



General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/C.2/44/L.37/Rev.1
7 December 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-fourth session
SECOND COMMITTEE
Agenda item 12

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/44/L.31/Rev.2

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. In operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.2/44/L.31/Rev.2, the General Assembly would proclaim the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, beginning on 1 January 1990. Under the terms of section D (Organizational arrangements during the Decade) of the annex to the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to:

(a) Establish, with due regard to equitable geographical representation, a Special High-level Council, consisting of a limited number of internationally prominent persons, in order to provide him with overall advice with respect to the Decade, to take appropriate action to promote public awareness and to mobilize the necessary support from the public and private sectors;

(b) Establish, with due regard to equitable geographical representation and covering the diversity of disaster-mitigation issues, a Scientific and Technical Committee on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, consisting of 20 to 25 scientific and technical experts selected in consultation with their Governments on the basis of their personal capacities and qualifications and including experts from the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system;

(c) Establish a small secretariat to be funded from extrabudgetary resources as follows:

- (i) The secretariat would be established at the United Nations Office at Geneva, in close association with the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, with its members drawn, as appropriate, from the international community of disaster reduction experts and other relevant experts, inter alia, seconded from competent United Nations organizations, Governments and non-governmental organizations;
- (ii) The secretariat would be responsible for the day-to-day co-ordination of Decade activities and would provide substantive and secretarial support to the Special High-level Council and the Committee, as well as for other related activities.

2. As requested in paragraph 9 of the annex to draft resolution A/C.2/44/L.31/Rev.2, the Secretary-General would designate the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, in accordance with his mandate as set out in General Assembly resolution 32/197, as the focal point for oversight and co-ordination of the programmes and activities of the United Nations system, in close co-operation with the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and, as appropriate, in consultation with the Director of the Decade secretariat.

3. In operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, the Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit to it at its forty-fifth session, a progress report on the implementation of the resolution, including the organizational arrangements made for the Decade. In paragraph 10 of the annex to the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would be requested to report biennially to the Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the activities for the Decade.

B. Relationship of proposed requests to the proposed programme of work

4. The activities proposed would fall under the purview of activities undertaken by the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/44/6/Rev.1, sect. 5A). They would also relate to chapter 5 (Disaster relief) of the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1991, and section 22 (Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

C. Activities by which the proposed requests would be implemented

5. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would:

(a) Appoint six prominent persons as members of the Special High-level Council, which would meet at Geneva for one day annually, starting in 1990;

(b) Appoint 20 to 25 scientific and technical experts as members of the Scientific and Technical Committee on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, which would meet at Geneva three times a year for one week per meeting, starting in 1990;

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(c) Establish a small secretariat at the United Nations Office at Geneva, in close association with the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, to be funded from extrabudgetary resources.

6. The members of the Special High-level Council and the Scientific and Technical Committee on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction would be entitled to payment of travel costs and daily subsistence allowance.

D. Modification required in the proposed programme of work

7. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.2/44/L.31/Rev.2, the following two new outputs would be added to the programme of work for 1990-1991; they would be prepared by the secretariat for the Decade under the general guidance of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation:

- (i) Progress report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session on implementation of the resolution, including the organizational arrangements made for the Decade, and on the status of existing international protocols and conventions for mutual assistance in case of disasters;
- (ii) Biennial report to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the activities for the Decade.

E. Additional requirements at full cost

8. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, it is assumed that the Special High-level Council would meet at Geneva for one day on an annual basis, starting in 1990. The related full cost of provision of conference servicing is estimated at \$67,700 for the biennium as follows:

	1990 \$	1991 \$	Grand total \$
<u>Special High-level Council</u>			
<u>Conference-servicing costs:</u>			
I. Pre-session documentation (24 pages, 1 document: A,C,E,F,R,S)	19 400	19 800	
II. Meeting servicing (Interpretation: A,C,E,F,R,S)	9 600	9 800	
III. Post-session documentation (5 pages, 1 document: A,C,E,F,R,S)	<u>4 500</u>	<u>4 600</u>	
Total	<u>33 500</u>	<u>34 200</u>	<u>67 700</u>

