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MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. David SILVEIRA DA MOTA
(Brazil).

AGENDA ITEM 74

**Budget estimates for the financial year 1970 (*continued*)
(A/7606, A/7608, A/7710, A/C.5/1230, A/C.5/1231 and
Corr.1 and 2, A/C.5/1233, A/C.5/1234, A/C.5/L.990)**

General discussion (continued)

1. Mr. MARTÍNEZ (Venezuela) said that he was glad to see that the Secretary-General had taken account of the various comments made by the Member States at the twenty-third session of the General Assembly in drawing up the budget estimates for the financial year 1970.
2. Concerning the order of priority of programmes, he had noted with interest that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had repeatedly advocated long-term planning, the establishment of an order of priorities and the evaluation of current and past programmes, particularly those related to economic and social development, in order to assess the over-all work programmes of the United Nations in relation to the available resources. The establishment of an order of priority for the various programmes, particularly in the economic, social and human rights fields, was indispensable if the United Nations wished to make the most effective possible use of the resources at its disposal.
3. His delegation considered that the reductions proposed by the Advisory Committee were judicious and that the estimates for 1970 were adequate for a reasonable and justifiable expansion of activities and covered essential requirements.
4. On the matter of co-ordination, his delegation shared the view of the Advisory Committee, which had stressed

the need to achieve a better co-ordination of the activities of review bodies; it would support all efforts made to remedy shortcomings in that field and to avoid duplication.

5. His delegation, like others, had some misgivings because the volume of documentation had not diminished as much as it should have done and there was a steady increase in the number of conferences and meetings; consideration should be given to the various possibilities suggested with a view to solving the problem.

6. It was to be hoped that a more rational use of budgetary resources—on which progress had already been made—would lead to an improvement in the financial position of the United Nations.

7. Mr. FASCELL (United States of America) said that his country shared the uneasiness experienced by a large number of States—both large and small, developed and developing—at the direction in which the United Nations was moving as well as their doubts as to its capacity for effective action. The United Nations and its affiliated agencies had grown considerably in response to the wishes of the Member States and the needs of the moment. Although that growth had been necessary and beneficial to the world community, it had to be conceded that the Organization had not always developed along clearly defined, rational and systematic lines. Consequently, it was not surprising that, in the face of the complex and proliferating machinery which had resulted from that growth and the financial and other problems which had arisen, people wondered whether the United Nations would be able, during the next 10 or 25 years, to respond effectively to the legitimate aspirations of its Members and carry out the challenging tasks which lay ahead.

8. The effectiveness of the United Nations, its system of management and the use made of the resources entrusted to it by the international community were matters of prime concern to the Fifth Committee. The Committee should give particularly detailed consideration to the financial, budgetary and administrative relationships existing among United Nations activities, the programmes financed from voluntary contributions and the activities of the specialized agencies. Moreover, several items on the agenda related to that subject. The Fifth Committee was competent to propose improvements in that field which would ensure a more rational and better co-ordinated utilization of the scarce manpower and financial resources available to the United Nations. The methods applied so far were not necessarily suitable to the tasks which would confront the United Nations family of organizations during the coming quarter of a century; it was incumbent upon the Fifth Committee to devise new, effective methods for future use.

In that respect, the Committee should recognize that the effort which it would be called upon to make to turn the United Nations into as effective an instrument as possible was a collective effort of vital concern to all States. Furthermore, despite the differences of opinion which might emerge on various items, there was no basis for confrontations if each State realized that it had no monopoly of wisdom. It should also be recognized that, if it was to carry out the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to constitute a vital force in international life, the Organization would have to develop its capacity to meet the needs of its Members. As it took on new activities, the United Nations should reassess those already in progress to see whether they still merited the order of priority that had been assigned to them. While there was no intention to fix a ceiling on essential activities, Member States should nevertheless agree that the United Nations should follow a rational pattern of growth related to the increasing complexity of tasks.

