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FIFTH COMMITTEE, 1475th MEETING

Wednesday, 8 December 1971, at 10.55 a.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. E. Olu SANU (Nigeria).

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE THIRD COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/8430/ADD.1 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 59* (A/8408/ADD.18, A/C.5/1409 AND CORR.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1409 and Corr.1) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Third Committee (A/8430/Add.1, para. 9), in which he estimated the additional cost of implementing the provisions of the draft at $62,000, taking into account the $18,000 savings which would result from locating the office for disaster relief questions at Genève rather than in New York. In addition, an increase of $17,400 in income from staff assessment was anticipated. The relevant report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions was issued as document A/8408/Add.18.

2. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 5 of the Advisory Committee's report, which indicated that the draft resolution recommended by the Third Committee was not confined to programme matters but also dealt with several administrative and budgetary aspects which were within the competence of the Fifth Committee. In view of the fact that it was not the first time such duplication had occurred, the Advisory Committee felt it would be useful, in the interest of orderly budgetary procedures, to recommend that the Secretary-General should ensure that, whenever a Main Committee was asked to act upon a proposal which fell within the field of competence of the Fifth Committee, the secretariat of that Main Committee should draw the matter to its attention so that the proposal might be referred to the Fifth Committee for consideration. Two questions which the Fifth Committee might wish to consider in the present case were the level of the post of the disaster relief co-ordinator, and whether he should devote himself full-time to the duties laid down in the draft resolution. After indicating the financial implications of the two alternatives, the Advisory Committee expressed the opinion that the personnel to be seconded to the office of the co-ordinator in cases of individual emergencies should, to the fullest extent possible, be provided from within the secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and that attempts should also be made to secure personnel from Governments and organizations on a non-reimbursable basis. The Advisory Committee felt that provisions for the financing of assistance in cases of natural disaster might properly be inserted in the annual General Assembly resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

3. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that his country had always supplied, and always would supply, considerable assistance in cases of natural disaster on a bilateral basis. His delegation had no objection to appropriating a specific amount in the Organization's budget for assistance in cases of natural disaster, in accordance with a resolution adopted to that end. However, considering that the assistance envisaged in General Assembly resolution 2435 (XXIII), concerning assistance in cases of natural disaster, was of the order of $20,000 per country in the case of any one disaster, his delegation did not feel it was reasonable to propose establishing a post of co-ordinator with the rank of Under-Secretary-General and a staff of four. It would be preferable to use persons already on the staff.

4. It approved the observations in paragraph 5 of the Advisory Committee's report which, in fact, noted a violation of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. The Third Committee had obviously encroached on the competence of the Fifth Committee and that anomaly should be pointed out. However, his delegation could not support the Advisory Committee's report as a whole because it contained recommendations that, though couched in vague terms, dealt with the establishment of an office and post of disaster relief co-ordinator.

5. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that, although it was a sponsor of the draft resolution adopted by the Third Committee, his delegation recognized that rule 101 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly had not been strictly observed. However, he wished to emphasize that the Third Committee had not in any way intended to encroach on the competence of the Fifth Committee and that it had been inspired only by the desire to take steps so that assistance might be provided as quickly as possible to countries that had suffered natural disasters. Bilateral assistance was, indeed, useful but it was the international community's duty to organize itself with a view to providing immediate assistance to countries that needed it.

6. With regard to the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 4 of the draft resolution, his delegation was concerned at the Secretariat's tendency immediately to establish a new unit as soon as a new task was envisaged, without first trying to use the available staff. It was true that paragraph 1 of the draft resolution laid down a large number of tasks for the disaster relief co-ordinator but if the Geneva personnel

* Assistance in cases of natural disaster: report of the Secretary-General.

already dealing with related questions were used, some savings might be achieved. Consequently, his delegation endorsed the conclusions in the Advisory Committee's report.

7. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation had always been in favour of strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of assistance in cases of natural disaster. It felt that the post of relief co-ordinator must be of a sufficiently high level to attract candidates of outstanding calibre and to enable the co-ordinator, once he was appointed, to carry out the task referred to in paragraph 1 of the draft resolution of the Third Committee, and particularly in its subparagraphs *(a)* and *(b)*. Consequently, the United States delegation was prepared to approve an additional appropriation of $62,000 for 1972.

