



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 24th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SEKYI (Ghana)

later: Miss MUCK (Austria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/33/SR.24
2 November 1978
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 100: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1978-1979 (continued)

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Special Political Committee in document A/SPC/33/L.3 concerning agenda items 51 and 52 (A/C.5/33/30)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that it was indicated in the statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/33/30) that the amount approved for the biennium 1978-1979 for the United Nations programme on space applications was \$197,100 and \$110,000 was allocated for 1978. The representatives of the Secretary-General had informed the Advisory Committee that expenditure and obligations on the programme had already reached 90 per cent of the anticipated level for 1978 and that it was likely that the full amount would be spent by the end of the year. The draft resolution adopted by the Special Political Committee (A/SPC/33/L.3) would increase the expenses of the programme to \$220,000 for the biennium, or \$22,900 more than the amount appropriated. The Advisory Committee recommended that, if the draft resolution in question was adopted, there would be need for an additional appropriation of \$22,900 under section 2C (f) of the programme budget for 1978-1979.
2. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Rapporteur be asked to report directly to the General Assembly along the lines indicated by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.
3. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 113: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST (continued)

(b) UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/33/292, A/33/328; A/C.5/33/L.10)

4. Mr. OCOKOLJIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation was prepared to accept the cost estimates submitted by the Secretary-General in his report (A/33/292), subject to the Advisory Committee's recommendations (A/33/328). At the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, it had welcomed the Security Council's decision to establish the United Nations Emergency Force and had been one of the co-sponsors of the General Assembly resolution on the financing of that Force. However, it should be borne in mind that the peace-keeping operations in the Middle East were of a temporary nature, their aim being to contribute to a just and lasting solution in that part of the world. The prolonged occupation of Arab territories had created a situation in which the mandates of the peace-keeping forces in Sinai and Golan were extended from year to year and the international community had to pay the not insignificant and steadily increasing costs.

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(Mr. Ocokoljić, Yugoslavia)

5. The spread of aggression to a new area had made it imperative to establish a new force, UNIFIL, and to convene the eighth special session of the General Assembly in order to decide how it should be financed. It was clear that the absence of a comprehensive settlement of the conflict not only constituted a threat to world peace and security, but resulted in additional costs which had to be borne by Member States. That situation should not be allowed to go on too long.
6. While his delegation believed that, in all equity, the costs of financing UNIFIL should be borne by the aggressor, it felt that in the present situation, the Force was engaged in a United Nations operation to which all Member States should contribute. Moreover, UNIFIL was making a significant contribution to defusing the situation in Lebanon. His delegation would therefore adopt a positive stand with regard to the financing of UNIFIL and vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10.
7. Mr. RAMZY (Egypt) said that he was very much gratified by the Secretary-General's efforts to respond to the Security Council's appeal and by the activities of UNIFIL, which had had to cope with a number of obstacles in order effectively and impartially to fulfil its mission in the field. However, he was worried by the precarious financial situation of the Force, described by the Secretary-General in paragraph 5 of his report (A/33/292), and the status of contributions for financing it.
8. While temporary difficulties were understandable, there was no excuse for the attitude of some Member States which categorically refused to participate in the financing of UNIFIL, which was brought into existence by the Security Council. The principle of collective financial responsibility emanated from the principle of collective security of the United Nations membership and it was incumbent on all States to fulfil their obligations under Article 17 of the Charter. His delegation endorsed the recommendations made by ACABQ in paragraphs 13, 15, 18, 24 and 25 of its report (A/33/328), provided they did not restrict the functioning of UNIFIL. It would vote for draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10.
9. Mr. OUATTARA (Ivory Coast) stressed the important part played by United Nations forces in the Middle East, where they represented an element of stability. His delegation desired peace and harmony in the region and was therefore gratified that UNIFIL's mandate had been renewed for four months. It was a delicate and difficult operation requiring substantial funds. The Secretary-General's cost estimates were justified by the nature of the United Nations intervention, local conditions and, in particular, the rigors of the climate to which members of the Force were exposed. His delegation also approved the Advisory Committee's recommendations in paragraph 29 of its report (A/33/328).
10. The status of contributions described in the Secretary-General's report (A/33/292) was alarming. It was beyond question that the costs of UNIFIL should be assumed by all Member States and if the tendency to evade that responsibility were to spread, there could be no certainty that the United Nations could organize another emergency force in future.

