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CONFERENCE OF PLENIPOTENTIARIES ON SUCCESSION OF STATES  
IN RESPECT OF TREATIES

PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1976-1977

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution  
recommended by the Sixth Committee (A/31/292, para. 10)

Ninth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and  
Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/31/44 and Corr.1) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution (A/31/292, para. 10) on the United Nations Conference on Succession of States in Respect of Treaties recommended by the Sixth Committee.
2. The Secretary-General estimates the total cost of the Conference at \$911,600 (A/C.5/31/44 and Corr.1, para. 5). The Advisory Committee recalls in this connexion that, when the General Assembly adopted resolution 3496 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, in which it decided to convene the Conference in 1977, it had before it a report by the Fifth Committee on the related administrative and financial implications, which were estimated at "up to \$476,000 ... subject to review by the Assembly at its thirty-first session in the light of a further detailed report of the Secretary-General". 1/
3. The substantial increase (by over 90 per cent) in the current estimate of the cost of the Conference compared to the administrative and financial implications submitted to the General Assembly at the time it decided to convene the Conference is not an isolated case. In its report (to be issued under the symbol A/31/8/Add.9), the Advisory Committee indicates that the Secretary-General's estimate of the costs of the United Nations Conference on Desertification increased from "up to \$540,000"

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1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Annexes,  
agenda item 96, document A/10494, para. 8.

at the thirtieth session (when the decision to convene the Conference was taken) to \$913,000, that is, by nearly 70 per cent. Similarly, the cost estimates of the United Nations Water Conference have been repeatedly revised upwards since the initial decision was taken to convene the Conference.

4. A comparison of the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/31/44 and Corr.1) (which are broken down in greater detail in document A/C.6/31/L.5/Rev.1) with those submitted by him last year (A/C.5/1749) shows that the increase of approximately \$436,000 is accounted for by the following factors:

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(a) Extra costs attributable to change of base, for costing purposes, from New York to Geneva (attributable to the decision in operative para. 1 of the draft resolution to convene the Conference at Vienna) <sup>2/</sup> (A/31/292, para. 10);	58,000
(b) Provision of summary records (operative para. 5 of the draft resolution);	144,000
(c) Addition of a sixth language, including cost of summary records in that language (operative para. 4 of the draft resolution);	202,000
(d) Presence of an expert (operative para. 6 of the draft resolution) and of representatives of liberation movements.	<u>32,000</u>
	\$436,000

<sup>2/</sup> The Secretary-General relates the use of Geneva as the base for costing purposes to para. 5 of General Assembly resolution 3350 (XXIX) on the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences (A/C.5/31/44 and Corr.1, para. 2), which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

...

"Approves the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit to the effect that certain bodies specified in paragraph 500 of its report A/9798 may also meet in Vienna for the period 1975-1977, taking into account the observations of the Joint Inspection Unit in paragraphs 501 and 502 of its report and subject to the related comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions A/9795/Add.2, para. 43 and in the light of the standing invitation of the Government of Austria as set forth in its memorandum A/9589/Rev.1, annex, para. 16."

In its report, the Advisory Committee states, inter alia, that:

"As to the assessment of extra costs, the Advisory Committee accepts that Geneva should be regarded as the base, not only for Geneva-based bodies, but any major special conference held in Vienna. In the Committee's opinion, however, that formula would not be appropriate if for any reason a New York-based body which is not now authorized to meet away from Headquarters were to meet in Vienna." (A/31/8/Add.9, para. 43).

A. Conference servicing costs

5. On the basis of the assumptions set forth in detail by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/31/44 and Corr.1, para. 4), conference servicing costs, including printing, are estimated at \$847,400.

6. The schedule of meetings foreshadowed (A/C.5/31/44 and Corr.1, para. 4 (a)) - after allowing for the cancellations which are to be expected at all conferences - does not, in the opinion of the Advisory Committee, require more than one full team of 18 interpreters (instead of 25). For the same reason, and considering that translating and précis-writing are done by staff having the same qualifications, the Advisory Committee recommends that the number of translators and précis-writers be reduced by 10 (from 50 to 40), that of revisers by 2 (from 16 to 14) and that of stenotypists by 10 (from 52 to 42).

7. Bearing in mind that two meetings will not be held simultaneously, the Advisory Committee recommends the following reductions in the number of auxiliary Conference-servicing staff:

Meeting room attendants	- by 3 (from 7 to 4)
Sound technicians	- by 1 (from 4 to 3)
Distribution clerks	- by 3 (from 8 to 5)
Reproduction clerks	- by 5 (from 14 to 9)

The Committee is also of the opinion that three cleaners (instead of six) should suffice.

8. The reductions in staffing recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 6 and 7 above entail a reduction in costs of \$125,000.

9. The Advisory Committee also recommends that, in line with the oft-expressed wish of the General Assembly, the volume of pre-session, in-session and post-session documentation be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of the Conference. The Committee recommends that the related estimates be reduced by \$7,000 for pre-session documentation, by \$30,000 for editing and by \$20,000 for printing.

10. Consequently, the Advisory Committee recommends reductions under conference servicing costs (including printing) totalling \$182,000, that is, from \$847,400 to \$665,000 (to the nearest \$1,000).

B. Other requirements

11. The Secretary-General estimates other requirements at \$64,200 (A/C.5/31/44 and Corr.1, para. 5 B). The Advisory Committee was informed that this includes \$32,300 for the travel and subsistence of 11 staff from Headquarters (8 Professional and above, including the Legal Counsel, and 3 General Service) and \$27,000 for the travel and subsistence of 9 representatives of 6 national liberation movements

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recognized by the Organization of African Unity, pursuant to paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 3280 (XXIX). The Advisory Committee recommends that the Secretary-General take steps to keep to the necessary minimum the number of staff detailed to the Conference from Headquarters. Furthermore, it is not certain whether nine representatives of national liberation movements will actually travel to the Conference. For these reasons, the Advisory Committee recommends that the request of \$64,200 for "other requirements" be reduced by \$5,000 to \$59,200.

### C. Recapitulation

12. The Secretary-General breaks down his estimate of \$911,600 into \$761,900 for conference servicing costs (except printing) and \$149,700 for other requirements (including printing) (A/C.5/31/44 and Corr.1, para. 6). The Advisory Committee's recommendations in this report reduce the former amount by \$162,000 (that is, to \$600,000) and the latter by \$25,000 (that is, to \$125,000). 3/

13. On the basis of the foregoing considerations, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee (A/31/292, para. 10) an amount of \$125,000 (excluding conference servicing costs) would be required under section 20 of the programme budget for 1976-1977. The Advisory Committee recommends further that conference servicing costs not exceed \$600,000, it being understood that these costs will be included in a consolidated statement to be prepared towards the close of the current session of the General Assembly, in which the Secretary-General will recapitulate the estimated conference costs of all the decisions taken during the year and indicate how much can be absorbed from within existing resources.

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3/ Rounded to the nearest \$1,000, consistent with the practice in the programme budget for 1976-1977.