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	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>Grand</u>
	\$	\$	total
			\$
<u>Other costs:</u>			
Travel and daily subsistence allowance for 6 members of the Special High-level Council	17 400	18 200	<u>35 600</u>

9. It is also assumed that the Scientific and Technical Committee on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction would meet at Geneva three times each year of the biennium, for one week per meeting. Thereafter, the Committee would meet on an annual basis. The related full cost of provision of conference servicing is estimated at \$554,000 for the biennium, as follows:

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>Grand</u>
	\$	\$	total
			\$
<u>Scientific and Technical Committee</u>			
<u>Conference-servicing cost:</u>			
I. Pre-session documentation (100 pages, 5 documents: A,C,E,F,R,S)	81 400	83 000	
II. Meetings servicing (Interpretation: A,C,E,F,R,S)	148 500	152 100	
III. In-session documentation (90 pages, 9 documents: A,C,E,F,R,S)	24 600	25 200	
IV. Post-session documentation (24 pages, 3 documents: A,C,E,F,R,S)	<u>12 400</u>	<u>12 800</u>	
Total	<u>273 900</u>	<u>280 100</u>	<u>554 000</u>

Other costs:

I. Travel and daily subsistence allowance for 25 members of the Scientific and Technical Committee for three weekly meetings each year of the biennium	267 600	279 000	546 600
II. Travel and daily subsistence allowance for 2 staff members from Headquarters for three weekly meetings each year of the biennium	<u>9 800</u>	<u>10 200</u>	<u>20 000</u>
Total	<u>277 400</u>	<u>289 200</u>	<u>566 600</u>

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10. As indicated in paragraph 1 (c) above, the secretariat for the Decade would be funded from extrabudgetary resources and therefore no additional resources would be required for that purpose under the regular budget of the United Nations. The secretariat for the Decade would be responsible for preparing the reports requested in paragraph 3 above, and therefore no additional resources would be required for those activities under the proposed programme of work for 1990-1991.

11. It is anticipated, however, that the conference-servicing costs for meetings of the Special High-level Council and the Scientific and Technical Committee for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction would be funded from the regular budget of the United Nations.

F. Potential for absorption

Conference-servicing costs

12. The estimates of conference-servicing costs shown in section E above, totalling \$621,700, are based on the theoretical assumption that no part of the conference-servicing requirements would be met from within the permanent conference-servicing capacity under section 29 (Conference and library services) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 (A/44/6/Rev.1), and that additional resources would be required for temporary assistance for meetings. The extent to which the Organization's permanent capacity needs to be supplemented by temporary assistance resources can only be determined in the light of the proposed calendar of conferences for the biennium 1990-1991. As indicated in section 29, paragraph 29.5, of the proposed programme budget, however, the level of resources for temporary assistance for meetings in 1990-1991 was estimated on the basis of previous experience to accommodate not only meetings which are programmed, but also additional meetings. In other words, provision was made in the proposed programme budget not only for meetings known at the time of budget preparation, but also for meetings that would be authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences in the biennium 1990-1991 was consistent with the pattern of meetings in past years. On that basis, it is estimated that no additional resources would be required under section 29 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 as a result of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/44/L.31/Rev.2.

G. Indication of additional requirements

13. It is anticipated that the requirements for travel and per diem of the meetings of the Special High-level Council and the Scientific and Technical Committee on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, included in section E above and totalling \$602,200 for the biennium, would be financed from extrabudgetary resources, in accordance with section E (Financial arrangements) of the annex to draft resolution A/C.2/44/L.31/Rev.2, which would recommend that extrabudgetary resources be provided for the implementation of the Decade. Therefore, no additional requirements would be requested under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 for the implementation of draft resolution A/C.2/44/L.31/Rev.2.