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at 3 p.m.  
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Republic)

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

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22 October 1976

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 92: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1976-1977 (continued)

United Nations information centres (A/31/8/Add.2; A/C.5/31/14) (continued)

Yearbook of the United Nations (A/31/8/Add.1; A/C.5/31/12) (continued)

1. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that OPI played an important role in obtaining world-wide support for United Nations activities and that particular attention should be paid to the information centre system. His country hoped to be able to establish closer links with information centres.

2. The fact that the United Nations was a political organization should be reflected in information centre activities, and particular attention should be paid to international security, disarmament and decolonization. In paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/31/14), particular importance was attached to the functions of the centre director. The principle of equitable geographical distribution was therefore important with regard to that post, and the Secretariat should provide a conference room paper showing the extent to which that principle was being applied. He welcomed the trend towards the creation of single information centres to serve the United Nations system as a whole. In general, all measures aimed at strengthening the information centre system were welcome.

3. With respect to the Yearbook of the United Nations, he agreed with ACABQ that the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/31/12) was inadequate, since it did not discuss any possible alternatives to the recommendations presented. Furthermore, the Secretary-General's recommendations involved unjustified additional expense and could in any case serve only as a temporary remedy. The Chief Editor of the Yearbook should therefore be invited to explain to the Committee why delays had arisen and what other possible measures could be taken to solve the problem. ACABQ was correct when it said that the problem was the low priority which departments gave to the preparation of Yearbook material (A/31/8/Add.1, para. 8), and the solution therefore lay in administrative measures and internal reorganization. He could not support the Secretary-General's recommendations.

4. Mr. KIVANC (Turkey) said that the Fifth Committee should review all OPI activities to be undertaken during the biennium 1977-1978 before examining the Secretary-General's budget proposals. The Committee's views would then serve as guidelines for the Secretary-General.

5. The major aims of the United Nations public information system were to raise public awareness and mobilize world opinion. Highest priority should therefore be given to strengthening the United Nations information centres system. To that end, he endorsed the measures referred to in paragraph 22 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/31/14), particularly since those measures would not involve any budgetary increases (A/31/8/Add.2, para. 4). He expressed concern over the problems referred to in paragraph 24 of the Secretary-General's report and said

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(Mr. Kivanc, Turkey)

that he awaited the Secretary-General's budget proposals for the next biennium with interest.

6. The information centre at Ankara was working satisfactorily and, in general, existing information centres should be maintained. However, he favoured a well-planned and financially well-balanced programme to increase the number of information centres rather than a consolidation of existing ones. Accordingly, Member States and the United Nations system as a whole should increase their contribution to the information centres system.

7. With respect to the Yearbook of the United Nations, the delay in publication could be solved largely by means of managerial and administrative measures. He therefore supported the recommendation of ACABQ, as contained in paragraph 13 of its report (A/31/8/Add.1).

8. Mr. BALUCH (Pakistan) said that the Yearbook of the United Nations was an indispensable reference work. Unfortunately, the late publication of the Yearbook meant that its potential was only partially realized in the sense that its contribution to policy-making was diminished. In his report (A/C.5/31/12), the Secretary-General had explained the delays in publication by pointing to the growth in United Nations activities and the problems faced by substantive departments in preparing the Yearbook while preparing official reports for legislative bodies. However, the growth in United Nations activities had been accompanied by a corresponding increase in staff. Furthermore, many of the reports for the Yearbook were completed by the end of the General Assembly session. If each department approached the task of preparing material for the Yearbook seriously, the problem would be half solved. There was no reason why the preparation of new reports should be incompatible with the preparation of the Yearbook.

9. The real problem, as recognized by ACABQ (A/31/8/Add.1, para. 8), lay in the low priority accorded to the Yearbook by the Secretariat; he therefore supported the recommendations of CPC that high priority be given to the preparation of the Yearbook, so that it could be ready within a year after the regular session of the General Assembly, without prejudice to its quality and its objectivity (A/31/38, para. 51). He also agreed with ACABQ as to the questionable utility of a Yearbook Production Advisory Group (A/31/8/Add.1, para. 9). However, the idea that senior officials be appointed as liaison officers to work with the Chief Editor of the Yearbook (A/C.5/31/12, para. 5) was a good one. Contributions must be submitted on time but, more important, they must be of a suitably high standard. With respect to the recommendations of CPC in paragraph 251 of its report (A/31/38), modern computerized methods of printing and book production should be thoroughly examined with a view to saving time and money. The Administrative Management Service and the Electronic Data Processing and Information System Service at Headquarters should be consulted in that respect. In general, AMS should have been consulted on all aspects of the Yearbook.

