GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTIETH SESSION

FIFTH COMMITTEE

Summary records of the 1698th to 1774th meetings, held at Headquarters, New York, from 17 September to 17 December 1975

1698th meeting

Wednesday, 17 September 1975, at 11.30 a.m.

Temporary Chairman: Mr. Gaston THORN (Luxembourg).

A/C.5/SR.1698

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

1. Mr. PAPOULIAS (Greece) nominated Mr. Christopher R. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago).

2. In the absence of further nominations and in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN declared Mr. Thomas elected Chairman by acclamation.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) was elected Chairman by acclamation.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.

1699th meeting

Tuesday, 23 September 1975, at 3.30 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1699

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

1. The CHAIRMAN said that he deeply appreciated the honour of being elected Chairman of the Committee. It was an honour not only to himself but also to his country and to the regional group of Latin American States.

2. Without prejudice to the important political considerations which determined the positions of members of the Committee, he felt the Fifth Committee resembled a family, with domestic squabbles over money and how it should be disbursed. However, out of those squabbles had sprung, over the years, a strong bond of co-operation, as a result of which the family ties had been strengthened.

3. His experience in the Committee had taught him to accept differences, appreciate different policy positions and admire the sincerity of the disposition of members to work

towards common understandings. He recognized the experience of senior members of the Committee who would provide valuable assistance in orienting the Committee's deliberations and was aware of the inexhaustable potential for co-operation among the members. Accordingly, he felt assured that members would assist and support him in discharging his responsibilities.

ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMEN

4. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic), nominated Mr. Yuri M. Matseiko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic).

5. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) nominated Mr. Yasuchi Akashi (Japan).

Mr. Matseiko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) and Mr. Akashi (Japan) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

6. Mr. SETHI (India) nominated Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit (Egypt).

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (A/C.5/1683, A/C.5/L.1225)

7. The CHAIRMAN, introducing the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, Mr. Mselle, recalled that it was the Committee's practice to invite the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, not only to answer questions on behalf of that Committee but also to participate fully in the Fifth Committee's deliberations. He assumed that the members would wish to continue that practice.

8. He also introduced the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, Mr. Davidson, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services and Controller, Mr. Debatin, adding that they or their representatives would be available at all times to assist the Committee in the consideration of the Secretary-General's proposals on administrative and budgetary matters. Lastly, he welcomed the new Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Anvar.

9. Turning to matters of procedure, he recalled that the General Assembly had decided that the thirtieth session should close on 16 December 1975 and urged delegates to be punctual, so that the Committee might make full use of the time available. He drew attention to document A/INF/136/Rev.1,[1] which contained the substance of General Assembly resolutions on the control and limitation of documentation, and recommended that delegations exercise restraint in their requests for additional documentation. To ensure the best possible interpretation, delegates should speak slowly, provide seven copies of any prepared statements they had for the interpreters and record writers and, where possible, should cite paragraph rather than page numbers when quoting from documents.

10. Finally, he reminded delegations which had not already done so to submit the names of their official representatives on the Committee to the Office of General Assembly Affairs, adding that they could use document A/INF/170 for that purpose. Subsequent changes should be submitted, in writing, to the Committee Secretary.

11. Turning to substantive matters, he recalled that 1975 was a "budget year". The Committee must examine, assess and recommend for approval by the General Assembly, the proposed programme budget of the Organization for the biennium 1976-1977, as well as the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979. Over-all consideration of both questions were fundamental to the work of the Organization. Beginning in 1976, the Organization would be embarking upon its second experimental biennial programme budget and its second medium-term plan and consideration of those questions would require thoughtful reflection on the functional relationships between the first biennial programme budget and the record one in order to assess programme content, programme achievement and continuity, and programme advancement. That assessment would also have to be related to the medium-term plans. Accordingly, in considering the two questions the Committee's focus could not be unidirectional.

12. While the Secretariat had worked hard to elaborate the programme budget and the medium-term plan in accordance with the objectives defined by the legislative organs, it was for the Committee, ultimately, to see to what extent the programmes formulated by the Secretariat conformed to the objectives and to recommend redefinition and even reformulation where necessary.

13. The other items on the agenda must also be viewed within the context of the same considerations. While it was perfectly proper for the Committee to evaluate the administrative arrangements of the Organization and recommend changes where necessary, he recalled that some of the items had been considered at the twenty-ninth session and certain reforms recommended. In respect of those items, the Committee might wish therefore merely to consider the extent to which the reforms had been instituted; with certain items it might merely take note of any new developments that had taken place since the twenty-ninth session. Other items might require longer consideration, but the Committee was operating within certain time constraints and budgetary economy and would wish to impose certain limits on itself.

14. Introducing a note (A/C.5/L.1225), which contained a tentative programme of work, he pointed out that the discussion of the accounts and the reports of the Board of Auditors had been scheduled for the week starting 20 October in order to accommodate the request by the Chairman of the Board that, in the interest of economy –since he had to be present at the discussions–they be set immediately prior to the meeting of the Panel of Auditors, which was scheduled for 27 October. Prior to 20 October, the Committee would concentrate on the general discussion, the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and the medium-term plan for 1976-1979.

15. In the preparation of the draft programme of work, the following general criteria had been taken into account: precedents from the past, particularly in respect of the

[1] Dated 30 June 1972.

general discussion and the consideration of the programme budget and the medium-term plan; availability of documentation; and the limited time at the Committee's disposal.

16. For the sequence of items, two specific criteria had been established: a certain measure of priority among the items on which decisions were required immediately and a form of relationship between items to be considered. On the basis of both sets of criteria, the question of the review of intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets and the general discussion on the medium-term plan and the programme budget had both been scheduled for the first three weeks. It would be appreciated if representatives would address themselves to both subjects during the general discussion, as that would save valuable time by avoiding repetition.

17. He drew attention to the sequential pattern of certain items, such as "Publications and documentation of the United Nations" and "Pattern of conferences", adding that smaller items on which no major debate had traditionally been required, or on which the Secretary-General had only reporting responsibility, had been distributed throughout the programme. However, the sequence did not negate the over-all interrelationship of the items as a whole.

18. While the draft programme of work would allow members to follow up the statements they had made at the twenty-ninth session on particular items, they might wish to postpone consideration of those questions for a full discussion during the thirty-first session, which would be a "non-budget session". He would appreciate the Committee's guidance on the matter.

19. He urged all delegations to place their names on the list of speakers for the various items at the earliest possible opportunity; he would like to complete the general discussion as early as possible in order to make best use of the limited time available.

20. Finally, as the Committee would be required to hold several elections in connexion with the item entitled "Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly", it would be appreciated if representatives submitted early the names of candidates for the various bodies, so that the elections might be scheduled at convenient times during the meetings.

21. He invited discussion of the programme of work he had submitted in document A/C.5/L.1225.

22. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) felt that it would be unwise to take up item 107, relating to the financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, in the week starting 20 October if, as was indicated in the annex to document A/C.5/L.1225, some of the documentation would not be available until late October. He suggested that the consideration of the item should be postponed until the week beginning 3 November.

23. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said it seemed rather odd that the consideration of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on United Nations accommodation, which had been deferred at the twenty-ninth session, should not be taken up until the week beginning 8 December–not until the end of the thirtieth session, in other words.

24. Mr. MALINGUR (Somalia) expressed satisfaction with the proposed programme of work. However, he felt that the Committee, while attempting to complete discussion of each item in the time allowed, should not be bound too rigidly by the schedule in document A/C.5/L.1225.

25. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) felt that the programme of work should not inhibit the Committee from holding a searching general discussion on the financial and budgetary policy of the Organization, whose complexity grew with every year that passed. Since delegations would need time to gather their thoughts, he suggested that statements in the general discussion might be made after the time-limit set in the programme of work, interrupting, if necessary, the progress of business on other items.

26. He supported the comment of the representative of the Soviet Union concerning the rescheduling of the question of United Nations accommodation.

27. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) also supported the comment of the representative of the Soviet Union.

28. With regard to item 107, he pointed out that, under the terms of General Assembly resolution 3211 B (XXIX), section II, paragraph 4, the Secretary-General's authority to enter into commitments for the United Nations Emergency Force and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force would end on 31 October 1975. Referring to the suggestion by the representative of the Upper Volta that the consideration of that item should be postponed until the week beginning 3 November, he would like to know exactly when the Committee would be able to consider the question.

29. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) suggested that the Committee's officers should indicate tentatively how many meetings the Committee would spend on each item.

30. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) supported that suggestion. Some indication of the approximate amount of time to be devoted to each item would be exceedingly useful for planning purposes, provided that the necessary degree of flexibility was retained.

31. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) agreed with the representative of Poland that the general discussion should be prolonged so as to enable delegations to digest the voluminous documentation before the Committee. He asked whether the Secretariat intended to issue further reports on the availability of documentation.

32. The CHAIRMAN, replying to questions, said that the list of available documents contained in the annex to document A/C.5/L.1225 would be revised from time to time.

33. It would be difficult to draw up a more detailed time-table for the entire session at the current stage; however, the number of meetings to be devoted to each item might be indicated on a weekly basis.

34. With regard to the suggestion made by the representative of Poland, he believed that the time schedule should

remain unaltered for the moment and that the Committee should postpone any decision to prolong the general discussion until the week starting 6 October.

35. Since the timing of the consideration of item 107 depended on other factors, he suggested that it should be retained for the time being.

36. He shared the view of the representative of Somalia that, while the Committee should attempt to complete its discussion of each item on time, it might not always prove possible to do so and that some degree of flexibility was required.

37. In reply to the statement made by the representative of the Soviet Union, he said that the question of United Nations accommodation had been placed at the end of the programme of work because the documentation would not be available until that time, as the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management would explain in greater detail.

38. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) reminded members that the first part of the Joint Inspection Unit report on United Nations accommodation, namely that dealing with office space at Headquarters, had been submitted at the twenty-ninth session, when the General Assembly had decided to postpone consideration of it in order to be able to consider it together with the second part, which would deal with accommodation in the rest of the United Nations system and was to be prepared in 1975. The second part of the report had reached the Secretary-General only at the end of August and was to be circulated to the executive heads of the specialized agencies, so that their comments could be reflected in the report prepared by the Secretary-General. The comments were due to be received by 6 October and would be embodied in a draft report which would be considered by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination at its meeting on 20 October. If all went according to schedule, the composite report containing the comments of the executive heads of the specialized agencies and of the Secretary-General would be ready for consideration by the Advisory Committee at the beginning of November. Assuming that that Committee would require no more than two weeks to prepare its report, the question could be tentatively scheduled for consideration by the Fifth Committee in the week starting 17 November. He trusted that that arrangement would go some way in meeting the wishes of the representatives of the Soviet Union, Poland and the Byelorussian SSR.

39. With regard to item 107, he said that it was impossible to predict exactly when the Fifth Committee documents would be issued, since everything depended on discussions yet to be held by the Security Council. It was not until the Council had indicated the size and nature of the Forces required that the documents could be drafted. If the Council took its decision substantially earlier than 24 October, the Committee would have additional time in which to consider the item; however, it was equally possible that the Committee would have even less time than was provided for in the programme of work. In any event, it was essential that the Committee should review the financial implications before the end of October, when the Secretary-General's authority to commit funds for the maintenance of UNEF and UNDOF would be no longer valid.

40. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Under-Secretary-General, whose reply on the question of United Nations accommodation was entirely satisfactory.

41. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) suggested that the programme of work should show that the time-limit for the general discussion was provisional.

42. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) sought an assurance from the Secretariat that projections of the demand and supply of office space in the United Nations system would be available when the Fifth Committee considered the question of inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences, under item 100. Without such information it would be difficult to reach a sound decision on the most rational and economic use of the premises available in the Donaupark project in Vienna. If the projections were not available, it would be more logical to take up item 100 after the question of United Nations accommodation instead of in the order shown in the programme of work.

43. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) explained that the Secretariat had initially bracketed together the question of inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences and that of United Nations accommodation and had scheduled their consideration for the week starting 8 December. However, the representative of Austria had prevailed upon the Secretariat to bring forward the consideration of the former question, and the week starting 10 November had been selected because of the interrelationship with subitem 100 *(a)* (Report of the Committee on Conferences). While there was a connexion between the two questions referred to by the representative of the United Kingdom, subitem 100 *(b)* did seem to be more closely related to the question of the report of the Committee on Conferences than to that of United Nations accommodation. In any event, the timetable was flexible and if slippage occurred, as it had done in the past, the Committee would no doubt decide to take up item 100 in the week starting 17 November, when it was due to consider the question of United Nations accommodation. In any event, the General Assembly, in its resolution 3350 (XXIX), entitled "Inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences", had requested the Secretary-General to report fully on the administrative and financial implications of the most rational and economic use of the premises available in the Donaupark project in Vienna. It followed that the Secretary-General would take account in his report under subitem 100 *(b)* of the options offered in the Joint Inspection Unit report on United Nations accommodation in so far as it was possible for him to do so without taking decisions.

44. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted the programme of work contained in document A/C.5/L.1225, subject to the need for flexibility and to the minor modifications agreed upon in the discussion.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.

1700th meeting

Thursday, 25 September 1975, at 10.05 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1700

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK *(continued)* (A/C.5/L.1225)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that he intended to submit early in October a revised version of document A/C.5/L.1225 which would include the changes recommended by the Committee at the previous meeting and provide the references of the additional documents which would have been issued in the meanwhile.

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/9854 and Add.1, A/10006 and Add.1, A/10008 and Corr.2, A/C.5/1669, A/C.5/1671, A/C.5/1673-1675, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1678, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/1681, A/C.5/1682)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/9646 and Add.1, A/10081, A/10117 and Corr.1)

General discussion

2. The CHAIRMAN invited the Secretary-General to open the general discussion on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979.

3. The SECRETARY-GENERAL made a statement.[1]

4. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General had raised a number of questions of vital importance to the proper functioning of the United Nations. The questions raised in the first part of his statement were included in the Committee's programme of work; although the question of the general financial situation of the Organization was not specifically included in the programme of work, it was related in one way or another to practically every agenda item. He was sure that the suggestions made by the Secretary-General would be among those on which delegations would comment during the general discussion in the hope that some progress towards an acceptable solution could be made.

5. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) made a statement.[1]

6. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the statements made by the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions should be issued as Committee documents.

It was so decided.[1]

7. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his Government would examine carefully the important issues raised by the Secretary-General in his statement. Turning to the documents before the Committee he said that the more informative budgetary analysis produced by the Secretary-General in response to criticism of the quality of the information in the first programme budget was commendable, but he expressed alarm at the expansion of the proposal programme budget into seven volumes (A/10006).

8. His delegation did not dissent from any of the Advisory Committee's comments in its corresponding report (A/10008 and Corr.2) on the budgetary analysis and methodolgy employed by the Secretary-General, but would add two points.

9. With regard to the method for analysing the cost growth in the 1976-1977 biennium over the 1974-1975 biennium, the Advisory Committee pointed out that the Secretary-General had counted the cost in full of all new posts approved in the 1974-1975 budget in the cost of maintaining the 1974-1975 appropriations at 1975 rates, even though 50 per cent of the new posts had not been filled in the 1974-1975 biennium, and suggested that the extra costs arising in the 1976-1977 biennium from the higher manning level of those posts–95 per cent–might count under the heading of "real-terms growth" of the programme. The Secretary-General's methodology was seriously misleading because it conjured out of sight a substantial amount of real growth which ought to be revealed to the Fifth Committee. The correct calculation of growth expressed in real terms was given in paragraph 19 of the Advisory Committee's report, under methodology B. If the Secretary-General's representative agreed with the foregoing comments, then his delegation hoped that the report of the Fifth Committee would ask the Secretary-General to amend his methodology in future.

10. The second point related to the overhead costs of operational projects. Despite the wealth of analytical tables in the programme budget proposals for 1976-1977 (A/10006), it was still impossible to discover what was being spent, section by section, on overhead costs, for while annex VI to the foreword identified the administrative backstopping element it did not identify the technical backstopping element of such costs. Whereas the estimated value of projects to be delivered in 1976-1977 was compared throughout the proposed programme budget with the value of projects to be delivered in the current

[1] The complete text of the statement made by the Secretary-General was subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/1685 and that of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee as document A/C.5/1686.

biennium and proposals were made for the establishment of new posts, nowhere–least of all in the section dealing with UNIDO, where it was most important–was there a clear analysis of the cost of project delivery, the resources allocated to it from regular budget and extra-budgetary sources and the amount of the proposed new resources to be devoted to it, together with the justification. His delegation hoped that the revised budget proposals to be received from UNIDO later in the session would have regard to the need for such information.

11. As it was his delegation's understanding that the Secretary-General would propose later in the session more realistic assumptions about the rate of exchange of the United States dollar and the other currencies required for the budget, it would reserve its position on those assumptions and on the assumptions relating to rates of inflation in 1976 and 1977.

12. Turning to the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1) and the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) he recalled that his delegation had always considered that the plan was primarily the concern of the Economic and Social Council. The Working Group had been wise to conclude that the problems of structure related not to the budgetary institutions, which were working well, but to programming. In view of the large area of agreement between the report of the Working Group and that of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System (E/AC.62/9) on what should be done about programme and budget machinery he proposed that the report of the Fifth Committee should draw the Working Group's report to the attention of the new *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System; it should also suggest that, subject to the views of the Economic and Social Council and the Second Committee, the new *Ad Hoc* Committee should consider adopting the Working Group's recommendations as an interim solution.

13. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) noted that when the Committee had discussed the first biennial budget, covering the years 1974-1975,[2] it had been confronted with an estimate of $513,440,000, representing an increase of 19 per cent over the figure for the previous two years. Since that time, however, the real value of the estimated figures had changed substantially, and appropriations of $606,033,000 had been approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 3359 (XXIX). The Committee was currently faced with a proposed programme budget for the 1976-1977 biennium amounting to an estimated gross expenditure of $737 million. Taking into account an estimated income of $116,542,000, Member States would have to bear a net burden of about $620 million. Moreover, in its report on the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee had proposed a cut in the Secretary-General's estimates of about $15,700,000. But the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had just confirmed that the estimated figure would be exceeded for two reasons: first, because an exchange rate of 3.10 Swiss francs to the United States dollar was used with regard to the expenses incurred by the Organization abroad, whereas the current rate was lower and it was not certain that the forecast rate would be reached; secondly, because of various expenses already foreseen, including those for the next session of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, for the implementation of decisions taken by United Nations bodies which would probably be ratified by the current session of the General Assembly, and for new decisions to be taken during the coming three months.

14. Leaving aside details of methodology, the main point of interest to Member States, i.e. the taxpayers, was how much more they would have to pay for the United Nations in the next two years as compared with the current biennium. The figure of $620,463,000 was $114,949,000 higher than the net amount of $505,514,000 approved by General Assembly resolution 3359 (XXIX), in other words, an increase of 22.7 per cent. The proposed programme budget explained repeatedly that the increase was mainly due to inflation, and that the real growth of the programme was only 3.5 per cent. That was no great consolation, and the fact remained that most Member States–with the exception of a few whose currencies might have been revalued with respect to the dollar–would have to appropriate larger amounts in order to pay their dues to the United Nations. They would therefore have to apply heavier fiscal burdens to their citizens, and the result would be a further contribution to inflation. In any event, whether the "fiscal increase" of 22.7 per cent or the "real growth" of 3.5 per cent was taken into account, it was essential to bear in mind that for most nations economic conditions had worsened in the past two years, and that even greater attention should therefore be paid to how the money was spent. More than ever there was an urgent need to streamline the administrative apparatus in the interests of efficiency and economy.

15. Figure 2 in the report of the Advisory Committee showed that while 5.4 per cent of the budget was devoted to political and peace-keeping activities, the highest percentage, 35.7 per cent, was allocated to common services, such as administration, conference and general services. He noted in that connexion that the budget filled seven volumes; he wondered whether it was really necessary to make it so long, and how many delegations would have favoured such an extensive format had their opinion been asked.

16. One of the main concerns in the preparation of the programme budget proposals had been to show how much of the increase was due to currency fluctuation and inflation thus far and how much should be added for the anticipated effects of increased inflation in the following three years. His delegation doubted whether that practice should be endorsed; in any case, the explanations of the increase could have been satisfactorily dealt with in the foreword and in its annexes. Instead, they had been extended to all sections and programmes, resulting in repetition of data and a lavish use of paper, even though everything should be done to devote every dollar to substantive activities.

17. At the same time, despite the wealth of information, one figure which could be highly interesting was missing. In response to a request made by the Fifth Committee, extra-budgetary resources were mentioned for the first

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 6* and corrigendum.

time. But at the end of annex VI to the foreword, the total given for extra-budgetary funds–$80,657,000–presented only half the picture, since it covered overhead reimbursements but not project costs. It would have been of great interest to know the total financial resources available to the Secretary-General for the next two years.

18. He reserved his delegation's comments on the various sections until such time as they came up for discussion, but in its first over-all look at the proposed budget, it could not fail to note a total of 826 requests for new posts, an increase of 8.6 per cent over the total number of posts approved for 1974-1975. Moreover, there were further requests for temporary assistance, consultants and expert groups, and for the upgrading of 63 posts. It had always been difficult to reconcile the various figures referring to staff members: annex IV to the foreword indicated that 10,412 posts were financed from the regular budget, and 1,513 from extra-budgetary funds. On the other hand, in the section headed "Composition of the Secretariat" in the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization it was stated: "As at 31 December 1974, the Secretariat of the United Nations consisted of 15,092 staff members holding permanent appointments or temporary appointments of one year or more, including 12,736 regular staff and 2,356 project personnel".[3] The ever-increasing size of such a bureaucracy called for reflection, especially at a time when public and private administrations were trying to meet the current economic crisis by dismissing thousands of workers or adopting other austerity measures. The cost of the ever-growing staff could not be measured only in money, since the more people were employed, the slower the pace of the Organization. The closest scrutiny should therefore be given to requests for the enlargement of existing units or the setting up of new offices. The reassessment of priorities and redeployment of resources should be a continuing exercise, and a clear definition of objectives and of their relation to available resources was of paramount importance. The Secretariat should therefore not hesitate to assume responsibility for making the substantive bodies of the Organization well aware of the financial consequences of their decisions, in particular by drawing their attention to the statements of financial implications. The scarce means at the disposal of the Organization must be carefully used to help needy nations, keeping in check any particular ambitions of programme managers, and with a strict evaluation of the input-output ratio.

19. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General, the Joint Inspection Unit and the Advisory Committee that the basis of the plan was the determination of an over-all rate of growth, and for that reason wondered whether the current cycle of the plan should be reconsidered. He doubted whether it made much sense to include in the medium-term plan the biennium already covered by the proposed biennial programme budget. The "rolling" plan should comprise three cycles of two years each: the first two years, a programme budget; the second two years, a plan; and the last two years, a tentative plan. That would reflect the pattern suggested by the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, in paragraph 71 of its second report.[4] In drafting the tentative plan for the third biennium, the Secretary-General would have to use a certain degree of imagination, but the result could offer useful guidelines on the basis of which the dialogue with the decision-making bodies could proceed. Furthermore, with regard to the problem mentioned by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 78 of its report, pragmatism would seem to suggest that the planned rate of growth should be half of what could be foreseen of the future programme decisions of intergovernmental organs. The other half could be added when the decisions were actually taken.

20. Referring to the review of the machinery dealing with programmes and budgets, he wondered whether the report (A/10117 and Corr.1) of the Working Group on that subject could be considered in isolation from the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System (E/AC.62/9) which, in the section concerning planning, programming and budgeting, covered the same ground. One procedure might be to refer both documents to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. Joint consideration of the recommendations of the Group of Experts and the Working Group would avoid any risk of inconsistency and duplication of effort. However, his delegation accepted the fact that a further detailed study of possible reforms should not prevent the adoption of some practical measures designed to ensure efficient financial procedures, along the lines of those recommendations of the Working Group which did not require major decisions.

21. Referring to the statement by the Secretary-General concerning the financial situation of the United Nations, he said that Italy had shown its desire to alleviate the financial difficulties of the United Nations by making a voluntary contribution, and hoped that other countries which had not made similar contributions would find it possible to do so.

22. In conclusion, he stressed the need to streamline procedures and ensure firm control over expenditure, and, in discussing the proposed programme budget, to take into account the interdependence of all nations of the world, keeping in mind the socio-economic and political realities of the era.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.

3 *Ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 1* and corrigendum, part five, chap. VI.

4 *Ibid., Twenty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 80, document A/6343.

1701st meeting

Monday, 29 September 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1701

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (A/9854 and Add.1, A/10006 and Add.1, A/10008 and Corr.2, A/C.5/1669, A/C.5/1671, A/C.5/1673-1675, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1678, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/1681, A/C.5/1682, A/C.5/1685, A/C.5/1686)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion **(continued)**

1. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation was gratified to note that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) was more readable and contained more information than that for 1974-1975. It was therefore possible to relate with greater ease the figures for expenditure to the programmes and activities. There were, of course, inherent difficulties in applying programme budgeting to political and security questions and legal questions. On balance, however, the programme budget was a better instrument than the traditional budget for ensuring a more rational use of the limited resources available.

2. A welcome development was the reduction in the number of budget sections as a result of the consolidation of related activities. The elimination of lengthy historical background and the increased use of tables were also improvements, although it should be stressed that some historical explanations would always be needed. His delegation also found worth-while the exercise of apportioning common service costs to the substantive departments, even though the methodology was still at an embryonic stage, and the decision to include information, albeit far from adequate, on extrabudgetary funds. It trusted that the Secretary-General would continue to make the programme budget even more informative in the future.

3. The report (A/10008 and Corr.2) of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget was extremely helpful. His delegation shared the view of the Advisory Committee that the nominal rate of growth of the next programme budget over that for the current biennium was 36.4 per cent, rather than the 21.6 per cent suggested by the Secretary-General, because a comparison of the initial estimates of the next budget with the revised estimates of the current biennium gave a distorted picture.

4. His delegation felt that the term "programme growth" was a misnomer; like the Advisory Committee, it considered that an increase in resources allocated, particularly an increase in staff resources, did not necessarily bring about the growth of a programme. In some cases programme growth could be achieved by a more efficient use of resources without any increase in expenditure. His delegation therefore stressed the need for the eventual adoption of the so-called "zero base" approach, by which it understood the examination not only of the proposed increments to the base but also of the base itself.

5. His delegation would appreciate more information on the way in which resources were matched to the shifting priorities of the Organization. In particular, it would like to receive an assurance that obsolete programmes were terminated and that less urgent programmes were relegated to a position of lesser importance. The budget documents were not completely satisfactory in that regard.

6. Although the Secretary-General had exercised some restraint in his request for additional posts, there was room for even greater discipline.

7. His delegation was impressed by the Advisory Committee's finding that the real growth rate for the proposed budget for 1976-1977 might be more than 6 per cent on account of the delayed effect of the increase in posts in the second biennium.

8. His delegation's preliminary view was that the proposed budget estimates, as revised by the Advisory Committee, were not excessive. Its final position, however, would depend on the revised estimates submitted later in the session.

9. With regard to the reclassification of posts, his delegation was concerned about the "grade creep" phenomenon and felt that promotion should normally take place only within the established manning table. At the same time, it believed that the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 62 of its report, which would preclude any reclassification of posts until the International Civil Service Commission had reported on the question, was unduly rigid.

10. The Secretary-General was to be commended for his disciplined approach to the use of experts and consultants. Consideration might be given to the feasibility of using the Administrative Management Service, now that it had completed its original mission, as a control mechanism for screening requests for experts and consultants, so that the Organization would resort to outside expertise only when absolutely necessary. In his delegation's view, far greater use could be made of internal expertise than was currently the case.

11. Although the Secretary-General's programme budget, incorporating as it did projected inflation rates, was

presumably based on the "full budgeting" principle, it did not preclude the need for supplementary appropriations in the second year. His delegation hoped, therefore, that the Secretary-General would seriously consider the adoption of the "semi-full budgeting" principle, as applied by UNESCO, by which inflation was reflected in the original budget estimates but was dealt with in the second year by the exercise of greater economy.

12. Unfortunately very few countries had followed the example of Japan, which had made a voluntary contribution of $10 million for the elimination of the short term financial deficit of the United Nations. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that it was high time for Member States to express their faith in the Organization by concrete acts. If Members failed to co-operate and to strengthen the financial foundations of the United Nations, the chances were that it would soon be financially crippled. His delegation would study very seriously the Secretary-General's suggestion for doubling the Working Capital Fund.

13. The medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1) showed many improvements over its predecessor. Part one was particularly stimulating and placed the major trends of United Nations activities in a truly historical perspective. The observations contained in the plan concerning the setting of priorities were pertinent to an understanding of a rational allocation of resources. It was his delegation's hope that the plan would be further improved in future years when the recommendations of a number of recent studies, including the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (see A/9646)–the imaginative report by Mr. Bertrand–were taken into account. A more refined plan would give greater order and clarity to United Nations activities, especially in the economic and social sectors. That was true even though there were political and technical difficulties in the way of adopting a thoroughly logical planning and programming system and, in addition, a large measure of flexibility was essential.

14. Referring to the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1), his delegation expressed its gratitude to the Group for its useful report and suggested that the Committee's discussion of the recommendations contained therein should be synchronized with the meetings of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, established by the General Assembly at its seventh special session.

15. In the meantime, the Fifth Committee might consider whether to adopt some of the less controversial recommendations of the Working Group, such as alternating consideration of the budget and the plan, and whether to defer the adoption of its other suggestions.

16. In conclusion, he said that planning and budgeting in a universal, multi-purpose organization was a complex matter and posed a real intellectual challenge. It was therefore to be hoped that the Committee would consider all the far-reaching implications of any changes recommended.

17. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) expressed appreciation for the efforts made to improve the presentation of the programme budget. One of the main difficulties encountered in integrating the varied activities of the United Nations was the diversity in practice of the decision-making bodies. He therefore wondered how far and at what cost programming could actually be integrated. The Joint Inspection Unit in its report (see A/9646) seemed to suggest that intergovernmental bodies should respect established planning limits and programme objectives, while the Secretary-General felt that activities should be pruned in accordance with the integrated programme after they had been decided upon in substance. The Secretariat could not be blamed for failing to present an integrated concept, for decisions that had not been made with a view to being integrated could not subsequently be integrated fully. His delegation felt that the interesting suggestions for setting priorities made by the Secretary-General in his report on the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 should not yet be put into practice. It also shared the reservations on some of the recommendations made by the Joint Inspetion Unit which the Advisory Committee had expressed in its report on the subject (A/10081).

18. An integrated programme budget could not be achieved exclusively through procedural adjustments. It involved the objectives and the structure of the United Nations. That fact had now been recognized and was stated in the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System (E/AC.62/9). It was also reflected in the decision taken by the General Assembly at its seventh special session to set up an *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. As proper programming was closely linked with the restructuring that was still under way, no major decisions on programme and budget machinery could be taken yet. Accordingly, he welcomed the cautious approach taken by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery and endorsed in principle its conclusions pending the outcome of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee. Those recommendations that were within the competence of the Fifth Committee should be implemented without delay; in particular, the proposal that the medium-term plan and the biennial programme budget should be considered in alternate years should be implemented as from 1976, even if the revised medium-term plan was not complete as a result of lack of time.

19. Streamlining of United Nations activities could not obviate the need for careful scrutiny of the programme budget project by project, despite the merits of various possible methods for setting general objectives and priorities. The Advisory Committee, within the limits of its mandate, should continue its valuable work in that field.

20. Another pitfall of too theoretical an approach to an integrated programme budget was that, if sectoral viewpoints were emphasized and programme objectives dealt with abstractly, individual responsibilities in the Secretariat and grounds for considering requests for additional posts and consultants would be understood less clearly. From a management point of view, the best use of resources was guaranteed when the activity of a particular Secretariat unit corresponded to a specific programme. With a few exceptions, the programme budget did not provide for operative activities in the proper sense of the word; apart from technical services, it concerned almost exclusively people

employed by the United Nations in such activities as analysis, research, organizing seminars and training. If the criteria developed for operative budgets were applied too extensively to the programme budget, a false impression would be created. Already the programme budget had introduced a certain rigidity by tying posts exclusively to certain programmes. His delegation had some reservations about what could be expected from further refinement of programme budget methodolgy.

21. Since the United Nations budget dealt mainly with employees, when the Secretary-General spoke of "real programme growth" he was referring to an increase in staff. That kind of growth was very different from increasing the UNDP budget or raising the financial level of World Bank activities. He shared the misgivings expressed by the Advisory Committee and accepted its findings in paragraphs 13 to 15 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2). The method used in computing real growth was confusing. His delegation was unable to determine what rate of growth was advisable, and had no alternative but to rely on the detailed scrutiny of the Secretary-General's requests by the Advisory Committee. His delegation intended in general to accept the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the budget estimates.

22. The Secretary-General had requested 826 new posts of which the Advisory Committee recommended 590 for approval. The staff now numbered more than 10,000, and the marginal efficiency of added posts must be decreasing. He drew attention to the fact that temporary posts were not shown as such in the budget, and suggested that in future temporary post requirements should be shown along with established post requirements, so that the grounds for conversion of temporary into established posts would be easier to assess. He also drew attention to the method whereby credits for temporary assistance posts were recalculated to maintain the existing level of activity and often furtner increased by a growth percentage, which implied that the conversion of temporary to established posts simply led to an increase in new temporary posts. Many posts remained vacant, often for reasons of political pressure or because of a cumbersome recruitment procedure. His Government's efforts to ensure proper representation in the Secretariat were impeded by those procedures. Accordingly, he endorsed the Advisory Committee's suggestion for delayed recruitment allowances and restraint in reclassification. Price increases and changes in currency exchange rates should not lead to built-in contingency funds for the worst possible developments; there should be enough funds provided to carry out approved programmes while allowing for sound budgetary management. He accepted the Secretary-General's assumptions on rates of currency exchange.

23. His delegation intended to study with great care the suggestions made by the Secretary-General in his statement (A/C.5/1685) before the Committee at the previous meeting concerning the precarious financial situation of the United Nations, and hoped that a timely solution would be found. As the fourth largest contributor, his Government wished to ensure that the funds were spent in the most profitable way to benefit the international community and implement General Assembly resolutions and decisions, particularly those of the recent sixth and seventh special sessions.

24. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that he was pleased to note that, in line with a suggestion made by the Cuban delegation at the twenty-eighth session, the estimated expenditure requirements for 1976-1977 had been presented both in monetary and real terms, that is, at 1975 rates. For an even fuller appreciation of longer-term trends, he would have preferred to see the total expenditure figures expressed in terms of rates for several previous years. The Cuban delegation was also gratified to find that programme growth figures had been given under each budget section, although it agreed with the conclusion of the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 13) that they did not reflect real programme growth and could best be defined as growth in expenditures expressed in real terms.

