



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
GENERAL

A/31/450/Add.1  
21 December 1976

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-first session  
Agenda item 99

UNITED NATIONS ACCOMMODATION

Utilization of office accommodation and conference  
facilities at the Donaupark Centre in Vienna

Report of the Fifth Committee (Part II)

Rapporteur: Mr. E. Brian NASON (Ireland)

1. The Committee considered this question at its 55th and 58th meetings on 17 and 20 December 1976, respectively.
2. For its consideration of this question the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the utilization of office accommodation and conference facilities at the Donaupark Centre in Vienna (A/C.5/31/34), as well as the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/31/452).
3. In paragraph 13 of his report (A/C.5/31/34), the Secretary-General proposed a plan of action whereby the General Assembly would agree to the taking over from the International Atomic Energy Agency for future requirements of the United Nations the A-2 Tower in the manner described in annex III to his report to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session (A/10348 and Corr.1). Consequent upon such an agreement, the plan of action would involve "the transfer of existing units from New York and Geneva (or for the establishment of new units in Vienna, should the General Assembly so decide) on the basis of a time-table which would, when completed, result in a rational and economic use of the Donaupark complex and full occupancy within a relatively brief period of time". The Secretary-General's phased plan called for the transfer from New York or Geneva of 500 staff members in the Professional and higher categories over a five-year period in the manner described in section IV of his report (A/C.5/31/34).
4. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions introduced the Advisory Committee's report (A/31/452) in an oral statement before the Fifth Committee at its 55th meeting.

5. In its report, the Advisory Committee stated that in its opinion a decision to accept Tower A-2 had to be predicated on a commitment to make early use of such space as would thereby become available. In this connexion, it trusted that the Secretary-General's assumptions as to the growth rates at New York and Geneva would, in the course of time, be proven correct and provide an adequate basis for the operation of the Secretary-General's plan and for the effective utilization of available space in Vienna. The Advisory Committee went on to note with reference to the costs involved, inter alia, that there were a number of uncertain elements in the Secretary-General's proposals as to which units would actually be located in Vienna; the various costings contained in section IV and annex IV of the report (A/C.5/31/34) were equally hypothetical because of uncertainties as to currency fluctuation, rate of inflation and local salary movements. With reference to the establishment of a planning and co-ordination unit described in paragraph 45 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/31/34), the Advisory Committee recognized the need for such a unit but did not believe it should become a part of the permanent establishment. Accordingly, it recommended that, should the General Assembly agree to take over Tower A-2, it should appropriate \$73,000 under section 22 J for temporary assistance in 1977.

6. The representative of Austria introduced a draft resolution (A/C.5/31/L.45) on behalf of Austria, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, the German Democratic Republic, Greece, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Republic, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Poland, Senegal and Zambia, and announced that the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Cyprus, India, Indonesia and Portugal had joined as sponsors. The draft resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 3350 (XXIX) of 18 December 1974, in which it welcomed the invitation extended by the Government of Austria to the United Nations to make use of the facilities available in the Donaupark Centre in Vienna after 1978,

"Recalling also its resolution 3529 (XXX) of 16 December 1975, in which it took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences, 1/

"Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the utilization of office accommodation and conference facilities at the Donaupark Centre in Vienna 2/ and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, 3/

"1. Approves the recommendation of the Secretary-General relating to Tower A-2, as contained in paragraph 13 (a) of his report, 2/ and to that

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1/ A/10348 and Corr.1.

2/ A/C.5/31/34.

3/ A/31/452.

effect authorizes the Secretary-General to enter into appropriate arrangements with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Government of Austria;

"2. Approves the phased plan of action as defined in paragraphs 11 and 12 and summarized in paragraph 13 (b) of the report of the Secretary-General, 2/ and paragraphs 1-3 of annex I to that document;

"3. Authorizes the Secretary-General, in order to ensure the most rational use of the premises available to the United Nations at the Donaupark Centre in Vienna as of 1978,

- (i) To put into effect phase I on the basis of his report, 2/
- (ii) To proceed, after further consultations with the host countries concerned, with the implementation of phase II taking into account those proposals which are consistent with paragraph 16 of his report and observations made during the debate on this question at the thirty-first session;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to report, in conformity with paragraph 4 of resolution 3529 (XXX), to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session on plans for implementing phase III as outlined in paragraphs 42 to 45 of his report, as well as other possibilities related to international organizations' activities based on sound principles of management;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at regular intervals on the implementation of the present resolution."

7. In introducing the draft resolution, the representative of Austria stated, inter alia, that the Government of Austria had complied with an agreement with the United Nations to construct the Donaupark Centre in its present capacity with space for 900 to 1,000 persons. Austria will have fulfilled its obligation with the completion and handing over of the Centre to the United Nations in the second half of 1978; it was now up to the United Nations to fulfil its part of the joint commitment. The cost of the Centre, in the sum of \$700 million, was to be borne entirely by Austria and the City of Vienna and the buildings were to be made available to the United Nations rent free.

8. The representative of Austria went on to state that the transfer of 500 staff members over five years from New York and Geneva as envisaged in the Secretary-General's proposals, i.e. 50 persons a year from each of the cities, would in no way detract from their role and standing as United Nations Headquarters. Their future growth was guaranteed. On the other hand, such action would avoid the need for costly acquisition of new premises by making use of the rent-free accommodation offered in Vienna.