8. Mr. DE BELDER (Belgium) associated himself with the observations of the United States representative.

9. Mr. HOLLIST (Nigeria), while recognizing the value of bilateral assistance in cases of natural disaster, approved the intention of the sponsors of the Third Committee's draft resolution. However, his delegation felt, as did the Advisory Committee, that the Third Committee had proceeded irregularly and it approved the recommendations in paragraphs 8 and 10 of the Advisory Committee's report. The establishment of an office responsible for co-ordinating relief in cases of natural disaster would be desirable but the cost of such an office should not be disproportionate to the tasks envisaged. He felt, in particular, that an Under-Secretary-General already on the staff might act as disaster relief co-ordinator, initially at least.

10. Miss WHALLEY (United Kingdom) approved the establishment of an office for disaster relief co-ordination. It was essential that the post of co-ordinator should be sufficiently senior to attract candidates of the highest quality. Her delegation was therefore in favour of establishing a post of Under-Secretary-General to that end and of appropriating an additional $62,000.

11. Mr. PICK (Canada) said that his delegation had always stressed the need for co-ordinating assistance in cases of natural disaster. However, it had some reservations on the proposed level of the co-ordinator's post. In so far as there were already a number of channels for providing relief, his delegation associated itself with the Nigerian delegation in recommending moderation and suggesting that the task of co-ordinator of operations should be given, at least at first, to an Under-Secretary-General already on the staff. Furthermore, his delegation was not sure that the level of Under-Secretary-General would be the most appropriate for the co-ordinator and in that respect it shared the views expressed in paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report.

12. Mr. ALWAN (Iraq) recognized that the Third Committee had encroached a little on the Fifth Committee's prerogatives and endorsed the observations in paragraph 6 of the Advisory Committee's report. With regard to the question of the level of the co-ordinator his delegation felt it would be wise to see first how the relief co-ordination office would operate before taking a decision on the matter.

13. Mr. SILVEIRA DA MOTA (Brazil) whole-heartedly approved the objectives of the draft resolution adopted by the Third Committee and endorsed the recommendations in paragraphs 6 and 8 of the Advisory Committee's report. He associated himself with the remarks of the representatives of Canada, Nigeria and Iraq and agreed that the Secretary-General could, indeed, designate an Under-Secretary-General already on the staff to act as co-ordinator, in order to avoid any additional administrative expenditure.

14. His delegation wondered whether, in order to lend more weight to its recommendations, the Fifth Committee should not depart from its usual practice and, instead of merely indicating to the General Assembly that it approved the views of the Advisory Committee, present a draft resolution taking up the points raised by the Advisory Committee. That would give the General Assembly a clear and complete picture of the recommendations of the Third Committee and of those of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee.

15. Mr. KALINOWSKI (Poland) said that assistance in cases of natural disaster should be provided essentially on a bilateral basis, with the participation of the United Nations, UNICEF and the competent specialized agencies. It was not necessary to establish a new post of Under-Secretary-General, which would only make the administrative machinery of the United Nations more cumbersome. The Secretary-General could designate an Under-Secretary-General already on his staff to act as the disaster relief co-ordinator, as suggested by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. He also approved the observations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 5 and 6 of its report.

16. Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania) supported the Advisory Committee's conclusion in paragraph 6 of its report. The question under study provided a good example of the difficulties which were likely to arise when the sponsors of a draft resolution adopted by another Main Committee of the General Assembly were not sufficiently aware of the competence of the Fifth Committee regarding administrative and budgetary matters. Although his delegation had been a sponsor of the draft resolution of the Third Committee, he shared the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 7 of its report and felt that the Fifth Committee should make its own decision independently on the level of the post of co-ordinator, the establishment of which was provided for in the draft resolution. It was probable that the Third Committee would have adopted a slightly different text if its attention had been drawn to the competence of the Fifth Committee regarding administrative and budgetary matters. He shared the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 10 of its report, namely, that personnel to be seconded to the office of the co-ordinator in cases of emergency should as far as possible be provided from within the Secretariat of the United Nations and those of the specialized agencies. He also shared the view expressed in paragraph 11 of the report and felt that if the Fifth Committee approved that paragraph, paragraph 10 of the draft resolution recommended by the Third Committee would become superfluous.