10. With respect to the financial implications of the Secretary-General's recommendations, he supported the recommendations of ACABQ as contained in paragraph 13 of its report (A/31/8/Add.1) and orally revised by the Chairman of ACABQ (A/C.5/31/SR.10, para. 6). He was confident that the Secretary-General would use the funds for the full implementation of General Assembly decisions.

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(Mr. Baluch, Pakistan)

In conclusion, he expressed his appreciation to the Chief Editor of the Yearbook and his staff.

11. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), referring to the United Nations information centres system, said that both the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/31/14) and that of ACABQ (A/31/8/Add.2) were completely satisfactory. It should be emphasized that information centre directors must give their undivided attention to the dissemination of information about the United Nations and must not act as the representatives of either the Organization or the Secretary-General; centre directors could not be made responsible for functions normally entrusted to diplomatic missions. It was also important to co-ordinate information activities within the United Nations system as a whole, and in cases where there were several information centres belonging to different agencies in the same town, those centres should, if possible, be integrated.

12. As for the Yearbook of the United Nations, the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/31/12) provided no valid explanation for the delays in the publication of the Yearbook. The Secretary-General should therefore provide further information on the subject. Furthermore, the Secretary-General did not explain what alternative recommendations had been explored. He claimed that the delays had been caused by the growing volume of United Nations activities (A/C.5/31/12, para. 3), but many States with fewer resources at their disposal managed to publish a yearbook without any great delay. The real reason for the delays was that substantive departments submitted texts of poor quality because of their lack of interest in the Yearbook. He therefore supported the recommendations in paragraph 12 of the ACABQ report (A/31/8/Add.1). The Yearbook should be ready 10 months after the end of the regular session of the General Assembly, so that it could be used for the following session. Despite the importance he attached to the Yearbook, he could not support the budgetary palliatives proposed by the Secretary-General and ACABQ.

13. Mr. MATHIAS (India) said that an effective and responsive United Nations information system was extremely important, especially since there was currently disillusionment with the Organization in the industrialized countries and a particularly negative impression of its work was often encouraged by the mass media. OPI should dispel that disillusionment by stressing the role of the Organization as the sole meeting ground for all countries, its aims and mode of functioning, and its real achievements.

14. The work of the United Nations information centre in each country would depend on the cultural background of the people and the prevalent attitude towards the United Nations. Therefore it was important that more information offices be opened to cover all major languages and culture groups in the world. At present, information material was published only in the six official languages of the United Nations and more money was necessary for centres in countries where other languages were spoken. Also, OPI releases did not always give enough importance to statements by representatives of developing countries.

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(Mr. Mathias, India)

15. He endorsed the ideas in paragraphs 27 and 28 of the Secretary-General's report, concerning the need for voluntary contributions by Member States for maintenance of local centres. It was heartening that many countries were prepared to pay a substantial part of centre expenses, and it was to be hoped that countries would at least provide free offices for centres. OPI should perhaps approach those foundations which had shown interest in the work of the United Nations, and flag days and similar activities could also be organized in every country to raise money for the local information centre.

16. While it was economical for several United Nations bodies, including the information centre, to share accommodation, he supported the caution in paragraph 6 (d) (i) of the Secretary-General's report that, wherever possible, the post of centre director should not be combined with that of resident representative. He agreed that the staff of information centres should give their undivided attention to the dissemination of information and the building of public support for United Nations activities.

17. While centre directors must have a "thorough knowledge of United Nations affairs" (A/C.5/31/15, para. 81 (a) (i)), it was clearly also essential for them to have thorough knowledge of the conditions, mentality and culture of the people among whom they would work. With reference to the grade of the information centre director, the report showed that not one director in the developing countries ranked higher than P-5. That fact spoke for itself. The weaknesses displayed by at least some United Nations information centres could be partially explained by the fact that the need to appoint directors with the qualifications he had mentioned was not always borne in mind. For example, centre directors did not always establish sufficiently close contacts with educators and non-governmental voluntary organizations. Directors should make greater efforts to establish close relations with persons and organizations concerned with education, and offer them documentation, posters and films. The staff of information centres should take the initiative in contacting those various groups, in offering them information and materials and suggesting how best they might be used. They should offer to give lectures or participate in meetings so as to put forward the United Nations point of view. Where staff limitations restricted that approach, the centre could use the goodwill and expertise of local persons well acquainted with and committed to the United Nations system.

