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TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1978-1979

Administrative and financial implications of decision 5 (II) of
the Preparatory Committee for the Conference (A/32/42, vol. II,
sect. IV) and draft resolution A/C.2/32/L.68

Twenty-fifth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the Secretary-General's statement of administrative and financial implications of decision 5 (II) of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries and draft resolution A/C.2/32/L.68, as orally revised, which was adopted by the Second Committee at its 53rd meeting, on 1 December 1977 (A/C.5/32/75 and Add.1).
2. In operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide to convene the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries at Buenos Aires from 30 August to 12 September 1978. The Secretary-General states that, should the General Assembly approve the draft resolution, there would be need to appropriate \$791,500 under section 4 of the programme budget for 1978-1979, and \$132,000 under section 25; the latter amount would be offset by an increase in an equivalent amount in the estimate for income section 1. The Secretary-General estimates the full conference servicing costs at \$962,400, including the services which will be provided from within existing resources.
3. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in paragraph 4.9 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979, 1/ it recommended that

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/32/8).

the provisional estimate of \$411,600 included by the Secretary-General in his initial proposals be deleted pending submission of revised estimates. The Advisory Committee recommendations on section 4 were approved in first reading by the Fifth Committee at its 18th meeting, on 17 October (A/C.5/32/SR.18, para. 32).

4. The Secretary-General's revised estimates for 1978 in document A/C.5/32/75 and Add.1 in the amount of \$791,500, excluding conference servicing costs, may be broken down as follows:

	(US dollars)
Conference secretariat	457,100
Economic and Social Council secretariat	68,700
Representation at the Conference	17,500
Information support programme	248,200
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	791,500
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Of the above total, \$232,900 relates to the decision to postpone the Conference from 27 March to 7 April 1978, as originally scheduled, to August/September 1978 (A/C.5/32/75, annex I, col. 10).

Conference secretariat

5. The breakdown of the \$457,100 being requested for the Conference secretariat is given in table 2 of document A/C.5/32/75. Of that amount, \$377,600 corresponds to 12 months' salaries and common staff costs for the Conference secretariat proper and the documentation staff. The Advisory Committee recalls in this connexion that when the Conference was scheduled to be held in March/April, it was envisaged that the Conference secretariat would be disbanded at the end of June; the cost of the proposed extension of the Conference secretariat by six months is estimated by the Secretary-General at \$201,300 (A/C.5/32/75, annex I).

6. As stated in paragraph 2 above, operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.2/32/L.68 provides that the Conference would end on 12 September 1978. The Advisory Committee understands that the report of the Conference would be submitted to a special session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and thereafter to the Economic and Social Council, which would transmit it to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session. To make it possible for the Assembly to consider the report in November and/or early December, there would be need for the Governing Council to meet not later than the second half of October. Consequently, the report of the Conference would have to be ready by 15 October at the latest. Once the report has been prepared in final form, the only tasks that would remain to be discharged by the Conference secretariat would be to assist the Governing Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in their consideration of the report. The Advisory Committee bore the above time-table in mind in its consideration of the need to extend the Conference secretariat to the end of 1978, as is being requested by the Secretary-General.

7. The Conference secretariat proper consists of the following staff:

Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference (ASG)

Principal officer (D-1)

Administrative officer (P-4)

Programme and operations officer (P-3)

General Service staff (one G-5, three G-4)

8. In a report to the first session of the Preparatory Committee of the Conference, the Secretary-General of the Conference (the Administrator of UNDP) indicated that the responsibilities of the Deputy Secretary-General and of the principal officer would be to assist him in his consultations with Governments and institutions concerned, and in maintaining liaison with various United Nations bodies (A/CONF.79/PC/4, para. 40). The Advisory Committee agrees that the services of these officers would be required during the consideration of the report of the Conference by the Governing Council of UNDP, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. Accordingly, the Committee has no objection to their being extended to the end of 1978.

9. According to paragraph 41 of the same report, "the responsibilities of the P-4 administrative officer would include the preparation and review of UNDP financial and administrative requirements for the substantive preparations for the Conference; the supervision, organization and control of the recruitment of staff and consultants; the monitoring of expenditures and projection of requirements; travel and other arrangements required for convening the panel of consultants; serving as authorizing officer for personnel obligations and other commitments; and organizing and administering the staff work in the office of the Secretary-General of the Conference". All this work will have been virtually completed by the time the Conference comes to an end. The Advisory Committee recommends that the services of the administrative officer be retained for six weeks beyond the closure of the Conference, i.e. to the end of October, instead of the end of December as proposed by the Secretary-General; the consequential reduction in salary and common staff costs would be \$7,000.