17. Regarding the category of the new post envisaged, he did not think that the co-ordinator should necessarily be an

Under-Secretary-General, at least during the initial stage, and in that respect he shared the view expressed by the representatives of Nigeria, Canada, Iraq and Italy. He favoured, therefore, the solution suggested by the Advisory Committee in the second part of paragraph 8 of its report. If, however, the Committee decided to establish a new post of Under-Secretary-General, he would formally propose the elimination of the D-2 post recommended by the Secretary-General.

18. Mr. DE PRAT GAY (Argentina) said that, despite its resolute opposition to any enlargement of the administration, his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution of the Third Committee, because it attached particular importance to assistance in cases of natural disaster and because it seemed that the establishment of the new office envisaged would not result in an excessive growth of the administrative machinery. He approved, therefore, the suggested solution put forward in paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report and also the proposal put forward by the representative of Brazil. He also supported paragraph 6 of the report, which he felt was particularly important for the future operations of the Main Committees of the General Assembly; he felt that the Fifth Committee should make a recommendation in that connexion.

19. Mr. TCHICAYA (Gabon) said that when the draft resolution in question had been adopted by the Third Committee, his delegation had expressed certain reservations regarding the establishment of a post of disaster relief co-ordinator. There was already a Red Cross committee at Geneva responsible for that task and his delegation felt that a proliferation of services to serve the same needs should be avoided.

20. Mr. NAUDY (France) supported every point of the conclusions reached by the Advisory Committee in its report. He particularly approved the observations made in paragraph 6 regarding the competence of the Fifth Committee and the need to avoid any conflict of competence in order to ensure a healthy budgetary procedure. He also appreciated the advice on the need for discretion given by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 of its report and shared the opinion of the representatives of Nigeria, Canada, Italy and Gabon. He also supported paragraphs 10 and 11 of the report, which seemed to him to be relevant.

21. Mr. BENNET (New Zealand) supported the provisions of the draft resolution of the Third Committee, of which his delegation had been a sponsor. He recognized, however, that the conclusions of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of its report were well-founded, and agreed in that connexion with the observations made by the representatives of Canada and Nigeria.

22. Mr. BARTUŠEK (Czechoslovakia) recognized the need to co-ordinate assistance operations in cases of natural disaster and felt, like the representative of Italy, that it was not necessary to establish a new post for that purpose, since the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs or the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva could very well undertake that task.

23. Mr. DILER (Turkey) favoured the establishment of a post of co-ordinator with the rank of Under-Secretary-General and assisted by a permanent office. He felt that the rank of the co-ordinator should be consistent with the importance of his functions.

24. Mr. WOSCHNAGG (Austria) said that his delegation, as a sponsor of the draft resolution of the Third Committee, favoured the establishment of a post of co-ordinator with the rank of Under-Secretary-General. The observations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 6 of its report were justified since it was necessary to avoid in the future any conflict of competences such as the one facing them currently.

25. Mr. HAMID (Sudan) said that his delegation, which had voted in favour of the draft resolution in question, approved its intentions but recognized that the solution proposed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of its report was not without merit since it suggested a more economical way to resolve the problem of the co-ordination of disaster relief assistance. He was pleased to note the understanding and the flexibility shown by the sponsors of the draft resolution in respect of the Advisory Committee's recommendations. He supported unreservedly the observations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 6 and 8 of its report, and also the proposal made by the representative of Brazil. The Fifth Committee should submit a draft resolution to the General Assembly, approving the aims of the draft resolution adopted by the Third Committee, but suggesting a different method of procedure.