25. Despite the optimism expressed by several delegations at the last two Assembly sessions regarding the transitory nature of inflation and currency instability, the two phenomena had persisted with disastrous effects on the finances of the international community. His delegation had been surprised, however, to find a separate column under each section of the proposed programme budget estimating total 1976-1977 requirements based on rates of inflation assumed for those years. That system of full budgeting purported to indicate budgetary losses which were in fact wholly unpredictable. Such losses had been financed in previous years, including the biennium 1974-1975, by having the Secretary-General submit supplementary estimates. Indeed, neither the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination nor the Advisory Committee had recommended full budgeting as a satisfactory solution to the problem of measuring the impact of inflation and currency instability on the United Nations budget, and the Working Group on Currency Instability had left a decision on the item pending at its 1974 meeting.

26. It had been repeatedly acknowledged, both in the Secretary-General's foreword to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and in the Advisory Committee's report, that the figures given for inflation and currency exchange rates for the biennium 1976-1977 were arbitrary assumptions. In fact, the margin of uncertainty concerning future trends was so wide that the Secretary-General's estimates of the amount likely to be added to budgetary requirements in 1976-1977 calculated at 1975 rates ranged from some $66 million (*ibid.*, para. 22) to close to $100 million if additional requirements conservatively estimated at some $30 million gross should in fact arise in 1976-1977 (*ibid.*, para. 24). On the other hand, the Advisory Committee stated candidly that it was not satisfied of the accuracy of the Secretary-General's estimates of inflation in that biennium and consequently viewed his assumptions as no more than working hypotheses (*ibid.*, para. 22).

27. His delegation questioned the wisdom of estimating the magnitude of losses due to inflation and currency instability merely on the basis of working hypotheses. As the Advisory Committee stated in its report (*ibid.*, para. 23), were it not for the Secretary-General's assumption, in the rates of exchange used in preparing the 1976-1977 estimates, that the United States dollar would be strengthened, the impact of inflation would have been $72.7 million, or $6.9 million more than indicated in

annex I of the foreword to the programme budget. Clearly, the working hypotheses could not reflect what would actually happen in 1976 and 1977 and there was no justification for including that unknown factor in the programme budget. It would be wiser to wait until the thirty-first and thirty-second sessions of the General Assembly before assessing the impact of inflation and currency instability on budgetary requirements for 1976 and 1977, respectively. In the meantime, the Committee should continue to seek a satisfactory solution to the problem. While the system of full budgeting might be applicable to the Secretariat, it had adverse consequences for most Member States.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

28. The CHAIRMAN announced that the list of speakers for the general discussion would be closed on Friday, 3 October, at 6 p.m. In order to make the best use of the time available, he intended, subject to the agreement of the Committee, to take up the first reading of non-controversial sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 whenever there was a pause in the general discussion. Those sections were: 13 (United Nations Environment Programme), 14 (International narcotics control), 16 (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), 18 (Human rights), 19 (International Court of Justice) and 20 (Legal activities).

29. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) endorsed the Chairman's suggestion.

30. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) proposed that the consideration of section 13 should be deferred, since his delegation intended to discuss at some length the question of the use of consultants in UNEP.

The proposal was adopted.

31. Mr. NZUE N'KOGHE (Gabon) suggested that the Committee should also discuss the question raised by the representative of Cuba, namely, the advisability of incorporating assumed inflation rates in the budget estimates.

32. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to begin its first reading of sections 14, 16, 18, 19 and 20 of the proposed programme budget at the following meeting.

It was so decided.

33. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to be prepared, by the end of the general discussion, to formulate concrete proposals with regard to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on medium-term planning in the United Nations system (see A/9646) and the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1).

34. He suggested that the Committee should agree to invite the Controller to provide explanations, at the following meeting, on certain fundamental questions concerning the proposed programme budget.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.

1702nd meeting

Tuesday, 30 September 1975, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1702

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1701st meeting)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion (continued)

1. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) recalled that the goal of the establishment of the programme budgeting system in the United Nations had been to achieve an integrated system of programming, planning and budgeting that would provide Member States with a clear picture of the programmes, activities and priorities of the Organization and of the resources allocated to them. The Turkish delegation welcomed the innovations of the United Nations programme budget described in annex VII to the Secretary-General's foreword to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) and in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008 and Corr.2). The structure of the budget had been modified in order to reduce the number of the expenditure sections from 35 to 26, and also to present a more consolidated view of requirements, especially in trusteeship and decolonization sectors; the sequence of the main parts of the budget had been reorganized; and unnecessarily detailed background descriptive material had been replaced by statements of medium-term objectives, activities and projects; the tabular presentation, finally, had been expanded and an attempt had been made to present resource requirements under the regular budget and also from extra-budgetary sources. In each case a uniform table

indicated: first, the direct costs, from both resources; secondly, for the first time, the apportioned costs involving the allocation to substantive programmes of programme support and common services provided in the same or other sections of the budget; and thirdly, extra-budgetary funds available, or likely to be so, for the purposes of operational projects such as those relating to UNDP and projects in the field of population and drug abuse control. In view of the distortion caused by inflation and currency fluctuations, the components of the additional credits had been presented in a systematic manner. A separate analysis had been provided at all levels of the budget indicating real growth in percentage terms.

2. Every Member State appreciated the complex and time-consuming process of budget preparation. It was also expected, however, that the proposed budget should be presented to the Advisory Committee in time and in proper form.

3. The Turkish delegation shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 8 and 9 of its report relating to the programme budget: the presentation varied from section to section and even within sections; comparative data on output in 1974-1975 were not given in every instance; additional information on extra-budgetary resources was needed; adequate justifications were sometimes not provided for requests for new posts; increased resources were often requested for areas consisting of "continuing activities" governed by decisions taken several years back; data were usually lacking on activities being terminated during the biennium and on the redeployment of resources; and the data on the estimated volume of manpower resources to be devoted to particular activities were not given. There was thus still a long way to go.

4. Since 1973 the object-type, line item classification budget system of the United Nations had been changed into a programme-budgeting classification system. However, the old-type review and examination techniques were still being practised in the subsidiary and legislative organs of the Organization. In order to allow an adaptation of budget review techniques in accordance with the concepts of programme budgeting, the Turkish delegation suggested that the Secretariat should consider the presentation of the next biennial budget in two formats: a concise and integrated format for the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly; a detailed format, containing all the required information, for the Advisory Committee and for implementation and accounting purposes.

5. The Turkish delegation shared the concern of the Advisory Committee on the "incremental methodology" once again employed by the Secretariat, and was of the opinion that, in the absence of the analysis suggested by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 11 of its report, the results obtained were disputable.

6. He noted the discussion in paragraphs 12 to 21 of the report of the Advisory Committee of the methodology used to calculate, at 1975 rates, the cost of maintenance in 1976-1977 of the 1974-1975 programmes. He pointed out that the term "programme growth" should mean at least an addition to the proposed budget of a new activity or a new project and not merely the addition of personnel posts or material in order to achieve previous objectives. Such an addition might be called an increase in expenditure but not a programme growth. In that connexion, the Turkish delegation would welcome an official document containing the remarks of the Secretariat on methodologies A and B suggested by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 18 to 21 of its report. Other subjective factors used in the calculation of the proposed budget were also disputable: the estimates of inflation in 1976-1977 given in paragraph 26 of the foreword to the proposed programme budget –8 per cent in 1976 and 7 per cent in 1977 in New York, and 9 and 8 per cent, respectively, for all other office locations–were too optimistic; whereas a rate of 3.10 Swiss francs to the United States dollar had been used in calculating the proposed biennial budget for 1976-1977, the actual rate used by the Organization in May 1975 had fallen to 2.57. The dollar was at the moment going strong in the European markets, but that was still an open question.

7. The Secretary-General had submitted a proposed programme budget totalling $737 million for the biennium 1976-1977 which was a gross increase of 21.6 per cent over the revised appropriations for 1974-1975. The proposed 21.6 per cent, when compared with the average biennial increase for 1970-1971 and 1974-1975 (24.4 per cent), appeared at first glance to be a very moderate increase. However, the additional requirements might be something of the order of $45 million. Out of that sum $30 million (or an increase of 4.9 per cent) could be added as a result of potential shortfalls in currency rates and $15 million (or an increase of 2.4 per cent) as a result of the unbudgeted items. To that sum could be added at least $15 million (or an increase of 2.4 per cent) as a result of inflation. The proposed budget should be evaluated as almost $800 million, which represented an increase of 31.3 per cent over the 1974-1975 revised appropriations. The Turkish delegation therefore supported the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. The Secretary-General, however, would have to fill that gap by revising the budget estimates during the current session or by requesting supplementary appropriations sooner or later.

8. The information provided in the annexes to the foreword to the proposed programme budget and the figures shown in the report of the Advisory Committee were very valuable for the evaluation of the proposed allocation of resources by the main fields of activity. The Secretariat should provide that type of comparative information tables, figures, and charts for the next biennial budget proposals.

9. Another important process of the United Nations budgeting system was the maintenance of the sufficient flow of cash for the effective implementation of the programme budget. That was a particularly serious problem at the current time and the Turkish delegation shared the hope of the Secretary-General that a new approach to the Organization's financial questions would be seriously considered during the session. Few Member States were prompt in the payments of their contributions to the budget of the Organization and in their advances to the Working Capital Fund. Such a delay was due to the fact that in many countries the budget year started on 1 March or in mid-summer; therefore, when they received the notification

from the Secretary-General at the beginning of January, Governments had to apply to Parliament for supplementary appropriations. That took time. One solution would be to authorize the Secretary-General, under the terms of a resolution, to call on Member States to add to their budgetary rules a provision which would allow automatic appropriations that did not have to go to Parliament. The provision might read:

"The Government is authorized to increase the amount requested in the budget for the payment of contributions to the United Nations budget and of advances to the Organization's Working Capital Fund under the required conditions."

Moreover, since the Working Capital Fund was wholly exhausted and for the past 12 years the size of the Fund had remained unchanged, despite an almost fourfold increase in the size of the expenditure budget, the time was ripe for consideration of the proposal of the Secretary-General concerning the size of the Working Capital Fund.

10. The Turkish delegation was of the opinion that the medium-term plan should cover a period of six years. That would allow the Secretary-General's rolling-plan approach (A/10006/Add.1, para. 20 *(i)*) or the Joint Inspection Unit's fixed-horizon planning approach (see A/9646, para. 140) to be discussed in a more meaningful and rational way. In that connexion, the Turkish delegation shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 81 and 83 of its report. The dynamism of a programme budgeting and medium-term planning machinery required the establishment of a rational and effective evaluation system, which did not exist in the United Nations.

11. The Turkish delegation fully supported the recommendations of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1). Some of the recommendations of that Group could be adopted by the Fifth Committee before the remaining recommendations were referred to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, set up by the General Assembly at its seventh special session. A decision should be reached during the current session on the recommendation that the medium-term plan and the budget should be considered in alternate years.

12. It was in the interest of all Member States that the limited resources of the United Nations should be used as effectively as possible and should be concentrated on the economic, social and humanitarian sectors to which the developing countries attached the greatest importance, in accordance with the decisions of the sixth and seventh special sessions.

13. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) observed that the biennium 1976-1977 was only the second period to which the concept of programme budgeting was being applied and he was therefore all the more appreciative of both the favourable and the critical comments which had been made concerning the Secretariat's efforts to improve the presentation of the programme budget. In the preparation of the budget proposals, the Secretariat had been guided by General Assembly resolution 3199 (XXVIII), which called, *inter alia*, for information on the allocation of indirect costs of programmes and for further information on extra-budgetary resources. An effort had been made to meet those requests to the greatest possible extent. However, he was desirous of serving the Committee further by providing information and clarifications where they would assist the discussion, reserving for comment at a later stage such basic issues as the relationship between the medium-term plan and programme budgeting, calculation of the magnitude of the inflation and currency instability factors, the question of an incremental approach versus a zero base concept and weighing of the advantages of programme budgeting against its limitations as a practical instrument for the United Nations.

14. Before explaining the Secretary-General's approach to the presentation of the budget document before the Committee, he wished to dispel the concern expressed by the representative of Italy at the 1700th meeting that there might be a discrepancy in the figures for staff members given in various documents. In reality, they were correct both in the proposed programme budget (A/10006) and in part five, chapter VI, of the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization.[1] However, the figure of 15,092 Secretariat members given in the latter document included the staffs of UNDP, UNICEF and UNITAR and only 10,163 represented permanent or temporary staff employed in the United Nations Secretariat for the performance of substantive work and financed either from the regular budget or from extra-budgetary resources.

15. The proposed programme budget submitted by the Secretary-General compared the initial estimates for the biennium 1976-1977 with the revised appropriations for 1974-1975. Since in any one year initial estimates were inevitably exceeded by the final revised appropriations, Member States might have been better forewarned if, as the representative of Japan had suggested at the 1701st meeting, the initial estimates for 1976-1977 had been compared with the initial appropriations for 1974-1975. On the other hand, given the uncertainties regarding the cost and extent of revised estimates, such a comparison might not have been realistic. The solution might be to present both comparisons, as the Advisory Committee had done in its report.

16. Since the budget, by its very nature, sought to estimate increased capacity required rather than to measure programme delivery, the Advisory Committee had correctly interpreted the term "programme growth" to mean growth in expenditure. Any programme had to be seen against the background of input–that is, expenditure in money and manpower–and output, or the benefits produced by the programme, such as number of meetings and documentation, which could not be measured in terms of money. An increase in input was not equivalent to an increase in output; much would depend on the efficiency with which resources were utilized and deployed. In the budget proposal, the proposed growth in expenditure was shown against the background of resources deployed for certain programmes and programme targets and was not synony-

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 1.*

mous with growth in programme as measured by its results. In future programme budgets, the point would be made more explicit by using the expression "growth in expenditure expressed in real terms".

17. Referring to annex VI to the Secretary-General's foreword to the proposed programme budget, he explained that to the initial estimate under the regular budget had been added extra-budgetary resources given in direct support of the particular budget section. The total represented direct costs. The costs of programme support were then apportioned to the various substantive programmes within the section. Finally, the common service expenditures were apportioned to the various substantive programmes. The total represented apportioned costs. The aim was to present a realistic picture of how the resources were being used, which would help to define the relationship between supporting and substantive programmes and to identify areas where further economies could be achieved.

18. Clarifying a point raised by the representative of the United Kingdom at the 1700th meeting, he pointed out that technical backstopping was not a supporting activity, but a substantive one; it therefore could not be shown as a distinct item in the breakdown of supporting costs in annex VI. Yet, even with respect to the substantive work programme of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, some estimates of technical backstopping costs had been shown, but they should be regarded as no more than indicative figures because the actual needs for support of particular projects would vary in accordance with the needs of the project. Moreover, the programme budget did not deal with the question whether reimbursement of overhead costs was sufficient to compensate for the Organization's technical and administrative backstopping expenditures. Although earlier studies indicated that it was insufficient, it should be recognized that the question was a political one and that full reimbursement should not necessarily be sought.

19. Directing his remarks particularly to the representative of Italy, he explained that the total of extra-budgetary funds shown at the end of annex VI represented resources made available for administrative and substantive Secretariat activities as opposed to resources made available for actual projects, which were called "operational funds". As compared with total estimated requirements under the regular budget totalling about $737 million, and the estimated total of about $80 million which would be available in extra-budgetary resources, the level of funds likely to be available for operational projects would amount to some $331 million. Of that total, roughly $172.5 million represented projects to be financed by UNDP, approximately $64 million those to be financed by the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme, $26.8 million those to be financed by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, $10 million those to be financed by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and approximately $57.8 million represented projects to be financed by miscellaneous trust funds. All that information concerning "outside funds" could not have been detailed in the budget without substantially increasing the already bulky documentation before the Committee, which had been made necessary because the Controller had decided to save money by disallowing printing of the proposed budget. In that connexion, he noted that it would have been possible to analyse the impact of inflation and currency instability on an over-all basis instead of showing it for each budget section; the latter procedure had been followed in order to present as complete a statement as possible of the total anticipated expenditures connected with each programme.

20. In contemplating a departure from the principle of full budgeting, it was important to realize that inflation affected the different categories of expenses (budget sections) to a different extent and that, in addition, the United Nations was suffering from serious cash flow problems. Without full budgeting it would lose the benefit of an adequate inflow of contributions at the beginning of the biennium to finance expenditures during the first half of the biennium. The representative of Japan would note that, while it was true that UNESCO did not project inflationary trends beyond the first half of each financial period, the risk was minimized because the General Conference appropriated a reserve of $10 million to meet contingencies and granted the Executive Board standing authority further to appropriate up to 5 per cent of the approved budget for such contingencies. The United Nations would have to set up similar safeguards to counteract the loss of cash inflows which were essential to its effective performance.

21. It was difficult to understand the methodology used in the budget presentation because the figures for the base period, or current biennium, did not appear to be calculated the same way as the figures for 1976-1977. In the first instance, the figure given was the actual appropriation, which reflected a substantial turnover deduction. When measuring the increase required, however, the point of departure was the expenditure needed to finance those approved posts after the delayed recruitment period was over. With the disappearance of that factor of delay, the amount required to finance the same staff was inevitably increased. For the additional staff to be recruited under the new budget, the presentation showed only the appropriations requested after again applying the deduction for delayed recruitment. Since the budget could show only the level of appropriations actually required in a given financial period, the figure for the 1976-1977 biennium could be only the amount actually needed to finance the proposed new posts. It would be beyond the scope of the budget presentation to show the full potential cost of those posts to be incurred in the 1978-1979 biennium, when there would be no deduction for delayed recruitment any more.

