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ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY CO-ORDINATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
WITH THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC  
ENERGY AGENCY

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. E. Brian MASON (Ireland)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 4th plenary meeting on 24 September 1976, the General Assembly decided to include in the agenda of its thirty-first session the item entitled "Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Agency: report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions" and allocated it to the Fifth Committee.
2. The Fifth Committee considered this item at its 8th, 14th, 15th, 17th, 20th, 21st, 24th, 25th, 30th and 38th meetings, between 14 October and 30 November 1976.
3. For its consideration of this item, the Committee had before it the following documents:
  - (a) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions concerned with general budgetary trends within the United Nations system, and commenting on the budgets of the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (A/31/233 and Add.1);
  - (b) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on co-ordination questions in the activities of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (A/31/227);

- (c) Report of the Secretary-General on bodies and organs established for purposes of administrative and budgetary control, investigation and co-ordination (A/31/75 and Corr. 1 and 2);
- (d) Report of the Secretary-General on the continuation of the Joint Inspection Unit and proposed revised terms of reference (A/31/75/Add.1 and Corr.1);
- (e) Report of the Secretary-General containing a brief, factual description of the activities of the intergovernmental bodies which have recently addressed themselves to questions related to administrative and budgetary control, investigation and co-ordination (A/31/75/Add.2).

4. The reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/31/227 and A/31/233 and Add.1) were introduced by its Chairman in an oral statement before the Fifth Committee at its 8th meeting, on 14 October.

5. The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, in an oral statement before the Committee at its 24th meeting on 5 November, responded to comments made in the course of the debate and commented on the question of enhancing the role of the Administrative Management Service.

6. The Under-Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination addressed the Committee at its 17th meeting, on 27 October.

7. In the course of the discussion of this item, and upon the invitation of the Chairman of the Committee, statements were made by the representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization and the observer of Switzerland to the United Nations.

8. The representative of the United Nations Environment Programme replied to queries raised by various delegations in an oral statement at the 20th meeting, on 1 November.

9. At the 24th meeting, when the Committee was discussing the review of action taken on the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service under agenda item 92, the Committee, at the suggestion of the Chairman, decided to proceed with the consideration of this item in two parts, the first part to be concerned with the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/31/227 and A/31/233 and Add.1) and the second part with the remaining reports on this item, including the following two reports which originally appeared under agenda item 92:

- (a) Report of the Secretary-General on review of action taken on the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service (A/C.5/31/6);
- (b) Related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/31/8/Add.5).

## II. ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE

### A. Draft resolutions A/C.5/31/L.6, A/C.5/31/L.12 and A/C.5/31/L.13

10. At the 29th meeting, on 15 November, the representative of Cuba introduced the following draft resolution (A/C.5/31/L.6):

"The General Assembly,

"Gravely disturbed by the continuing currency fluctuations in the developed countries in which the organizations of the United Nations system effect their expenditures,

"Bearing in mind that the fluctuations in exchange rates among the currencies of the developed countries in which the headquarters of the organizations of the United Nations system are situated cause substantial losses in the budgets of those organizations, which are currently defrayed by all the States members of those organizations,

"Considering the economic benefits which those developed countries receive because the headquarters of the organizations of the United Nations system are situated therein,

"1. Requests the developed countries in which headquarters of the organizations of the United Nations system are situated to establish fixed exchange rates, from 1 January 1978, for the foreign exchange transactions of those organizations, in accordance with the exchange rates prevailing in the market on that date, for which those organizations may opt in carrying out their foreign exchange transactions;

"2. Also requests those developed countries to provide the Secretary-General with information on this matter as soon as possible, in order that he may report to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session."

11. Following some discussion, at the 30th meeting, on 16 November, the Committee rejected the draft resolution (A/C.5/31/L.6) by 38 votes to 17, with 41 abstentions.

12. The representative of the Netherlands then introduced the following draft resolution (A/C.5/31/L.12) on behalf of Canada, Japan and the Netherlands:

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered with appreciation the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions with regard to administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the IAEA, and the co-ordination question in the activities of the United Nations Environment Programme;

"1. Concurs with the observations and comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained therein;

"2. Refers to the organizations concerned the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in documents A/31/233 and A/31/227 and brings the latter report specifically to the attention of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme;

"3. Refers the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in document A/31/227 to the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination in connexion with the decision of that Committee to consider in depth environment programmes at its seventeenth session in 1977.