26. Mr. GONTHA (Indonesia) said that, like the other sponsors of the draft resolution of the Third Committee, his delegation recognized that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee were sound. It shared the view of the representatives of Canada and Nigeria and wondered, with regard to paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, whether it was really necessary to appoint as head of the office envisaged a co-ordinator with the rank of Under-Secretary-General. A D-2 official could very well handle that task, the more so since natural disasters were, by their nature, unpredictable. He supported the Brazilian suggestion that the Committee should submit a draft resolution based on the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee and proposed that the representative of Brazil take the initiative on the draft.

27. Mr. HULTGREN (Sweden), whose delegation was also a sponsor of the draft resolution of the Third Committee, said that he supported unreservedly the observations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. After due reflection, his delegation was in favour of the creation of a post of co-ordinator with the rank of Under-Secretary-General, assisted by a permanent staff at Geneva. It also recognized, however, that the solution suggested in paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report was not without merit and it was very difficult for him to make a decision on the question at that moment. His delegation formally requested, therefore, that the Committee defer taking any decision until the next day.

28. Mr. REFSHAL (Norway) supported the Swedish representative's request, since it was also very difficult for

his delegation to make an immediate decision on the matter. His delegation attached great importance to the draft resolution, of which it was also a sponsor. In recommending that the level of the post of co-ordinator should be comparable to that of an Under-Secretary-General, it had been the wish of the sponsors of the draft resolution that the co-ordinator be an official of the highest competence and that he should have the necessary authority to treat with Heads of Governments. He was sure that the Under-Secretaries-General already in office had the competence and authority required, but it did not seem desirable that the co-ordinator should divide his duties between those of co-ordination and those of a head of department, because, as natural catastrophes occurred unexpectedly, he must be available at all times to travel to various countries in order to organize any assistance necessary.

29. The CHAIRMAN said that he was reluctant to agree to the request of the Swedish and Norwegian representatives because, in order not to delay the work of the General Assembly, the Committee should take decisions on the financial implications of the various draft resolutions adopted by other Committees as and when those resolutions were submitted to it. The Brazilian representative's suggestion that the Committee should submit its recommendations to the General Assembly in the form of a draft resolution involved certain difficulties and some degree of risk as well in that it might not be adopted by the General Assembly. It would be wiser for the Committee to submit its recommendations on the Advisory Committee's report in its own report to the Assembly.

30. Mr. SILVEIRA DA MOTA (Brazil) said that he fully agreed with the Chairman. Nevertheless, the Committee should not merely indicate in its report, as was its usual practice, that it approved the Advisory Committee's recommendations. It should in addition inform the General Assembly of the implications of those recommendations, if they were adopted, and of the way in which the Third Committee's draft resolution would be altered in consequence.

31. The CHAIRMAN agreed, at the request of the Swedish and Norwegian representatives, to postpone further consideration of the question until the following day.

AGENDA ITEM 101

Amendment to rule 156 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/8495 and Corr.1)

32. Mr. TURNER (Controller) said that the amendment to rule 156 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly proposed by the representative of Pakistan in his letter of 1 December 1971 to the Secretary-General (see A/8495 and Corr.1) would have financial implications under sections 1, 5 and 7 of the budget estimates for 1972, as follows: $6,400 under section 1 (Travel and other expenses of representatives and members of commissions, committees and other subsidiary bodies) if the representative in question was based in New York and $10,700 if he was based elsewhere; $6,000 under section 5 (Travel of staff) for the travel and subsistence allowance of three interpreters who would be sent from New York to Geneva; and $3,500 under section 7 (Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance of premises) for the construction of an interpretation booth in the room in which the Advisory Committee held its meetings. Those financial implications would not involve any additional appropriation because they would be met from within existing resources under sections 1, 5 and 7.

33. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked that the Committee should defer its consideration of the Pakistan proposal until a written statement of the financial implications was available.