18. The information centres should make greater use of television and radio in every country, as those were the most powerful media for reaching great masses of people who would be untouched by the printed word. Both national and private broadcasting systems would probably welcome well-produced programmes on the United Nations, its aims, achievements and failures, the reasons for the latter, and the future role of the Organization.

19. Four aspects of the United Nations and its work needed to be particularly stressed. The first was how the new international economic order was to be established and the benefit which would accrue from it to all nations. Acceptance of the new order was perhaps the most important aspect of the United Nations work

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(Mr. Mathias, India)

in the next quarter of a century and its future credibility would largely depend on the success or failure in promoting the new order. Publicity among the peoples in the developed countries was more important, so that they would see the new order not as a threat to their own economic future and standard of living but as a means of offering a human standard of living to hundreds of millions and of producing peace and prosperity for all.

20. Secondly, the fight against apartheid and racial discrimination needed to be widely publicized in all nations, especially those whose people tended to take the matter less seriously and whose Governments sustained racist régimes indirectly. The primitive inhumanity and barbarism of those régimes had to be vividly brought home. Visual and written publicity material should be produced and widely distributed. OPI had produced two excellent pamphlets on the human reality of apartheid. Wide distribution of those pamphlets and of documentary films on the subject would be a major step by the United Nations towards fulfilling its mandate to promote the struggle against racial discrimination and apartheid, particularly during the current decade of action against those heinous crimes.

21. The third aspect was the question of disarmament. OPI should stress the amount of money spent on arms, compared with the pitiable sums spent on development.

22. Fourthly, vacancies in the Secretariat at various levels and the qualifications required to fill them should be widely publicized in all countries. That was particularly important in view of the opinions expressed by many delegations in the Committee that developing countries, and even some developed ones, were not getting their fair share of United Nations posts, chiefly at decision-making levels.

23. Feedback and evaluation were vitally important. The need to develop an efficient system by which the impact of information centres on the people was periodically measured was of paramount importance. Only thus could the work of the centres be geared to real needs.

24. Finally, with reference to the Yearbook, the delay of two to three years was regrettable and meant that the Yearbook lost most of its value. The reason for the delay was not lack of finance; the Secretariat must give higher priority to the publication. The Secretary-General's promise to publish with a delay of 18 months was not good enough, and the delay should be only six months. More personnel resources should be allocated for two years to eliminate the backlog and begin timely publication of the Yearbook.

25. Mr. VOLPE (Venezuela) paid a tribute to the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information for his review of the United Nations information centres system.

26. The United Nations had a fundamental responsibility to keep the general public informed of its activities in all areas, particularly with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security and the new thinking on social and economic structures.

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(Mr. Volpe, Venezuela)

27. His delegation supported by and large the statements made by previous speakers. It congratulated OPI on its success in expanding its activities through the creation of a larger number of centres, despite budgetary and administrative constraints. It supported the views expressed by the Secretary-General concerning measures to bring about greater efficiency, speed, competence and co-ordination in the information system, and welcomed the innovation of meetings of centre directors. It had also noted with appreciation that OPI, since the end of 1972, had made a special effort to recruit personnel specialized in information, achieve equitable geographical distribution, and provide greater opportunities for women staff.

28. With respect to paragraph 28 of the Secretary-General's report, his delegation would have liked more information on the various services and facilities supplied by the host countries to information centres such as, for example, whether the industrialized countries provided rent-free premises. It supported the view that the Secretary-General should consider giving wider publicity to the reports prepared by the centres. In conclusion, he agreed with the Advisory Committee that views concerning additional resources for OPI should be expressed the following year.

29. Ms. TROTTER (New Zealand) said that the detailed review of the United Nations information centres system had been a worth-while exercise, and the Secretary-General's current report gave a clear picture of OPI field operations.

30. Her delegation supported the findings of the Advisory Committee, and in particular endorsed the view that the function of the directors of the centres was to give their undivided attention to the dissemination of information about the United Nations rather than to act as representatives of the Organization. It was pleased to note that the measures being taken to improve the effectiveness of the system would not involve any budgetary increases.