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(Mr. Ouattara, Ivory Coast)

11. Draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10 accurately reflected all the concerns of ACABQ, particularly with regard to the procedures it described in paragraph 28 of its report. The Secretary-General should be in a position to respond positively to the Security Council's requests and his cost estimates should be subjected to serious study by the Advisory Committee.

12. Mr. SAGHIYYAH (Lebanon) considered that in his report (A/33/292), the Secretary-General had put the question of UNIFIL in its true perspective. Not only was there a financial problem; the issue was also the action in which its contingents engaged and it was to be hoped that the men who had sacrificed their lives had not died in vain. The Lebanese delegation, one of the co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10, therefore appealed to the Committee to help the Secretary-General to discharge the mandate conferred upon him by the Security Council by adopting the draft resolution. Refusal to participate in the financing of UNIFIL stripped the Force not only of its means of action, but of the political and moral support it needed.

13. Mr. KE Fu-tsun (China), explaining his vote before the vote, recalled that his delegation had stated its position of principle in the Security Council on 18 September 1978. It was against having UNIFIL financed by the Member States of the United Nations. It would not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10 and China would not contribute to the financing of UNIFIL.

14. Mr. MALONGA (Congo) said that his country carefully followed all initiatives aimed at settling the tragic situation of the Lebanese people and bringing peace to the world. In that spirit, it was always prepared to contribute. However, the United Nations did not realistically assess the actual material position of the Congo, as he had had the opportunity to demonstrate during the debate on agenda item 108 concerning the scale of assessments. Maintaining a position which could not change so long as the situation of the Congo had not been reviewed, his delegation regretted that it could not participate in the vote on the draft resolution.

15. Mr. LEMP (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his country was always prepared to support United Nations forces because they constituted the essential instrument for maintaining peace and security. Consequently, it took an active part in UNIFIL and its financial contribution exceeded its assessed share. In the belief that draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10 provided effective means of controlling expenditure, and with regret that the large uncollectable sums imposed that much heavier a burden on the troop-contributing countries, his delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution.

16. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that for the reasons given and in view of the reservations expressed during consideration of draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.8 on the financing of UNEF and UNDOF, his delegation would vote against draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10. He reserved the right to revert to the question at a later stage.

17. Mr. NGUYEN NGOC HOAN (Viet Nam) said that his delegation declined all responsibility for the financing of UNIFIL and regretted that it could not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10.
18. Mr. BORAD (Uruguay) pointed out that his country's participation in the financing of the Force represented a considerable effort because its economy was only now gradually recovering from the difficulties generated by the energy crisis and the slow pace at which the new international economic order was being brought into existence. However, taking the position that nothing should be left undone that could contribute to the restoration of peace in countries wracked by war, his delegation would vote for draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10.
19. Mr. WILSKI (Poland) recalled that, at the eighth special session of the General Assembly, he had explained to the Fifth Committee and in the General Assembly, why he considered that peace-keeping costs should be borne by the aggressor. Events had merely confirmed the soundness of his position. His delegation would therefore vote against draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10 and Poland would not contribute to the financing of UNIFIL.
20. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) reasserted the position that Israel's aggression was part of an expansionist policy aimed at occupying more territories and depriving the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights. The costs relating to United Nations intervention, particularly the costs of UNIFIL, should be borne by the aggressor. Furthermore, when UNIFIL had been established, certain major principles of the Charter had not been observed. For those reasons, his delegation would vote against draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10.
21. Draft resolution A/C.5/33/L.10 was adopted by 67 votes to 12, with one abstention.
22. Mr. AL-ANBARI (Iraq) wished to make it clear that his delegation had voted against the draft resolution.
23. Mr. SADELER (Benin) observed that his delegation had not taken part in the voting. Benin would not take part in the financing of UNIFIL for reasons which had been made clear at the previous meeting.
24. Mr. SAVCHUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) explained that his delegation had voted against the draft resolution because, in its view, it was those responsible for aggression, in this instance Israel, who should bear the financial consequences of this action, and not the Member States. He thought that the General Assembly, at its current session, would categorically condemn Israeli aggression and demand that Israel unconditionally fulfil the provisions of resolutions adopted by the Security Council and, in particular, that it withdraw all its troops from Lebanon. In the circumstances, the Ukrainian SSR could not

