

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION 1977

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FIFTH COMMITTEE

55th meeting

held on

Friday, 2 December 1977

at 3.15 p.m.

New York

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 55th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela)

later: Mr. TALIEH (Iran)

later: Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany)

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

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Revised estimates under income section 3.C.2: Visitors' Service (Geneva) and under income section 1: Income from staff assessment

Revised estimates under section 26.B: Alterations and improvement of premises at Geneva

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 100: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1978-1979 (continued)
(A/32/6, A/32/8 and Add.3 and 13, A/32/38; A/C.5/32/12, 13 and 15; A/C.5/32/L.26)

First reading (continued)

Section 1 - Over-all policy-making, direction and co-ordination

1. The CHAIRMAN said that for section 1 the Secretary-General had requested an appropriation of \$19,398,200 and the Advisory Committee had proposed a reduction of \$1,286,400. In addition, an amount of \$18,600 should be deducted for the reclassification of one post from P-5 to D-1, pending the adoption of a decision on the whole question of reclassifications. Similarly, the Fifth Committee had before it a revised estimate (A/C.5/32/15) for the restructuring of the Office of the Under-Secretaries-General for Special Political Affairs. At the end of the debate, separate votes would be taken on the initial estimates for section 1 and on the estimates for the restructuring which he had mentioned.
2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the reduction of \$1,286,400 which the Advisory Committee was recommending under section 1 did not include the recommendations with respect to the restructuring of the Office of the Under-Secretaries-General for Special Political Affairs (A/32/8/Add.3). Most of the recommended reductions concerned the provision for the General Assembly, in particular the contractual printing costs. For the reasons given in paragraph 1.5 of its report (A/32/8), the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of \$959,800 in that estimate. Other substantial reductions related to the World Food Council (\$115,000), especially with regard to the funds requested for the Council secretariat, consultants, travel, communications and supplies.
3. With respect to subsection B (Executive direction and management), the Advisory Committee was recommending a reduction of \$211,600, as was explained in paragraphs 1.24 to 1.32 of its first report (A/32/8) and in document A/32/8/Add.13.
4. With respect to the restructuring of the Office of the Under-Secretaries-General for Special Political Affairs, for which the Secretary-General was requesting the addition of new posts and the reassignment of some existing posts, the Advisory Committee was recommending that the Secretary-General's request should be reduced by \$75,300 (A/32/8/Add.3, para. 11).
5. Mr. Talieh (Iran) took the Chair.
6. Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/32/L.26 concerning the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, said that the African group had not been represented in the Advisory Committee since 1961. The draft resolution reflected the interest of the developing countries in having more representatives in the Advisory Committee and therefore recommended that its membership should be increased from 13 to 16 members, effective from 1 January 1978. He urged the members of the Fifth Committee to adopt the draft resolution, in order to reaffirm the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

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7. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) announced that the Syrian Arab Republic had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.5/32/L.26.

Section 22 - Administration, management and general services (continued)

Subsection E - Internal Audit and Management Improvement Service

8. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning the future of the Administrative Management Service (AMS), recalled that the Service had been established in 1969 as an independent unit, for the purpose of improving administrative practices and ensuring a better use of available personnel. Although there had been some short-comings in the work of AMS, it should be pointed out that not all its recommendations had been put into practice and his delegation had observed that the heads of certain Secretariat units had repeatedly obstructed the implementation of some of those recommendations. In his view, AMS could and should play a positive role; to combine it with the Internal Audit Service would reduce the effectiveness of its work, since it would detract from its independence. In addition, the combination would be incompatible with General Assembly resolution 31/194, which requested the Secretary-General to strengthen the existing role and functions of AMS.

9. The discussion held by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session had given the impression that the majority of Member States had been opposed to the proposed merger, and paragraph 22.55 of its first report (A/32/8) showed that the Advisory Committee also opposed it. His delegation therefore believed that it would be premature to endorse the Secretary-General's recommendations that the Internal Audit Service and the Administrative Management Service should be combined.

10. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) recalled that General Assembly resolution 31/94 C had noted that an effective and continuing management improvement programme was essential. The Japanese delegation hoped that AMS would continue to play a positive role, and expressed the hope that at its thirty-third session the General Assembly would make an in-depth study of the question of the administrative management of the United Nations, with special reference to the measures outlined in paragraph 67 of the Secretary-General's report in document A/C.5/31/6.