31. The efforts being made to co-ordinate information activities between the centres and the field offices of other international organizations were of special interest to her delegation. There was considerable scope for rationalizing and centralizing information activities, at least at the regional level. In that connexion, she requested a progress report on the study being conducted by the Joint United Nations Information Committee concerning the possible consolidation of regional or field information services of individual organizations into a single information centre for the whole system.

32. With regard to the Yearbook of the United Nations, she said that the Secretary-General's report was disappointing and did not respond fully to the request made by the General Assembly at its thirtieth session that the Secretary-General should "explore ways and means of ensuring a more timely production of the Yearbook". Her delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that higher priority should be given to the preparation of the Yearbook rather than creating new mechanisms. It also agreed with the representative of Italy that contributing departments should write their submissions immediately after the event so that

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(Ms. Trotter, New Zealand)

the Yearbook could appear within 12 months. Indeed, if it did not prove possible to produce the Yearbook on time within the existing resources, she questioned whether its publication should in fact be continued.

33. Mr. BOUAYAD AGHA (Algeria) said that the effectiveness of the United Nations depended on the extent to which the public was conversant with its aims and activities. Thus, his delegation had welcomed the Secretary-General's intention, as announced in 1972, to give the highest priority to the reinforcement of public information activities outside Headquarters. He commended the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information on the excellent results obtained.

34. The interesting report prepared by the Secretary-General gave a clear picture of the activities of the information centres and advanced the conclusion that the centres should be further strengthened in order to increase their effectiveness. Like ACABQ, his delegation considered that the function of the directors of information centres was to disseminate information about the United Nations rather than to act as the representatives of the Organization, and that accordingly the level of their post was not of vital concern. In his report, the Secretary-General had described in detail the functions and qualifications of the OPI field establishment but had given no information on the background of the directors. Yet the reinforcement of the centres could be achieved only by ensuring the competence of the directors and their ability to co-operate closely with national information services.

35. His delegation was less concerned than previously about the way in which the press of one country was influencing its public by providing a distorted picture of the United Nations.

36. The efforts being made by the Secretary-General to increase the effectiveness of the system were very welcome. With respect to the additional resources that the Secretary-General was seeking for that purpose, he asked for more information as to how Member States should make their extrabudgetary contributions.

37. OPI had done a commendable job in publicizing recent United Nations decisions concerning apartheid and the new international economic order. He trusted that they would disseminate as thoroughly any relevant information concerning the Water Conference and the Conference on Science and Technology for Development.

38. With regard to the Yearbook of the United Nations, he said that the problem of backlog should be resolved by reorganizing the Yearbook Unit. The solution of recruiting extra personnel was simply an easy way out and did not tackle the root of the problem. The Secretary-General should issue firm instructions to submitting departments and units with the object of inducing them to present well-drafted texts for the Yearbook in good time. As the report of ACABQ indicated, the Secretary-General's recommendations on the subject were simply palliatives and did not go far enough.

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Emoluments of the members of the International Court of Justice (A/31/8/Add.3; and A/C.5/31/13) (continued)

39. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that the problem of the emoluments of judges had been complicated in the past by an exaggerated concern to preserve their sui generis nature in conformity with the judges' functions. Because of the wish to avoid a formula resembling that used for determining the salaries of United Nations officials, it had been necessary in the past to conduct far too frequent reviews of those emoluments.

40. His delegation considered that the basic salary of \$50,000 net, determined by the Assembly in 1975, was sufficient to attract candidates of a high calibre and to guarantee their independence. The proposed cost-of-living adjustment would protect the judges' salaries from the effects of inflation and fluctuations in exchange rates. In view of the fact that the President of the Court spent the entire year and the other judges spent six months in The Hague, his delegation would have preferred method D for adjusting their salaries rather than method H, as favoured by the Advisory Committee. Nevertheless, it could support the draft resolution in the annex to the Advisory Committee's report. In conclusion, he commended the thoroughness with which the Secretary-General's report had been prepared.

41. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) commended the Secretary-General for presenting the Committee with a number of options for adjusting the emoluments of the members of the International Court of Justice. His delegation had never seen the point of stressing the sui generis nature of the judges' emoluments. The Secretary-General's recommendation concerning the use of the APA index (A/C.5/31/13, para. 26) had perhaps been dictated by an exaggerated concern that the index applied to the salaries of all other international civil servants, namely, WAPA, should not be applied to the judges' emoluments. His delegation could, nevertheless, go along with the recommendation of ACABQ, since it would result in a minimum adjustment of base salaries and because all other salaries in the United Nations system were subject to some form of adjustment.