9. In view of its approach to the question of how the United Nations should develop, his delegation shared the opinion of the Secretary-General, who saw the present as a period of consolidation in which to assess the existing resources, capacity and methods of work of the United Nations. The budget estimates for the financial year 1970, which represented a considerable improvement over those presented for the previous year, on the whole reflected that opinion, for which the Secretary-General should be commended. Moreover, he, the United States representative, wished to congratulate the Advisory Committee, whose recommendations were, as usual, very much to the point. However, it would be premature at that juncture to adopt any position on the budget estimates for 1970, since the Committee did not yet have a very clear idea of what the final budget level would be. His delegation, like others, would carefully scrutinize the revised estimates coming before the Committee. At all events, he wished to emphasize that his comments on the budget estimates should not be construed as meaning that the major administrative and budgetary problems with which the Committee was concerned could be solved by the Secretary-General alone. His delegation recognized that all the Member States had a share of responsibility for the existence of those problems. Only greater discipline on the part of each one of them would ensure the orderly and rational development of the United Nations administrative and budgetary methods and procedures.

10. He shared the doubts which had been voiced concerning the wisdom of the estimate submitted in regard to provisional posts, since the staff utilization survey was not completed and a number of Secretariat posts remained unfilled. Furthermore, the system of provisional posts, which had been tried and discarded some years before, was not a normal method of budgeting. However, the Advisory Committee had scrutinized the relevant estimate very carefully and had decided to accept it, subject to certain reductions, reassured by the intention expressed by the Secretary-General to use those posts only in moderation. Moreover, his delegation understood why the Secretary-General had requested funds for provisional posts. While sharing the misgivings expressed by the Advisory Committee on the number of posts involved, his delegation considered that the solution adopted by the Secretary-

General could be accepted as an exceptional measure to deal with an unusual situation.

11. The United States delegation shared the view of many others that savings could be made in conference and documentation costs. That was a category of expenditure which arose almost entirely from the demands of Member States, and there was little the Secretary-General could do about the problem. The best hope of reducing conference and documentation costs lay in the recommendations of the Committee on the Reorganization of the Secretariat,¹ and the Fifth Committee should give them its approval. The Secretary-General was making an effort to deal with that part of the problem which was his responsibility, and he had directed that the Office of Conference Services should be the first department to be studied by the new Administrative Management Service. In that connexion, his delegation wished to congratulate the Secretary-General on the manner in which he had responded to the Fifth Committee's request for a study of the utilization of Secretariat staff.

12. The question of a planning estimate for 1971 was one of the most important which the Committee would have to take up. His delegation hoped that, in preparing that estimate, the Secretary-General would be guided by the same principle as in the case of the budget estimates for 1970 and would not propose any significant increase in staff until the results of the manpower survey became reasonably clear.

13. In the matter of unforeseen expenses, he felt that the Fifth Committee should adopt at the current session the Advisory Committee's recommendations on procedures for dealing with such expenses and their financing; action on those recommendations had been deferred² until additional information was made available. His delegation felt that the volume of the supplementary appropriations for 1969—only a part of which was covered by General Assembly resolution 2483 (XXIII) relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for that financial year—showed that greater restraint should be exercised in incurring obligations and approving expenditures which had not been foreseen at the time when appropriations for the given financial year had been made.

14. His delegation shared the concern expressed by the Secretary-General, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and a number of delegations that the activities of the subsidiary bodies established with a view to achieving greater efficiency and economy were not being properly co-ordinated. The Fifth Committee had perhaps not exercised sufficient care in establishing the terms of reference of the subsidiary bodies; it was essential to correct that situation by clearly defining the responsibilities and relationships of the various organs dealing with administrative, budgetary and management problems, and harmonizing their activities. In order to accomplish that objective, the Advisory Committee should study the problem in depth, in consultation with the other bodies concerned, and make

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Annexes*, addendum to agenda item 74, document A/7359, annex.

² *Ibid.*, *Annexes*, agenda item 74, document A/7476, para. 166.

specific recommendations to the Fifth Committee at the twenty-fifth session on how to deal with the matter.

