UNITED NATIONS

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONTRIBUTIONS



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: FIFTH SESSION SUPPLEMENT No. 13 (A/1330)

Lake Success, New York
1950

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NOTE

All United Nations documents are designated by symbols, i.e., capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

I. MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS

1. The Committee met at Lake Success from 7 to 18 August 1950. The following members were present:

Mr. Rafik Asha

Mr. H. CAMPION

Mr. R. CHARRON

Mr. Kan Lee

Mr. Josué Saenz

Mr. Mitchell W. Sharp Miss M. Z. N. WITTEVEEN

- 2. Mr. Seymour Jacklin and Mr. Frank Pace, who are members of the Committee, were unable to attend.
- They designated Mr. B. G. Fourie and Mr. S. McKee Rosen, respectively, to represent them. The Committee accepted these designations and the two substitute members participated in the work of the Committee throughout the session.
- 3. Mr. P. M. Chernyshev, who is also a member of the Committee, did not attend its meetings.
- 4. The Committee re-elected Miss M. Z. N. Witteveen as Chairman and Mr. Josué Saenz as Vice-Chairman.

II. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 5. The General Assembly resolved on 20 October 1949 (resolution 343 (IV)):
- "That, notwithstanding the provisions of rule 149 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations shall be reviewed by the Committee on Contributions in 1950 and a report submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly

at its next regular session".

6. In reviewing the scale of assessments, the Committee was guided by its original terms of reference laid down by resolution 14 A, 3 (I) of 13 February 1946 and by the further directives given to it by the General Assembly in resolution 238 A (III) of 18 November 1948. These terms of reference and instructions are set out in the annex attached to this report.

III. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 7. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the number of countries for which up-to-date official national income estimates are made available has increased, and that for other countries the basic economic statistics have been improved. Nevertheless, there are a number of Member States for which the Statistical Office of the United Nations had to base its estimates on inadequate information. Therefore, in using the statistical material provided by the Secretariat, the Committee had to take into account the varying reliability and accuracy of the statistics presented for the various Member States.
- 8. The Committee again expresses the hope that Member States for which detailed data are not yet available will find it possible to provide fuller statistical information and thus assist the Committee in its task of removing maladjustments in the scale of assessments.
 - 9. When comparing national incomes of different

countries, the Committee found itself faced again with the difficult problem of converting the figures expressed in national currencies into a common unit, namely, the United States dollar. In previous years, the prevailing official exchange rates could not be used for this purpose in every case. Therefore, where appropriate, account was taken of the change in the internal purchasing power of the currency compared with the United States dollar. Following the realignment of national currencies in September 1949, carried out with the approval of the International Monetary Fund, the new exchange rates may be expected to correspond more closely to equilibrium rates. On the other hand, the effects of the recent devaluations have probably not yet had time to work themselves out fully in terms of prices and incomes. Under these circumstances, the Committee found it advisable, when comparing national incomes, to make calculations on alternative assumptions as to the appropriate rates of conversion.

IV. SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS

- 10. In view of the improvement in the statistics available and the intensive examination of the statistics made by the Committee in earlier years and at the present session, the Committee decided that, this year, progress could be made towards removing maladjustments in the scale of assessments. Some of these maladjustments have arisen because of changes in the relative capacity to pay of the various countries since the scale was originally determined; other maladjustments were inherent in the original scale. The Committee recognized that many countries are still experiencing difficulties in securing foreign exchange, in particular, United States dollars and Swiss francs.
- 11. The Committee feels that in recommending changes it should move cautiously and gradually. As already pointed out, the basic economic data for some countries are still inadequate and there can be differences of opinion as to the appropriate rates for converting estimates of national incomes into a common currency. Under these circumstances the Committee considers that it should propose changes only where it is fully satisfied that the changes are justified by the available evidence.
- 12. As a working rule, therefore, the Committee agreed, in this as in previous years, that generally no change either upwards or downwards of more than 10 per cent in any one year should be proposed in the percentage contribution of any country. The maximum percentage change was applied to those countries the existing rates of contributions of which appear to differ most from an assessment based on relative national income and other relevant factors.
- 13. When the Committee submitted, for the first time, a scale of assessments in October 1946 (A/80) it had made "judgments as to the extent to which the capacity to pay of countries which had suffered from the war had been reduced". The Committee at that time envisaged that before the end of the period 1946-1948 for which the scale was intended to apply, it could be hoped "that the distortions in national economies produced by the war will have greatly diminished and that revised estimates can then be worked out on a firmer statistical basis". While full information about the extent of recovery since 1946 from "temporary dislocations of national economies arising out of the Second World War" is not available to the Committee, official statements as well as other information appeared sufficient to justify at least the changes proposed for the coming year in the assessments of such countries.
- 14. Accordingly, the Committee recommends changes in the rates of contributions of the nineteen countries shown in the following table. Cases requiring special consideration in terms of General Assembly requests and resolutions are dealt with in paragraphs 16, 17 and 19.