11. He noted that the proposed programme budget did not sufficiently reflect all the benefits derived from management improvement efforts, despite the relevant recommendation of the General Assembly, and expressed the hope that that problem would be corrected in the future.

12. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposals concerning the combination of the Administrative Management Service and the Internal Audit Service, although it noted the different views expressed on that subject by the Advisory Committee. It should be borne in mind that the combination would not involve complete integration and that the Secretary-General had acknowledged that, while the two units were closely interrelated, their functions were different. In the view of the Japanese delegation, the Secretary-General's proposals would enable the

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(Mr. Akashi, Japan)

two units to achieve a greater interaction in their functions and to exchange opinions and ideas. In any case, the effectiveness of AMS depended greatly on the calibre of its members, and he therefore hoped that the Secretary-General would bear in mind the recommendations on that subject made in resolution 31/94 C.

13. The Japanese delegation had certain doubts as to whether AMS should be a completely independent unit directly responsible to the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management; it would perhaps be logical to establish a unit responsible to the Secretary-General himself, as had been done in UNESCO.

14. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation was not entirely convinced that the Internal Audit Service and the Administrative Management Service should be merged. Although it realized that the question was controversial, the French delegation considered that the Advisory Committee had made pertinent comments to the effect that the objectives pursued by the two Services were different, although to a certain extent interrelated. The French delegation believed that AMS should be composed of a small number of highly qualified specialists, assisted by consultants, with the task of solving very specific problems and that it should be directly linked to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management.

15. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that he fully agreed with the views expressed by the three previous speakers. Although they had certain points in common, the Internal Audit Service and the Administrative Management Service pursued different objectives and should adopt different approaches. His delegation would therefore prefer AMS to be retained as a separate entity and to continue to be responsible directly to the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management. It hoped that, if it was decided to combine AMS with the Internal Audit Service, AMS would retain its own identity.

16. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) acknowledged that the question of the combination of the Internal Audit Service and the Administrative Management Service in a single service was debatable, since the arrangement would have advantages and disadvantages, and said that he respected the objections raised by the Advisory Committee and by several delegations. Nevertheless, he felt that the combination of both services would in no way affect the independence of AMS, since at present both services were directly responsible to the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management. What had been proposed was not that the Administrative Management Service should be made subordinate to the Internal Audit Service, but that they should be merged in a single joint body in which both Services would be equally important. Such a merger would result in increased efficiency and economy in the work of the United Nations.

17. In addition, when deciding on the matter, the Fifth Committee should bear in mind that, if it opted for keeping the two Services separate, it would be necessary to restore the two posts which the Secretary-General had proposed to eliminate, since otherwise the position of AMS would be weakened.

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18. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) asked the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management to explain why it would be necessary to restore the two posts in question if it was decided to keep AMS separate.

19. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation did not understand why it would be necessary to restore the two posts if it was decided to keep AMS separate, and repeated his view that AMS should be composed of a small group of highly trained specialists, assisted by consultants.

20. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the most important consideration was quality and not quantity, and also asked why it would be necessary to restore the two posts mentioned if it was decided to keep AMS separate. In addition, his delegation was not convinced that the two Services would remain autonomous after being combined. AMS would no longer be directly responsible to the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, and would become dependent on him through the head of the Internal Audit Service. The Soviet delegation agreed with the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 22.55 of its report (A/32/8) and believed that the two Services should remain separate.

21. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) said that it was sufficient to compare paragraphs 22.130 and 22.131 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979 (A/32/6) in order to appreciate the difference of character between the Management Improvement Branch and the Internal Audit Branch. Whereas the function performed by the latter Branch could be described as unidirectional and retrospective, the Management Improvement Branch was more concerned with the future. He therefore wondered how combination of the two would enhance efficiency. In addition, table 22.62 in the proposed budget showed that the number of established posts proposed for the biennium 1978-1979 was 69, compared with 67 for the biennium 1976-1977. It did not therefore appear that restoration of the two posts whose elimination had been proposed was essential in order to ensure efficient operation. The United States delegation therefore did not see why the maintenance of two separate Services would require restoration of the two posts in question.

22. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said he was surprised that several delegations were stressing the need to support and strengthen AMS, while at the same time making proposals which would in fact weaken its position. He wondered what would be the effect on the position of AMS, if it was decided to keep that Service separate, of it being headed by a staff member of only D-1 rank. In order to avoid a weakening of AMS, it was vital to restore the two posts in question, if it was decided not to combine the two Services.