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to refer to the Executive Heads, through the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, matters arising out of the above-mentioned reports and the related discussion in the Fifth Committee which called for their attention and necessary action, in particular the question of rotation of staff;

"5. Transmits these reports to the United Nations Board of Auditors, to the members of the Panel of External Auditors and to the Joint Inspection Unit for their information;

"6. Requests the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to continue its present practice of supplementing annual reports on administrative and budgetary co-ordination with reports on specific problems, taking into account the suggestions made in this respect in the discussions in the Fifth Committee."

Nicaragua later joined the sponsors of the draft resolution (A/C.5/31/L.12).

13. The representative of the Philippines orally proposed that a second preambular paragraph be inserted in the draft resolution (A/C.5/31/L.12) which read as follows:

"Concerned with the growing need for effective administrative and budgetary co-ordination within the framework of the United Nations system,".

14. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions orally suggested that the words "its present practice of supplementing" in operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution (A/C.5/31/L.12) be replaced by the words "to supplement, as appropriate, the".

15. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/31/L.12 accepted the oral amendment of the Philippines and the suggestion of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

16. Draft resolution A/C.5/31/L.12, as amended, was adopted by consensus (see para. 22 below, draft resolution A).

17. Also at the 30th meeting, the representative of Canada introduced draft resolution A/C.5/31/L.13 on behalf of Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Canada and the Philippines on the subject of administrative co-ordination of electronic data processing and information systems in the United Nations organizations. Nicaragua later joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.
18. Draft resolution (A/C.5/31/L.13) was adopted by consensus (see para. 22 below, draft resolution B).

B. Draft resolution A/C.5/31/L.21/Rev.1

19. At the 38th meeting, on 29 November, the representative of India introduced draft resolution A/C.5/31/L.21/Rev.1 on behalf of the delegations of India, Japan, Jordan, the Netherlands, Sri Lanka, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay.
20. Draft resolution A/C.5/31/L.21/Rev.1, concerned with the strengthening of the role and functions of the Administrative Management Service, was adopted by consensus (see para. 22 below, draft resolution C).
21. The comments and observations made by delegations in the course of the discussion of this item, as well as the various oral statements made, are reflected in the summary records of the Committee (A/C.5/31/SR.8, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 24, 25, 30 and 38).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

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

Administrative and Budgetary Co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency

A

The General Assembly,

Having considered with appreciation the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions relating to administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, 1/ and to co-ordination questions in the activities of the United Nations Environment Programme, 2/

Concerned with the growing need for effective administrative and budgetary co-ordination within the framework of the United Nations system.

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1/ A/31/233 and Add.1.

2/ A/31/227.

1. Concurs with the observations and comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in the above-mentioned reports;
2. Refers to the organizations concerned the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in its reports and brings the report on co-ordination questions 2/ specifically to the attention of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme;
3. Refers the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on administrative and budgetary co-ordination 1/ to the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination in connexion with the decision of that Committee to consider in depth environment programmes at its seventeenth session in 1977;
4. Requests the Secretary-General to refer to the Executive Heads of the organizations of the United Nations system, through the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, matters arising out of the above mentioned reports and the related discussion in the Fifth Committee which called for their attention and necessary action, in particular the question of rotation of staff;
5. Transmits these reports to the Board of Auditors, to the members of the Panel of External Auditors and to the Joint Inspection Unit for their information;
6. Requests the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to continue to supplement, as appropriate, the annual reports on administrative and budgetary co-ordination with reports on specific problems, taking into account the suggestions made in this respect during the discussions in the Fifth Committee.