 1950 Recommended rate

		of contribution	
C		for 1951	Change
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
Afghanistan	. 0.05	0.06	+ 0.01
Australia		1.92	— 0.05
Byelorussian Soviet So cialist Republic		0.24	+ 0.02

	1950 Re	commended rate	
	Rate of	of contribution	
	contribution	for 1951	Change
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
Canada	3.20	3.30	+ 0.10
Chile	0.45	0.41	0.04
Cuba	0,29	0.31	+ 0.02
Czechoslovakia	0.90	0.99	+ 0.09
Egypt	0.79	0.71	- 0.08
Greece	0.17	0.18	+ 0.01
Guatemala	0.05	0.06	+ 0.01
India	3.25	3.41	+ 0.16
Netherlands	1.40	1.35	0.05
Pakistan	0.70	0.74	+ 0.04
Poland	0.95	1.05	+ 0.10
Syria	0.12	0.11	- 0.01
Thailand	0.27	0.24	- 0.03
Ukrainian Soviet Sociali	.s t		-100
Republic	0.84	0.92	+ 0.08
Union of South Africa	1.12	1.04	- 0.08
Union of Soviet Sociali	st		2.00
Republics	6.34	6.98	+ 0.64
Venezuela	0.27	0.30	+ 0.03
Yugoslavia	0.33	0.36	+ 0.03
			. 0.00

- 15. The results of the adjustments shown above leave a balance of + 1.00 per cent.
- 16. Sweden. The Committee again considered the contribution of Sweden in the light of economic conditions and the application of the limitation on the per capita contribution of any Member, and recommends a further reduction in the rate of contribution of Sweden from 1.98 to 1.85 per cent. This reduction of 0.13 per cent would bring down the per capita contribution of Sweden close to that of the largest contributor.
- 17. United States of America. Last year the Committee proposed a reduction of 0.10 in the percentage contribution of the United States of America as "a first step in implementing the decision of the General Assembly and the instructions given by the Assembly to the Committee on Contributions". Neither the discussions in the General Assembly nor its resolution 238 (III) indicate the amount of reduction which should be made in any one year in the contribution of the United States of America. The Committee, however, understands that it is directed to take a further step in implementing this resolution. Accordingly the Committee recommends that the balance of increases over decreases in the changes proposed above to be used to reduce the assessment for the United States of America from 39.79 to 38.92 per cent, a reduction of 0.87 per cent.
- 18. It should not be assumed that in making this recommendation the Committee adopted as a working rule for the future that the balance of any revisions made in the contributions of Member States should automatically be used to reduce the contribution of the larger contributor: the assessments of other countries, including other large contributors, will also require careful re-examination.
- 19. Israel. At the request of the General Assembly, the Committee subjected the assessment of Israel to a particularly thorough review. In the light of the available information it came to the conclusion that no change should be recommended.

20. The Committee recommends the following scale of assessments, to be applied for one year only:

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR 1731	SCALE	OF	ASSESSMENTS	FOR	1951
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SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR 1951	
Country	Per cent
Afghanistan	
Argentina	. 1.85
Australia	. 1.92
Belgium	. 1.35
Bolivia	. 0.08
Brazil	. 1.85
Burma	
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	. 0.24
Canada	. 3.30
Chile	. 0.41
China	
Colombia	
Costa Rica	
Cuba	
Czechoslovakia	
Denmark	
Dominican Republic	
Ecuador	
Egypt	
El Salvador	
Ethiopia	
France	
Greece	
Guatemala	
Haiti	
Honduras	
Iceland	
India	
Iran	0.45

Country	Per cent
Iraq	0.17
Israel	0.12
Lebanon	
Liberia	0.04
Luxembourg	0.05
Mexico	
Netherlands	1.35
New Zealand	
Nicaragua	0.04
Norway	0.50
Pakistan	0.74
Panama	
Paraguay	0.04
Peru	
Philippines	
Poland	
Saudi Arabia	
Sweden	
Syria	
Thailand	
Turkey	0.91
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	
Union of South Africa	1.04
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	6.98
United Kingdom of Great Britain	
and Northern Ireland	
United States of America	
Uruguay	
Venezuela	
Yemen	~ ~ ~ ~
Yugoslavia	0.36
Тотаг	. 100.00

V. SCALES OF CONTRIBUTIONS OF SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

21. On 24 November 1949, the General Assembly adopted the following resolution (311 B (IV)):

"The General Assembly,

"Believing that there is room for closer relationship between the assessments of Member States in the contributions both of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies,