22. If methodology B suggested by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 18 of its report were applied, the second end of the comparison would have to be the actual expenditures to be incurred for the new posts in 1976-1977. The question was what figure in the current biennium should be taken as the first end of the comparison. The answer seemed doubtful only because, in an effort to provide a more detailed breakdown, the budget presentation distinguished between maintenance and growth. Whereas the Advisory Committee wanted the amounts required in the 1976-1977 biennium to finance approved posts to be shown as "growth", the budget presentation showed them as "maintenance". As a result, the growth figure was lower because the maintenance base

was higher than in the method proposed by the Advisory Committee. The Secretary-General had endeavoured to explain how he had determined the maintenance requirement in paragraph 11 of his foreword to the proposed programme budget. He had considered it preferable to include the additional amounts required in the new biennium to finance the posts approved in the current budget period under the heading of "maintenance". Indeed, all expenditures resulting from keeping the approved number of posts in the forthcoming budget represented "maintenance": they were the financial implications of maintaining approved capacity and not of increasing capacity. The distinction between "maintenance" and "growth" was intended to differentiate between cases of strictly financial follow-up of decisions already taken and financial commitment where a new choice had to be made. In that sense, maintenance did include growth in expenditure but the additional appropriation was only a further reflection of what had already been decided by the General Assembly.

23. His remarks should not be construed as prejudging the view of the Committee. If the Committee were to decide that additional staff requirements should be shown as an element of growth because of the disappearance of the delayed recruitment factor, the Secretary-General would follow that method in the preparation of his next programme budget proposals.

24. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) congratulated the Controller on his excellent and very comprehensive explanations, which complemented the statement made by the Secretary-General at the 1700th meeting (A/C.5/1685), and which would undoubtedly constitute an extremely useful document of reference for all delegations wishing to speak in the general discussion.

25. He would appreciate, however, some explanations on a few points of detail. First, with regard to the salaries paid to staff in such organizations as UNICEF, UNITAR and UNDP, he would like to know what percentage of the costs was borne by the United Nations and what percentage by the organizations. Secondly, the United Nations, as the executing agency for certain projects, was entitled to reimbursement of part of the overhead costs incurred; it would be interesting to have some further information on that point.

26. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) thanked the Controller for his extremely lucid and helpful statement. On the question of the manning table, he pointed out that the figure of approximately 15,000 staff was mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, but that no distinction was made between the different categories of staff according to duration and type of contract or according to organization. His delegation would like a more detailed breakdown of the over-all figure.

27. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the implied suggestion of the representative of the Philippines that the text of the statement made by the Controller should be issued as a document in the same way as the opening statement given by the Secretary-General, observed that, under the terms of General Assembly resolution 2538 (XXIV), a statement of the financial implications must be submitted before a decision could be taken. The financial implications for issuing the statement would amount to approximately $2,000.

28. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) felt that the Controller's statement, although of great interest, should not be issued *in extenso*. The Fifth Committee should set an example by endeavouring to limit as far as possible any financial implications that might result from its decisions. Moreover, it was during the reading of the individual sections of the programme budget that members of the Committee would want to exchange views with the Controller, who could be expected at that time to provide every guidance for a better understanding of the highly complex programme budgeting system, which was still at an experimental stage.

29. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) endorsed the comments of the representative of Algeria. The Controller's statement would be summarized in the provisional summary record, and there was no reason to doubt that a faithful account of his views and explanations would be given.

30. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that, for reasons of economy, he shared the opinion of the representatives of Algeria and the United Kingdom. The summary record would certainly provide a very comprehensive account of the Controller's statement. Furthermore, having spoken very early in the general discussion, the Controller would undoubtedly have other opportunities to address the Committee on substantive questions. If the Committee decided to reproduce that particular statement *in extenso*, it would be setting a precedent for the future, and that did not seem desirable.

31. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) explained that, although he had indeed said that the Controller's statement would very usefully complement that of the Secretary-General, he had not proposed that the text of the statement should be issued in full.

32. The CHAIRMAN noted that the members of the Committee appeared to be in agreement that the Controller's statement should be fully summarized in the summary record.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1701st meeting)

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget

33. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) felt that, before proceeding to a consideration of the individual sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), the Committee should take a decision on a general question that concerned the entire exercise of programme budget approval. The question at issue was whether, during its consideration, the Committee should take account of the assumptions as to inflation rates which were incorporated in the budget estimates but which had not been broken down in sufficient detail in the corre-

sponding report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008 and Corr.2). Before the Committee began to consider the individual sections, it must decide upon the procedure it would follow.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that, as he understood it, the representative of Cuba felt that it would be undesirable for the Committee to begin its consideration of the proposed programme budget before taking a decision on the "inflation" factor, for which provision had been made in the budget estimates. He suggested two alternative procedures: the Committee could decide to take no notice of the "inflation" factor in its first reading of the individual sections; or, bearing in mind that it was the first reading and that the Advisory Committee had approved many of the Secretary-General's proposals, the Committee, without prejudice to the decisions that it would subsequently take in the course of the second reading, could decide to embark forthwith on the first reading of the individual sections, taking into account the inflation factor as currently shown in the proposals. He felt that the second procedure would be preferable.

35. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) reminded members that the inflation factor was not shown separately in the report of the Advisory Committee and that consequently it was impossible to ascertain to what extent the inflation factor was reflected in any of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee that the Fifth Committee might adopt. His delegation therefore preferred the first of the procedures suggested by the Chairman.

36. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) supported by Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) and Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) favoured the second procedure.

37. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) observed that, in its report, the Advisory Committee had pointed out that the inflation rates selected by the Secretary-General were no more than working hypotheses. These hypotheses apart, the question arose whether it was acceptable to reflect the inflation factor in the budget estimates; his delegation felt that it was. There was a danger, however, if the Committee had at the outset to resolve a question of principle, that the discussion might continue indefinitely. Consequently, his delegation supported the second procedure advocated by the Chairman, namely, that the Committee should take a decision, in first reading, on the recommendations in the form in which they had been submitted, subject to the possibility of making any adjustments that might be necessary, in second reading, to the appropriations approved in the first reading.

38. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that for the reasons given by the representative of the Upper Volta, he was in favour of the second procedure suggested by the Chairman.

39. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that at the appropriate time his delegation would deal in detail with the problems of inflation; however, for the time being it strongly supported the Cuban proposal that each section should be considered at the first reading without regard to the inflationary component.

40. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) thought that the Cuban proposal warranted consideration, but it would seem more logical to have a first reading of the entire programme budget and then to go back and consider the estimated inflation rates. It was indeed an important problem since the inflationary factor represented a total of more than $65 million for the whole budget and since, in many sections, the rate of inflation exceeded the growth rate of the programme in question. The Advisory Committee had, of course, emphasized that problem.

41. However, unless a third solution could be found, his delegation would support the Chairman's first suggestion.

42. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that many delegations had not yet made their general comments on the proposed programme budget. In their statements they would no doubt put forward new views on the problem of inflation. Perhaps the Cuban delegation would wish to take that factor into account.

43. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that he understood the practical difficulties which the adoption of his suggestion would present. In view of that consideration and the argument just put forward by the Chariman he would not press his proposal.

44. The CHAIRMAN said that he took it that the Committee wished to begin its first reading of the sections of the proposed programme budget, without prejudice to later decisions concerning the inclusion of the inflationary component in the budget figures, or its exclusion, and concerning the way in which that factor should be treated.

It was so decided.

SECTION 14. INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

45. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the funds requested by the Secretary-General under section 14 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) amounted to approximately $4,023,000. The Advisory Committee, in paragraph 14.13 of its report, had recommended reducing that amount by $167,000. Furthermore, the reduction in the estimated cost of the representation allowances, which the Advisory Committee recommended in paragraph 65 of its report, would involve an additional reduction of $2,000 in the estimated requirements under that section. The total allocation recommended by the Advisory Committee in section 14 was therefore $3,854,000.

46. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that the estimated requirements under section 14 were for two organs, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board, and their respective secretariats: the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the Control Board's secretariat. The programme also had a further component, namely, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control.

47. The funds requested by the Secretary-General, i.e. $4,023,000, represented an increase of 33.9 per cent over

the revised estimates for 1974-1975. Real growth for the section was estimated by the Secretary-General at 5.9 per cent—a rate higher than that of the proposed programme budget as a whole. If extra-budgetary funds and apportioned costs were taken into account, the estimated requirements for international narcotics control would become $9,900,000.

48. In its first report[2] on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975 the Advisory Committee had already expressed its concern over the lack of co-ordination and the duplication which might result from the existence, side by side, of two secretariats in the field of narcotics control. The Economic and Social Council had itself requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts for the best possible co-ordination between the various organs. But little progress had been made in that direction. In paragraph 14.12 of the current report the Advisory Committee suggested that the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination might be invited to study the problem. In the last analysis the decision rested with Member States, and the Fifth Committee's views on the matter would be useful.

49. In its consideration of the Secretary-General's proposals, the Advisory Committee had taken into account the justifications submitted and the current resources available to the programme. It concluded that the request to add 6 posts—2 Professional and 4 General Service posts—to the current manning table of the two secretariats could be reduced. If one took into account extra-budgetary resources, the current manning table stood at 88: 47 Professional and 41 General Service posts. The Advisory Committee believed that even with the slightly increased work-load referred to in the Secretary-General's estimates, the current staff should be able to handle that extra work. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommended the addition of 1 P-4 post to the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board for the reasons given in paragraph 14.9 of its report. It was not convinced, however, that a case had been made to justify the request to reclassify the post of the Secretary of the Board from D-1 to the D-2 level and, as stated in paragraph 14.10, the Advisory Committee was unable to endorse it. The request for reclassification of a P-4 to a P-5 post was covered by the recommendation contained in paragraph 61 of the report.

2 *Ibid., Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8* and corrigendum, para. 18.3.

50. Lastly, he drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 14.11 of the report of the Advisory Committee in regard to paragraph 14.16 of the Secretary-General's estimates.

51. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that his delegation did not wish to recommend any new cuts in the funds requested by the Secretary-General in section 14, because the money spent in the fight against those scourges of mankind which were the abuse of, and illicit traffic in, narcotic drugs was money well spent.

52. His delegation wished to make a renewed appeal for the merger of the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the International Control Board did, of course, have different functions and responsibilities, since the Commission's task was to help the Economic and Social Council, while the Board supervised narcotic-drug production, manufacture and trade and tried to identify leakages to the illicit drug traffic. But the staff servicing each of the two organs must be perfectly acquainted with the activities of the other in order to avoid duplication of effort and ensure that information was circulated in a satisfactory manner. It could be seen from the list of staff of the United Nations Secretariat[3] that there were 29 persons working for the International Narcotics Control Board and 44 working for the Commission, plus 5 for field projects.

53. After a survey of the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Administrative Management Service had concluded that from the administrative viewpoint there would be advantage in integrating the two secretariats in question. Furthermore, in its resolution 1935 (LVIII) of 6 May 1975 the Economic and Social Council had requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts for the best possible co-ordination in the struggle against drug abuse and it had also requested him to invite governmental assistance with a view to achieving the maximum results and avoiding overlapping and duplication of effort. His delegation submitted therefore that as a first step the Fifth Committee, in its report, should urge the unification of the two narcotic-drug secretariats.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

3 Document A/C.5/L.1224, dated 15 August 1975.

1703rd meeting

Wednesday, 1 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1703

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1701st meeting)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion (continued)

1. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that the form of presentation of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 showed a notable improvement over that for 1974-1975. The order of presentation of the sections was more logical, descriptive narratives had been replaced by an account of medium-term objectives, activities and even projects and, above all, the tabular material was more abundant and the breakdown of expenses more detailed. Other welcome developments were the inclusion of annexes accompanying the Secretary-General's foreword, the calculation of "real growth" by section and programme, the allocation of indirect costs to most programmes and the inclusion of information on extra-budgetary funds, even though the data on the sources of such funds were not sufficiently comprehensive. It was true that the presentation was not consistently satisfactory and that regrettable omissions and variants were to be found in some sections. On balance, however, the results of the Secretariat's work were constructive, and the Organization was clearly moving away from a "budget by operational unit" towards a real "programme budget". One of the aims of the reform had been achieved, at least in part: Member States could follow the distribution and allocation of funds appropriated.

2. On the other hand, other questions which the programme budgeting system was designed to elucidate –whether the estimates were justified, if they corresponded to activities decided upon by the legislative organs, if alternative, more economical means of attaining United Nations objectives existed–remained partially unanswered. As the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions observed in paragraph 9 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), the relation between requests for increased resources and additional activities was not always clear from the programme material. Generally speaking, no information had been given concerning activities which would be discontinued during the biennium or the way in which the resources thus released would be reallocated.

3. Those short-comings derived from the rather simplistic "incremental" approach employed by the Secretary-General which, in the words of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, at the 1700th meeting appeared to discourage "any meaningful inquiry into the utility, productivity, and performance of ongoing activities" (A/C.5/1686). The base to which activities had been added should not have been accepted without a careful examination. Furthermore, the soundness of the "full budgeting" approach, which made advance provision for such factors as inflation, was questionable. It provided a solution of convenience which was not conducive to achieving economies and which, moreover, had not been adopted by the more courageous organizations in the United Nations system. The rates of inflation selected by the Secretary-General were no more than working hypotheses, as were the forecasts of the parities of currencies other than the dollar.

4. Full budgeting had even more regrettable results when applied to a biennial budget. Logically, the contributions of Member States for 1976 should be lower than their contributions for 1977. However, in accordance with current practice, the two annual contributions were set at the same level, even though the appropriations for 1976 would be greater than the expenditure planned for that year, while the contributions for 1977 would not be adequate to meet the needs of the second half of the biennium. The Secretariat should therefore specify the exact amount of resources required for 1976 without incorporating into the estimates a projected 1977 rate of inflation, and the contributions of Member States for the first year of the biennium should not exceed that amount.

5. In estimating the growth in expenditure, the Secretary-General had chosen to compare the initial estimates for 1976-1977 with the 1974-1975 revised appropriations. However, it was clear that that methodology underestimated the growth factor. Of the alternative methodologies for calculating "programme growth" and "real growth" described by the Advisory Committee in its report, his delegation was inclined to favour that outlined in paragraph 18 *(b)*, because it showed the amount of growth in real terms by comparing comparable elements (the cost of new posts, less the delayed recruitment deduction for both biennia. His delegation also agreed with the statement in paragraph 13 of the Advisory Committee's report that the term "programme growth" as used by the Secretary-General really meant "growth in expenditures expressed in real terms". However, having heard the explanations of the Controller on that point at the previous meeting, he inclined to believe that the discrepancy lay in the choice of words and that there was no real divergence of opinions.

6. The medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1) also showed considerable improvement over that for 1974-1977. Particularly noteworthy was the stimulating and innovative material to be found in the introduction and part one concerning the establishment of an effective planning system for the Organization. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination had already expressed interest in the Secretary-General's suggestion that the point of departure for medium-term planning should be the determination of an average rate of growth in real terms for the period of the plan vis-à-vis the base period, programme growth being defined by the adoption of an original system of "incremental priorities" established on the basis of special criteria. The Secretary-General did not conceal the fact that the predominantly political character of United Nations activities gave rise to specific difficulties so far as planning was concerned because the orientations selected for the planning period might at any time be called into question by initiatives taken in the intergovernmental organs. The French delegation felt that all efforts to establish truly integrated programmes would be in danger of being jeopardized until some measure of discipline was shown in the matter of launching new unplanned and unbudgeted activities. The disorderly proliferation of bureaucracy and services would continue unless the conduct of Member States was sufficiently self-disciplined to ensure the necessary co-ordination at the different levels and to permit the choice of sensible options.

7. His delegation associated itself with the comments of the Advisory Committee (A/10081) on the important report on medium-term planning in the United Nations system prepared by the Joint Inspection Unit and appearing in document A/9646 and it welcomed the fact that the latter's recommendation concerning the harmonization of

programme budget presentation was already under study. It hoped that the Committee would discuss and take a decision on both the report of that Unit and the observations of the Advisory Committee. As to the merits of a "rolling plan" versus a "fixed-horizon plan", his delegation, while acknowledging the superiority of the latter, was inclined to agree with the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee that it was preferable, at least for the time being, to adopt a "rolling plan", to be re-examined every other year, since that would allow some flexibility in the setting of priorities. Furthermore, in view of the Organization's relatively limited planning experience and its special difficulties, the four-year period for the medium-term plan should also be retained for the time being.

8. The report prepared by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) was objective and balanced, gave a penetrating analysis of existing machinery and needs, and proposed reasonable solutions. His delegation endorsed the ideas underlying the main recommendations, namely, that one body should be responsible for planning and programming and that the existing division of labour between programming bodies and budgetary bodies should be maintained.

9. It should be noted, however, that many of the issues dealt with in the report of the Working Group concerned the structure of the United Nations system—a subject examined in the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System (E/AC.62/9), whose conclusions were to be considered by a Committee of the whole set up by the General Assembly at its seventh special session: that *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. It would therefore be premature for the Fifth Committee to take a decision on those recommendations of the Working Group that concerned the structure of the United Nations system, which should be transmitted to the *Ad Hoc* Committee, although the Fifth Committee might wish to consider the procedural recommendations as, for example, recommendation 1 (A/10117 and Corr.1, para. 77).

10. His delegation trusted that the suggestion made by the Secretary-General during his statement at the 1700th meeting (A/C.5/1685) concerning prompt and full payment of assessed contributions would receive a favourable response. His Government had already endeavoured to speed up the payment of its contribution and trusted that other Governments would do the same. On the other hand, the Secretary-General's suggestion concerning the size of the Working Capital Fund would require study by his Government since it posed some thorny problems from the standpoint of both principle and practice. It would seem more appropriate to defer the enlargement of the Fund until after the finances of the Organization had been put in order. If the action were taken now, the resources of the Fund might be used improperly to liquidate the Organization's bad debts.

11. His delegation shared the views of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee concerning personnel matters, particularly his comment on the increase in manpower and the so-called "grade creep" phenomenon. It was to be hoped that the International Civil Service Commission would inject some order in the areas of job classification and the establishment of a proper career and promotion scheme.