10. The responsibilities of the P-3 programme and operations officer are "to assist the Secretary-General of the Conference and his immediate staff in the planning and organizing of the substantive UNDP inputs required at each stage of the preparatory process for the Conference, including network analysis of activities needed to reach the required outcome. This officer would also assist in the preparation of time-schedules, guidelines and requirements for each step involved in document preparation and assist in the appraisal, review and control of UNDP operations directed to the successful completion of the Conference" (A/CONF.79/PC/4, para. 41). The Advisory Committee recommends that this officer be retained until the end of October. The consequential reduction in the estimate would be \$5,800.

11. In view of the recommendations in the preceding paragraphs, the Committee is of the opinion that two of the General Service posts can also be discontinued as of the end of October 1978, entailing a reduction of the estimate by \$5,200.

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12. The documentation staff consists of two Professional (one P-5, one P-4) and two General Service posts. Paragraph 9 of document A/CONF.79/PC/4 indicates that these staff are engaged in the preparation of basic documents for the Conference. The Advisory Committee understands that it is not intended to retain the Professional officers beyond the end of September 1978. The Committee would have no objection to the two General Service staff being retained for one month beyond that date so as to assist in the production of the final report. The total reduction in the estimates related to documentation staff would thus be \$28,400.

13. For the reasons indicated in paragraphs 9 to 12 above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the estimate for the Conference secretariat be reduced by \$46,400, i.e. from \$457,100 to \$410,700. The consequential reduction in the estimates for section 25 and income section 1 is \$12,000.

Economic and Social Council secretariat

14. Bearing in mind that the report of the Conference will be considered by the Economic and Social Council at the end of October and by the General Assembly in November/December 1978, the Committee has no objection to the two posts referred to in paragraph 28 of document A/C.5/32/75 being extended to the end of the year.

Representation at the Conference

15. The Advisory Committee notes the information in paragraphs 30 and 31 of document A/C.5/32/75.

Information support programme

16. As can be seen from paragraph 32 of document A/C.5/32/75 and from document A/C.5/32/75/Add.1, the cost of the information support programme in 1978 is now estimated at \$248,200. Of this amount \$132,600 relates to activities which had initially been scheduled for 1977 but which either have been rescheduled because of the postponement of the Conference, or could not be carried out in 1977 for a variety of reasons. The bulk of the request relates to regional encounters, to an interregional workshop at the time of the Conference and to the Conference exhibition, but the Secretary-General is also seeking \$7,700 to enable the Office of Public Information to engage on a temporary basis two coverage officers, one editor, one radio officer and one television film officer to replace some of the regular staff who would be providing information coverage at the Conference. In annex III, paragraph 13, it is stated that the temporary staff would "handle other meetings at Headquarters at the time of the TCDC Conference". The draft calendar of conferences and meetings annexed to the report of the Committee on Conferences ^{2/} indicates, however, that only two bodies are scheduled to meet at Headquarters during the period of the Conference (30 August to 12 September), namely the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Committee on Science and Technology for Development; moreover, these two

^{2/} Ibid., Supplement No. 32 (A/32/32), annex I.

bodies will meet concurrently for less than one week. In the circumstances, the Advisory Committee recommends that the request for \$7,700 for the Office of Public Information be absorbed.

Conference servicing costs

17. The Secretary-General estimates that, on the assumption that no services can be provided from within already approved resources, conference servicing costs in 1978 would amount to \$962,400, consisting of \$162,300 for the third session of the Preparatory Committee which is scheduled to meet in New York in May 1978 for a period of five days (A/C.5/32/75, para. 33, and table 7) and \$800,100 for the Conference itself (table 8). More than half of the latter amount relates to pre-session documentation (\$415,500, excluding the costs of reproduction and distribution). In paragraphs 35 and 36 of his statement, the Secretary-General reiterates the view that the total volume of pre-session documentation would be about 1,000 pages. Inasmuch as such a volume of documentation can only be prepared and issued over a period of months, the Advisory Committee expects that most of the related translation costs will be absorbed.

Recapitulation

18. In paragraphs 13 and 16 above, the Advisory Committee has recommended reductions totalling \$54,100 under section 4 and \$12,000 under section 25 and income section 1.

19. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it approve draft resolution A/C.2/32/L.68 recommended by the Second Committee, there would be need for additional appropriations of \$737,400 under section 4 and \$120,000 under section 25 of the programme budget for 1978-1979, the latter amount being offset by an increase of \$120,000 in the estimate for income section 1. The Fifth Committee may also wish to inform the Assembly that conference servicing costs are estimated at \$962,400, including the cost of the services to be provided from already approved resources.