- "1. Recognizes that, to the extent that the contributions of members of the specialized agencies are assessed in accordance with principles similar to those on which the contributions of Members of the United Nations are based, it is desirable that the same data should be utilized for the assessment of those contributions:
- "2. Authorizes the Committee on Contributions to recommend or advise on the scale of contributions for a specialized agency if requested by that agency to do so;
- "3. Requests the Secretary-General to inform each agency that the Committee is available to perform this service."
 - 22. The Committee studied the procedure to be fol-

lowed in implementing this resolution and took such action as seemed appropriate in the light of the directives given previously by the General Assembly. In making recommendations or tendering advice the Committee cannot, even in an indirect way, assume responsibility for the scale of contributions of a specialized agency. Nor does the Committee believe that it should, on behalf of any specialized agency, attempt to apply principles which are not similar to those on which the contributions of Members of the United Nations are based.

- 23. Accordingly, the Committee has arranged for the basic statistical data as used by the Committee to be made available to the specialized agencies. It wishes to stress, however, that although the statistics at its disposal have become more reliable over recent years, for a number of countries they are still incomplete and inadequate. The specialized agencies should therefore be aware of the limitations of the figures which are transmitted to them.
- 24. The Committee has arranged for the Secretariat to make available to the specialized agencies upon their

request, the most up-to-date information, some of which may be confidential, on:

- (a) National income in national currencies;
- (b) National income expressed in United States dollars, specifying the various methods of conversion employed;
 - (c) Population;
 - (d) Per capita income;
- (e) Technical methods and formulae used by the Committee in applying the deduction for low per capita income;
- (f) Explanatory material on the methods used by different countries in preparing their estimates of national income, adjustments made to the published figures and notes on the reliability of the data.
- 25. With regard to those countries which are members of specialized agencies but not of the United Nations, such information concerning national income and

other statistics as are available to the Secretariat will be supplied.

26. The Committee considered a report from the Secretary-General on communications received from specialized agencies following the resolution of the General Assembly. In reply to specific requests from the Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Labour Organisation, information and data on particular points have been furnished. In the case of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, requests were received by the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions for the theoretical probable percentage for four countries which are not members of the United Nations. The Committee approved the action taken to provide this information in respect of these countries to UNESCO since members of that organization "are assessed in accordance with principles similar to those on which the contribution of Members of the United Nations are based".

VI. OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

CONTRIBUTION BY SWITZERLAND TOWARDS THE EXPENSES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

- 27. The General Assembly agreed on 20 October 1949 (resolution 343 (IV)) that Switzerland should contribute 1.65 per cent of the expenses of the International Court of Justice for the year 1950. This assessment, which is established by the General Assembly subject to consultation with the Swiss Government, was accepted for 1950, but the Swiss Government reserved its right to ask for a reduction for the following year.
- 28. In reviewing again this year the rate of contribution to be made by Switzerland towards the expenses of the International Court of Justice, the Committee took into account an official request received from the Swiss Government for a reduction of its percentage contribution to the Court and examined the supporting material submitted.
- 29. The opinion of the Committee is that if Switzerland were included in the scale of assessments for the total budget of the United Nations, a lower rate for the year 1951 would be justified. The Committee felt, however, that since the contribution by Switzerland is a proportion of only the direct expenses of the Court and not of the total direct and indirect costs, it would not be unreasonable to ask Switzerland to continue to pay an amount equivalent to 1.65 per cent of the direct expenses of the Court.
- 30. The Committee therefore recommends that Switzerland shall contribute an amount equivalent to 1.65 per cent of the expenses of the Court for 1951.

CONTRIBUTION BY THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TOWARDS THE EXPENSES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

31. Following upon the adoption by the General

Assembly, on 1 December 1949, of resolution 363 (IV), the Principality of Liechtenstein, on 29 March 1950, became a party to the Statute of the International Court of Justice. The Committee recommends that for the year 1951, the Principality of Liechtenstein shall contribute 0.04 per cent of the expenses of the Court. This assessment would be subject to consultation with the Principality of Liechtenstein.

32. For the year 1950, it is recommended that the Principality of Liechtenstein shall contribute three quarters of the assessment of 0.04 per cent to the expenses of the Court for 1950.

Percentage or unit system of assessment

33. The General Assembly resolved on 14 December 1946 (resolution 69 (I)) "that as it may be more convenient for the United Nations to adopt a unit basis of assessment in lieu of the percentage basis, the Committee on Contributions is directed to give consideration to the relative merits of each method". The Committee has in previous reports recommended that consideration of the relative merits of the unit and the percentage system of assessment should be deferred until a more permanent scale is proposed. Since the Committee now recommends that the proposed scale of assessments for 1951 be adopted for only one year, the question of a unit or percentage system has again been deferred.