15. In that connexion, he felt that the tendency in recent years to create new bodies to deal with administrative and budgetary questions was partly attributable to the fact that the Advisory Committee was carrying too heavy a workload in relation to its existing programme and method of work. For some time past, the Fifth Committee had been calling upon the Advisory Committee to study an increasingly large number of problems, and there would obviously be an increasing reliance on the Advisory Committee as United Nations activities expanded. It would therefore be desirable for the members of the Advisory Committee to be able to devote more time—perhaps, indeed, all their time—to that Committee's own work. That would enable the Advisory Committee to give greater attention to its work programme and to be of greater service to the Fifth Committee by virtue of being in session for a good part of the year. It might even prove necessary in future to make arrangements for the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to serve on a year-round basis. The Advisory Committee should be asked to consider that matter and report to the Fifth Committee at the twenty-fifth session.

16. With regard to the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/7611 and Corr.1³ and Add.1), in which the latter presented the results of its review of the criteria applied in establishing the scale of assessments, his delegation endorsed the Committee's conclusions, namely that the guidelines laid down by the General Assembly had stood the test of time and made it possible to establish a balanced and equitable scale based primarily on the principle of capacity to pay. There was therefore no need to provide any new guidelines for the Committee on Contributions.

17. Turning to the question of the financial position of the Organization, he suggested that the Fifth Committee should ask the Secretary-General to devote his efforts and those of appropriate senior officials of the Secretariat to an attempt to negotiate a *modus vivendi* which would put the United Nations back on a sound financial basis. It was essential that the Organization should survive and develop so that it could continue to carry out the purposes of its Charter, and every effort should therefore be made to improve its financial position. Only sound financing and effective management would enable the United Nations to live up to the hopes which were placed in it. The financial support required by the United Nations would not be forthcoming if Member States lost faith in the Organization's ability to make effective use of its resources. A number of Governments already thought it inadvisable to give the United Nations significantly greater financial aid until its organizational structures, methods of work and guidelines for future development were changed. The United Nations had to deal with that situation; it must make wise use of the coming year so that Member States would be reassured and would give proper attention to its needs and to the financial support which it required in order to function. He urged the Committee to act on his delegation's suggestions, which had been made in the light of those circumstances.

³ *Ibid.*, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 11 and erratum.

18. Mr. TAITT (Barbados) observed that the Committee's deliberations reflected to a large extent the actual situation with regard to the work of the United Nations. As the Deputy Prime Minister of Barbados had stated in the General Assembly on 8 October 1969 (1784th plenary meeting), his country had no illusions about what the United Nations could and could not accomplish and was aware that, like any other large organization, it had its share of inefficiency. The Secretary-General and his associates could be more vigilant in curbing some of the more objectionable manifestations of bureaucracy, although it must be recognized that his opportunities for taking action were limited by the fact that he could not give satisfaction to every one of the 126 Member States.

19. There was surely no State whose budget did not increase from one financial year to the next. It might be true that budgetary committees tended to make cuts in the estimates submitted to them, but the United Nations budget should not be regarded in traditional terms. It was essentially an instrument through which the collective wishes of Member States were expressed in concerted action. Concerned though his delegation was with proper administrative and financial practices, it could not understand why some countries were alarmed at the modest increase in United Nations expenditure. It found it particularly difficult to understand how that attitude could be adopted by Member States which were jeopardizing the Organization's financial position by refusing to pay certain expenses of which they disapproved. A similar attitude would quickly bring a citizen of an individual country into conflict with the law. His delegation questioned the motives of those Member States which, while professing concern with the advancement of the developing countries, made statements in the Committee about what they regarded as an "alarming" constant increase in the United Nations budget.