12. His delegation would take a final position on the budget estimates once the readings of the different sections and the revised estimates had been completed.

13. Mr. SOKALSKI (Poland) said that at a time when many countries were facing grave economic crisis, the financial structure of the United Nations should correspond to the over-all financial situation of its Member States. Any increase of United Nations expenditures should therefore not exceed the average rate of annual growth of the national income of Members. The minimum level of expenditure provided for in the proposed programme budget, which would later be increased by the submission of revised estimates, meant that the United Nations would soon be spending over $1 million a day. Poland's record of involvement in United Nations activities was well known and it would continue to support the Secretary-General in his successful efforts to give fresh impetus to the main fields of activity of the Organization. Nevertheless, it could not support budget estimates which involved such a high level of expenditure and towards which the Polish taxpayers would be required to contribute so heavily. The problem was to find a compromise which would properly safeguard the interests of individual States and at the same time preserve the possibility of collective decision-making. His delegation was ready to pursue that goal, provided that the Secretariat showed greater concern for real economy and financial restraint.

14. Biennial programme budgeting had been presented to Member States as a first step in the process of restructuring the United Nations system. To judge by the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, it was not fulfilling its purpose of making the system more efficient and economical.

15. The major reason for the increased requirements was not inflationary pressures but the Secretary-General's request for 826 additional posts. Yet there were many instances of duplication, lack of co-ordination and low efficiency within the Secretariat. It would be useful to ascertain in greater detail why certain Secretariat units needed new posts and why the staff recruited for programmes now completed had not been reoriented to perform other functions. The elimination of "dead wood" would allow for considerable savings in manpower and would be an important indication of financial restraint on the part of the Secretariat.

16. While programme budgeting provided Member States with a clearer picture of the basic areas of work and of the utilization of resources, the biennial budget cycle made control of expenditure more difficult for Member States and unnecessary expansion of the budget easier for the Secretariat. An important omission was the lack of any meaningful inquiry into the utility, productivity and performance of ongoing activities.

17. His delegation was concerned about the recurrent practice of submitting supplementary estimates every year and suggested that the General Assembly should work out

specific criteria and conditions governing the submission of requests for additional funds. It believed that, in principle, supplementary estimates should be used to meet extraordinary needs which could not have been foreseen at the time when the budget had been approved and should be substantiated by the Secretariat. The task of preparing guidelines on the submission of supplementary estimates might be entrusted to the Advisory Committee, the Joint Inspection Unit or the Board of Auditors.

18. His remarks should not be construed as an expression of total disapproval of the Secretariat's financial policies because, while the Secretariat bore major responsibility for programming and utilizing budget funds, Member States, by their decisions and actions, were also responsible for unnecessary budget growth. Although the Fifth Committee, like all the Main Committees of the General Assembly, was composed of representatives of sovereign States, its financial decisions had more serious implications for the Member States who were the main contributors to the budget, with the result that majority decisions were often taken more expeditiously than was the case in other Committees where money was not involved. That special aspect of the Fifth Committee's work should be seen against Article 18, paragraph 2, of the Charter, which provided that decisions on budgetary questions required a two-thirds majority vote of the General Assembly. Since, with the expansion of United Nations activities, the budget increasingly reflected the financial implications of most decisions of the principal organs, the Charter reference to "budgetary questions" should be interpreted to apply to all the individual expenditures comprising the budget total. Enforcement of the principle of the two-thirds majority vote on budgetary questions was an important means of reconciling the need for greater economy with the requirements of collective decision-making. More frequent recourse to consensus in reaching financial decisions in the Fifth Committee might also result in greater economies. Savings could also be made by correcting certain practices such as delays in starting meetings, poor organization of work and the proliferation of conferences and meetings of all kinds of bodies, many of which should long ago have been dissolved by their parent organs. In its report to the Fifth Committee, the Committee on Conferences should give special attention to the unreasonable growth in the number of meetings and conferences. Finally, substantial amounts could be saved by reducing the volume of documentation. Unfortunately, efforts to achieve that end were often frustrated. For example, the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Charter of the United Nations, after being denied summary records, had adopted a report which was likely to cost more to produce than verbatim records of its proceedings. Similarly, the proposed programme budget, once it had been adopted, would apparently be reproduced in print at even greater cost.

19. His delegation would not be prepared to endorse any of the financial proposals before the Committee in the programme budget until it had a better picture of the extent to which financial policies and expenditure were justified in the interest of sound management. Even the Advisory Committee had apparently experienced much hesitation in endorsing some of them and had been shy in exercising its restraining powers. In order to obtain that clearer picture, the Polish delegation would submit a working paper[1] for circulation to the members of the Committee containing some of the questions about the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 which it would like to see clarified.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1701st meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 14. INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

20. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that there was considerable overlapping and waste under section 14 because there were two secretariat units engaged in identical activities: the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board and the secretariat of the Division of Narcotic Drugs. The increased expenditure estimates under the section were obviously the result not of inflation but of the Secretary-General's request for 3 new posts and the upward reclassification of posts. He would welcome an explanation from the Director of the Budget Division to account for the reappearance of the heading "narcotic drugs control" in the programme of technical assistance detailed in table 15-3 under section 15 of the proposed programme budget (A/10006). His delegation supported the reduction recommended for section 14 by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 14.13).

21. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that estimated expenditure under the section for the 1976-1977 biennium showed an increase of approximately $1 million or 33.9 per cent over the 1974-1975 revised estimates because of inflation, requests for additional posts and the reclassification of posts. The Advisory Committee had quite rightly recommended a reduction in expenditure for additional staff but had failed to follow through by recommending strict economies and had tolerated certain staff increases. The Soviet delegation did not agree with that position. It did, however, agree with the Advisory Committee that the secretariats of the International Narcotics Control Board and the Division of Narcotic Drugs could be merged to eliminate duplication. On the other hand, he could not support the additional expenditure due to inflation and currency fluctuations; those costs should be offset by maximum economies in general budget expenditure. He formally requested detailed information in writing on the method used for computing the inflation component of $343,000 for section 14. If a separate vote was taken on the Secretary-General's figure for the inflation component and the expenditure for additional staff, the Soviet delegation would vote against those items. If the section was voted on as a whole, it would abstain.

22. Mrs. DERRÉ (France) said that her delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the Committee for

[1] Subsequently circulated as conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.1.

Programme and Co-ordination should study the secretariat arrangements in narcotics control with a view to eliminating duplication. Pending the results of that study, it shared the Advisory Committee's views on the request for additional posts and the reclassification of one post and would support the recommended reduction under section 14. Drawing attention to the inflation figures given in the last two columns of table 14-8 in the proposed programme budget, she observed that they appeared exaggerated and asked the Director of the Budget Division to explain them.

23. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 14.12 of its report that CPC should advise the Economic and Social Council on the possible merging of the two narcotics secretariats, but raised the question whether the Fifth Committee should authorize any additional posts for either secretariat pending the outcome of that consultation.

24. In connexion with the question of transferring posts previously financed from extra-budgetary funds to the regular budget, dealt with in paragraph 14.11 of the Advisory Committee's report, he requested the Advisory Committee to study the level of posts which would be financed from those voluntary funds and report whether the level was determined by the Secretary-General alone or in consultation with the Advisory Committee. In his view, it was questionable whether the Fifth Committee could be asked to recommend the transfer to the regular budget of high-level posts established with financing from extra-budgetary sources.

25. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said he agreed with the Advisory Committee (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 62) that no further reclassification of posts should be requested by the Secretary-General until the International Civil Service Commission had made its recommendations on promotions; the Fifth Committee should not be asked to approve promotions through reclassification. He further agreed with the Advisory Committee that the study requested of CPC would be helpful in determining whether the two narcotics secretariats should be combined, and he supported the recommended reduction under section 14.

26. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the representative of Algeria, said that the reference to narcotics control under section 15 did not imply any duplication between sections 14 and 15, and that he would provide more specific information on that point later.

27. He would provide an answer in writing, as requested, to the question asked by the Soviet representative concerning the estimated $343,000 to compensate for inflation.

28. In reply to the representative of France, he said that the inflation figures in table 14-8 did not in fact represent only inflationary growth, but also the increase in the representation allowance for the one high-level post involved. It had been put under the inflation component for convenience only; an explanatory note should have been added.

29. All who had spoken on section 14 had referred to duplication within the Secretariat; the Secretary-General had no objection to the suggestion made by the Advisory Committee that CPC should be invited to study the programme aspects of the existing secretariat arrangements in narcotics control. Economic and Social Council resolutions adopted in 1973 had approved separate secretariats for the Board and the Division, but those arrangements could of course be reconsidered.

30. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should suspend its consideration of section 14.

SECTION 16. OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

31. The CHAIRMAN said that, in his initial estimates for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) the Secretary-General had requested an appropriation of $14,822,000 under section 16. The Advisory Committee had recommended no specific reduction in the initial estimates, but, pursuant to its comments in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) on representation allowances, that amount should be reduced by $800. The total appropriation recommended under section 16 by the Advisory Committee was thus $14,821,200.

32. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the estimates for section 16 had been prepared in conformity with the policy decision agreed on jointly by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Secretary-General in 1973 and endorsed by the Advisory Committee, whereby the regular budget of the Office of the High Commissioner for 1974 to 1977 was to be maintained at a constant level in real terms, changes being made only to take account of rises in prices and wages. Accordingly, it was one of the few sections where the Advisory Committee had not made any specific recommendation on reductions, the only reduction being consequential on its recommendation on representation allowances.

33. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) commended the Office of the High Commissioner for adhering strictly to the principle of financial austerity in its field programmes and for its high level of efficiency. He drew attention to the fact that the regular funds did not cover special operations, such as humanitarian assistance to Cyprus. He expressed great appreciation for the indefatigable efforts made by the Office of the High Commissioner to alleviate the suffering of the Cypriote refugees and also thanked Governments which had made contributions. Continuing assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner would be indispensable until the plight of the Cypriote refugees was brought to an end, which the Greek delegation earnestly hoped would not take long.

34. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on an appropriation under section 16 for the biennium 1976-1977 in the amount of $14,821,200.

An appropriation in the amount of $14,821,200 under section 16 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 61 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

SECTION 18. HUMAN RIGHTS (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

35. The CHAIRMAN said that, in his initial estimates for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) the Secretary-General had proposed an amount of $5,299,000 for section 18. The Advisory Committee, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 18.10), had recommended a reduction of $315,000 and, pursuant to paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report, a further reduction of $400 with regard to representation allowances, and, pursuant to paragraph 61 of its report, a reduction of $8,000 in connexion with reclassification. Accordingly, the total amount recommended for section 18 by the Advisory Committee for the biennium 1976-1977 was $4,975,600.

36. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General's estimates under section 18 for the biennium 1976-1977 were 15.2 per cent higher than the revised appropriations for the biennium 1974-1975, as adjusted. The Secretary-General had estimated real growth at 5 per cent on the assumption that several international instruments relating to human rights would soon enter into force, leading to added responsibility for the Division of Human Rights. Part of that responsibility would be to service the Human Rights Committee to be established pursuant to the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. To that end, the Secretary-General proposed to establish a small unit in the Division of Human Rights, comprising 3 Professional and 2 General Service posts. The Advisory Committee felt that it would be better to wait until those instruments had entered into force, the proposed committee established, and the workload involved clarified, before taking action. The Secretary-General could then review the situation and submit revised estimates if necessary. The stand taken by the Advisory Committee was a technical one, and it did not imply opposition in principle to the request by the Secretary-General. A report of the Secretary-General (A/10196) had been issued, under agenda item 84, on 9 September 1975–that is, after the Advisory Committee's report–indicating that as at 1 September 1975 34 States had signed or acceded to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, while 33 States had signed or acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the required number for their entry into force was 35. The Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had been signed or acceded to by 11 States. Although the required number was 10, it could not enter into force before the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights became operational. Accordingly, the view stated by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 18.7 of its report remained valid.

37. The Secretary-General had requested $153,000 for preparations for a proposed world conference to combat racism and racial discrimination scheduled for 1978, but the Advisory Committee saw no reason why much of the preparatory work could not be carried out by existing staff and recommended accordingly a reduction of $74,000.

38. The additional P-2 post for programme support at Geneva had not been approved by the Advisory Committee on the grounds that adequate justification for it had not been provided; there were already 72 posts, including 42 Professional posts, in the Division at Geneva. The proposed reclassification to D-1 of the P-5 post in the New York Liaison Office was covered by the observations in paragraph 61 of the Advisory Committee's report.

39. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that he could not accept the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 18.7 of its report that the composition proposed by the Secretary-General for the unit that would service the projected Human Rights Committee should not be approved at the current stage. It was to be a small unit, and he believed that adequate funds should be allocated at the current stage, so that it could operate effectively as soon as it was called upon to operate.

40. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) pointed out that, according to figure 4, appearing on page 19 of the Advisory Committee's report, human rights activities accounted for only 3 per cent of the total allocation requested for economic, social and humanitarian activities, and less than 1 per cent of the total budget. His delegation considered human rights activities one of the most important United Nations activities, regarding respect for human rights as essential to friendly relations and co-operation between States. Accordingly, he welcomed the fact that only a very few ratifications were still needed before two important Covenants on human rights would enter into force. He hoped that the Covenants would be accepted in time for a decision to be taken at the current session to establish the projected Human Rights Committee and that revised estimates to cover costs for that committee would be submitted before the second reading of section 18.

41. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) requested clarification as to whether the request by the Secretary-General for the reclassification to D-1 of the P-5 post in the New York Liaison Office had been approved by the Advisory Committee or not.

42. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendations on section 18. In connexion with the proposed reclassification, he expressed concern at the trend towards inflating Professional posts, and requested information on the level of posts in liaison offices of specialized agencies in New York, for comparison. Another comparison could be made with the UNDP resident representatives, who were not all at the D-1 level.

43. Referring to paragraph 18.9 of the Advisory Committee's report on the request for an additional P-2 post, as well as to paragraph 18.5, he said the Secretary-General had not provided adequate justification for those posts. If the Secretary-General did not provide further information on those posts, he would be obliged to oppose them.

44. Mr. KOBINA-SEKYI (Ghana) called for approval of the $153,000 requested by the Secretary-General to prepare for the world conference on combating racial discrimination scheduled for 1978. The Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had been proclaimed as of 10 December 1973, and 1978 would be the mid-point of the Decade and thus an excellent opportunity to assess the achievements and short-comings of the Decade. The conference was important and the importance of the preparatory work for it should also be recognized.

Another factor was that the conference might be held in a developing country with limited resources; reducing the appropriations for preparations might impose additional financial burdens on the host Government.

45. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should suspend its consideration of section 18.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

Question of including summaries of the debates in the Committee's reports to the General Assembly

46. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, recalled that at its 1651st meeting, at the twenty-ninth session, the Committee had decided, during its consideration of the item on United Nations publications and documentation, to dispense with an account of the general discussion on certain items in its report to the General Assembly. That decision was pursuant to paragraph *(f)* of the annex to General Assembly resolution 2292 (XXII), and, the conclusions of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly. The Committee had decided that summaries of its debates on only certain substantive items—corresponding to items 97, 102 and 104 to 107 on the agenda of the current session—should be included in its reports to the General Assembly. The decision had been a provisional one, and the Fifth Committee must now reconsider the matter and decide whether it wished to continue the practice and also include a summary of its debate on item 96 (Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979) in its corresponding report.

47. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee take note of the Rapporteur's statement and take a decision on the matter later.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

1704th meeting

Thursday, 2 October 1975, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1704

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1701st meeting)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion (continued)

1. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the attitude of his delegation to administrative and budgetary questions in the United Nations had been constantly determined by the principled support rendered to the Organization by the Soviet Government through active participation in its activities, and the constant desire to increase its effectiveness as an important instrument for the maintenance of peace and security.

2. In his statement before the General Assembly on 23 September 1975 (2357th plenary meeting), the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gromyko, had stressed that the successful fulfilment of its lofty mission by the United Nations, as an important instrument for consolidating international security, presupposed constant enhancement of the effectiveness of its work.

3. In the examination of budgetary questions, his delegation proceeded from the assumption that budgetary appropriations must be utilized rationally and be directed, first of all, towards carrying out the basic tasks of the United Nations set forth in the Charter, and towards contributing to the further development of détente so as to make it irreversible. In its concern to consolidate international peace and security, the Soviet Union had brought before the General Assembly at its current session two most important questions, namely, prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, and the conclusion of a treaty on complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. His delegation was hopeful that the General Assembly would endorse those proposals.

4. Proceeding from its principled position, the Soviet Union, as one of the major contributors to the budget, could not agree that the contributions of Member States should be utilized for purposes other than those for which the Organization had been created and, moreover, for aims contrary to the Charter.

5. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 totalled $737 million, which represented an increase of $131 million, or 21.6 per cent, as compared with the biennium 1974-1975. If one also took into account the potential additional requirements which might arise owing to decisions of intergovernmental bodies and which, as the Secretary-General had reported, might be of the order of $45 million, then the increase in the United Nations budget could reach 29 per cent as compared to the previous period and could set a record in the entire history of the United Nations. It must be noted in particular that the United Nations budget was growing at a much faster

rate than the gross national product and national income of Member States. According to the data of IMF, in recent years the real growth of the gross national product and national income of the countries members of the Fund had not exceeded 5 to 6 per cent a year on the average. Meanwhile, the United Nations budget growth rate had reached almost 30 per cent, or from five to six times more than the GNP growth rates of the majority of Member States. Thus, obviously a contradictory situation arose, as the resources of the Member States grew at a substantially slower pace than the appropriations requested in the United Nations budget. That contradiction could no longer continue and it must be resolved by means of more rational and economical planning of United Nations resources. It would be wrong to think that the Member States, particularly the developing countries, derived any benefit from that growth of budget expenditures; budgetary resources were spent mainly on Secretariat personnel costs, and there was no relationship between the increase in the number of United Nations personnel–and in salaries–and the real development needs of the Member States. The unjustifiable rate of growth of the United Nations budget in recent years aroused concern on the part of many Member States, and that was why the United Nations budget for 1974-1975 had not been endorsed by a considerable group of States, including four permanent members of the Security Council. The total contribution of those States accounted for more than 58 per cent of the budget. Unfortunately, the analysis of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 showed that the Secretariat had not heeded those wishes of Member States but had gone even further along the road of unwarranted increase of budgetary expenditures.

