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Agenda item 108

PERSONNEL QUESTIONS

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Peter G. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic)

1. At its 5th plenary meeting, on 23 September 1977, the General Assembly decided to include the following item in its agenda:

"Personnel questions:

- (a) Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General;
- (b) Other personnel questions: report of the Secretary-General."

and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee.

2. The Committee considered the item at its 4th, 6th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 14th, 15th, 17th and 20th meetings, from 28 September to 19 October 1977. For its consideration of item 108 (a), the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/32/146) and a list of the staff of the Secretariat showing, by office, department and organizational unit, the names, functional titles, nationality and salary level of all staff members employed as at 30 June 1977 (A/C.5/32/L.2). The Committee considered under item 108 (b) a report of the Secretary-General on the amendments made to the Staff Rules during the period from 1 July 1976 to 30 June 1977 (A/C.5/32/3).

3. At the request of some delegations, during its consideration of the item the Committee was provided by the Secretariat with information on the characteristics of staff appointed and promoted between 1 July 1976 and 30 June 1977, issued in a conference room paper. Data on the distribution of the staff of the Secretariat by region and nationality were also provided in a conference room paper, following a request by the delegation of Poland.

4. At the 14th meeting, on 12 October, the representative of India introduced a

draft resolution (A/C.5/32/L.7/Rev.1) sponsored by Ghana, India, Japan, Kenya and Trinidad and Tobago, which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its earlier resolutions on the composition of the Secretariat and, in particular, resolution 31/26 of 29 November 1976,

"Having considered the report of the Secretary-General in document A/32/146,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;

"2. Expresses the view that the report of the Secretary-General does not sufficiently fulfil the requirements of resolution 31/26 and those of other relevant resolutions;

"3. Urges the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts for effective implementation of resolutions 31/26, 31/27 and other relevant resolutions, within the framework of Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

"4. Takes further note of the assurances of the Secretary-General to provide a full report on the implementation of the directives and provisions contained in resolutions 31/26 and 31/27 to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General, in the submission of his report to the thirty-third session to provide full data, including comparative numerical data on the implementation of the relevant resolutions, particularly resolution 31/26, taking fully into account the views and suggestions expressed during the discussion on this item at the thirty-second session."

5. At the 15th meeting, on 12 October, the representative of Japan, on behalf of the sponsors, taking into account the views expressed and the amendments proposed by a number of delegations during the discussion on the draft resolution, orally revised it as follows:

(a) In operative paragraph 2, the words "sufficiently fulfil" were replaced by the words "entirely meet";

(b) Operative paragraph 3 was repladed by the following:

"3. Urges the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts for effective implementation of resolutions 3416 (XXX) and 3417 A and B (XXX) of 8 December 1975, 31/26 and 31/27, in all their parts, and other relevant resolutions, within the framework of Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;"

(c) Operative paragraph 4 was renumbered operative paragraph 2 and paragraphs 2 and 3 were renumbered accordingly.

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6. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted by consensus draft resolution A/C.5/32/L.7/Rev.1, as orally revised by the sponsors (see para. 16 below, draft resolution A).

7. At the same meeting, the representative of the United States of America said that he did not join in the consensus. The representative of the United Kingdom declared that, had there been a vote on the draft resolution, his delegation would have abstained.

8. At the same meeting, Nepal introduced a draft decision on the composition of the Secretariat (A/C.5/32/L.8/Rev.1), which read as follows:

"The General Assembly

"1. Decides to request the Secretary-General to include in his forthcoming report on personnel questions to be submitted to the thirty-third session of the General Assembly a special section reflecting the views of the United Nations personnel on

"(a) How to intensify their efforts to contribute in an impartial manner to the attainment of the aims and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of social and economic development of the developing countries;

"(b) How the morale of the United Nations personnel can be improved to this end;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to employ suitable techniques to ascertain the views of the United Nations personnel with the object of achieving the goals set forth in operative paragraph 1 above."

9. At the 17th meeting, on 14 October, the representative of Nepal, following a suggestion by Pakistan, announced that he would not press his draft decision to a vote provided that its text would be included in the present report.

10. At the 20th meeting, on 20 October, the representative of Barbados introduced, and orally revised, a second version (A/C.5/32/L.9/Rev.2) of a revised draft resolution which he had introduced earlier to the Committee (A/C.5/32/L.9/Rev.1). The new text, which was sponsored by the Bahamas, Barbados and Nigeria, was identical with that of draft resolution B in paragraph 16 below, except that operative paragraph 2 read as follows:

"2. Urges the Secretary-General to make greater efforts to appoint to senior posts both through recruitment and promotion younger people of outstanding ability and demonstrable potential;"

11. At the same meeting, the representative of Ghana proposed that the words "in the context of resolution 31/26" be added after the words "greater efforts" in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution. The amendment was accepted by the sponsors.