20. In the past few years, the world had been subject to gross inflationary pressures, but, in view of the current international trade structure, there was no doubt that such trends did not originate in the developing countries. It was precisely the developed countries, however, which claimed that an apparent rise of 6 per cent was too high, although, when the budget estimates for 1970 were examined realistically, the real increase actually was closer to 2 per cent. It was to avoid any uncertainty on that score that his delegation endorsed the request by the delegations of India, Pakistan and other countries for an urgent and thorough study of the real as opposed to the apparent dollar increase in United Nations expenditure over the past ten years. He was confident that such a study would show a very gradual increase in expenditure compared with the astronomical increase in the economic and social needs of the developing countries.

21. The developing countries were often accused of being irresponsible in financial matters and of spending a large amount of funds provided by other countries, which in turn did not hesitate to suggest that their own assessments amounted to a substantial percentage of the total budget of the United Nations. However, the simple fact was that the assessments of the developing countries were relatively much more onerous than those of the other countries, just as the taxes paid by a person earning \$10,000 a year

represented a much heavier burden for him than those paid by a person earning \$200,000 a year. The developed countries should rather consider their contribution to the United Nations budget in terms of their national budget; the United Nations budget—\$164 million—was the equivalent of a mere 30 jet fighters, a minute portion of the cost of the vast stockpiles of nuclear arsenal which threatened mankind's existence. As the representative of Yugoslavia had said, the United Nations budget was increasing because its activities were expanding. The developed countries should not forget that it was by their attitude in the Fifth Committee that the sincerity of their statements in other Committees, where they proclaimed their support for the objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade, was judged; such support was hardly compatible with the idea of imposing budgetary restrictions.

22. Any attempt to impose a ceiling on expenditure in advance would not be in the best interests of the Organization in general or of the developing countries in particular. In that connexion, his delegation agreed wholeheartedly with the Secretary-General that the preparation of the budget was no more than an attempt to reflect in financial terms the level of resources regarded as necessary to carry out the tasks entrusted to the Organization. Similarly, the Committee should concentrate its efforts on improving the process of programme formulation by establishing concrete objectives and translating those objectives into long-term and medium-term programmes for which, in turn, budgetary provisions could be made. His delegation also hoped that the new Administrative Management Service would help the Secretary-General to utilize available resources most effectively. It was pleased with the terms of reference that had been given to that Service, and it hoped that the comprehensive survey of staff deployment and utilization would not suffer from the political machinations which were reputed to exist in the Secretariat.

23. The General Assembly, in its resolution 2359 A (XXII), had requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to achieve a better geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat. That problem had existed for some time, and only superficial progress seemed to have been made in 1969 towards finding a solution. In that connexion and without wishing to intrude on the Secretary-General's prerogative in the matter of staffing, he wished to draw the Secretary-General's attention to the need for careful scrutiny of the personnel recruitment practices. Due account must be taken of differing educational systems which did not necessarily mean that personnel from one country was less competent than that from another.

24. With regard to accommodation, his delegation suggested a study of the possibility of renting office space in the new facilities to small delegations which could not afford the constantly increasing rents in New York.

25. The United Nations continued to be submerged in a rising sea of documents, and unless a solution was quickly found, the situation would become hopeless. It would seem that in the electronic age, the appropriate solution would be to store electronic data in a central unit; that would considerably reduce the number of overlapping documents and would cost much less than the existing system. However, his delegation would oppose any attempt to

exploit the documentation problem at the expense of small delegations.

26. His delegation was convinced that most of the administrative problems of the United Nations stemmed from a lack of effective co-ordination. Member States were largely at fault, for at each session they created new bodies and then expected the Secretary-General to redress the situation. So long as Member States continued to display that attitude, it would be impossible to achieve concrete results, and deliberations on the question would remain a mere ritual.