(Mr. Savchuk, Ukrainian SSR)

participate in the financing of UNIFIL and his delegation could not allow itself to be swayed by the humanitarian reasons which had been adduced since they were based on a distortion of the historical facts.

AGENDA ITEM 110: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

(a) COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)
(A/33/176; A/C.5/33/CRP.1 and 2)

(b) OTHER PERSONNEL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)
(A/C.5/33/1)

Implementation of personnel policy reforms (continued) (A/33/228; A/C.5/32/2)

AGENDA ITEM 106: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT: REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT
(continued)

Women in the Professional category and above in the United Nations system
(continued) (A/33/105 and Add.1)

25. The CHAIRMAN recalled that it was not a question of reopening the debate on these two items but simply of presenting some observations on the statement made at the previous meeting by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services.

26. Mr. MALONGA (Congo) considered that the Assistant Secretary-General's statement contained many positive elements which showed the attention which the Secretary-General paid to the comments made by the members of the Working Group on personnel questions, which were of the utmost importance. He hoped that the Secretary-General and his colleagues would move quickly from promises to practical action, particularly in the matter of the recruitment of women from developing countries and their appointment to senior posts. Hitherto, those senior posts had been reserved for the nationals of certain countries, while staff from other countries acted for the most part as a stop-gap, but there was now hope that appointments to these positions would soon be made on a broader geographical basis.

27. The representative of the Congo was convinced that the measures announced in the plan presented by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services would be implemented and would allow fundamental changes to be made as desired by a large majority of Member States. He was glad that the dialogue entered into with the Secretary-General had created fresh prospects, and thought that the Fifth Committee would henceforth be in a position intelligently to evaluate the relevance of the measures taken by the Secretary-General to achieve his aims and purposes. The Congolese delegation would co-operate fully with the Secretariat in order to bring about the proposed reforms.

28. Miss MUCK (Austria) noted with satisfaction that the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services, in his detailed report, had provided answers to almost all the questions put to him and she hoped that the Fifth Committee would therefore be in a position to make more specific recommendations. That being the case, certain questions, in particular those dealing with the need to publicize job offers more widely in seeking qualified candidates among women and young people for inclusion on the Roster, merited more detailed replies, even though they would probably be provided by the Working Group on Personnel Questions.

29. She was grateful to the Assistant Secretary-General for having devoted the last part of his statement to setting out a programme of action, thus clearly recognizing that concrete measures must be taken to remedy the present situation, which was far from satisfactory. The point was to make very positive progress in relation to past practice, which had been to discuss the problems in very general, and indeed vague terms.

30. She wished to draw attention to several elements of the action programme to which her delegation attached particular importance, as, for example, the compulsory use of the Roster, the organization of competitive examinations for transfer from the General Service to the Professional category, the fixing of an age-limit for retirement, the need to define Professional category groups and to establish standards for appointment and promotion, the classification of posts within the two categories, the establishment and then the general application of competitive examinations for recruitment to the beginning levels of the Professional category (P-1 and P-2), and the setting up of career organization committees for each Professional group. The Working Group would of course study those questions and offer more precise recommendations, but bearing in mind the spirit of co-operation shown by the Assistant Secretary-General in his statement, thought that the Secretariat could effectively apply a whole range of detailed measures.

31. Mr. SADDLER (United States of America) thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services for his response to the concerns expressed by many members of the Fifth Committee, including the United States, regarding the needs still to be met to strengthen the Secretariat, and indicated that his delegation would study very carefully the proposed programme of action.

32. As the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany had noted at the preceding meeting, there was no reason to separate Member States into two categories, the developing countries, on the one hand, and the developed countries, on the other, when discussing personnel matters. All Member States were equally concerned with the efficient staffing of the Secretariat and all had competent qualified nationals who could contribute effectively to the United Nations.