6. The proposed budget for 1976-1977 had been drawn up without due regard for possible benefits from the introduction of the new budget programming system, without proper analysis of the effectiveness and advisability of all existing programmes, and without critical reappraisal of those programmes from the point of view of establishing priorities and redistributing the Organization's resources on that basis. The Secretariat had not only built into the proposed budget the continuation of practically all current activities, but had also provided for the expansion of programmes without specific instructions of the General Assembly to that effect. Thus, the proposed budget had again been drawn up in violation of rules 153 and 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly; in many cases, the expansion of activities provided for in the budget was being done without any decision by the Assembly, although, in accordance with the rules of procedure he had mentioned, any increase in expenditures must follow a decision of the Assembly. Expenditures totalling some $40 million had been included in the budget estimates for the expansion of programmes without General Assembly decisions to that effect. Such practice was inadmissible, and his delegation was in complete accord with the opinion expressed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report that "programme increases should normally follow rather than precede action by the legislative organs" (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 28). The Secretary-General, in his capacity as chief administrative officer of the Organization, must at last take measures to implement the clear-cut and unequivocal guidelines of the General Assembly on that question. His delegation would also like to draw attention to the inadmissible fact that the budget contained understated data on the real growth of programmes and of total budget growth as compared to previous periods. His delegation was therefore in complete agreement with the material contained in paragraph 19, methodology B, and paragraph 29 of the Advisory Committee's report, indicating that the real growth rate of programmes in the new budget amounted to 6.1 per cent and that the growth of the new budget set a record.

7. In recent years, the deepening of the crisis of the monetary and financial system of capitalist countries and currency rate fluctuations in some of them had negatively influenced the United Nations budget and those of the specialized agencies, resulting in significant additional expenditures. The Secretariat had always followed a doubtful trend to finance the deficit resulting from currency rate fluctuations by increasing the contributions of Member States. However, in its resolution 2150 (XXI), the General Assembly had approved the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, which had indicated that unavoidable increases in expenditure, caused by price increases and other circumstances, should as far as possible be financed by savings, reassessment of programme priorities, redeployment of resources and internal budget adjustments.[1]

8. Taking the foregoing into account, one could not in any way agree to the decision of the Secretariat to include in the budget considerable sums (more than $118 million) to finance the effect of expected inflation; such an approach was contrary not only to the previous guidelines of the General Assembly on the question but also to the decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session (resolution 3360 (XXIX)), when it had requested the Secretary-General, in solving the problems connected with the effect of inflation on the United Nations budget, to take into account the views expressed by Member States. A large number of Member States had repeatedly expressed their opinion that additional expenditures caused by inflation should be financed out of savings in the execution of the budget or absorbed through contributions–including voluntary contributions–of the developed States where the Secretariat units which suffered from inflation were situated. The Secretariat, in violation of the directives of the General Assembly, had arbitrarily decided to levy the additional expenditures on all Member States. Consequently, his delegation could not endorse the Secretariat's proposal to include in the budget for 1976-1977 the expenditures to absorb inflation, and it expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would take effective measures to lessen the impact of inflation on the United Nations budget.

9. There also arose the question how that tremendous amount of $118 million had appeared; in that regard, his delegation requested the Secretariat to provide the Fifth Committee with the following information: what would be the increase of actual expenditures from the United Nations budget in 1974 relating to inflation, with breakdown separately for New York, Geneva and Vienna, and

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 80, document A/6343, para. 40.

what would be the expected increase of expenditures from the United Nations budget in 1975 relating to inflation, with breakdown for the same three locations?

10. His delegation believed that the reasons justifying the estimates were of utmost importance when preparing the programme budget. The programme budget must definitely contain information concerning the time-limits for programme implementation and the expenditures planned for programme implementation with details for each years. The Secretariat must provide complete information on staff and financial resources released as a result of the completion or reduction of certain programmes, and submit for the consideration of the General Assembly proposals on the utilization of such resources. Unfortunately, the programme budget proposals under consideration contained practically no information on such matters. Moreover, the Secretariat had, without informing the General Assembly, redeployed significant numbers of staff without even giving the reasons for its decisions. In future, the Secretariat should include in the proposed budget complete information on the resources allocated to each programme –expressed in man-months–and on the resources released for each programme, and submit to the General Assembly proposals on the subsequent utilization of such resources. His delegation wished to emphasize its disagreement with the Secretariat practice of increasing continuously and automatically the number of staff, which entailed an irrational and unjustified increase in budgetary expenditures. Requests for staff must be based on the objective requirements of the Organization's priority programmes, and not on the assumption of an arbitrary and automatic increase of staff each year. At the current stage, there were approximately 10,000 permanent posts in the United Nations, the cost of which accounted for almost 80 per cent of the budget. As everyone knew, however, in many parts of the Secretariat, employees were not fully occupied and productivity was often in need of improvement. In such conditions, the Secretary-General's request for 826 new posts was unjustifiable. It was necessary, instead, to put existing personnel to better use and to use the programme budget as an effective means to control the implementation of programmes and ensure the optimum use of United Nations resources, including, above all, its manpower resources. The Joint Inspection Unit should be made responsible for overseeing the effective utilization of Secretariat personnel. His delegation could not, for its part, approve the requests for additional permanent and temporary staff.

11. His delegation noted with concern the clear trend whereby posts which had previously been financed from extra-budgetary resources were transferred to the United Nations regular budget without a special decision of the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee had also drawn attention to that trend in paragraphs 52 and 53 of its report, and his delegation fully endorsed its recommendation on that question.

12. The reclassification of posts, which was regularly requested by the Secretary-General, was not justified in most cases, since requests were not based on an increase in either the responsibilities or workload of staff members, and reclassification merely constituted a means of promoting employees, which led to considerable additional expenditures for salaries. The United Nations post classification should be based exclusively on the requirements of the Organization's work programmes. His delegation therefore fully supported the recommendation in paragraph 62 of the report of the Advisory Committee.

13. That report showed that the Secretariat did not take sufficiently vigorous action to realize greater savings. Thus, while it provided services to various United Nations agencies, over and above those which were partially reimbursed as overhead costs, the Secretariat did not take every possible step to see that the costs of such services were fully reimbursed by the agencies in question. As could be seen in particular from paragraph 22.91 of the report of the Advisory Committee, agencies such as UNDP and UNICEF did not reimburse the United Nations fully for the services of the Purchase and Transportation Service, which amounted to 21 man-years or approximately $300,000 a year. Similar situations existed in the case of other Secretariat units. His delegation endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General should take urgent steps to ensure the full reimbursement of the costs of services thus rendered. The Fifth Committee should consider a report on the implementation of that recommendation at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

14. The unjustifiable tendency to increase the budget must be reversed through such means as the following: the volume of programme activities should be determined on the basis of the amount of resources that Member States were willing to provide to the United Nations for their implementation; strict priorities must be established for the implementation of programmes, with due account being taken of the importance, urgency and real possibilities of implementing them within the proposed time-limits; in establishing such priorities, account should be taken of the availability of other possible methods for the execution of programmes in the framework of the United Nations system, and attempts should be made to increase co-ordination and eliminate duplication.

15. Full advantage should be taken of the considerable possibilities for increasing the effectiveness of the large staff of the Secretariat, whose salaries accounted for nearly 80 per cent of the budget, so that new programmes could be executed without additional staff through an increase in productivity and a more effective organization of work. When determining the sources of financing for new programmes, internal resources should be utilized to the fullest extent, including resources released as a result of the completion of earlier programmes, the discontinuance of outdated or unimportant programmes and the elimination of duplication. The sessional meetings of new bodies and new conferences should be financed from resources released by such means as reducing the number of United Nations bodies, shortening the length of their sessions, organizing their meetings more rationally and reducing expenditure on documentation. Finally, for the purpose of achieving effective stabilization of the United Nations budget, which should not exceed the average rate of annual growth of the gross national product and national income of Member States.

16. The situation with regard to the geographical distribution of posts in the Secretariat was still unsatisfactory. New

staff were recruited mainly from among nationals of overrepresented countries—a practice which was at variance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter and numerous resolutions of the General Assembly. The activities of the Secretariat would be more effective if, in accordance with the principle of broad geographical distribution enunciated in the Charter, all Member States were equitably represented without discrimination. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of the Secretary-General, the situation showed little improvement. In order to implement consistently the resolutions of the General Assembly relating to personnel questions, practical measures were needed: the decisions of the Assembly regarding respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution in recruitment should be strictly complied with; the recruitment of nationals of overrepresented countries should be stopped and only nationals of underrepresented countries should be recruited—especially nationals of the Soviet Union, which, despite being one of the countries which paid the highest contributions, continued to be underrepresented—the decisions of the General Assembly concerning retirement should be strictly implemented; the granting of permanent contracts should be discontinued and the possibilities thus created should be used to recruit specialists from underrepresented countries.

17. His delegation regretted that once again the proposed budget contained estimates to cover expenses incurred in violation of the Charter, namely, for payment of interest and principal on the United Nations bond issue. Those expenses were the sad and burdensome consequence of operations in the Congo and the Middle East carried out in violation of the Charter. Faithful to the Charter, the Soviet Union had stated its categorical opposition to the decision to undertake those operations. It did not and would not accept any responsibility in respect of those operations, and had no intention of contributing towards the expenses arising from them. Full responsibility for those operations belonged to the countries which had imposed them on the United Nations; they should therefore bear full responsibility for the financial consequences.

18. His delegation reaffirmed its position regarding the method of financing technical assistance. Under Article 17 of the Charter, the United Nations budget could not be used to finance technical assistance which, as in the case of UNDP, should be financed exclusively from voluntary contributions. The Soviet Union would therefore, as in the past, continue to pay in roubles that portion of its assessment which corresponded to technical assistance activities.

19. His delegation shared the concern of others over the critical financial situation of the Organization and wished to do all possible to right the situation, while observing the requirements of the Charter. The means to remedy those financial difficulties should be sought after careful examination of the reasons which had caused them. It was well known that the Organization found itself in a difficult financial situation because of considerable expenditures incurred in violation of the perfectly clear provisions of the Charter. The difficulties had become even more acute when the $16 million still owed by the Chiang Kai-shek régime had been included in the United Nations short-term deficit. It was impossible to agree to a solution which forced all Member States to defray that régime's arrears in contributions.

20. In 1972, in the Special Committee on the Financial Situation of the United Nations, his delegation had put forward a proposal[2] which would provide a genuine and just way of settling the question of the Organization's financial difficulties. It also took into consideration the need for strict observance of the United Nations Charter in the solution of that complex question, and his delegation continued to believe that its proposal could form a satisfactory basis for such a solution.

21. With regard to the financing of UNEF, including UNDOF, it was disturbing to note that the Secretariat did not keep Member States sufficiently informed about the way in which the funds appropriated for those purposes were spent. The report of the Secretary-General on that question should provide the necessary information and justifications both on future and past expenditures.

22. His delegation greatly appreciated the efforts made by the Advisory Committee to strengthen the effectiveness of the Organization's activities and achieve greater savings, and supported all its recommendations to that end. However, he hoped that it would play a more active part in determining ways to reduce expenditure and would keep a closer check on the measures taken as a follow-up to its recommendations.

23. His delegation supported the recommendations in the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) regarding that part of the over-all mechanism of the United Nations which concerned the financial aspects of United Nations activities.

24. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) noted that, of the appropriations of $737 million requested by the Secretary-General for 1976-1977, the Advisory Committee had requested reductions totalling $15 million, or about 2 per cent of the total. While reserving his delegation's position on individual items, he could accept the Secretary-General's estimates as amended by the Advisory Committee.

25. However, he was concerned that inflation and monetary instability had seriously eroded real programme growth for the biennium 1976-1977. That was particularly serious since the General Assembly had recognized at its seventh special session that the United Nations system would have to play a greater role in the establishment of a new international economic order. To be sure, the Organization's expenditure amounted to almost $1 million per day and Pakistan, whose contribution to the United Nations budget constituted a far from negligible burden, was anxious to see that the money raised from Member States was spent with maximum regard for economy and efficiency. It should be borne in mind, however, that world-wide military expenditures were approaching $900 million a day, which was more than the entire biennial budget of the United Nations.

26. His delegation supported the policy of full budgeting, which anticipated the impact of factors such as inflation

2 *Ibid., Twenty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 29,* para. 16.

instead of reacting to them *ex post facto* by supplementary estimates. With the current substantial rate of inflation, that method was preferable, particularly since the Working Capital Fund was for all practical purposes depleted. Full budgeting helped to reduce cash flow problems and spared the Fifth Committee acrimonious debate at a subsequent date. His Government welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal to double the resources of that Fund.

27. His delegation agreed with CPC and the Advisory Committee that the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1977 (A/10006/Add.1) contained innovative concepts and represented a major contribution towards the establishment of a real system of planning in the United Nations. The Secretary-General had once again employed the incremental approach in drawing up the plan and had suggested certain criteria for determining priorities (such as effectiveness, political considerations, opportunity, specificity, and the staff/workload ration) which to a certain degree lacked precision and objectivity. The thematic approach would, under certain conditions, give a broader view of certain crucial problems, especially those which were amenable to multisectoral treatment.

28. With regard to the budget, his delegation shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 11 of its report that a more careful analysis in favour of new or more important ones. However, under the incremental approach, that was scarcely possible and the legislative organs were therefore driven to accepting the existing base and accommodating new activities by the addition of new resources. That method distorted the real priorities of Member States whereas the thematic approach would, at least in theory, enable the competent intergovernmental body to decide to which activity the total funds requested should be allocated as opposed to only the additional funds provided for. It was obviously difficult to abolish existing institutions and to start from "zero base". However, his delegation fully agreed with the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 79 of its report as to the need for weeding out obsolete projects and those of less priority so as to redeploy the resources to meet new decisions.

29. His delegation favoured the Secretary-General's suggestion (*ibid.*, paras. 61 and 62) that the medium-term plan and the programme budget should be considered in alternate years and believed that, in order to implement General Assembly resolution 3199 (XXVIII), the medium-term plan should be formulated one year before the budget. Thus, on the basis of the decision taken by the legislative organs, the plan would define in general terms the true objectives of the United Nations and the general policies which would make it possible to achieve them, while the budget, which was the concrete manifestation of the plan, would indicate the necessary inputs of staff and funds and the objectives achieved, such as meetings held and studies carried out. That procedure would facilitate the task of the Secretariat and of delegations and would enable the Secretariat to focus its attention on the medium-term plan. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly would decide at its current session to consider the plan and the budget in alternate years without further delay.

30. His delegation also supported the principle of the rolling plan, which enabled the Organization to readjust its priorities and targets during the period of the plan, and would have no objection to the adoption of a six-year rolling plan, in conformity with those of the specialized agencies.

31. Consideration of the plan would be entrusted to CPC, while the Advisory Committee would consider the programme budget, and both documents would be examined by the Economic and Social Council and the Fifth Committee also in alternate years. In order to avoid too rigid a compartmentalization, CPC could continue to study both the plan and the budget of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the Advisory Committee could continue to consider the budget and the plan.

32. In that connexion, he noted that the recommendations made by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery in its report (A/10117 and Corr.1) had been largely aimed at strengthening the programming aspect of the medium-term plan and reforming CPC. In his view, the Advisory Committee was discharging its mandate efficiently, since its members, selected on the basis of broad geographical representation and on personal qualifications, could give thorough consideration to the items referred to them, because they could hold long sessions. CPC, on the other hand, had been allocated only one week in 1975 to consider the medium-term plan, inevitably in a cursory fashion. In paragraph 34 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), the Advisory Committee had pointed out that the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and other subsidiary organs could play a major role by carefully scrutinizing the programmes of work submitted by their secretariats and following up approved projects and activities. His delegation considered that the Council had over-all responsibility in the matter but, in view of the size and the limited time at its disposal, it should be assisted by a smaller advisory committee. That body should obviously be CPC, which should be strengthened and revitalized, should be given sufficient time, and, while retaining its intergovernmental character, should be composed of experts so that it could play vis-à-vis the Economic and Social Council the same role as the Advisory Committee played vis-à-vis the Fifth Committee. In that connexion, it was regrettable that, in spite of the soundness of its recommendations in paragraph 77 of its report, the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery had not gone far enough; it would not in fact suffice to give CPC more time—four to six weeks each year—for its work and urge Member States to appoint high-calibre representatives, for the majority of States which were members of CPC would have to continue to rely on the members of their permanent missions, who did not have time to carry out a detailed examination of the medium-term plan and budget, because the calendar of conferences was very heavy. It was essential not only that the United Nations should ask Governments to appoint one or more high-level experts to represent them on CPC but also that the Organization should pay the subsistence allowances and travel expenses of those intergovernmental experts, as it did in the case of the members of the Advisory Committee. The Governments of all countries, in particular those of developing countries, would thus be encouraged to designate high-level experts to represent them on CPC, which would improve the quality of that Committee's deliberations. Far from increasing the

expenses of the United Nations, such a strengthening of CPC would result in greater effectiveness and economy, since CPC, as an intergovernmental body, would be able to weed out obsolete programmes and eliminate activities of lower priority, a task which the Advisory Committee could not perform, since it was a body of experts.