23. Mr. GARCIA (Brazil) said that the functions of the Department of Administration and Management included the overseeing of the effectiveness of utilization of the Organization's resources and that its own budget proposals should therefore be an example of budgeting in general. That was true in the case of the proposal to merge the Administrative Management Service and the Internal Audit Service. The merger would enhance the efficiency of the two Services by permitting more co-ordinated mutual support and closer integration of their activities. His

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(Mr. Garcia, Brazil)

delegation did not share the fear that the merger would weaken the management improvement function and considered, on the contrary, that it would strengthen both Services. Moreover, the work of the combined units would continue to be carried out under the leadership of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, who would continue to head the programme of management improvement in the Secretariat.

24. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) said that there seemed to be no recommendations but only opinions in section 22 E of the Advisory Committee's report (A/32/8). Accordingly, he would like to be informed of the nature of the decision adopted by the Committee if, as was customary, the recommendations in section 22 E of the Advisory Committee's report were put to the vote.

25. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should refrain from voting on section 22 E for the time being and should take up those sections on which decisions must be adopted at the current meeting.

Section 17 - Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (continued)

26. The CHAIRMAN said that adoption of the Swedish proposal to restore the amounts whose deletion had been recommended by the Advisory Committee was equivalent to approving the initial estimate in the amount of \$2,539,700 submitted by the Secretary-General under section 17. That amount included \$400,000 for emergency relief assistance in connexion with natural disasters, which had been accepted by the Advisory Committee. Thus, the Committee had before it under section 17 a revised recommendation of the Advisory Committee in the amount of \$2,380,200. Accordingly, he suggested that the Committee should vote first on the initial estimate submitted by the Secretary-General, in accordance with the Swedish proposal, and, if necessary, depending on the result of that vote, on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

27. Mr. LANDAU (Austria) said that his delegation had already had occasion in the Second Committee to support the work of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) and endorsed the proposal introduced by Sweden on behalf of the Nordic countries.

28. Mr. DERESSA (Ethiopia) said that Ethiopia and many other developing countries whose economic and social development efforts had been disrupted by natural disasters attached great importance to the financing of UNDRO activities and considered that they should be financed from the regular budget until voluntary contributions had reached a level that would enable UNDRO to respond quickly and effectively to emergency situations. All the members of the Fifth Committee recognized the importance of UNDRO. The advisability of making available the funds required for emergency relief had been demonstrated only a few weeks earlier when the Office had provided swift and effective relief to Ethiopia in the wake of the heavy flooding which had caused much damage in that country. His delegation supported the Swedish proposal, in particular with respect to the \$400,000 for emergency relief assistance, and was glad that the Advisory Committee had agreed that that amount should again be included in the regular budget.

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29. Mr. VAN VLOTEN (Netherlands) requested the Controller to reply to the question which he had put at the 51st meeting (A/C.5/32/SR.51, para. 26) concerning the transfer of the P-2 post to which reference was made in paragraph 17.6 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/32/8).

30. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the Secretary-General's proposal for the next biennium would mean that an adequate proportion of resources from the regular budget was available for financing UNDRO activities, in particular with respect to the proposed transfer of posts, and he supported the Swedish proposal to approve the amounts requested by the Secretary-General. At the same time, he considered that there should be no such transfers in the future and that, as a rule, UNDRO should concentrate on co-ordination, disaster prevention and planning. However, in view of the present situation of the Trust Fund, he supported a further appropriation of \$400,000 under the regular budget for emergency relief assistance.

31. Mr. FALL (Senegal) said that, as a representative of one of the Sahelian countries, he would vote for the Swedish proposal.

32. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) said that he knew from experience that natural disasters, besides causing short-term suffering, had long-term effects on social and economic development. Therefore, the work of UNDRO not only was humanitarian but also represented an investment for economic and social development. Bangladesh attached great importance to the formulation of an international strategy for disaster prevention and the preparation of a world survey of damage caused by disasters as well as to UNDRO research and development activities. UNDRO had been considerably strengthened since the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, but its activities had remained circumscribed owing to the fact that it was largely dependent on voluntary contributions. His delegation considered it proper to restore the appropriations proposed by the Secretary-General in order that UNDRO might be guaranteed financial resources with which to continue its work.

33. Mr. SHARMA (Nepal) said that he supported the strengthening of UNDRO in order to enable the Office to continue to provide assistance in order to mitigate the effects of natural disasters and, accordingly, endorsed the proposal made by the Swedish delegation.

34. Mr. BAMBA (Upper Volta) said that he supported the proposal of the Swedish delegation in view of the important role played by UNDRO.

35. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) said that his delegation fully supported the work of UNDRO and in 1976 had concurred in the transfer of up to 50 per cent of the Office's costs to the regular budget. Similarly, at the current session, his delegation had voted in the Second Committee in favour of a draft resolution which called for a further transfer of costs to the regular budget, on the understanding that such costs would not exceed 50 per cent of the total. His delegation would vote for the transfer of posts proposed by the Secretary-General; however, it could not support the Swedish proposal for the restoration of an amount of \$400,000 for emergency assistance relief to Governments in the event of natural disasters, as it believed that such relief should be financed from voluntary funds, not from the regular budget.

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36. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the Secretary-General had no objection to the recommendation in paragraph 17.6 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/32/8) concerning the P-2 post in the disaster prevention and preparedness programme.

37. Mr. NAUDY (France) proposed that, instead of acting on the suggestion made by the Chairman, the Committee should vote, first, on the inclusion of an amount of \$400,000 in the regular budget, then, on the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in its report and, finally, on the estimates for the section as a whole; in that way delegations would have an opportunity to adopt different positions on the individual recommendations and to apply different priorities to each proposed appropriation. Furthermore, that procedure would be in accordance with rule 130 of the rules of procedure in that the Advisory Committee's final recommendation on the amount of \$400,000 should be regarded as an amendment.

38. Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden) said that his delegation would not oppose the voting procedure proposed by the French delegation if the Chairman considered that it would expedite the Committee's work.

39. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) said that, in accordance with the proposal made by the French delegation, the Committee would vote first on the amount of \$400,000 for emergency relief assistance to Governments in connexion with natural disasters. It would then vote on the amount of \$159,500, which represented the difference between the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General and that recommended by the Advisory Committee. Finally, it would vote on the total estimate under section 17.

40. An amount of \$400,000 for emergency relief assistance was approved by 74 votes to 11.

41. The restoration of an amount of \$159,500 representing the reductions proposed by the Advisory Committee under section 17 was approved by 79 votes to 3.

42. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) was of the view that the Fifth Committee should have voted on the amount of \$159,500 less the cost of the P-2 post concerning which the Controller had stated that the Secretary-General would have no objection to its continued financing from extrabudgetary resources.

43. Mr. SAFRONCHUCK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had not been able to participate in the voting on the restoration of the amount of \$159,500 because it did not understand the meaning of the proposal or its financial implications and considered that that point should be clarified.

44. Mr. VAN VLOTEN (Netherlands) said that his delegation had voted for the restoration of the amount of \$159,500 because it endorsed the view that the P-2 post should be financed from the regular budget.

45. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation had voted for the restoration of the amount of \$159,500 on the understanding that the cost of the P-2 post would be deducted from it.

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46. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) explained that, although the Controller had stated that the Secretary-General did not object to the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the P-2 post should continue to be financed from extrabudgetary resources, the representative of Sweden had insisted on the restoration of the amount of \$159,500 in his delegation's proposal.

47. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) did not believe that the Fifth Committee could insist on the restoration of the Secretary-General's proposal if the Secretary-General, through the Controller, had stated that he had no objections to the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

48. Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden) said that, according to his delegation's understanding, the Committee had voted on the restoration of the amount of \$159,500, including the cost of the P-2 post. Likewise, the fact that the Controller had stated that the Secretary-General did not object to the Advisory Committee's recommendation did not mean that the Secretary-General was revising his initial estimate, on which the Committee was voting.

49. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the estimate which the Secretary-General was submitting to the Committee was that contained in the documents which it had before it. It was another matter that in the course of the debates the question had been put as to what was the Secretary-General's reaction to the recommendation of the Advisory Committee. The Secretary-General had replied that he had no objection to the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 17.6 of its report, but that did not mean that he was changing his original estimate. Likewise, that did not mean that the Secretary-General considered the post in question unnecessary. The post existed and it was merely a question of whether it should be transferred to the regular budget.

50. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the situation was unprecedented and unique; the Secretary-General had no objection to the Advisory Committee's recommendation but was submitting an estimate contrary to it. His delegation felt that the Fifth Committee should have a fresh opportunity to take a decision on that question.

51. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the initial estimate of \$2,539,700 proposed by the Secretary-General under section 17.

52. An appropriation in the amount of \$2,539,700 under section 17 for the biennium 1978-1979 was approved in first reading by 76 votes to 9, with 5 abstentions.

53. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy), explaining her vote, said that, in voting \$400,000 for emergency assistance, her delegation's intention had not been to favour the transfer to the regular budget of \$400,000, because it felt that such activities should be financed from voluntary contributions. Furthermore, it was stated in the Advisory Committee's report that the Fifth Committee would have before it a report on the possibility of continuing to finance those activities from voluntary

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(Miss Forcignano, Italy)

funds. However, the Fifth Committee had not received that report. Consequently, her delegation had abstained from the vote on section 17 as a whole.

54. Mr. FALL (Senegal) took note of the opinion expressed by the Controller that the fact that the Secretary-General had not made any objection to the recommendation of the Advisory Committee did not mean that the Secretary-General was changing his original proposal. That confirmed his delegation's vote.

55. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that there had been no error in procedure and that the vote had been taken on the Secretary-General's original proposal. That did not prevent the Secretary-General from not using the post in question and making the resultant savings if he so wished.

Honoraria for the members of the Human Rights Committee (A/32/8/Add.13; A/C.5/32/38)

56. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America), taking into account the fact that the Commission had decided the previous week to leave the comprehensive study of the question of honoraria until the thirty-third session, proposed that consideration of honoraria for the members of the Human Rights Committee should also be postponed.

57. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that consideration of the question could not be postponed because article 35 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the General Assembly and ratified by many States, provided that the members of the Committee should receive emoluments determined by the General Assembly and that that term meant honoraria and not subsistence or travel, as had been clear from the debate on the Covenant. Consequently, it was reasonable to set honoraria at the rate currently applicable to other organs.

58. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the United States proposal and said that the statement of the United Kingdom representative was not very convincing because article 35 of the Covenant did not stipulate when the determination of the honoraria was to be made. The item was not the most important of the questions being considered by the Committee and could be postponed for more than one year.

59. Mr. ANDRIANKIRIJA (Madagascar), supported by Mr. FALL (Senegal), said that no one was disputing the principle of the payment of honoraria; it was just a question of fixing the amount. The rate proposed by the Secretary-General was reasonable because it was in line with the rates payable to other organs, and the Committee should adopt a decision on the subject.

60. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) said that in article 35 of the Covenant it was not necessarily a question of honoraria and, in any case, no time-limit was set for determining them. In view of the need to speed up the Committee's work, he felt that consideration of the question might well be postponed.

61. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had entered into force in

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(Mr. Debatin)

March 1976 and, consequently, it was necessary for the Assembly to determine the emoluments of the members of the Committee, in accordance with article 35. It could not be interpreted to mean that the form and conditions of payment of those emoluments should consist of no payments.

62. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked whether the other Committees were informed of the decisions of the Fifth Committee to postpone consideration of certain items.

63. Mr. VAN VLOTEN (Netherlands) said that postponement was not justified and he supported the statement made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 7 of its report (A/32/8/Add.13) to the effect that it had no objection to the Secretary-General's proposal.

64. The CHAIRMAN said that, if the delegations of the United States and the Soviet Union had no objection, a decision would be adopted at the current session.

65. It was so decided.

66. Mr. MOLteni (Argentina) asked, with reference to the clarification given by the Controller, whether subsistence payments could be regarded as emoluments or only the honoraria.

67. Mr. Schmidt (Federal Republic of Germany) took the Chair.

68. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that subsistence was a reimbursement of expenditures made and emoluments were honoraria which bore no relation to that type of expenditure.

69. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that the General Assembly itself at its sixteenth session had approved the Controller's interpretation, as was clear from paragraph 10 of document A/5005.

70. Mr. ANDRIANKIRIJA (Madagascar) said that, according to paragraph 7 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/32/38), the financial implications for 1976-1977 could be absorbed from within currently available resources and that for 1978-1979 an additional appropriation under section 18 would be required. Consequently, it would be necessary to adopt two decisions, one on the fixing of the emoluments of the Committee members and the other on an additional appropriation of \$39,000 under section 18 for the biennium 1978-1979.

71. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that article 35 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights did not require the payment of honoraria to members of the Human Rights Committee. Besides, the proposed payment of such honoraria would be unfair to the members of similar organs, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, who received nothing for their work.

72. Mr. ANDRIANKIRIJA (Madagascar) said that the General Assembly, when adopting

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(Mr. Andriankirija, Madagascar)

the Covenant in its resolution 2200 (XXI), had officially decided that emoluments should be paid to the members of the Committee out of United Nations funds. That decision by the Assembly must be respected, and the Fifth Committee must now confine itself to determining the amount of those emoluments.