34. Mr. FAROOQ (Pakistan) said that, in the explanatory memorandum issued in document A/8495 and Corr.1, it was proposed to amend rule 156 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to increase the membership of the Advisory Committee from 12 to 13 so that the People's Republic of China would be represented on that Committee. The proposal was sponsored by the delegations of Argentina, Canada, Chile, Guinea, Iraq, Italy and Yemen, as well as his own delegation, and enjoyed the support of many more. The participation of the People's Republic of China in the work of the Advisory Committee would be another step towards the completion of the process set in motion by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). There had been an element of urgency in the introduction of the proposal at the current session because, by becoming a member of the Advisory Committee, the Chinese delegation would gain a panoramic view of the entire budgetary processes of the United Nations. If the question of China's participation in the work of the Advisory Committee was not decided at once, China would have to wait until the twenty-seventh session. It would be regrettable if Chinese participation in the work of such an important committee was delayed for one year, the more so as the Advisory Committee itself would be deprived of the contribution that the Chinese representative could make to its deliberations. His delegation believed that China, which accounted for almost one third of humanity and represented a distinct culture and social system, should, in its own right, be a member of the Advisory Committee. The proposal would in no way change the character of the Advisory Committee, which would remain a small group. The expenditure involved would be minimal and, as the Committee had been informed, could easily be met from within existing resources.

35. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that it was his understanding from the statement by the Controller that the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Third Committee concerning agenda item 59 and considered by the Fifth Committee at the beginning of the meeting, would not involve any additional appropriations.

36. Turning to the item under consideration, he said that his delegation was one of the sponsors of the proposal concerning the amendment to rule 156 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which had been introduced by Pakistan. It believed that the approval of the draft resolution would contribute to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) of 25 October 1971 on the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations. Considering that

the People's Republic of China was one of the main contributors to the budget of the United Nations, it was appropriate to ensure its participation in the work of the Advisory Committee whose function was to examine in depth all budgetary requirements and the financial implications of decisions taken by the General Assembly and to advise on any other matter concerning administrative arrangements. The Advisory Committee, composed of a small group of qualified men serving in their personal capacity and elected because of their individual qualifications and experience, met in closed session without summary records and with a minimum of official red tape and was therefore able to conduct its business in the most discreet, speedy and efficient way.

37. Rule 157 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly provided that members of the Advisory Committee should be selected on the basis of broad geographical representation in addition, of course, to their personal qualifications and experience. The amendment of rule 156 proposed by Pakistan seemed to his delegation to meet entirely the need for all organs of the United Nations to reflect the current composition of the Organization. The membership of the Committee had been increased from 9 to 12 in 1961 (General Assembly resolution 1659 (XVI)) to make room for experts from newly independent countries. The current geographical distribution of members of the Advisory Committee was carefully established so as to achieve a well-balanced representation of the States Members of the United Nations. While it was essential that that careful geographical balance should not be altered and that the membership of the Committee should not be enlarged unduly, it was evident that, as the People's Republic of China was a Member of the United Nations, a duly qualified expert designated by that great country should be admitted to the Advisory Committee to help it provide the General Assembly with the necessary administrative and budgetary advice.

38. His delegation hoped that the delegation of China would soon take its place in the Fifth Committee and that it would make a highly valuable contribution to the work of the Advisory Committee. It was confident that the Fifth Committee would unanimously approve the proposal to increase the membership of the Advisory Committee from 12 to 13 so that an expert designated by the Government of China might be elected to that body.

39. Mr. PICK (Canada) associated his delegation with the Pakistan proposal, which was very simple and consonant with the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China. He therefore hoped that the Fifth Committee could take a decision on it without delay.

40. Mr. FAKIH (Kenya) associated himself with the comments of the Canadian representative.

41. Mr. DE PRAT GAY (Argentina) recalled that his country's Permanent Representative to the United Nations had stated that his Government was convinced that the entry of the People's Republic of China into the Organization would enable the latter to play a truly universal role and would help it to achieve the aims and objectives of the Charter.

42. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he would like to clarify certain points in the debate. His delegation had in no wise opposed the inclusion of the new item in the agenda in the General Committee of the General Assembly. It was merely concerned that the Fifth Committee should conform strictly to rule 154 of the rules of procedure, which provided that no resolution involving expenditure should be recommended by a committee for approval by the General Assembly unless it was accompanied by an estimate of the expenditures prepared by the Secretary-General. A written statement of the financial implications of the proposal should be made available to the Fifth Committee before it took a decision.