42. The Secretary-General had made an attempt in paragraphs 12 and 13 of his report to suggest possible criteria for a subsequent review of the judges' base salaries, and his delegation was glad that ACABQ had accepted those suggestions. In that connexion, he pointed out that in the Federal Republic of Germany the salaries of the highest judges were assimilated to those of the highest government officials. That practice was in no way seen as undermining the independence of the judges.

43. Mr. McCREIDIE (Australia), stressing the importance of ensuring that salaries of members of the International Court of Justice were set at a level corresponding to the dignity of the Court, said that his delegation supported the concept of a review every five years of salaries and statutory allowances and compensation, as recommended by ACABQ.

44. His delegation believed that tying the judges' emoluments too closely to cost-of-living indices did not contribute to the standing of the Court. It would be preferable to make adjustments only as a result of substantial changes in circumstances. The salaries themselves were set, and should continue to be set, at

(Mr. McCredie, Australia)

a level which provided reasonable cushioning. At the same time, the factor of inflation should not be ignored for as long a period as five years. There was a need to institute a fair system, which would not, however, be a micro-system of interim adjustment. The Secretary-General's proposal for adjustment verged on being such a micro-system and the proposal in paragraph 17 of the ACABQ report might under some indices cross the margin. While his delegation could accept the 5 per cent threshold proposed by the Secretary-General, should there be a consensus of the Committee in support of it, it would prefer to authorize adjustments only when the 10 per cent threshold, either way, had been reached. It did not believe that hardship would be entailed under such a determination.

45. Finally, for the sake of simplicity and because all judges spent an appreciable part of the year in The Hague, there were some advantages in adopting The Hague post adjustment index as the basis of cost-of-living adjustments. His delegation could, however, accept the alternative proposal contained in paragraph 17 of the ACABQ report.

46. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that the sui generis nature of the judges' emoluments would not be compromised by taking measures to preserve their real purchasing power. An adjustment of the emoluments of the members of the Court would moreover, be consistent with Article 32 of its Statute.

47. His delegation concurred with the observations and conclusions of the Advisory Committee and with its recommendation that the cost-of-living adjustment should be a function of annual salary only. It also supported the view that an index reflecting world-wide movements in prices, using the simple arithmetic average of post adjustment, would be more appropriate than the Netherlands CPI. The members of the Court were entitled to have greater freedom to choose where to spend their annual leave and sick leave. The proposed 5 per cent upward or downward adjustment was reasonable as a supplementary payment. It was the understanding of his delegation that pension benefits of the members of the Court would be calculated on the basis of base salary only and would not include such cost-of-living supplements as might be provided.

48. His delegation would support the draft resolution recommended by the Advisory Committee; it proposed, however, the addition of the following new third preambular paragraph: "Taking into account the views expressed by members of the Fifth Committee,". That paragraph should be added because many of the views expressed in the Committee's debate at the current session were worth taking into account in any future reviews of the emoluments of members of the Court. His delegation also proposed the insertion of the word "periodic" before the word "review" in paragraph 3.

49. Mr. KRUMIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/31/13) were unacceptable. In the preceding five years, the judges' salaries had risen from \$30,000 to \$50,000 per annum, an increase of almost 70 per cent, and the most recent increase had taken place on 1 January 1976. There was therefore no justification for any further increases. He could not agree with the practice of equating the salaries of judges with those of senior Secretariat officials (A/C.5/31/13, paras. 12-13), since it was

incompatible with the opinion of ACABQ that there should be no direct and automatic link between the emoluments of judges and those of senior Secretariat officials. It should be remembered that judges did not contribute to the pension fund and their salary was not taxed. A comparison between the salaries of judges and those of senior Secretariat officials showed that judges' salaries were significantly higher. The argument that judges' salaries must be increased in order to attract highly-qualified candidates was therefore invalid, since judges' salaries were already high enough; when members of the Court were being elected, there were always more candidates than vacancies. The Secretary-General's recommendation that he be given the authority to adjust the salaries of members of the International Court of Justice annually (A/C.5/31/13, paras. 26-27) was inconsistent with Article 32 of the Statute of the Court according to which salaries of judges were to be fixed by the General Assembly. His delegation could not, therefore, support the recommendations of the Secretary-General.

50. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that one of the main principles of his Government's foreign policy was respect for the International Court of Justice and for the rule of law which the Court upheld. His delegation therefore did not believe that the judges' emoluments should be allowed to become a matter of controversy and, although not fully satisfied with the draft resolution in document A/31/8/Add.3, would readily join in any consensus to adopt it.

51. Referring to the summary of past reviews of the emoluments of the members of the Court contained in the annex to the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/31/13), he noted that the Fifth Committee had at the sixteenth session expressed the view that judicial salaries should not be subject to frequent reviews. The Fifth Committee's concern in taking that position had been to safeguard the dignity of the judges by preserving the purchasing power of their emoluments. Ironically, in 1972 the Advisory Committee had invoked the Fifth Committee's view to prevent the General Assembly from taking adequate measures to protect the purchasing power of the judges' salaries.

52. His delegation could not entirely concur in the recommendation to adopt method H for adjusting the judges' salaries. It noted that of the eight possible methods, that method would yield the smallest increase in net salary. His delegation therefore preferred method A, as it fully agreed that the WAPA index should not be applied to the judges' emoluments. Moreover, his delegation could not accept the assumption that the judges would not spend their entire salary at The Hague. The Court was developing into a major centre for research on international law and it was also to be hoped that the number of cases brought before the Court would increase in future: such developments would mean that the judges would be spending more time at The Hague.

53. With regard to the application of the Noblemaire principle to the salaries of the judges, his delegation believed that the sui generis character of their functions made it wrong to compare their salaries with those of judges in national judiciaries.

54. As to the relationship between the judges' emoluments and public support for the Court, his delegation believed that that support would depend on the substantive

(Mr. Stoforopoulos, Greece)

work of the Court itself, which in turn depended on the attitude of States towards the Court.

AGENDA ITEM 102: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

(a) COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/31/154 and Corr.1) (continued)

55. The CHAIRMAN said that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Barbados would make a statement on agenda item 102 (a).

56. Mr. FORDE (Barbados) said that he was very concerned to note that no Barbadian, and indeed no person from the Caribbean and few from the developing countries, had been appointed to senior posts in the Secretariat. Moreover, there appeared to be discrimination against young people and women at that level.

57. He had noticed from section III D of the Secretary-General's report that as many as 30 per cent of the nationals of some countries would reach retirement age during the next few years, and he urged the Secretary-General to seize that opportunity to recruit young qualified personnel from the regions which were grossly underrepresented or not represented at all in the Secretariat. The current system as it related to young people was neither sound nor fair. The belief that youth must enter at the lower level of the Professional grade was unenlightened, as was the requirement that the young applicant should have a Ph.D. degree together with some 10 years of professional experience. That system discriminated against young people who were competent to do the job. In Barbados, and indeed in many of the Caribbean countries, young people had proved their ability to perform important and vital duties in both government and business sectors. The Organization could not afford to lose the skills and talents of young people, which had been developed in response to the changing needs and new demands of the twentieth century.

58. The question of the employment of women in the Secretariat, especially in senior and policy-making posts, was of great concern to his Government. Barbados strongly supported any move to achieve the full integration of women in the over-all policy-making process of the Organization. The fact that no substantial improvement had been made in redressing the balance between men and women in the Secretariat at the Professional and senior levels was disturbing. His delegation would like to know whether the number of women employed at the senior level had increased above 12 since the end of 1975. It would also like to know what recommendations had been made on the question of the equality of men and women in the Secretariat by the JAC Standing Committee on the Employment of Women and which of those recommendations had been accepted. Although the plans of the Secretary-General to improve career development and training and conditions of service for women were commendable, good intentions were not enough; positive and swift action must be taken to eliminate discrimination.

(Mr. Forde, Barbados)

59. With respect to the Secretariat staff as a whole, the Secretary-General did not yet appear to have developed any sound and equitable system of recruiting personnel or to have improved the current system, which was still weighted heavily in favour of the countries of Western Europe and North America. He would like to know what criteria were used for the recruitment of General Service staff, bearing in mind the Secretary-General's proposal at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly that General Service staff should be recruited outside New York and his own delegation's inquiry at the same session as to whether they could be recruited not only from the United States but also from nearby English-speaking countries. Was it a fact that one requirement was that the applicant should have a valid United States visa if he was in New York? A situation in which nationals from Caribbean countries were refused employment with the United Nations simply because their visas were invalid or would expire before action could be taken on their applications was both anomalous and iniquitous. The United Nations did not and should not function as an arm of the United States Immigration Service. The question whether a prospective employee had a valid United States visa should be considered only after the applicant had been interviewed, considered competent and offered a post. His delegation wondered how many promising and highly qualified persons had been denied the chance to serve the Organization owing to the visa requirement.