(Mr. Saddler, United States)

33. It was regrettably necessary to restate his delegation's view that the solution to the problems relating to personnel did not lie simply in having adequate resources but in management effectiveness, resource allocation and the establishment of priorities. He believed that the funds provided in the programme budget were sufficient for carrying out the essential task of improving recruitment practices.

34. The United States delegation would support the Secretary-General in his efforts to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, according to the principles of the Charter, as well as to achieve progress in personnel management and to ensure that the basic ideals of equality and justice prevailed within the Secretariat.

35. Miss Muck (Austria) took the Chair.

36. Mr. AL-ANBARI (Iraq) thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services for having presented a clear, concise and comprehensive report. He noted especially that, regarding the question of equitable geographical distribution, the Assistant Secretary-General had pointed out that a great many unrepresented nations had not offered any candidates for Secretariat posts. The actual situation had perhaps been masked by the fact that some delegations had asked for greater representation in the Secretariat. The Secretariat could not be blamed if many developing countries needed to hold on to their professionals to further the process of national development. The most that could be said was that to arrive at an equitable geographical distribution, it would perhaps be fairer to take the region rather than the nation as a base. With regard to the under-represented countries or those only a few positions short of the bottom figure for their desirable range, his delegation shared the Secretary-General's opinion that it was very difficult to make rapid changes without running the risk of putting obstacles in the way of the Secretariat's work.

37. The proportion of female staff holding positions in the Secretariat was to be seen as a reflection of the situation of women in the Member States themselves. He hoped that the increase in the number of women in the Secretariat would go hand in hand with the improved status of women in the developing countries. He welcomed the detailed information furnished by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services concerning allegations of discriminatory treatment. He relied on the Assistant Secretary-General and his assistants to settle whatever cases might arise.

38. He supported the proposed programme of action and hoped that in the course of the next two years, it would be possible to record some progress.

39. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that it was his impression that the Assistant Secretary-General had made a frank and constructive response to the many concerns expressed by the members of the Committee, especially relating to the proper representation of all the Member States, the better representation of developing

(Mr. Kemal, Pakistan)

countries at the higher echelons, the imbalance between men and women in the Secretariat, the recruitment of young candidates and other personnel reforms.

40. His delegation would like to see the necessary preparatory work undertaken to ensure that the proposed action programme could get under way by early the following year. He looked forward to receiving concrete proposals from the Secretary-General after the General Assembly had adopted the necessary measures.

41. He noted with appreciation that the Assistant Secretary-General had emphasized what was, in the words of the Charter, the paramount consideration in the recruitment of staff, namely, the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competency and integrity, with due regard paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

42. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) congratulated the Assistant Secretary-General for the clarity and coherence of his report. He recalled especially the passage where he had said that "the desirable ranges were a measuring stick" and that it could happen that a Member State's representation suddenly fell just above or just below the desirable range, without its justifying the fact that some States were grossly under-represented and others grossly over-represented. His delegation noted that the Assistant Secretary-General had committed himself to remedying that situation and to tolerating only minor exceptions. In that connexion, consideration should be given not only to the number but also to the nature of the posts occupied by nationals of every Member State, which meant that not only quantity but also quality must be considered. Regarding the recruitment of women, it was the Assistant Secretary-General's task to safeguard the interest of all staff members and it was therefore not necessary to assign the responsibility for the question to anyone else. As for the question of reserved posts, he welcomed the fact that the Assistant Secretary-General had asserted that no position should be the province of any single Member State or group of Member States.

43. Turning to the problem of over-representation, he said that he did not think it justified to recruit nationals from over-represented States, even when a national from a developing country was involved. That was a problem that called for a solution. He hoped that the Secretary-General would succeed in getting the proposed action programme under way and especially in solving the basic problem of the imbalance in the representation of Member States in the Secretariat. If the Secretary-General succeeded in correcting that imbalance at the senior level, the problem would be largely resolved.

44. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that while he agreed generally with the views expressed by the Assistant Secretary-General and had been impressed by his detailed statement, he would like to clear up a point of direct interest to Kenya. In his statement, the Assistant Secretary-General had indicated that all Professional and D-1 posts should be classified throughout the Secretariat as

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(Mr. Okeyo, Kenya)

well as all General Service posts at Headquarters, the Geneva Office and Vienna. The Kenyan representative wanted to know whether his failure to mention Nairobi had been an oversight or a deliberate omission. As a headquarters city, Nairobi could not be excluded from any plan to integrate the General Service structure.

45. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services was right in saying, in his statement, that quotas, statistics and desirable ranges were the result of compromise and constituted a measuring stick that should be used, but should not govern the users. However, the Assistant Secretary-General had referred several times afterwards to unrepresented and under-represented countries as if they were clear-cut rigidly defined categories. It should be emphasized that placing countries in the category of "under-represented" must be interpreted in the light of the relative value of figures. In that connexion, he noted that Italy was still an under-represented country for two reasons: Table 9 of the annex to document A/33/176 showed that with 58 nationals in the Secretariat, Italy was just beyond the floor of her desirable range of 55 to 75, and the actual number of Italian nationals had gone down from 61 in 1976, to 59 in 1977 and now to 58. Table 16 further showed that in the weighted desirable range, Italy was clearly under its minimum since its quota should be 1,681 to 2,275 and was only 1,599. He hoped that situation would be corrected by holding a second session of competitive examinations in Italy in the light of the excellent results of the first session held in Italy four years ago.

46. He concluded by noting that the question under discussion was one in which all delegations were passionately interested because, as the representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States had said, they all wanted to participate properly in the activities of the Secretariat.

47. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said he was pleased to note that the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services had placed the various problems in the context of the principles laid down in Article 101 of the United Nations Charter. The Secretary-General had indicated that he considered it important to have all Member States represented by their nationals in posts subject to geographical distribution. The unrepresented and under-represented countries were justifiably impatient because of the slow progress and were inclined to call for more drastic measures.

48. With regard to the question of women in the Secretariat, the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services was right in saying that the United Nations could be proud of its record. The Organization must be realistic: if the Secretariat tried to be too progressive, it would run the risk of increasing the over-representation of certain States. Greater participation of women had to be dealt with in the context of equitable geographical distribution. His delegation reiterated its pledge to offer as many women candidates as possible, but the proportion of women in Japan specializing in economics, administration and other related disciplines was not very large, and only 3.2 per cent of

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(Mr. Akashi, Japan)

successful candidates in the examination for the higher class of the national civil service had been women. It would therefore be dangerous to set unduly high targets which might run counter to the realization of equitable geographical distribution.

49. He agreed with the Joint Inspection Unit that the earmarking of posts to correct imbalances in the Secretariat was a prerequisite for holding effective competitive examinations and rectifying geographical imbalance. His delegation would also be happy to work with other interested delegations on the most appropriate ways of strengthening the authority of the Office of Personnel Services.

50. He had three comments on the suggested programme of action. First, his delegation was somewhat disappointed that only 25 per cent of all expected vacancies at the P-1 to P-5 levels was to be earmarked for appointments from unrepresented and under-represented countries; that was definitely too low to ensure equitable geographical distribution, as requested by nearly three quarters of the speakers on the item. Secondly, his delegation was pleased by the Secretariat's announced policy of strict application of the statutory retirement age of 60. It hoped that the General Assembly would be kept informed annually of the exceptions to that rule. Thirdly, the limit of 30 to 35 per cent of the posts at the P-1 and P-2 levels for transfer from the General Service category was too liberal; it would block the recruitment of younger and more qualified staff. In any case, it was essential to establish a clear-cut order of priority among all the questions involved.

51. Miss ZONICLE (Bahamas) thought the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services had somewhat weakened his statement by his constant references to the difficulties and costs of bringing about needed changes. Everyone was aware of the imperfections of the system and if everyone agreed that changes were necessary, they must be willing to take steps to effect those changes, such as more recruitment missions, increased publicity, the organization of competitive examinations on a wider basis and the standardization of administrative procedures.