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12. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted by consensus draft resolution A/C.5/32/L.9/Rev.2, as amended (see para. 16 below, draft resolution B).

13. At the same meeting, after the Chairman had announced a consensus, the representatives of the United States and of the United Kingdom said that their delegations could not participate in the consensus.

14. The comments and observations made in the course of the discussion of this item, as well as the replies to queries raised, are reflected in the summary records of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/32/SR.4, 6, 9-11, 14, 15, 17 and 20).

Decision of the Committee

15. At the 4th meeting, on 28 September 1977, the Chairman proposed that the Committee should recommend that the General Assembly should take note of the amendments to the Staff Rules made by the Secretary-General. The Committee decided, without objection, to adopt the Chairman's proposal (see para. 17 below).

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

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

Composition of the Secretariat

A

The General Assembly,

Recalling its earlier resolutions on the composition of the Secretariat, in particular resolution 31/26 of 29 November 1976,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat, 1/

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. Further takes note of the assurances of the Secretary-General to provide to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session a full report on the implementation of the directives and provisions contained in resolutions 31/26 and 31/27 of 29 November 1976;
3. Expresses the view that the report of the Secretary-General does not entirely meet the requirements of resolution 31/26 and those of other relevant resolutions;

1/ A/32/146.

4. Urges the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts for the effective implementation of General Assembly resolutions 3416 (XXX) and 3417 A and B (XXX) of 8 December 1975, 31/26 and 31/27, in all their parts, and other relevant resolutions, within the framework of Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter of the United Nations.

5. Requests the Secretary-General, in the submission of his report to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session, to provide full data, including comparative numerical data, on the implementation of the relevant resolutions, particularly resolution 31/26, taking fully into account the views and suggestions expressed during the discussion on this item at the thirty-second session.

B

The General Assembly,

Recalling its earlier resolutions on the composition of the Secretariat, in particular resolution 31/26 of 29 November 1976,

Having examined the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat, 2/

Noting that little progress has so far been achieved in respect of the implementation of resolution 31/26,

Reaffirming that the paramount consideration in the employment of staff at every level is the necessity for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and convinced that this is compatible with the principles of equitable geographical distribution,

Noting with satisfaction the indication in the Secretary-General's bulletin of 8 March 1977 3/ that particular attention will be paid in the annual review of promotion to the selection of female staff members who are qualified for promotion or for assignment to positions of greater responsibility,

Believing that greater efforts can be made to recruit younger persons to the Secretariat in order to reduce the average age of appointment at the base Professional grade, compatibly with the requirements of geographical distribution,

Welcoming the establishment of the panel to investigate allegations of discriminatory treatment 4/ and to recommend appropriate action in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 31/26,

2/ Ibid.

3/ ST/SGB/154.

4/ ST/A1/246.

1. Requests the Secretary-General to report separately on the recruitment of young people below the age of 27 years in future reports on the composition of the Secretariat;

2. Urges the Secretary-General to make greater efforts, in the context of General Assembly resolution 31/26, to appoint to senior posts, both through recruitment and promotion, younger people of outstanding ability and demonstrable potential;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to report on all recruiting missions undertaken from now until the thirty-third session of the General Assembly, giving details of each mission, including publicity, groups contacted, meetings held, the number interviewed by age and sex, the number of candidates added to the roster and the number of candidates appointed, and thereafter report on this matter annually;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session an analysis of the ages of staff, on appointment and on promotion, in each of the Professional grades and above over the past 20 years separately for the ten-year periods 1959-1968 and 1969-1978, in order to evaluate and to formulate such policy guidelines as may be necessary in this area;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a breakdown of staff composition by grade and sex at divisional level within departments and to include information on efforts made within each department to establish conditions of equality and an equitable balance between men and women staff members;

6. Recommends that the Secretary-General should draw the attention of the appointment and promotion bodies to the special need to appoint, in the context of equitable geographical distribution, and promote qualified women, particularly at the more senior levels;

7. Urges the Secretary-General, in order to enable the members of the panel established to investigate allegations of discriminatory treatment to discharge their duties with the utmost confidentiality and expedition, to make the maximum time necessary available to them without prejudice to their other functions and to make the necessary facilities available, including direct access to files necessary to the execution of their task, with the proper safeguards;

8. Requests the Secretary-General, in his annual report on personnel questions, to include an account of the work of the panel, including the number and categories of cases dealt with, whether they were satisfactorily resolved and the main problems encountered.

17. The Fifth Committee also recommends that the General Assembly should take note of the amendments made by the Secretary-General to the Staff Rules of the United Nations during the period from 1 July 1976 to 30 June 1977. 5/