COLLECTION OF CONTRIBUTIONS

- 34. The Committee had before it a report on the collection of contributions. It noted that, as at 10 August 1950, 96.40 per cent had been collected for the year 1949 and 33.07 per cent for 1950.
- 35. As no Member State is in arrears in the payment of contributions for two full years, no action was re-

quired by the Committee with respect to the application of Article 19 of the Charter.

Collection of a portion of the 1950 contributions in currencies other than United States dollars

- 36. The General Assembly resolved on 20 October 1949 (resolution 343 (IV)) "that, notwithstanding the terms of regulation 20 of the Provisional Financial Regulations, the Secretary-General shall be empowered to accept at his discretion, and after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, a portion of the contributions of Member States for the financial year 1950 in currencies other than United States dollars".
- 37. The Committee took note that, for 1950, it had been possible to accept from Member States 15 per
- cent of their 1950 contribution (excluding the provision for the Jerusalem area) in Swiss francs and 7 per cent in a group of ten currencies. This was a considerable extension of the arrangement for payment of contributions in currencies other than United States dollars compared with last year when only Swiss francs had been accepted. In view of the continuing dollar shortage in many countries the General Assembly may wish again to empower the Secretary-General to accept part of the 1951 contributions in currencies other than United States dollars.
- 38. Thirteen Member States declared their intention to make payments in one or more of the designated currencies to a total amount of \$1,365,720.
- 39. Only one Member State chose to pay in Swiss francs, to an amount of \$561,386.

ANNEX

Terms of reference of the Committee on Contributions

ORIGINAL TERMS OF REFERENCE

The original terms of reference of the Committee on Contributions are contained in chapter IX, section 2, paragraphs 13 and 14, of the report of the Preparatory Commission (PC/20) and in the report of the Fifth Committee (A/44), and were adopted at the first part of the first session of the General Assembly on 13 February 1946 (resolution 14 A, 3 (I)).

The relevant paragraphs of the report of the Preparatory Commission incorporating the amendments of the Fifth Committee are as follows:

"The apportionment of expenses

- "13. The expenses of the United Nations should be apportioned broadly according to capacity to pay. It is, however, difficult to measure such capacity merely by statistical means, and impossible to arrive at any definite formula. Comparative estimates of national income would appear prima jacie to be the fairest guide. The main factors which should be taken into account in order to prevent anomalous assessments resulting from the use of comparative estimates of national income include:
 - "(a) Comparative income per head of population;
- "(b) Temporary dislocation of national economies arising out of the second world war;
- "(c) The ability of Members to secure foreign currency.

"Two opposite tendencies should also be guarded against: some Members may desire unduly to minimize their contributions, whereas others may desire to increase them unduly for reasons of prestige. If a ceiling is imposed on contributions the ceiling should not be such as seriously to obscure the relation between a nation's contributions and its capacity to pay. The Committee should be given discretion to consider all data relevant to capacity to pay and all other pertinent

factors in arriving at its recommendations. Once a scale has been fixed by the General Assembly it should not be subjected to a general revision for at least three years or unless it is clear that there have been substantial changes in relative capacities to pay.

- "14. Other functions of the Committee would be:
- "(a) To make recommendations to the General Assembly on the contributions to be paid by new Members;
- "(b) To consider and report to the General Assembly on appeals by Members for a change of assessment; and
- "(c) To consider and report to the General Assembly on the action to be taken if Members fall into default with their contributions.

"In connexion with the latter, the Committee should advise the Assembly in regard to the application of Article 19 of the Charter."

RESOLUTION 238 A (III) ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON 18 NOVEMBER 1948

The General Assembly,

Recognizing

- (a) That in normal times no one Member State should contribute more than one-third of the ordinary expenses of the United Nations for any one year,
- (b) That in normal times the per capita contribution of any Member should not exceed the per capita contribution of the Member which bears the highest assessment,
- (c) That the Committee on Contributions needs for its work more adequate statistical data,

Accordingly

1. Reaffirms the terms of reference of the Committee on Contributions accepted by the General Assembly in its resolution of 13 February 1946 (resolution 14 A, 3 (I));

- 2. Calls upon Member States to assist the Committee on Contributions by providing the available statistics and other information essential to its work:
- 3. Accepts the principle of a ceiling to be fixed on the percentage rate of contributions of the Member State bearing the highest assessment;
- 4. Instructs the Committee on Contributions, until a more permanent scale is proposed for adoption, to recommend how additional contributions resulting from (a) admission of new Members, and (b) increases in
- the relative capacity of Members to pay, can be used to remove existing maladjustments in the present scale or otherwise used to reduce the rates of contributions of present Members;
- 5. Decides that when existing maladjustments in the present scale have been removed and a more permanent scale is proposed, as world economic conditions improve, the rate of contribution which shall be the ceiling for the highest assessment shall be fixed by the General Assembly.

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