27. With regard to the budget in general, his delegation had noted the gap between the Secretary-General's proposals and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. It would support the Advisory Committee's recommendations, but would also take note of the goodwill the Secretary-General had always shown in that regard and the fact that the Fifth Committee had never found it desirable to question the wisdom of those recommendations, even when the Secretary-General did not share the Advisory Committee's views. While he by no means wished to question that Committee's competence, he felt that it would be most helpful if all the information before the Advisory Committee was transmitted to the Fifth Committee so that the latter could more effectively fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

28. Lastly, he wished to congratulate the Secretary-General on the restraint exercised in the preparation of the budget for 1970. He wished to make only one observation: it would be desirable if more delegations were consulted concerning certain administrative and budgetary matters. Furthermore, when only a few delegations had been consulted, the Secretary-General should specify which ones they had been. It was misleading, to say the least, to portray the view of several delegations as that of the Fifth Committee or indeed of the entire United Nations.

AGENDA ITEM 77

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly:

(a) Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/7571, A/C.5/1235)

29. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1235) and invited members to hold an election to fill the vacancy in the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions resulting from the resignation, effective 15 November 1969, of Mr. André Ganem (France). The French Government had proposed that Mr. Emile de Curton should fill the post until the end of Mr. Ganem's term, namely, until 31 December 1971.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. de Alwis (Ceylon) and Mr. Tchicaya (Gabon) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	90
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	5
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	85

<i>Abstentions:</i>	2
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	83
<i>Required majority:</i>	42
<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Mr. de Curton	81
Two other persons	2

Mr. Emile de Curton (France) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended his appointment as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for the period from 16 November 1969 to 31 December 1971.

30. The CHAIRMAN, on behalf of the Fifth Committee, Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), on behalf of the Advisory Committee, and Mr. TURNER (Controller), on behalf of the staff of the Secretariat, paid tribute to Mr. Ganem.

31. Mr. SCHUURMANS (Belgium), on behalf of the Western European States, Mr. KACOU (Ivory Coast), on behalf of the African States, and Mr. MEYER PICÓN (Mexico), on behalf of the Latin American States, joined in those tributes.

32. Mr. SERBANESCU (Romania), Mr. RIAD (United Arab Republic), Mr. ZIEHL (United States of America), Mr. S. K. SINGH (India), Mr. ULANCHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. RHODES (United Kingdom), Miss FORCIGNANÓ (Italy), Mr. MCGOUGH (Argentina), Mr. FERNANDEZ MAROTO (Spain), Mr. SANU (Nigeria) and Mr. HACHÈME (Mauritania) also paid tributes to Mr. Ganem.

33. Mr. GANEM (France) thanked his colleagues for their expressions of esteem and said he was sure that his successor would also earn the Committee's trust.

(c) Board of Auditors (A/7573, A/C.5/1238)

34. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to hold an election to fill the post on the Board of Auditors that would become vacant when the term of office of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of Pakistan expired on 30 June 1970. The Committee had to recommend the name of a Member State whose Auditor-General, or official holding the equivalent title, would be a member of the Board of Auditors for a three-year term beginning on 1 July 1970. The Government of Pakistan had proposed that the Comptroller and Auditor-General of Pakistan should be re-elected to the Board (see A/C.5/1238).

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Náthón (Hungary) and Mr. Bennet (New Zealand) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	89
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	2
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	87
<i>Abstentions:</i>	3
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	84
<i>Required majority:</i>	43

<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Pakistan	82
Two other Member States	2

The Comptroller and Auditor-General of Pakistan having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended his appointment as a member of the Board of Auditors for a three-year term beginning on 1 July 1970.

(d) United Nations Administrative Tribunal (A/7574, A/C.5/1237)

35. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to hold an election to fill two posts on the United Nations Administrative Tribunal that would become vacant on 1 January 1970. The appointees would sit on the Tribunal for a three-year term. The Government of Cyprus had proposed that Mr. Rossides should be re-elected and the Government of Uruguay had put forward the candidature of Mr. Forteza (see A/C.5/1237).

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Rogers (Canada) and Mr. Sum (Malaysia) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	87
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	3
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	84
<i>Abstentions:</i>	2
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	82
<i>Required majority:</i>	42

<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Mr. Rossides	80
Mr. Forteza	71

Mr. Francisco Forteza (Uruguay) and Mr. Zenon Rossides (Cyprus) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended that they be appointed members of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1970.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.