9. Even if the recommended plan of the Secretary-General were to be implemented, the representative of Austria stated, much of the office space in Donaupark would still stand empty for the long-term growth possibilities of the International

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Atomic Energy Agency and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. Therefore, Austria could in no way agree to any further reduction in the lower limit set in the five-year plan or of the 500 staff members destined for transfer to Vienna. It was essential that the Secretary-General be authorized to proceed with the implementation of the plan and that the Secretary-General's views with regard to specific units to be transferred be endorsed by all Member States.

10. The following amendments were submitted to draft resolution A/C.5/31/L.45:

(a) Belgium and France proposed (A/C.5/31/L.49) that paragraph III, subparagraph (ii), should be replaced by the following text which would become the new paragraph 4:

"4. Requests the Secretary-General, in conformity with the guidelines described in paragraph 4 of resolution 3529 (XXX), to present to the General Assembly, at its thirty-second session, revised proposals for phase II which would be consistent with paragraph 16 of his report (A/C.5/31/34) and which would take into account observations put forward in the course of the debate on this question at the thirty-first session."

and that the succeeding paragraphs should be renumbered accordingly;

(b) Iran proposed (A/C.5/31/L.50) and Algeria subsequently co-sponsored the proposal, that the following text should be inserted as new paragraph 5:

"1. Requests the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure that the success of the United Nations Decade for Women and of the World Conference of 1980 will not be adversely affected by putting into effect phase I in accordance with paragraph 3 (i) above."

and that the existing paragraph 5 should be renumbered 6;

(c) Algeria and Iran proposed (A/C.5/31/L.51):

(i) The deletion of operative paragraph 3 and its replacement by:

"3. Authorizes the Secretary-General to put into effect the proposals pertaining to phase I as well as those contained in paragraphs 29-36 and 41 of his report (A/C.5/31/34);"

(ii) The deletion of operative paragraph 4 and its replacement by:

"4. Requests the Secretary-General, in conformity with the guidelines described in paragraph 4 of resolution 3529 (XXX), to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session concrete proposals which would ensure that, at the end of the phased plan of action, the objective set out in paragraph 11 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/31/34) would be attained."

11. Mexico proposed the following draft resolution (A/C.5/31/L.58):

"The General Assembly,

"Noting with appreciation the report by the Secretary-General on the utilization of office accommodation and conference facilities at the Donaupark Centre in Vienna, 4/ and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, 5/

"1. Agrees that the United Nations should take over Tower A-2 at the Donaupark Centre in Vienna and, in this connexion, authorizes the Secretary-General to make appropriate arrangements with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Government of Austria;

"2. Decides to request the Secretary-General, in accordance with the instructions given in paragraph 4 of resolution 3529 (XXX), to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session revised specific proposals to attain the objective stated in paragraph 11 of his report, which should be compatible with the comments made in paragraph 16 and to take into account the observations made on the subject during the discussion at the thirty-first session."

12. At the 58th meeting, the representative of Belgium, on behalf of Belgium and France, withdrew the draft amendment in document A/C.5/31/L.49 and announced that Belgium would join as a sponsor of the amendment proposed by Algeria and Iran (A/C.5/31/L.51).

13. The representative of Mexico did not press for a vote on the draft amendment proposed by his delegation (A/C.5/31/L.58).

14. The co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/31/L.45 accepted the amendments proposed by Algeria, Belgium and Iran (A/C.5/31/L.51). They also accepted the amendment proposed by Algeria and Iran (A/C.5/31/L.50), with the deletion of subparagraph "(i)" in the last line of the new paragraph 5, consequential upon their acceptance of the new paragraph 3 in document A/C.5/31/L.51.

15. At the same meeting, the Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/31/L.45, as amended, by consensus (see para. 17 below).

16. A full account of the Committee's consideration of this item, as well as explanations of vote, is reflected in the summary records of the Committee (A/C.5/31/SR.55 and 58).

#### RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

17. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

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4/ A/C.5/31/34.

5/ A/31/452.

Utilization of office accommodation and conference  
facilities at the Donaupark Centre in Vienna

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 3350 (XXIX) of 18 December 1974, in which it welcomed the invitation extended by the Government of Austria to the United Nations to make use of the facilities available in the Donaupark Centre in Vienna after 1978,

Recalling also its resolution 3529 (XXX) of 16 December 1975, in which it took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences, 6/

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the utilization of office accommodation and conference facilities at the Donaupark Centre in Vienna 7/ and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, 8/

1. Approves the recommendation of the Secretary-General relating to Tower A-2, as contained in paragraph 13 (a) of his report, 7/ and to that effect authorizes the Secretary-General to enter into appropriate arrangements with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Government of Austria;
2. Approves the phased plan of action, as defined in paragraphs 11 and 12 and summarized in paragraph 13 (b) of the report of the Secretary-General, 7/ and paragraphs 1-3 of annex I to that document;
3. Authorizes the Secretary-General to put into effect the proposals pertaining to phase I as well as those contained in paragraphs 29-36 and 41 of his report;
4. Requests the Secretary-General, in conformity with the guidelines described in paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 3529 (XXX), to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session concrete proposals which would ensure that, at the end of the phased plan of action, 7/ the objective set out in paragraph 11 of the Secretary-General's report would be attained;
5. Requests the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure that the success of the United Nations Decade for Women and of the world conference to be held in 1980 will not be adversely affected by putting into effect phase I in accordance with paragraph 3 above;
6. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at regular intervals on the implementation of the present resolution.

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6/ A/10348 and Corr.1.

7/ A/C.5/31/34.

8/ A/31/452.