B

The General Assembly,

Considering the rapidly expanding applications of electronic data processing techniques to information systems and data banks throughout the United Nations system, their potential value in accelerating the implementation and co-ordination of important programmes, particularly in the field of economic and social development, and the importance of ensuring efficient use of available resources,

1. Requests the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to provide policy advice and recommendations on the administrative co-ordination of electronic data processing and information systems in the United Nations organizations; in carrying out this task, the Advisory Committee should identify and focus on major issues that will help to increase benefit from the expanding applications of electronic data processing and information systems, and should also examine methods and criteria for:

- (a) Assessing the utility of existing and proposed information systems;
- (b) Co-ordinating and harmonizing existing and planned information systems;

/...

(c) Estimating costs for establishing and operating the systems;

(d) Considering any other administrative co-ordination issues, including policies concerning acquisition and utilization of computer hardware, that, in the opinion of the Advisory Committee or the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, require the consideration of Member States;

2. Requests the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to assist in that task by providing, as required, the services and assistance of the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems and Related Activities.

C

The General Assembly,

Noting with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General 3/ on the review of action taken on the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, 4/

Being convinced that an effective and continuing management improvement programme is essential for the efficient and economical functioning of the Organization and that this, in turn, requires a competent central internal machinery endowed with the necessary mandate and the maximum support of the Secretary-General,

Noting the view of the Secretary-General that, while "an acceptable degree of success" 5/ has been achieved in implementing the past recommendations of the Administrative Management Service, further measures are needed throughout the Secretariat for securing better results from management improvement efforts,

Noting also the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management before the Fifth Committee on this matter, 6/ and in particular, paragraph 17 thereof,

Agreeing with the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions as contained in paragraphs 12 to 19 of its report, particularly those in paragraph 14,

1. Requests the Secretary-General:

(a) To put into effect promptly the measures mentioned in paragraph 67 of his report; 7/

3/ A/C.5/31/6.

4/ A/31/8/Add.5.

5/ A/C.5/31/6, para. 64.

6/ A/C.5/31/SR.24.

7/ A/C.5/31/6.

/...

(b) To strengthen the existing role and functions of the Administrative Management Service by:

- (i) Authorizing the Service to identify management problems or areas requiring management improvement and to examine and report thereon with specific recommendations as to action required;
- (ii) Reviewing the reports and recommendations when received and taking the necessary steps to ensure the prompt and effective implementation by the offices or departments concerned of those recommendations which he has approved
- (iii) Empowering the Service to monitor and, whenever necessary, assist in the implementation of recommendations which he has approved,
- (iv) Calling upon the offices or departments responsible to report at six-monthly intervals on the progress being made in implementing the approved recommendations, together with any problems and difficulties encountered in the process;

(c) To inform all staff of the Secretariat of the revised role and functions of the Administrative Management Service and of his strongest support for the Service, and to call upon them to extend to it full co-operation and assistance;

(d) To give special attention to the matter of staffing of the Administrative Management Service so as to ensure that the Service is staffed at all times by individuals possessing the highest degree of technical competence;

(e) To submit annually to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions a report in summary form on the management improvement projects and other advisory services rendered by the Administrative Management Service during the preceding twelve months; such reports should also include:

- (i) A complete list of all reports and recommendations made by the Administrative Management Service during the year, with an indication of the recommendations, or parts thereof, not approved by the Secretary-General;
- (ii) A summary of the progress reports submitted during the past year in accordance with paragraph 2 (d) of the present resolution, together with an evaluation by the Secretary-General of the benefits derived to date or expected to be derived in the future from the implementation of the approved recommendations dealt with in these reports;

(f) To ensure that the programme budget proposals, beginning with those for the biennium 1978-1979, reflect all the benefits derived from the management improvement efforts referred to in paragraph 1 (e) (iii) above;



(g) To report to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session on the results obtained through the application of the measures mentioned in paragraph 67 of his report 2/ and the procedure set out in the present resolution;

2. Requests the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions:

(a) To draw the attention of the General Assembly to any situation or problem requiring its attention which may arise from the annual reports mentioned in paragraph 1 (e) above;

(b) To submit its views and recommendations on the report of the Secretary-General referred to in paragraph 1 (g) above;

3. Decides to review, at its thirty-third session, the question of administrative and management control of the United Nations, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General referred to in paragraph 1 (g) above and the views and recommendations submitted thereon by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

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