared in a General Assembly resolution which had been adopted by all the countries of the world.

83. Mr. HILLEL (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Syria was still occupying Lebanon, where 31,000 of its soldiers continued to be stationed and acted as a so-called deterrent force. The real character of the Syrian occupation, therefore, could no longer be disguised and was clearly designed to achieve the objective which the Syrian Government had been pursuing for a long time, namely, the integration of Lebanon into Syria. As long as the Syrian Government intervened in the internal affairs of another country, it had no right to make its voice heard.

84. With regard to Iraq it should be pointed out that, quite recently, the Iraqi Government had had 18 political prisoners executed; that act alone was enough to disqualify Iraq from speaking out on a question of that nature in the Committee.

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85. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of the Zionist entity had referred to the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon. In that respect, it should be pointed out that their presence was the result of a decision taken by the Arab Group. Furthermore, the Syrian troops in Lebanon were at the disposal of the legitimate Government of Lebanon, and the Zionists had no right to interfere in the internal affairs of Lebanon.

86. Mr. JAWAD (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the comments made by the Zionist representative were totally unfounded and that it would be more appropriate for him to mention the massacres committed by his country in Palestine and in the occupied Arab territories.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.