43. Mr. CLELAND (Ghana) said that, for the reasons stated by the representatives of Pakistan, Italy, Canada, Kenya and Argentina, his delegation would vote in favour of the proposal.

44. Mr. TURNER (Controller) said that the comments of the representative of the Soviet Union were justified and that a statement of the financial implications would be issued shortly.[1] The reasons why that had not yet been done were purely technical: it had been necessary to request information from Geneva as to the needs of the United Nations Office there with regard to Chinese-language interpreters so that realistic and precise financial implications could be prepared.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.34 AND 43)

45. The CHAIRMAN recalled his earlier suggestion that the consideration of agenda item 77, on the planning estimate for the financial year 1973, and the mock-up of the budget, under item 82, on implementation of the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, should be postponed to the twenty-seventh session.

46. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the mock-up of the budget had been communicated to the Advisory Committee half-way through its session. It was a very important document and a great deal of work had gone into its preparation; the Advisory Committee had not been able to give it the attention it deserved. The Committee had had several talks about the report with Mr. Bertrand, a member of the Joint Inspection Unit, and had followed closely the debates in the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination and in the Economic and Social Council. It had also received the alternative form of presentation of the budget[2] considered by CPC. The Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee were therefore called upon to consider both the mock-up of the budget and the alternative presentation. Another question to be considered was what changes were to be made in the executive and deliberative machinery; it would therefore be wise to defer consideration of that question to the

1 Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.44.

2 Document E/AC.51/L.66 (mimeographed), of 8 November 1971.

following session of the General Assembly, which would permit the Advisory Committee to give the question thorough consideration at its spring session.

47. The Advisory Committee might seem over-cautious to some delegations, and they probably thought that any difficulties that might arise from the adoption of a programme budget would be ironed out bit by bit; the Advisory Committee thought that, before the programme budget was adopted, very firm bases should be established, and it was convinced that one year's postponement of the consideration and adoption of the new format of the budget would not hold up the work of the Organization.

48. Mr. DERWINSKI (United States of America) supported the Chairman's suggestion that consideration of agenda item 77 and of the form of presentation of the budget, under item 82, should be postponed to the next session. He had a few comments to make in that regard, however.

49. Discussing item 77, he said that he assumed the Chairman was suggesting that the Committee should take a similar decision to that which it had taken at the previous session when it had decided to postpone for another year the application of paragraph 7 of resolution 2370 (XXII) of 19 December 1967. He was inclined to accept such a decision in view of the circumstances, on the understanding that it would in no way affect the principle that planning estimates should be approved by the General Assembly every year for the forthcoming second budgetary period.

50. If the Fifth Committee did not receive a planning estimate for the financial year 1973, the Secretary-General should not ask for any new appropriations in the budget estimates for 1973, particularly for staff, except in the amounts required to cover salary and price increases.

51. In the view of the United States delegation, the Secretary-General had made good use of the study made by the Administrative Management Service to ensure the best deployment of staff to carry out the programmes. He now had to review the programmes and see whether they were of high enough priority for staff to be assigned to them. Such a review would certainly reveal that many programmes no longer had high priority and might now be abandoned to make way for new and more important activities. While recognizing that many of the programmes had been started at the request of intergovernmental bodies, he was sure that it lay within the Secretary-General's competence to inform those bodies when he judged that programmes were no longer useful and that it was his duty to do so.

52. As to the mock-up of the budget, it was regrettable that neither the Fifth Committee nor the Advisory Committee had enough time to consider it at the current session. He could agree to the deferment of that question to the next session, on condition that in the meantime the Secretariat continued its efforts to establish an integrated programming and budgeting system and particularly the machinery for that purpose, especially at the intergovernmental level; he also agreed that the Advisory Committee should devote whatever time was required to considering that question at its spring session in 1972.

53. Mr. FAROOQ (Pakistan) said that he would like the Advisory Committee, whose interim report on the mock-up of the budget was expected on 13 December, to present the report a little earlier so as to permit the Fifth Committee to take a decision of principle and the Secretariat to continue its work.

54. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee's work schedule did not permit it to give priority to that report; furthermore, if that question was to be deferred to the next session, the Advisory Committee might perhaps not have to submit the report at all.

55. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) associated himself with the comments made by the representative of Pakistan.

56. Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania) said that he was aware of the complexity of the problem and of the need to take a well-considered decision. The Fifth Committee could not consider that item carefully in two days just before the end of the General Assembly session. It had to give the Secretariat precise instructions about how to proceed with regard to the new form of presentation of the budget and, since there were two possible alternatives, it would be better to defer discussion of that item to the next session, as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had indicated.

57. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) associated himself with the statement made by the United States representative.

58. Mr. HAMID (Sudan) said that a decision ought to be taken at the current session. The Fifth Committee already had before it three reports on the subject: the mock-up of the budget, the alternative form of presentation of the budget advocated by CPC, and a report of that Committee. If the Advisory Committee could submit its report on 13 December, the Committee would be able to take a decision.

59. Mr. VAN DER GOOT (Netherlands) thanked the Chairman for circulating the list of items still to be considered by the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/XXVI/CRP.34), and emphasized once again that the Committee's schedule of work should be discussed separately.

60. It was a pity that the Fifth Committee should have to defer consideration of the planning estimate and the mock-up of the budget for another year because of practical difficulties; but he expressed the hope that the Committee would be prepared to give those items detailed examination immediately after the opening of the twenty-seventh session.

61. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the beginning of the session the Fifth Committee had considered the schedule and the organization of its work at four meetings; but it was impossible to keep strictly to the schedule of work that had been approved, since delegations should be able to make full statements of their views on each agenda item without any time-limit; and it was always desirable in any event for decisions to be reached through a consensus, particularly on budgetary matters.

62. Mr. GUPTA (India) said that his delegation would have been ready to consider the question of programme budgeting. Nevertheless, it shared the view of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that it would not be very useful to spend only a couple of meetings at the current session on consideration of a question which ought to be thoroughly discussed by the Fifth Committee. His delegation trusted that at its next session the Advisory Committee would devote at least as much attention to the alternative form of presentation submitted in CPC as to the mock-up itself, which was not very satisfactory. He asked whether the Secretariat intended to prepare a mock-up of the 1973 budget like the one it had prepared for 1972. The Secretary-General should also report on the juridical and institutional consequences of introducing budget programming; indeed he should have reported on it at the current session.

63. The Fifth Committee should present specific recommendations regarding action to be taken by the Secretariat in the intervening period if it took a formal decision to defer consideration of the question to the twenty-seventh session. There should be five elements in such a decision. First, expression of regret that the matter could not be discussed at the current session. Secondly, the Advisory Committee should consider in detail both the mock-up and the alternative. Thirdly, a "mini-mock-up" covering a small segment of the 1973 estimates should be prepared. Fourthly, a report on the institutional, legal and structural implications of introducing programme budgeting should be prepared. Fifthly, the report should be presented through CPC and the Economic and Social Council.

64. The Indian delegation was in favour of postponing consideration of the planning budget to the twenty-seventh session.

65. Mr. WOSCHNAGG (Austria) did not think it would be advisable to defer the discussion of budget programming to the twenty-seventh session in view of the importance of the item and the fact that all the necessary documents had already been issued. Despite the assurances given by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, he wondered whether that Committee would really discuss the question in depth when it met in the spring of 1972.

66. Mr. STEENBERGER (Denmark) said that he was sorry that the question of the programme budget could not be taken up at the current session. He wondered whether the Advisory Committee and the Secretariat would have all the necessary information for a detailed study of that question before the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

67. Mr. RHODES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee would be in a position to give detailed consideration to the programme budget before the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly and that it would be doing so with a view to making a complete and detailed report to the Fifth Committee at the opening of the session.

68. As to a mock-up of the budget for 1973, mentioned by the representative of India, he feared that its preparation would absorb too much time and resources but he thought it might be possible to submit part of the budget—a kind of "mini-mock-up"—in that form.

69. Although the report of CPC on the programme budget had been available for some time, the Economic and Social Council had only just concluded its consideration of the question and its report was only in the draft stage. In those circumstances, the Advisory Committee could hardly give the report the attention it deserved.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.