



## General Assembly

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/C.5/39/36  
12 November 1984

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-ninth session  
FIFTH COMMITTEE  
Agenda item 109

### PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1984-1985

#### Compensation in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to service with the United Nations and health insurance for members of commissions, committees or similar bodies

##### Note by the Secretary-General

1. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 34/233, part VI, the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to promulgate amended rules governing compensation to members of commissions, committees or similar bodies in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to service with the United Nations. The rules now in effect were introduced in June 1980 (ST/SGB/103/Rev.1).
2. In paragraphs 3 and 4, respectively, of the resolution, the General Assembly also decided that the Secretary-General should (a) review the scale of compensation contained in the rules at least once every four years, in the light of inflation and currency fluctuations since the previous review, and submit appropriate recommendations in the context of his programme budget proposals for the appropriate biennium; and (b) examine the feasibility of providing insurance coverage for members of commissions, committees or similar bodies to meet the cost of medical or dental treatment of an emergency nature which becomes necessary during a period of service to the Organization but which would not be connected with a service-incurred injury, on the understanding that coverage paid for by the United Nations would be provided only to the extent that the affected person was not otherwise covered by an insurance or compensation scheme.
3. In paragraph 4 of its report on the conditions of service and compensation for officials other than Secretariat officials (A/39/7/Add.1) to the current session of the Assembly, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions makes reference to these decisions. Considering further that four years have elapsed since the last revision of the scale of compensation, the Secretary-General

submits at this time a proposal in this regard as well as information regarding the steps taken to provide insurance coverage for members of commissions, committees or similar bodies.

Compensation in the event of death, injury or illness

4. The substantive effect of the amendments adopted in 1980 was to increase the amounts, which had been in effect since March 1956, payable to survivors under article 6 (a) of the rules from \$25,000 to \$100,000 and, under article 6 (b), from a maximum of \$25,000 - the exact amount to be determined by the Secretary-General - to a fixed amount of \$50,000. The maximum compensation amount payable for permanent disfigurement or loss of function under article 7 (d) was increased from \$25,000 to \$100,000. The text of articles 6 and 7 of document ST/SGB/103/Rev.1 appears in the annex to this document.

5. The scale of compensation has been reviewed, taking into account the percentage increase in pensionable remuneration for the Professional and higher categories since June 1980. The reason for this approach is threefold:

(a) The rules contained in document ST/SGB/103/Rev.1, including the compensation schedule, were patterned along the lines of the rules currently in force for Secretariat officials (ST/SGB/Staff Rules/Appendix D/Rev.1/Amend.1);

(b) The maximum lump-sum amount payable to Secretariat officials in respect of permanent disfigurement or loss of function is calculated by reference to twice the pensionable remuneration at the P-4, step V, level;

(c) The scales of pensionable remuneration for staff in the Professional and higher categories are adjusted in the light of inflation and/or currency fluctuations.

6. On this basis and taking into account the revision of the scale of pensionable remuneration recommended by the International Civil Service Commission for implementation as of 1 January 1985, the Secretary-General seeks the authorization of the General Assembly to increase, with effect from 1 January 1985, the amounts of compensation payable under document ST/SGB/103/Rev.1 to members - or their survivors - of commissions, committees or similar bodies in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to service with the United Nations, as follows:

(a) Article 6 (a), fixed amount from \$100,000 to \$130,000;

(b) Article 6 (b), fixed amount from \$50,000 to \$65,000;

(c) Article 7 (d), maximum amount from \$100,000 to \$130,000.

7. The financial implications of the proposed changes cannot be determined, since it is not possible to estimate the number of cases which may arise in the future. In this regard, it should be noted that the last case for which compensation was paid under these rules - a lump-sum award of some \$5,000 - occurred 15 years ago. Only three other claims have been received since and those cases related only to medical expenses, the provisions for which are not affected by the changes proposed in this note.

/...

8. In accordance with the provisions of resolution 34/233, part VI, the Secretary-General proposes further that the next review of the scale of compensation should be carried out in 1988.

#### Health insurance

9. Since 1981, the Organization has made available to members of commissions, committees and similar bodies medical coverage of the type indicated by the General Assembly in resolution 34/233, part IV, under a commercial insurance policy which had been purchased for coverage of short-term conference staff. Eligibility for enrolment under this policy has been extended to members of all commissions, committees and similar bodies in respect of which the United Nations pays daily subsistence allowance or annual remuneration.

10. The medical insurance provided covers cases of an emergency nature, reimbursing 80 per cent of the cost of covered physicians' fees, medicines and tests and 100 per cent of hospitalization costs for semi-private accommodation. The premium cost is \$0.83 per day in New York and \$0.55 elsewhere. The full premium cost is paid by the members of commissions. Coverage is provided on the request of the individual.