73. Mr. FALL (Senegal) observed that the position just stated by the representative of Madagascar coincided with that taken by the Advisory Committee, as could be seen from paragraph 6 of its report (A/32/8/Add.13).

74. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee, pending the decision to be taken at the thirty-third session on the thorough study of the question of honoraria, should recommend that the General Assembly decide that the total amount to be paid each year as honoraria to the members of the Human Rights Committee should be \$2,500 for the Chairman and \$1,000 for the other members, as from 1 January 1977, and that it approve an additional appropriation of \$39,000 for that purpose under section 18 of the proposed programme budget for 1978-1979. The General Assembly should also take note of the fact that the additional amount of \$19,500 under section 18 of the programme budget for 1976-1977 would be absorbed within available appropriations for the current biennium.

75. The Chairman's proposal was adopted by 66 votes to 10, with 6 abstentions.

76. Mr. CUNNINGHAM (United States of America) said that his delegation strongly supported the work of the Human Rights Committee. However, the payment of honoraria to its members was contrary to the principle originally laid down in General Assembly resolution 677 (VII) that no fee or other remuneration, other than travel and subsistence, where appropriate, should normally be paid in respect of members of organs and subsidiary organs who served in an individual capacity. His delegation was opposed to making exceptions to that principle, as it believed that service on those organs bestowed an honour on the individual and his country, and that the payment of a remuneration would diminish that honour. The United States delegation believed that the payment of travel and subsistence adequately met the financial needs of the members of such organs.

77. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that his country had been one of the first to sign and ratify the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and that one of its nationals was a member of the Committee. It was therefore obvious that the Soviet Union recognized the value of the Covenant and the importance of the Committee's work. However, it had voted against the decision just adopted, as it believed that the payment of honoraria to the members of organs of that kind was unnecessary and unfair.

Programme for training English and French translators at the Economic Commission for Africa (A/C.5/32/35)

78. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee was in agreement with the

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(Mr. Mselle)

proposed training programme and drew particular attention to paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/32/35). The Advisory Committee accepted the Secretary-General's estimates for the programme, with the exception only of the \$61,400 requested to cover the salaries and common staff costs of those who would replace in New York and Geneva the staff members seconded to ECA to direct the training programme. The Advisory Committee considered that that amount could be absorbed within the 1978-1979 appropriations.

79. Mr. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago) supported the training programme suggested by the Secretary-General, as he considered it a very useful initiative. His delegation understood that the candidates for training would be persons from third world and especially African countries.

80. Mr. DERESSA (Ethiopia) said that his delegation welcomed the initiative taken by the Secretary-General in proposing the training programme.

81. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to a question by the representative of Algeria, said that the Advisory Committee did not believe that there would be delays in implementing the training programme if the General Assembly did not approve the Secretary-General's request for \$61,400. That amount was being sought to defray the salaries and common staff costs of the personnel who would replace in New York and Geneva the staff members seconded to direct the training programme, not to finance the training programme itself.

82. Mr. DERESSA (Ethiopia) and Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone) requested the Secretariat to indicate whether the Advisory Committee's recommendation to delete the sum of \$61,400 requested by the Secretary-General would or would not affect the execution of the ECA training programme.

83. Mr. LANDAU (Austria) said he would like the Secretariat to indicate whether the deletion of the sum of \$61,400 would affect translation work in New York and Geneva.

84. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the training programme would be started at ECA, as planned, whether the sum requested by the Secretary-General for replacements for the New York and Geneva staff members in charge of the programme was deleted or not. It was impossible to know in advance whether the deletion of the funds for replacement staff would or would not affect the work in New York and Geneva, since that could depend on the volume of work in the offices concerned. Should the Committee approve the appropriation of \$61,400, the Secretariat would do its utmost to economize as much as possible in the use of the funds, but it would be helpful to know whether they would be available for use in case of need.

85. Mr. ANDRIANKIRIJA (Madagascar) proposed that the sum of \$61,400 requested by the Secretary-General for the salaries and common staff costs of the replacements should be retained.

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86. Mr. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago) said that some confusion seemed to have arisen over the question of the replacement staff. The Controller had explained that whatever happened to the appropriation requested for that purpose, it would not affect the training programme in any way. As for the possible effect on services in Geneva and New York, he wished to know whether it would be possible to replace two experienced translators at short notice. His delegation thought that there would be no problem, and that the funds would not be needed. However, if the members of the Committee were willing to approve the appropriation it would not oppose it.

87. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services, Controller) reiterated that the training programme would not be affected by the deletion of the appropriation, and said that although services in Geneva and New York would not be seriously affected, it must be borne in mind that in both translation services there was a backlog of work and that it would be only fair to replace the staff assigned to other tasks. The short amount of time in which to find replacements would not be a problem, since both in New York and Geneva recourse could be had to the services of free-lance translators.

88. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee decided to approve an additional amount of \$152,100 under section 22 (J, 3) of the programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979.

89. It was so decided.

Revised estimates under income section 3.C.2: Visitors' Service (Geneva) and under income section 1: Income from staff assessment (A/C.5/32/44)

90. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee accepted the revised estimates under income section 3.C.2 (Visitors' Service (Geneva)) and income section 1, as summarized in paragraphs 21 and 22 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/32/44). He observed that table 1 of the Secretary-General's report showed that the deficit would be reduced by \$141,000; however, if apportioned costs estimated at \$61,900 were included, the deficit would be somewhat greater than the \$241,000 shown in table 1.

91. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee decided to approve the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the revised estimates for the Visitors' Service at Geneva, whereby the deficit under subsection C.2 of income section 3 would be reduced to \$241,000, and income from staff assessments would be reduced by \$61,300 in income section 1.

92. It was so decided.

Revised estimates under section 26.B: Alterations and improvement of premises at Geneva (A/C.5/32/32)

93. The CHAIRMAN said that the revised estimates were the result of the decisions taken by the Trade and Development Board during the first part of its ninth special session, held at Geneva.

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94. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee accepted the estimates in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/32/32) and recommended approval of the amount requested.

95. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee decided to approve an amount of \$56,000 under section 26.B of the programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979.

96. It was so decided.

Implications of the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (continued) (A/32/8/Add.14, A/32/38; A/C.5/32/26; A/C.5/32/L.18 and L.24)

97. Mr. SHARMA (Nepal) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/32/L.24 on behalf of the sponsors, which had been joined by Peru and Venezuela, and said that the subject of communications was of vital importance in the endeavour to attain the objectives of the United Nations Charter. No effort must be spared to employ all means available for the effective maintenance of peace and for the social and economic advancement of the developing areas. In that connexion the United Nations Chronicle served a very useful function, and must be continued on a monthly basis. The short-wave radio broadcasts also performed a valuable function, as they reached areas that did not have access to the written word, and they should therefore be made more effective.

98. Mr. SERBANESCU (Romania) said that his delegation was concerned over the situation confronting the Fifth Committee with regard to the decision it would have to take on the recommendations of CPC, and particularly on those contained in paragraph 23 of its report (A/32/38). The Committee was asked to take a substantive decision on certain programmes, although the competent organs had not pronounced on the subject, and, also, to take a decision it had no right to take on partial measures, although CPC itself had decided to consider in depth at its eighteenth session, inter alia, the programme of social development and humanitarian affairs. Such a course of action would give rise to a conflict of authority that could have far-reaching consequences. His delegation had therefore joined the delegations of other countries in submitting draft resolution A/C.5/32/L.18. That would give CPC the necessary time to make the in-depth study referred to in paragraph 4 of its report, and the Fifth Committee could take an informed decision without infringing on the competence of the other committees or departing from the appropriate procedures.

99. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy) said that at the following session the report of CPC should be considered by the Fifth Committee at the beginning of the session so as to allow for a constructive discussion which would enable objective and useful decisions to be made. Her delegation believed that the activities of CPC should be adequately integrated into the United Nations system without overlapping with the work of other organs. Rather than over-emphasizing precise assignments of specific levels of growth, CPC should confine itself mainly to establishing precise priorities in various fields of activity, leaving other bodies, such as ACABQ, to make recommendations on the resources required to implement those priorities. If those objectives were to be achieved, specific time-tables would have to be set for the activities of the bodies concerned and there would have to be full co-operation between CPC and the Advisory Committee.

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(Miss Forcignano, Italy)

100. Her delegation had been surprised by CPC's recommendation in paragraph 23 (b) of its report (A/32/38). It had to be borne in mind that problems related to youth and the elderly were universal and of paramount importance for all countries of the world. Similarly, the programme being carried out by the Division of Social Affairs at the Geneva Office not only served European interests but was also used by those units of the Secretariat concerned with social development; its object was to attract the participation of countries of other continents and to serve their development needs. In any event, part of that programme was self-supporting, since the costs of the seminars and study groups which were its main activity were borne by the host countries for those activities. Her delegation believed that before decisions of the kind recommended by CPC were adopted, the programmes concerned should be more carefully scrutinized. Her delegation had accordingly become a sponsor of draft decision A/C.5/32/L.18 and hoped that it would be approved by the Committee.

101. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that CPC's over-all review of programmes was an indispensable step in the planning and programming processes of the United Nations and should provide the framework for the more detailed review of budgets conducted by the Fifth Committee with the assistance of ACABQ. The fact that both CPC and the Advisory Committee dealt with the distribution of resources was the cause of some overlapping in their activities. While the sole authority for the adoption of budgets lay with the General Assembly, with the advice of the Advisory Committee, the work of CPC was a useful instrument for determining priorities among programmes, especially in the economic and social sectors.

102. With regard to the relative rates of real growth, it had to be borne in mind that CPC itself had admitted in its report on the work of its sixteenth session (A/31/38, para. 88) that it was working with a blunt instrument and that the determination of those rates was not a substitute for the normal budgetary review. Moreover, no solution had been found for a number of conceptual ambiguities and practical difficulties referred to in Annex V of the foreword to the budget estimates for 1978-1979 (A/32/6), outstanding among which was the problem of transfers of posts from extrabudgetary funding to the regular budget. It was to be hoped that CPC would manage to refine its analytical tools in order to solve those problems.

103. Despite all those limitations, the Secretary-General had translated the real growth rates recommended by CPC into absolute percentage rates, thereby applying unduly rigid recommendations about which there had been considerable nuance of opinion within CPC, as paragraphs 62-65 of its most recent report (A/32/38) showed. For example, CPC had recognized how difficult it was to assign growth rates to small programmes in which an increase of even one post would propel such programmes from the "well below average" category into the "well above average" category. That problem had arisen in connexion with a new P-5 post in the international drug control programme, and his delegation accordingly had reservations about the Secretary-General's proposals concerning that programme in paragraph 15 of his report (A/C.5/32/26).

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(Mr. Akashi, Japan)

104. Furthermore his delegation had doubts about the wisdom of CPC's recommendations on certain press coverage of the United Nations, short-wave broadcasting and the quarterly publication of the United Nations Chronicle; those recommendations might be detrimental to more effective dissemination of information. For that reason it had decided to sponsor draft resolution A/C.5/32/L.24. Subject to those observations, his delegation was prepared to accept the remaining proposals of the Secretary-General on the implications of the recommendations of CPC.

105. Mr. ANDRIANKIRIJA (Madagascar) announced that his delegation had become a sponsor of draft decision A/C.5/32/L.18 and draft resolution A/C.5/32/L.24.

United Nations accommodation at Nairobi (continued) (A/32/8/Add.10;
A/C.5/32/19 and Add.1, A/C.5/32/L.25)

106. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Brazil, Canada, Jordan, Netherlands, Pakistan, Senegal, the United Republic of Cameroon, the United Republic of Tanzania and Upper Volta had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/32/L.25.

AGENDA ITEM 107: APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF SUBSIDIARY ORGANS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (continued)

(a) ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS (continued)
(A/32/101/Add.2; A/C.5/32/31/Add.1)

107. The CHAIRMAN said that Mr. V. X. Palamarchuk had been nominated as a candidate for the vacancy that had arisen in the Advisory Committee owing to the resignation of Mr. A. V. Grodsky. Bearing in mind the precedent established by the General Assembly and the Fifth Committee and in view of the fact that there was no opposition to the proposed nomination, he suggested that the Committee should waive secret balloting and recommend by acclamation that Mr. V. X. Palamarchuk should be appointed a member of the Advisory Committee for the period beginning on 1 January 1978 and ending on 31 December 1978. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee approved that suggestion.

108. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

109. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) said that when the Committee had approved the draft resolution in the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/32/9, annex V), the relevant recommendations of the Advisory Committee (A/32/319, paras. 6 and 7) had not been brought to its attention through an oversight on the part of the Committee Secretary. Since no objections had been made to those recommendations of the Advisory Committee during the consideration of item 110 in the Fifth Committee, it could be concluded that the Fifth Committee had intended to approve them. Accordingly, the operative paragraph of section 1 of the said draft resolution needed to be amended accordingly.

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110. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to include agenda item 110 (United Nations pension system: (a) Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) among the items to be considered at the following meeting in order to remedy the oversight referred to by the Secretary.

111. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 7 p.m.