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DURATION OF THE COMMISSION'S SESSION

Financial Implications of extending the duration
of the Commission's session from 10 weeks to 12 weeks

Note by the Secretary-General

1. Although the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee, while considering the proposals contained in the draft resolutions for a 12 week duration of the present session, made suggestions with a view to shortening the overall duration of the session, it appears that with the workload on hand and the work pattern of the Commission and its Drafting Committee, a regular 10 week duration of the session is not sufficient and that the minimum duration should hence be set at 12 weeks.
2. It is assumed that the extension by two weeks would affect the following requirements of the Commission:
 - (i) the in-session workload of the Commission, which averages for a ten week session 700 pages of documentation, of which about 350 pages represent verbatim records, would increase for this latter item by 20%, or 70 pages, raising the in-session documentation to a new overall total of some 770 pages.
 - (ii) the post-session workload, comprising editing and printing of the report and both volumes of the Year Book, would suffer a proportionate increase.
 - (iii) the subsistence allowance payable to the members of the Commission would be increased by 20%.
 - (iv) the subsistence allowance of the six substantive staff members to be detailed from Headquarters would proportionately increase.
 - (v) all other requirements, such as working languages, would remain the same.

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(2 p.)

3. On the basis of above assumptions, the total estimated cost for a 12 weeks session, starting in 1975, would be in the order of \$450,000 for the in-session, plus \$68,000 for the editing of post-session documentation, not including printing. In other words, the estimated cost of the session at the present dollar exchange rate, if held in 1975, would amount to \$518,000.

4. The indicated cost is an order of magnitude of the total quantifiable cost of holding the 27th session, and that is, as far as staff is concerned, the cost of permanent staff, plus the cost of temporary staff which, depending on the conference pattern at the period of meeting in 1975 or subsequent years, might be required to reinforce the permanent establishment. Hence, since the conference pattern already approved for the biennium 1974/1975 refers to a 10 weeks session for 1975, the actual financial implications of the proposal now before the Commission should be the difference of the above cost and the cost of a 10 week session during the same period, i.e. \$518,000 less \$445,000, say \$73,000.

5. To this cost should, however, be added the additional subsistence cost (\$18,000) of the members of the Commission and of six substantive staff from New York (\$3,000).

6. As a result of the increased duration of the session, it is anticipated that the length of the Year Book would be increased by about 45 pages in each language, for which additional printing costs, estimated at \$5,000, would arise.

7. To sum up, the extension by 2 weeks of the regular 10 weeks session of the Commission would represent an additional expenditure to the United Nations budget, additional printing costs included, of $\$73,000 + \$18,000 + \$3,000 + \$5,000 = \$99,000$ in 1975, and also in future years of the same order of magnitude, subject to changes in unit cost.