11. As insurers are reluctant to underwrite dental coverage for short periods of time, it has not been possible to provide dental insurance under a short-term insurance policy. Emergencies can be identified readily as such in cases of medical care, but it is much more difficult to do so in cases of dental care, in view of its largely elective nature. It is for this very reason that minimum service of six months is required for staff members to participate in the dental plan of the Headquarters health insurance schemes. Furthermore, the absence of dental insurance coverage for emergencies does not represent a potential risk remotely comparable to that represented by the absence of medical coverage. Emergency medical costs can be catastrophic, a situation which does not arise in respect of emergency dental care.

12. Since the optional medical insurance was made available in 1981, approximately 50 members of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly have purchased the coverage. In any given year, there may be as many as 50 eligible commissions, committees and similar bodies - including working groups and visiting missions - with an approximate total membership of some 500 individuals who would be entitled to the emergency medical coverage.

13. In the relevant portion of resolution 34/233, part VI, reference is made to "coverage paid for by the United Nations". As indicated above, while the coverage is paid for by the individuals concerned, the group rates under the plan which the Organization has negotiated are minimal in relation to the coverage.

14. Given the modest cost of the insurance coverage to the members (\$0.83 or \$0.55 per day), its ready availability and its optional character, the present arrangements would appear to be appropriate and sufficient.

Annex

Excerpt from Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/103/Rev.1

Article 6. Survivor's benefits

In the event of the death of a commission member, or of a former commission member, which is attributable to service as a member of the commission, benefits shall be payable in accordance with the following guidelines:

(a) Compensation in the amount of \$100,000 shall be paid as hereinafter provided:

(i) If the commission member leaves surviving a spouse and/or dependent children;

(ii) If the commission member does not leave a spouse or dependent children and leaves a surviving dependent parent or a dependent parent and a dependent brother or sister;

(b) Compensation in the amount of \$50,000 shall be paid if the commission member does not leave a spouse or dependent child or dependent parent and leaves surviving a dependent brother or sister;

(c) If the deceased commission member leaves more than one spouse surviving, then the amount payable to this category of persons shall be divided equally among the spouses;

(d) A dependent child shall mean an unmarried child under the age of 21 years;

(e) A dependent parent shall mean a parent who had been dependent upon the commission member for at least one half of his or her financial support at the time of the member's death;

(f) A dependent brother or sister shall mean an unmarried brother or sister under the age of 21 years who had been dependent upon the commission member for at least one half of his or her financial support at the time of the member's death;

(g) In the interest of fairness and equity, normally any amount payable under this article shall be divided equally among those persons of the same degree of relationship to the deceased; where the degree of relationship is different, or whenever the Secretary-General deems it appropriate, he may, in his discretion, make a different apportionment of the amount payable.

Article 7. Injury or Illness

In the event of an injury or illness of a commission member, or of a former commission member, which is attributable to the performance of official functions as a member of the commission, the following provisions shall apply:

/...

(a) The United Nations shall pay all reasonable medical, hospital and directly related expenses incurred by the commission member, and which are not reimbursable from insurance or other sources;

(b) In the case of injury or illness resulting in permanent disfigurement or loss of function, there shall be paid to the commission member a lump sum, the amount of which shall be determined by the Secretary-General on the basis of the schedule set out in paragraph (d) below, and applying, where necessary, proportionate and corresponding amounts in those cases of permanent disfigurement or loss of function not specifically referred to in the schedule;

(c) The payment of lump-sum compensation under paragraph (b) shall be made in addition to any other compensation payable under this article, whether or not the permanent disfigurement or loss of function affects the commission member's earning capacity;

(d) SCHEDULE FOR PERMANENT DISFIGUREMENT  
OR LOSS OF FUNCTION

Loss or total loss of use of			Amount
(i)	Both arms or both hands, or both legs or both feet, or sight of both eyes		\$100,000
(ii)	Arm	(at shoulder)	60% of (i)
		(at or below elbow)	57% of (i)
(iii)	Hand	(at or below wrist)	54% of (i)
(iv)	Thumb		22% of (i)
(v)	Fingers	First (index)	14% of (i)
		Second (middle)	11% of (i)
		Third (ring)	5% of (i)
		Fourth	3% of (i)
(vi)	Leg	(with short thigh stump)	40% of (i)
		(at or below knee)	36% of (i)
(vii)	Foot	(at or below ankle)	28% of (i)
		Great toe	5% of (i)
		Any other toe	1% of (i)
(viii)	Loss of sight	One eye (presuming other is normal)	24% of (i)
(ix)	Loss of hearing		35% of (i)

(e) The total compensation may not in any case exceed that under (d) (i) above.