60. The question of promotion within the Secretariat was another area of concern. He must again emphasize that plans for remedying the situation were not enough; positive and urgent action was required so that high productivity could be maintained through a swift response to the legitimate grievances of the staff.

61. With respect to section III of the Secretary-General's report, he said that his Government firmly believed in the principle of equitable geographical distribution and was prepared to support any criteria in conformity with that principle. It could accept the Secretary-General's proposed new method of establishing the desirable ranges of Member States in so far as it was more flexible and simpler. However, it could not accept some of the criteria for the weights assigned to the factors of population, membership and contribution. As had already been pointed out by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, there was an acute need to redress the gross imbalance between the membership and the contribution factors. No justification had been provided for the weight given to the contribution factor in the past, and the idea that that factor should be limited to 50 per cent was a reasonable one. His delegation could not support the contention that the more a country contributed, the greater should be its representation in the Secretariat. Despite the vehement arguments advanced by the United States delegation in rejection of the Secretary-General's proposal to make a very small increase in the desirable range of posts for Member States with a minimum assessment, it was not difficult to understand the reason for the burning desire on the part of small countries to have an increase in their range of posts. The desirable ranges of Professional posts to be filled by nationals from Eastern Europe, Western Europe, North America and Japan was nearly 70 per cent of all Professional posts, while the actual posts held constituted 64.1 per cent of the total. That left a relatively small percentage of posts for the large number of developing countries, including

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(Mr. Forde, Barbados)

Romania. A more pertinent question therefore was why the Secretary-General had not maintained the proposal he had made at the thirtieth session for a desirable range of 2 to 8. Even that range was too low. He agreed with the representative of Trinidad and Tobago that every Member State should be entitled to 12 Professional staff members in the Secretariat.

62. An examination of the composition of the senior staff in the Secretariat revealed a glaring disproportion of staff recruited from the developed countries as against those recruited from the developing countries. 52.9 per cent of such posts were held by nationals from the developed market-economy countries, and the others were distributed among nationals from the African, Asian, Latin American and Eastern European regions. Tables 5 and 8 in the annex to the Secretary-General's report revealed an intolerable situation. Twenty-nine of the senior posts were filled by nationals of 21 Latin American countries, 90 were distributed among 18 Western European countries, and 61 were filled by nationals of the 8 countries that formed the North American and Caribbean region, meaning that 151 posts were held by nationals of only 26 countries. As to the posts for the North American and Caribbean region, none were held by a national of the Caribbean countries. Yet there were competent and highly-qualified persons from the Caribbean region, some of whom had actually applied to the Organization, who could fill some of those senior positions. The present unsatisfactory situation raised two important issues, namely, the need to increase the number of persons from developing countries in senior posts, and the principle that senior posts should not be considered the exclusive preserve of any nationality or any small group of countries. As the representative of Trinidad and Tobago had rightly pointed out, it was absolutely essential to reflect the cultural perceptions of the developing countries as inputs in the policy-making of the Organization. The provisions of General Assembly resolution 3417 A (XXX) should therefore be fully implemented. In that connexion, his delegation would like to receive answers to the questions posed by the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago on the implementation of that resolution. In particular, he would like information on the specific personnel policies and practices applied in evaluating candidates from developing countries; the breakdown of separations from senior posts since the twenty-ninth session of the Assembly and their replacements by nationality; the number of nationals of developing countries who had been placed on the short list for such posts; the number of vacancies which actually had been advertised in developing countries prior to the selection process; the number of posts that would become vacant in the next 12 months as a result of retirement and expiration of contracts; and how many of the appointments to the 10 senior posts that had been filled over the past year had been made without prior advertising.

63. The Government of Barbados would like to see the introduction of a system in which it and all other developing countries which were unrepresented or underrepresented at the senior level would be systematically notified of all impending vacancies and consulted about the possibility of presenting candidates.

64. In future reports, his delegation would like the Secretary-General to provide a separate table similar to table 5 in the annex, which would show the distribution of staff in senior posts by nationality alone.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.