52. Her delegation had been heartened by the measures proposed for increasing recruitment in the under-represented or unrepresented countries, particularly in the Caribbean region. Once all States were given a chance to show that they could serve the Organization, fairer competition might help eliminate inequities and abuses such as the inheritance of certain posts by nationals of the same State, promotion based on longevity of service and not the quality of performance and political pressures.

53. Finally, while it had nothing against giving special consideration to the employment of women and young people, her delegation felt that intensification of recruitment among those groups should not be at the expense of under-represented or unrepresented States. If all Member States adhered to that principle as a necessary corollary to the principle of equitable geographical distribution, the issue would resolve itself because, as time went on, countries would present an equal number of suitably qualified candidates.

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54. Mr. SASSI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the Office of Personnel Services should be strengthened so that it could truly assume its responsibilities. He also supported the programme of action proposed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services and the steps taken by the Office of Personnel in the interests of the under-represented and unrepresented countries, women and young people. One of the most effective ways of reaching the desired goals would be to allow Member States to present qualified candidates for technical posts. On the other hand, high-level posts should be filled on a competitive basis.

55. Mr. WILLIAMS (Panama) said he was glad that the Secretariat was really trying to resolve personnel problems. With regard to the employment of women and young people and an increase in the number of nationals from unrepresented or under-represented countries in the Secretariat, his delegation noted that the way was open for negotiation thanks to the Working Group of the Group of 77, which was trying to arrive at a satisfactory solution of those problems. Thus, the protests of Member States had not fallen on deaf ears. He agreed with the representative of Italy that all Member States were prepared to co-operate in order to achieve success in that endeavour.

56. Mr. SIDDIQ (Sudan) said it was difficult to find a formula for recruitment that would satisfy all countries. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services had made promises which offered hope for the future.

57. The African States, all of which were developing countries, had reiterated through the Chairman of OAU their confidence in the commissions of the United Nations. However, their representation in the Secretariat was not commensurate to their number. All that Africa wanted was to increase its participation in United Nations activities, and it welcomed the choice of an African for the post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, in accordance with resolution 652 adopted by the Council of Ministers of OAU at its thirty-first session in Khartoum.

58. The principle of equitable geographical distribution was not enough in itself to ensure fairness, since the quality of posts must also be taken into account. Developing countries were seldom given the chance of senior-level political and administrative posts. There were also anomalies in geographical distribution; for instance, in one unit three directors were nationals of one country and in another all the Professional staff were from one continent. Competence was made a pretext for monopolizing certain important posts. Since the developing countries could not forgo the skills needed for their own development, a new formula which would make it possible for those skills to be used should be worked out.

59. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada) noted that the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services had not dealt with some questions, including the over-representation of certain countries. In particular, he had not touched on the question of staff members at the P-1 to P-4 levels in the language services who requested transfers to posts that were subject to geographical distribution, usually administrative posts for which they had not been trained. Canada would therefore like the Secretary-General to supply the Working Group on Personnel Questions with a

(Mr. Pedersen, Canada)

description of changes of post during the past four years, indicating the duties performed by the staff members concerned, their nationality and the training they had received.

60. The Assistant Secretary-General had also mentioned, in connexion with the question of over-representation, the holding of examinations to replace retiring senior officials with lower-level professionals. He did not understand what was meant by that statement and would like some clarifications.

61. On the question of financing, it was clear that the programme of action would require additional resources, especially for recruitment and examination missions. Yet the Assistant Secretary-General had given not the slightest indication of the cost of that programme or of how better use might be made of available resources. Among the questions calling for an answer were whether more missions would be sent to under-represented countries than to adequately represented countries and whether or not candidates would be recruited by senior officials for reasons of prestige. It would be useful for the Working Group to know the financial implications of a more comprehensive and more precise programme.

62. Mr. MARVILLE (Barbados) said that his delegation, having studied the statement by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services, welcomed that declaration of intent from the Secretary-General and the input of the Assistant Secretary-General himself in seeing the resolutions emanating from the Fifth Committee implemented.

