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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1978-1979

First-class travel in the United Nations organizations

Report of the Secretary-General

1. During its thirty-second session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 32/198, paragraphs 2-4 of which read as follows:

"2. Decides that the principle of seeking the most economical air fare structures shall be implemented as follows:

"(a) The Secretary-General and one representative of each Member State attending regular, special or emergency special sessions of the General Assembly shall be entitled to first-class travel;

"(b) Other persons previously entitled to first-class travel under General Assembly resolutions 2245 (XXI) and 3198 (XXVIII) and those chairmen of intergovernmental committees at present entitled to travel paid by the United Nations shall be entitled to first-class travel only when the duration of a particular flight exceeds nine hours (by the most direct and economical route), including scheduled stops for such purposes as change of planes or refuelling, but excluding travel time to and from airports;

"(c) Payment by the United Nations for travel expenses in all other cases shall be limited to the least costly air-fare structure regularly available, or its equivalent, by recognized public carrier via the shortest and most direct route;

"3. Authorizes the Secretary-General to exercise his discretion in making exceptions in the most exigent circumstances to allow first-class travel on a case-by-case basis;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly on the implementation of the present resolution, noting all exceptions made under paragraph 3 above, the reasons therefor, and the savings achieved through utilization of economy and other air fares."

2. In response to the above-mentioned resolution, the present report is submitted to the General Assembly covering the period from 1 January to 30 September 1978.

3. The total savings accrued during this period as a result of the implementation of the resolution amounted to \$124,464.

4. The Secretary-General exercised his discretion in making exceptions to allow first-class travel in accordance with paragraph 3 of resolution 32/198 in the following cases:

(a) Twenty-one persons (of whom 3 were staff members and 18 members of subsidiary organs) travelled first class as a result of their travel arrangements having been made prior to the implementation of the resolution;

(b) Five persons (of whom 3 were staff members and 2 members of subsidiary organs) were authorized to travel first class on the grounds of physical disability, on the recommendation of the Medical Service;

(c) Eleven staff members were authorized to travel first class because of the unavailability of seats in economy class;

(d) First-class travel continued to be authorized for 1 immediate aide of the Secretary-General accompanying him during his official travels for security purposes;

(e) The travel by first class of 1 senior official was authorized on official mission combined with home leave on a long and complicated journey of more than 23 hours involving several stop-overs;

(f) First-class travel was authorized for travel on separation of 1 senior official in January 1978;

(g) One senior official travelled first class to accompany the Secretary-General during one of his official trips.

5. Details of the individual exceptions referred to above have been provided to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

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