63. On the question of the inheritance of posts by certain States, his delegation agreed that the pressures exerted on the Secretary-General militated against the performance of his task, but found it difficult to believe that the pressures involved could be construed as "mounting pressures" in the case of a specific post of crucial importance, and it would have something to say if that post was once more inherited by a national of the same State. His delegation was also uncomfortable about the non-advertisement of a senior post recently filled, which seemed to have become the preserve of one or two Member States.

64. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's promise to use the opportunity provided by retirement of staff from over-represented States to improve geographical distribution, but did not share his pessimism with regard to the problem of under-represented Member States or with respect to the improvement of the balance of women within the Secretariat. For those reasons, it would join in the effort to establish guidelines to encourage and prod the Secretariat.

65. The Assistant Secretary-General had responded to some of the issues raised by the representative of Barbados and by other Caribbean Member States. First of all, with regard to the employment of women in the Secretariat, there had been some progress in the specific case highlighted by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago in 1978 and by his own delegation in 1977, but the criteria used for establishing merit seemed to be very much akin to those used when considering excellent candidates from developing countries.

68. With regard to the question of discrimination, his delegation approved of the efforts made by the Secretary-General but, knowing that there would still be staff

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(Mr. Marville, Barbados)

members who were fearful of voicing complaints, either to the correct body or to any other person, for fear that such a complaint could become known to those against whom it was made, it would pledge its assistance to the Secretary-General in the strengthening of any measures to identify and weed out such discrimination.

67. In the case of non-representation in the Caribbean, he pointed out that the Secretariat could not hope to recruit a highly qualified and senior person within the national service of his own country at a junior level within the Secretariat. That affair had been partially the result of the junior nature of the recruitment mission sent to the region, in the sense that it was difficult to see how a P-3 could recruit for P-4 or P-5 posts. It was therefore to be hoped that, with a view to both the correction of non-representation and the recruitment of Caribbean nationals at the senior levels of the Secretariat, the Assistant Secretary-General or some senior member of his staff would take part in any future mission to the region.

68. His delegation approved of the Secretary-General's intention not to send missions to find women candidates from any over-represented country, and hoped that redoubled efforts would be made in the case of missions sent to other countries.

69. His delegation welcomed the Assistant Secretary-General's statement generally, and in particular with reference to examinations and post reclassification. It would therefore join with other delegations in attempting to formulate guidelines, including targets and percentages which would be acceptable to all members of the Committee. That was necessary partly because there were still a few areas which needed to be addressed and partly because precise goals were a prerequisite for ensuring that the Secretary-General's statement of intent with respect to changes within the Secretariat would be carried out.

70. Mr. ALSHARAFI (Yemen) thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services for his statement, in which he had answered many of the questions raised during the debate, and said that his delegation supported the proposed programme of action for distributing posts among States and ensuring the efficiency of the Organization. The Assistant Secretary-General had said that the Secretariat would encounter difficulties in recruiting nationals of unrepresented countries, and he would like to know what those difficulties were: did developing countries not put forward enough candidates, or were recruitment missions too expensive. In any event, his delegation was hopeful that the Secretary-General would overcome the obstacles to balanced geographical distribution within the Secretariat.

71. Mr. SCALABRE (France) said that his delegation had no reservations to express with regard to the clear, objective and comprehensive statement by the Assistant Secretary-General, and it generally supported the programme of action he had outlined. The information he had given and the proposals he had made should provide a basis for the work of the Working Group on Personnel Questions.

72. Mr. FALL (Senegal) said that he was extremely satisfied with the statement by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services, whose integrity, devotion to the United Nations and competence in so fundamental an area as personnel matters

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(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

were generally appreciated. At the preceding session his delegation, along with the Algerian delegation and others, had been surprised that the head of the Office of Personnel Services was not promoted to Under-Secretary-General, and it hoped that in due course the Secretary-General would take that action in recognition of the vital importance of personnel services and Mr. Gherab's personal qualities.

73. His delegation supported the programme of action outlined by the Assistant Secretary-General for improving geographical distribution, including the principle that no post should be inherited by a given Member State, and the need to increase the number of staff members from unrepresented States or to improve the percentage of women in the Secretariat. He hoped that the advancement of women would not have the effect of worsening the imbalance within the Secretariat between over-represented States and under-represented or unrepresented States. His delegation would give favourable consideration to any request for an increase in the resources of the Office of Personnel Services in order to provide staff for recruitment missions.

74. Mr. GHERAB (Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services) acknowledged that there might have been some omissions in his statement. He assured the representative of Kenya that both Nairobi and the headquarters of the various regional economic commissions would be included in the post classification programme. He also assured the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany that the procedure he had outlined for recruiting women would also be applied in the case of candidates for under-represented or unrepresented countries; in other words, the reasons for the rejection of a candidate by the department concerned would have to be put in writing. Lastly, he thanked delegations which had endorsed the position stated by the Secretary-General, and said that his staff would be available to provide the Working Group with any information needed to produce a draft resolution that would help the Secretary-General to carry out the responsibilities of chief administrative officer conferred on him by the Charter.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PATTERN OF CONFERENCES: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES
(continued) (A/33/32, vols. I and II)

75. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) commended the Committee on Conferences upon its excellent report (A/33/32, vols. I and II), which presented a clear and detailed account of its work. With regard to the utilization of the funds available for conference services, his delegation supported the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences that the General Assembly should take further measures to reduce the wastage of time and resources and should urge all United Nations bodies to open and adjourn meetings on time. It also endorsed the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit that there should not be more than one special conference in any given year in each field of United Nations activity unless a absolutely necessary.

76. Furthermore, with regard to the control of documentation, it was essential that documents should be issued in good time if the work of intergovernmental bodies was not to be seriously hampered, as had been the case when the Fifth Committee had had to postpone consideration of a number of items because the

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(Mr. Hamzah, Syrian Arab Republic)

necessary documents were not available. In addition, delegations often received documents in the languages they needed too late. His delegation agreed with the general observations in the report of the Committee on Conferences and the recommendations it contained, and would vote in favour of the two draft resolutions submitted by the Committee.

77. Mr. ONIGA (Romania) noted that the Committee on Conferences, which had met for the first time as a permanent organ, had endeavoured to streamline its work and had quite rightly decided to deal with two especially important problems, namely the utilization of resources available for conference services and the limitation of documentation. If it continued to pursue that course, the Committee would obtain better and better results, all the more so as its work had been characterized by a profound sense of responsibility and co-operation.

78. After analysis of the Committee's report (A/33/32, vols. I and II), which was very logically structured, his delegation noted that paragraph 14, volume I, dealt with the delimitation of the area of competence of the Committee on Conferences in relation to that of the Advisory Committee. Since the Committee on Conferences had only touched briefly on the question, it might be well to study the conclusion it had reached in depth and to consult directly with the Advisory Committee in order to avoid duplication of work.

79. Commenting on paragraphs 32 to 38 of the report, his delegation expressed the view that it was for the General Assembly to authorize changes in servicing requirements and the relevant resolutions should take into account all the substantive factors so as to avoid complications at a later stage.

80. His delegation was in general agreement with paragraphs 39 to 51. Commenting on paragraph 50, it noted, however, that common sense should be the yardstick and the Committee on Conferences should not be made an arbiter for intergovernmental bodies. The example and perseverance of the chairmen of committees were the factors that determined strict discipline, as illustrated by the Fifth Committee.

81. With regard to paragraphs 56 and 57, his delegation looked forward to the results of the proposed studies on standards of staffing requirements. It did not think it was sufficient to prepare a manual for committee secretaries (paras. 60 and 61); attention should also be given to the training of staff, which might be based on the example of the veteran secretaries of certain committees.

82. In order to resolve the problem of the control and limitation of documentation, which continued to grow, it was essential to introduce technical innovations and structural changes in the drafting of reports and documents, as illustrated in the Joint Inspection Unit's report on the subject. His delegation had noted with interest the comments and proposals made in paragraphs 73 and 82 and recommended that the Committee on Conference should introduce innovations and persevere in its efforts.

83. In principle, his delegation could support the 20 recommendations and two draft resolutions submitted by the Committee on Conferences, subject to some slight changes or clarifications to which it reserved the right to revert.