33. He was aware that the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery had not taken a firm decision on the question of emoluments and travel expenses for CPC members, because it was afraid that other bodies might demand the same privileges. His delegation wished to state emphatically that it would be opposed to the extension of such a system to other intergovernmental bodies. The case of CPC, as an advisory committee to the Economic and Social Council, was unique and could not be compared to that of other bodies.

34. His delegation felt that it would not suffice to forward the Working Group's report to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, which would not be able to consider the United Nations programme and budget machinery as thoroughly as the Working Group had done in 1975. He therefore proposed that, after adopting the recommendation regarding the review of the medium-term plan and proposed programme budget in alternate years, the Fifth Committee should forward the Working Group's report to the *Ad Hoc* Committee for favourable consideration. He hoped that the question of travel expenses and subsistence allowances to members of CPC, discussed in paragraph 55 of the Working Group's report, would be resolved in a manner that would strengthen CPC and enable it to carry out its mandate effectively.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1701st meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 18. HUMAN RIGHTS *(concluded)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

35. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) paid tribute to the work of the Division of Human Rights. He pointed out an example of duplication which affected section 18, since some of the Division's activities were financed out of appropriations under section 15, which dealt with the regular programme of technical assistance. Observing that the Division had 42 Professional posts as against 30 General Service posts, he agreed with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that it was a division that was led by too many generals, especially since it was often the General Service staff who were the most active. It was, therefore, not necessary to approve the establishment of additional Professional posts and still less to reclassify as Principal Officer (D-1) the post of senior officer (P-5) occupied by the Head of the New York Liaison Office. It would be unusual for 5 General Service staff to be supervised by a Principal Officer (D-1), and if the incumbent of that post deserved a promotion, he should be transferred to Geneva. If the staff of the New York Liaison Office was increased after the transfer of the Division of Human Rights to Geneva, it would be tantamount to allowing someone who had left by the door to climb back through the window. In reviewing the staff of liaison offices of United Nations organs and specialized agencies, he had observed that as a general rule it was officials recruited from the developed countries who occupied the D-1 and D-2 posts—which gave grounds for thinking that the policy of liaison offices was not impartial.

36. It was stated in paragraph 18.1 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008 and Corr.2) that the Secretary-General was requesting an appropriation of nearly $5,300,000 to cover the "direct costs" of United Nations activities in the field of human rights, whereas it appeared from table 18-7 of the proposed programme budget (A/10006) that the Secretary-General estimated that the apportioned indirect costs would amount to nearly $8 million, bringing the total to $13,300,000. He was of the opinion that in being asked to approve an appropriation of $5,299,000, the Fifth Committee was being obliged to approve indirectly expenditure under other sections; the indirect apportioned costs of financial, conference and other services, which would be added to the amount requested by the Secretary-General, should be indicated in each case.

37. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) regretted that he was unable to approve the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General under section 18, particularly with regard to the increases attributed to inflation and fluctuations in exchange rates. His delegation had explained in its policy statement that such costs should be covered by economies and by voluntary contributions from the countries in which the main United Nations offices were situated.

38. His delegation was also unable to approve the increase which would result from the establishment of the new posts requested by the Secretary-General. The additional workload due to programme growth could be carried out by the existing staff of the Division of Human Rights, provided it improved its productivity and expenditure on the less important activities was curtailed. Consequently, his delegation would abstain in the voting.

39. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said he had doubts about the creation of a new unit in the Division of Human Rights to service the projected Human Rights Committee. Although his delegation shared the Advisory Committee's views on the subject, it feared that the Human Rights Committee might be established at the end of the thirtieth session, when it would be difficult for the Avisory Committee to examine the financial implications of setting up the unit.

40. Assuming that the Human Rights Committee was established in the near future, the Fifth Committee could, without infringing the principle laid down by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 18.7 of its report, adopt one of the three following solutions: first, it could defer the examination of section 18 of the proposed programme budget until the Secretariat could submit a request for a specific amount on which the Advisory Committee and subsequently the

Fifth Committee could take a decision; second, it could vote at the current meeting on the Advisory Committee's recommendation, on the understanding that, if the Secretary-General shortly had available the requisite information, a definitive decision would be taken on that particular point during the second reading of section 18 or when the Secretary-General submitted, if need be, a request for a revised appropriation; third, if the Secretariat considered that the Optional Protocol to the International Convenant on Civil and Political Rights would come into force after the closure of the thirtieth session, it could forthwith propose a tentative date from which it would be authorized to spend the amount required to set up the new unit to service the Human Rights Committee.

41. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) hoped that, from its inception, the Human Rights Committee to be established would have at its disposal the necessary Secretariat services.

42. Mr. EKONG (Nigeria) agreed with the Advisory Committee about the requests for new posts by the Secretary-General: the Division's existing staff could undertake the preparatory work for the world conference on action to combate racism and racial discrimination. The tendency to create new posts whenever new activities were envisaged should be halted; maximum use should be made of personnel already serving the Organization. He hoped, however, that his remarks would not be interpreted by the Committee to mean that his delegation attached less importance to the proposed world conference.

43. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) shared the concern expressed at the 1703rd meeting by the representative of Upper Volta about the excessive increase in high-level appointments in the Division of Human Rights. Like the Ghanaian delegation, he also wanted an assurance that the world conference on action to combat racism and racial discrimination, which was so important for the promotion of human rights, would have sufficient funds to make its work effective. The Dominican Republic would vote in favour of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

44. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) pointed out that the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights might not become operative within the near future. The Protocol would come into effect three months after being ratified by the thirty-sixth signatory States. Certain Governments had not progressed as far along that route as the representative of Australia seemed to believe. As for the Secretary-General's requests for new posts for the unit which would service the projected Human Rights Committee, the Advisory Committee had given, in paragraph 18.7 of its report, its reasons for recommending that the decision should be postponed. Such considerations were of a purely technical nature, and the Fifth Committee should support that recommendation.

45. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) stressed that there was nothing in the report of the Advisory Committee or in previous statements by its Chairman to suggest that the Advisory Committee was not giving due consideration to the world conference on action to combat racism and racial discrimination. The remarks of the Advisory Committee were of a purely technical nature and did not at all question the utility of that conference. The Advisory Committee had concluded that a slight reduction in the number of posts requested by the Secretary-General was possible without affecting, in the least, the quality of the preparatory work for the conference. Since the conference was scheduled for 1978, it would be possible to review the matter in the context of the progress report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

46. The Advisory Committee had never questioned the importance of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It was solely for practical reasons—namely, the need to wait for the setting-up of the new committee and the formulation of the work involved—that the Advisory Committee had recommended that a decision on the establishment of the proposed unit should be postponed.

47. Since the Belgian delegation had, at the previous meeting, drawn a parallel between paragraph 18.9 and paragraph 61 of the report of the Advisory Committee, he wished to recall that the recommendations contained in paragraph 61 were of a general nature: the Advisory Committee had made an over-all decision on reclassification, and it was for the Secretary-General to decide in which divisions or departments the reclassifications recommended by the Advisory Committee would take effect.

48. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the Secretariat had already begun a study of posts to be reclassified. Although no definite decision had yet been reached, the P-5 post in the New York Liaison Office was not on the list of posts to be reclassified. He pointed out, for the information of the Committee, that the head of the Liaison Office was also the secretary of the Third Committee.

49. One delegation had expressed concern that there might be a possible overlapping between funds requested under section 15 and section 18. He therefore wished to point out that the $490,000 requested under section 15 for human rights would be used solely for training fellowships and information seminars. Those strictly operational activities should not be included in the section on human rights.

50. With regard to the question raised by the representative of Algeria on the breakdown of the direct and indirect costs of the human rights programme, he stated that there was nothing peculiar about section 18. In drawing up the budget estimates, the Secretariat had adhered to the wishes of the General Assembly; if the apportioned indirect costs seemed quite high, it was because it was normal in the field of human rights for meeting and conference expenses to be high.

51. Since the representative of the Upper Volta had pointed out at the previous meeting that the Advisory Committee drew attention in paragraph 18.9 of its report to the absence of any workload indicators for the Division of Human Rights, it should be noted that that unit was not the only one of which that was true. Some departments, like the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which were better equipped than others, were in a position to draw up a fairly detailed work programme, but others could

not do so and had to give a precise description of the task envisaged when they requested an additional post. In the case of the P-2 post mentioned in paragraph 18.9 of the Advisory Committee's report, the request had been based on the findings of the Administrative Management Service to the effect that the staff responsible for documentation should be strengthened.

52. As far as the relationship between the number of General Service staff and of other officials in the Division was concerned, the Secretary-General was open to all suggestions by the Fifth Committee.

53. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that he would have been in favour of reclassifying the post of Head of the New York Liaison Office to D-1 if its incumbent had been transferred to the Division of Human Rights at Geneva; however, a post of Principal Officer (D-1) could not be justified in New York.

54. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that, with regard to the expenditures for the group which was to service the projected Human Rights Committee, he was prepared to accept the position of the Advisory Committee in view of the information given by the United Kingdom representative.

55. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, in the light of all the recommendations of the Advisory Committee (see the 1703rd meeting, para. 35), the appropriation under section 18 had been reduced to $4,975,600.

An appropriation of $4,975,600 under section 18 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 73 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.

56. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that his delegation, for the reasons it had already given, (1702nd meeting) had not participated in the vote and would not participate in the vote on the other sections: he reserved his position on the question of incorporation into the budget of expenditures attributable to inflation.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

57. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) pointed out that the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Mr. Strong, was currently in New York and that it would therefore be useful to proceed as soon as possible to the consideration in first reading of section 13 of the proposed programme budget, relating to UNEP.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee endorsed the proposal by the representative of Algeria.

***Question of including summaries of the debates in the Committee's reports to the General Assembly* (concluded)**

59. The CHAIRMAN, recalling the statement made by the Rapporteur at the previous meeting, invited representatives to express their views on the question of including summaries of the debates in the reports of the Committee to the General Assembly.

60. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia), supported by Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), said he thought that the Committee should summarize in its reports only the debates on those items which it had decided, at the twenty-ninth session, should be given such treatment. A summary of the debates on the proposed programme budget would be far too voluminous for inclusion in the report on that item. Interested delegations could always refer to the summary records of the meetings in question.

61. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that he had always been in favour of economy, in the area of documentation as in others. There as elsewhere, duplication should be avoided and the trend towards increasing or enlarging documents curbed, while their quality should be improved. He therefore shared the view expressed by the representative of Australia and the Philippines.

62. However, the fact that certain debates would not be summarized in the Committee's reports raised the problem of the date on which summary records were issued. For example, after more than a week of general discussion and the first reading of two sections of the proposed budget, only the summary record of the Committee's first meeting of the current session had been issued in Russian. There had been cases in which his delegation had not received summary records of one session until May the following year. If the Committee's reports were not to contain a summary of all debates, all the more attention should be given to issuing, in good time and in all working languages, the summary records of meetings.

63. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation thought it essential to include in the relevant report of the Committee a summary of the debates on the pension scheme.

64. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the twenty-ninth session that topic had already been among those on which the debates had been summarized in the reports and said that the same procedure would be followed if the previous year's decision was maintained.

65. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan) said that he would prefer to see the Committee summarize in its reports only the debates on questions to which delegations attached particular importance; the number of questions on which the debates were summarized in the reports need not be as great as it had been the previous year.

66. The CHAIRMAN noted that the tendency was to maintain as it stood the list of items requiring a summary of debates and said he thought that it would be difficult to decide which questions were or particular importance to delegations, as the representative of Pakistan had suggested. If there was no objection, he would take it that the questions on which a summary of the debate would appear in the Committee's reports to the General Assembly would be the same as at the twenty-ninth session.

It was so decided.

67. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, replying to a question by Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), said that those questions corresponded to items 97, 102, 104, 105, 106 and 107 of the agenda of the thirtieth session.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

1705th meeting

Friday, 3 October 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1705

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (A/9854 and Add.1, A/10006 and Add.1, A/10008 and Corr.2, A/10008/Add.1, A/C.5/1669, A/C.5/1671, A/C.5/1673-1675, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1678, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/1681, A/C.5/1682, A/C.5/1685, A/C.5/1686)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion (continued)

1. Mr. ÅLGÅRD (Norway) reiterated the concern expressed by his Minister for Foreign Affairs in his statement before the General Assembly on 26 September 1975 (2364th plenary meeting) that implementation of the decisions taken at the seventh special session might be impeded because of the short-comings and inadequacy of the current organizational system. The Fifth Committee's task was to ensure that the United Nations was able to discharge successfully the new responsibilities it would undoubtedly be called upon to bear as a result of the important breakthroughs achieved during the seventh special session. The budget was a reflection in financial terms of the level of resources required to implement approved programmes, and the United Nations should not allow a situation to develop whereby the programmes were not implemented because of a lack of financial resources. The budget was a modest one: $737 million for a two-year period, one third of the budget of a medium-sized city such as Oslo. If the budget did not increase year by year, the Organization could be regarded as stagnant; he did not understand why moderate expansion of the United Nations budget was viewed by some delegations with such concern. The Committee should not try to reduce the budget to a minimum which would cripple United Nations activities but should determine how appropriations were made and request information on the budgetary intentions of the programming and executive organs.

2. The medium-term plan and programme budget under consideration represented an important step forward, with improvements in methodology and in fixing priorities, although of course further improvements were still necessary. A system of planning was being developed which could help the international community achieve the goals stated in the policy decisions of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council in the important field of co-ordinating United Nations activities in the economic and social fields. He supported the suggestion made by the Secretary-General that the Committee discuss whether it should continue to consider the programme budget and the medium-term plan at the same time. Consideration should be given to alternating the plan and budget, so that more time and attention could be devoted to each. In view of the need to set priorities, it seemed logical to consider and adopt the plan first, so that the bodies involved would have clearer guidelines for working on the budget.

3. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) was, by and large well balanced, sound and moderate. That view was confirmed by the endorsement of almost all the budget estimates by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2). While reserving the right to comment later in detail on individual aspects of the budget, his delegation was prepared to support the framework of the budget estimates with the adjustments recommended by the Advisory Committee.

4. His Government shared the concern expressed by the Secretary-General over the general financial situation of the United Nations, particularly its short-term and long-term deficits. All the elements necessary for a solution of the financial problems were, he believed, contained in the proposal for a package solution supported by the great majority of the members of the Special Committee on the Financial Situation of the United Nations. He supported the Secretary-General's suggestion (see A/C.5/1685) that assessed contributions should be paid more promptly in order to alleviate the chronic cash-flow difficulties. His Government was also prepared to study the Secretary-General's suggestion that the Working Capital Fund, which had not been increased since 1963, should be doubled, on the understanding that an increase in the Fund should under no circumstances serve as a pretext for nations primarily responsible for the United Nations financial crisis to postpone consideration of a solution. The Secretary-General's suggestions would, at least, improve the cash-flow situation, but they would not solve the financial problems of the United Nations. He urged Members to show the necessary political will and assist the Secretary-General in solving those problems which were crucial to the whole future of the Organization.

5. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), speaking for the second time in the general discussion with the consent of the Committee, said that the procedural recommendations made by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery in its report (A/10117 and Corr.1) should be implemented without delay; he hoped that the Chairman of the Working Group would submit an appropriate draft resolution and that it would receive general support.

6. The underlying objective of the proposal by the representative of Pakistan at the 1704th meeting concern-

ing the payment of subsistance and travel allowances to members of CPC was extremely important, but he had difficulties of principle in supporting it. He suggested that it should be discussed outside the Fifth Committee with a view to reaching a consensus as soon as possible.

7. Referring to the comments by the representative of the Soviet Union at the same meeting about the growth in the United Nations budget and the growth of the gross national product of Member States, and particularly members of IMF, he said that, according to IMF statistics, the real growth rate of the gross national product and national income of its members had been approximately 5 or 6 per cent on average, while the Secretary-General had estimated the real growth of the United Nations at 3.5 per cent and the Advisory Committee, more correctly in his view, had estimated real growth at 5 or 6 per cent. He assumed that the Soviet representative intended that the United Nations budget thus be increased by approximately 5 or 6 per cent. The United Kingdom delegation, however, preferred a 3 or 4 per cent growth rate, as recommended by the Advisory Committee through its proposed reductions in the budget.

8. In his statement at the 1702nd meeting; the Controller had discussed the method of classifying the cost of posts which were currently vacant and would be filled during the next biennium. In that connexion, his delegation recommended adoption of methodology B advocated by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 18 of its report.

9. Referring to the question of overhead costs, he drew attention to annex VI to the foreword to the proposed programme budget, which listed costs in such a way as to avoid double accounting, and suggested that the same method should have been used in the budget in respect of technical backstopping.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the previous meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 13. UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

10. The CHAIRMAN welcomed the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Mr. Strong.

11. The Secretary-General, in his initial estimates for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), had proposed an amount of $7,289,000 under section 13. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), had recommended no specific reduction in the initial estimates, but its recommendations in paragraphs 63 to 65 of the report concerning representation allowances, would require a reduction of $1,200, and the recommendation in paragraph 61, concerning reclassifications, would require a reduction of $6,000. The total amount recommended under section 13 by the Advisory Committee for the biennium was thus $7,281,800.

12. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that section 13 contained the costs for UNEP financed from the regular budget of the United Nations. The Secretary-General's estimate included an amount of $931,000 for Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. Excluding that amount, the estimates of $6,358,000 represented a 21.4 per cent increase over the revised appropriations for the current biennium, an increase attributed by the Secretary-General to inflationary pressures. Although the UNEP estimates in the regular budget showed zero growth in real terms, the Advisory Committee had noted a trend towards a steady increase in UNEP's programme support and administrative costs. While the number of posts financed from the regular budget of the United Nations was still 98, the number of posts financed from the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme had risen from 182 to 221. As the Advisory Committee had pointed out in paragraphs 13.7, 13.9 and 13.10 of its report, there was a relatively high percentage of senior staff on the UNEP manning table, and also a relatively high level of expenditure on temporary assistance and communications. It was the view of the Advisory Committee that greater vigilance was needed to ensure that programme support and administrative costs were kept at the minimum level compatible with the effective operation of UNEP as a focal pont for co-ordinating environment activities in the United Nations system. That was an area which the General Assembly and the Governing Council of UNEP would need to keep under constant review.

13. The Advisory Committee referred in paragraph 13.11 of its report to the decision of the Governing Council to authorize the Executive Director to go ahead with the construction of temporary premises for UNEP. As pointed out in the same paragraph, the Advisory Committee had been informed that the project had additional financial implications under the regular budget of the United Nations.

14. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that, while a zero-growth factor had been applied to UNEP activities financed from the United Nations regular budget, in keeping with the decisions of the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UNEP recorded in document UNEP/GC/42, of 30 January 1975, the total number of UNEP costs was to increase from 280 to 319. The new posts were to be financed from the fund of UNEP, which meant that only 30.7 per cent of posts would now be financed from the regular budget, and only 34 out of the total 129 Professional and higher posts would be financed from the regular budget. His delegation had noted that development with great concern and had only accepted as an exceptional and temporary measure the proposal that all additional staffing requirements during the biennium 1976-1977 should be financed from the UNEP Fund. The total number of posts in the UNEP secretariat was unrealistically low, and the important programme activities of UNEP should be given due attention by the United Nations in future. Accordingly, he noted with satisfaction the decision by the Governing Council of UNEP[1] to request the Executive Director to seek assurance from the Secretary-General that efforts

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 25*, annex I, decision 42(III), sect. IV.

would be made to reassess, for the biennium 1978-1979, the distribution of staff costs between the regular budget of the United Nations and the programme and programme support costs of the UNEP Fund.

15. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) recalled that, at the third session of the UNEP Governing Council, held in April and May 1975, his delegation had expressed doubt as to whether UNEP was taking the right approach to the financing of its administrative and programme support costs. General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) provided UNEP with two sources of financing: the regular budget of the United Nations to cover the cost of the Governing Council and a small secretariat, and voluntary contributions to cover operational costs and programme support and administration. The distinction had been drawn very clearly, but the Advisory Committee, in its critical comments, implied that the distinction had become somewhat blurred. Many posts which his delegation felt should be financed from the regular budget were in fact being financed by the UNEP Fund. That reduced the Fund's ability to use its resources for the purposes for which they were originally intended. He expressed the hope that the situation would be corrected, and that the arrangements provided for in General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) would be respected.

16. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) expressed reservations over the large number of high-level posts requested by UNEP, and also over the fact that no reference was made to equitable geographical distribution of posts. He also expressed concern over the vagueness of the scope of the various programmes which seemed to deal with too many matters without coherent objectives. Instead of reducing pollution and protecting the environment, UNEP seemed to become involved whenever any economic activity was started in a developing country, with a detrimental effect on the industrial and economic development of some regions. After all, it was the developed, not the developing, countries that were responsible for the deterioration in the environment. While the developing countries should avoid the errors made by the developed countries, they should not be forced to pay an exorbitant price.

17. He requested clarification from the Executive Director of UNEP as to the Programme's approach to and involvement in the conference on human settlements. It would be of interest to many developing countries, many of whose problems related to housing.

18. He requested clarification from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee as to why it had not recommended any reduction in the Secretary-General's estimates for section 13 in spite of its critical comments.

19. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) observed that it had been the general feeling at the recent session of the Governing Council of UNEP that vigilance should be exercised to ensure that the "small secretariat" established under General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) remained simply a focal point for environmental action and co-ordination and did not become unwiedly.

20. He would appreciate it if the Executive Director would supply some information on the following three points: first, how many meetings were to be convened at Nairobi during the biennium and whether the estimate for temporary assistance for those meetings was sufficient; second, where would the UNEP communications facility be installed; and, third, what progress had been achieved in selecting priorities for programme to meet the needs of all countries.

21. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the comments of the Advisory Committee, particularly those in paragraphs 13.5, 13.7, 13.9 and 13.10 of its report, were fair and fully justified. Consequently, he was at a loss to understand why the Advisory Committee had failed to propose any reduction in the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General and, like the representative of Algeria, would welcome some explanations on that point.

22. His delegation could not support the request for 39 additional posts, even though they were to be financed from the Fund, because it ran directly counter to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) establishing UNEP. The extra expenses arising from inflation and the servicing of meetings should be absorbed by making economies under other heads of changing priorities. Accordingly, his delegation would abstain in the vote on section 13.

23. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation, too, was somewhat surprised that the Advisory Committee, despite its criticism of some of the Secretary-General's proposals, had made no recommendation for a reduction in the estimate.

24. His delegation was particularly concerned by the request for a large number of additional posts to be financed from the UNEP Fund. As past experience demonstrated, posts originally financed from extra-budgetary sources were later transferred to the regular budget. It was highly doubtful whether that formula, which was applied in other sections of the budget as well, constituted sound planning policy. He would like to know whether the total of 221 posts financed from the Fund had been established in accordance with the objectives of the Fund and also why so many posts at the D-1 level and above, namely 25 out of 129 posts at the Professional and higher levels, were required.

25. His delegation had very serious doubts about the wisdom of approving the Secretary-General's proposals and felt that the Advisory Committee's comments should be included in the report to be submitted by the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly.

26. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) endorsed the comments of the representative of Algeria and asked how the conference on human settlements was to be financed.

27. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) expressed support for the views of the representative of Algeria. He was particularly concerned by the request for a large number of additional posts and by the lack of information on the geographical distribution of posts.

28. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) reminded members that the Advisory Committee's comments in its

report were in line with the views which his delegation had expressed in the Governing Council of UNEP at its third session. Those views were largely reflected in the Governing Council's decisions. It would be wrong, in his view, for the Fifth Committee to discuss in excessive detail matters that were more appropriately debated by the Governing Council. Nevertheless, his delegation wished to take advantage of the presence of the Executive Director of UNEP to ask why so many high-level posts were needed and how the Programme intended to disburse the sum of $543,000 for communications.

29. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that his delegation was concerned at the disproportionate growth in the administrative establishment of UNEP and pointed out that all the posts, including those financed from the UNEP Fund, were paid for by contributions from Member States. It seemed incomprehensible that such a large increase in staff should be contemplated when the General Assembly, in resolution 2997 (XXVII), had specifically decided to establish "a small secretariat". It was to be hoped that the Executive Director, in paying heed to the Advisory Committee's remark, in paragraph 13.19 of its report, concerning the need for UNEP to take additional measures to effect economies, would exercise restraint, not only in the matter of temporary assistance for meetings, but also in respect of administrative growth in general, particularly in the higher echelons of the UNEP secretariat.

30. His delegation wished to associate itself with the earlier comments concerning the need for equitable geographical distribution of posts, with special regard for countries which were at currently under-represented.

31. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) asked the Executive Director of UNEP to indicate how many staff were located in Nairobi and how many elsewhere, whether there were currently any vacancies in the manning-table, and the extent to which the existing staff found itself unable to cope with the workload.

32. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) said that his delegation was not satisfied that the terms of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) were being observed. It was unfortunate that, despite certain critical comments, the Advisory Committee had not seen fit to recommend a reduction in the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General. In particular, the number of additional posts requested seemed excessive.

33. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) endorsed the remarks made by the representatives of Algeria, the Soviet Union and Belgium. It did not really matter whether the new posts were financed from extra-budgetary sources or from the regular budget because, once approved, they would be paid for by Member States. In any event, the budget proposals should have indicated the criteria governing recruitment for new posts to allow the Committee to determine whether the principle of geographical distribution was being observed.

34. Mr. SETHI (India) associated his delegation with the comments of the representative of Algeria and said that he, too, would welcome explanations from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee as to why that Committee had not recommended any reduction in the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General. It would be interesting to know also whether the posts financed from extra-budgetary resources were likely to be transferred to the regular budget at some future date.

35. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Fifth Committee was called upon to vote only on the appropriations requested for UNEP to be financed from the regular budget of the United Nations. Administrative and programme support costs financed from the UNEP Fund had been dealt with in a separate report which the Advisory Committee had submitted to the Governing Council of UNEP. It was therefore its hope that the Governing Council would take cognizance of the views and recommendations that it had put forward in that report. With regard to the current discussion and, as pointed out in the report before the Committee (A/10008 and Corr.2), the appropriations requested for UNEP to be financed from the regular budget showed zero growth in real terms. In other words, the increase over the figure for 1974-1975 resulted mainly from the provision for the anticipated impact of inflation. The Advisory Committee's position on that factor was therefore consistent with the stand it had taken with regard to the other sections of the programme budget for 1976-1977. It had regarded the rates of inflation as working hypotheses, without recommending any reduction in the related estimates as submitted by the Secretary-General.

36. With regard to the Secretary-General's estimates under the regular budget for temporary assistance for meetings and for communications, he said that, because of certain imponderable factors, the Advisory Committee had deemed it advisable to leave the Executive Director of UNEP to exercise restraint rather than recommend a reduction itself.

37. Mr. STRONG (Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme) said that he welcomed the opportunity to hear at first hand the concerns and questions of members of the Committee. He would provide specific figures in reply to the queries at a later stage.

38. He assured members that UNEP took the views of the Advisory Committee very seriously and had maintained close contact with that Committee throughout the process of establishing its headquarters in Nairobi. Explaining the communications costs indicated in the budget, he said that Nairobi had not had the infrastructure required to service the headquarters of a world organization which was concerned with an issue that touched upon the activities of many members of the United Nations family. The communications facilities required to enable UNEP to maintain close contact with other organizations had proved much more expensive than had initially been anticipated. He recalled that the decision to locate UNEP headquarters in Nairobi had been reached fairly late in the session at which UNEP had been established, and the Secretariat had not had sufficient time to prepare additional estimates relating to requirements in various areas, including staff, with the result that adequate provision had not been made in the budget for certain items.

39. The relationship between the funding of UNEP from the regular budget and from the UNEP Fund was the

subject of consultations between the Programme's secretariat and officials at United Nations Headquarters. Initially, it had been decided that, at a period of general financial stringency in the United Nations, UNEP would keep its demands on the regular budget at a relatively stable level. The Governing Council of UNEP had expressed concern, echoed by the representative of Sweden at the current meeting, regarding the extent to which that might deprive the Programme of its share in the growth of the regular budget. He hoped that at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly the results of the consultations on the subject would be available to members.

40. Referring to the comments made concerning the large number of new posts requested, he pointed out that the size of the UNEP secretariat must be viewed in relation to the wide range of tasks which the Programme had been asked to carry out. He welcomed the fact that Governments, responding to his request at the first session of the Governing Council, had provided guidance at the third session on the order of priorities which should be adopted.

41. The large number of new high-level posts could be attributed to the fact that UNEP personnel discharged a policy and programme co-ordination function and had to command respect in the agencies with which they worked. With regard to the geographical distribution of posts, UNEP had in a relatively short time achieved a very good distribution; some 40 nationalities were represented in a group of approximately 100 professionals. Efforts would be made to sustain and improve the geographical balance in filling the new posts.

42. It was reasonable to expect that UNEP's maximum growth would occur during its early years. A levelling off of growth would be possible only if restraint was exercised in creating new tasks for the Programme.

43. With regard to Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, he said that UNEP itself had provided approximately $3 million, particularly to finance the participation of developing countries in demonstration projects. The remainder of the funds would come from the regular budget and from other sources. The figures would be made available to members.

44. A better balance had been achieved in UNEP programmes between the concerns of the developed and the developing countries. Some industrialized countries, in fact, were maintaining that the balance had tipped too far in favour of the developing countries. UNEP wished to maintain a balance. Moreover, a large number of programmes now reflected the interests of developing and developed countries alike: for example, Earthwatch and UNEP's activities in the regional seas, including the Mediterranean Sea.

45. In reply to the question raised concerning the number of meetings to be convened in Nairobi and the provision of funds for temporary assistance, he said that experience had demonstrated that more meetings were held with greater attendance than had been budgeted. Since the UNEP budget did not include provision for all the translators and interpreters required in Nairobi, it was necessary to seek outside assistance using the temporary assistance budget.

46. As to the location of UNEP staff, he said that there were approximately 80 Professional staff in Nairobi and 16 in the regional and liaison offices. Action had been taken recently to strengthen the regional offices considerably by transferring senior officers who had gained experience in Nairobi to those offices, in order to ensure that UNEP activities would have a greater regional orientation and to reflect the experience gained by UNEP in Nairobi, rather than to establish mini-programmes.

47. In conclusion, he said that UNEP would do everything possible to take into account the advice, comments and decisions of the Fifth Committee.

48. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) expressed his delegation's appreciation for the excellent relations which UNEP maintained with the Government of Kenya under the guidance of the Executive Director.

49. Members should not interpret the application of zero-growth factor to the UNEP section of the regular budget as implying non-activity on the part of UNEP. Time was required to establish an infrastructure for an organization of such magnitude in a country like Kenya. Furthermore, the move of the UNEP secretariat from the Kenyatta Conference Centre to its new location might interfere with the general performance of the Programme. However, he was confident that UNEP would make a valuable contribution to the international community's efforts to solve its complex environmental problems. He whole-heartedly agreed with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that the Fifth Committee should be understanding of UNEP's circumstances and ensure that it had sufficient high-level personnel to carry out the tasks entrusted to it.

50. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that he was not satisfied with the explanation provided by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. That Committee should have recommended reductions in the UNEP budget, and should reconsider section 13. For example, the question of reclassification of posts was a matter for the International Civil Service Commission to settle. In that connexion, the Advisory Committee should have recommended a reduction in the budget by the $9,000 mentioned in paragraph 13.3 of its report. Similarly, economies could be effected in the budget for communications.

51. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), emphasizing that the Advisory Committee was an advisory body, said that, if the Fifth Committee could not accept its recommendations, that Committee should provide guidance as to what should be done. He did not believe that the Advisory Committee should reconsider its report on section 13, since that report was based on a careful assessment of the elements involved. He would take members' comments into account when it considered UNEP's budget in the future.

52. He was confidnet that the Executive Director of UNEP would take the Fifth Committee's views into account and hoped that he would administer the appropriations for communications and temporary assistance bearing in mind the remarks of the Advisory Committee.

53. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation retained complete confidence in the Chairman of the Advisory Committee as well as in that Committee, which had given very valuable advice concerning section 13. Any decision by the Fifth Committee concerning cuts in the regular budget would be based on the analysis provided by the Advisory Committee.

54. That Committee had noted in its report[2] on the financial reports and accounts for the year 1974 and the reports of the Board of Auditors that programme support and administrative costs for 1974 had constituted 47 per cent of UNEP's total expenditure, partly owing to a shortfall of 71 per cent on the delivery of programmes, resulting in a high percentage of administrative and support costs. Those figures provided *prima facie* evidence of over-staffing and suggested that UNEP was engaged in the management of projects, a task which properly belonged to other agencies. He would welcome clarification by the Executive Director.

55. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece), recalling the Executive Director's reference to UNEP activities in the Mediterranean Sea, said that his Government definitely wished UNEP to maintain an active role in the area and did not wish that role to be impaired in any way.

56. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should defer a decision on section 13 pending clarification by the Executive Director of various points raised in the discussion.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

2 Document A/10239, of 16 September 1975, para. 20.

1706th meeting

Monday, 6 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1706

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT DECISION SUBMITTED BY THE THIRD COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10284 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 12* (A/C.5/1687)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General, in his note (A/C.5/1687), had considered that, should the General Assembly approve the draft decision submitted by the Third Committee (A/10284, para. 4) with regard to the Rapporteur of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group to inquire into the current situation of human rights in Chile, a supplementary appropriation of $3,700 would be required under section 20 of the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975.

2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee agreed that, should the General Assembly approve the draft decision of the Third Committee, the Secretary-General should meet the requirement of $3,700 within credits available to him in the current biennium. The Secretary-General should include an account of the question in the budget performance report he would submit during the current session.

3. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee request its Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that approval of the draft decision of the Third Committee would require a supplementary appropriation of $3,700 under section 20 of the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975.

It was so decided.

* Report of the Economic and Social Council.

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1705th meeting)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion (continued)

4. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation believed that the United Nations should be permitted to grow to fulfil the obligations which its Members imposed upon it, but that it should not dissipate its energies on irrelevant activities. Thus, while advocating economy, his delegation was calling for effectiveness in United Nations activities as well as savings.

5. His delegation congratulated the Secretariat on its presentation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) and endorsed the appraisal of it made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its corresponding report (A/10008 and Corr.2). He emphasized the need for accurate forecasting of expenditure, in view of the fact that supplementary and revised estimates were given less detailed scrutiny than the original budget estimates. Some revised estimates were, of course, unavoidable to cover amounts required pursuant to legislative decisions not yet made when the budget proposals were prepared.

6. Adequate provision should be made for inflation—a post-war fiscal evil common to all economies to varying degrees and not attributable to any one single cause. The Committee would serve no purpose by underestimating the effects of inflation; it should take it into account when preparing and approving a budget, rather than adopt an *ex post facto* method of budgeting for it, particularly in view of the cash flow problem. The Secretariat had taken a conservative position in regard to inflation rates and the effects of currency instability. That was no doubt due to pressures from contributing Members to minimize increases in expenditure. Nevertheless, revised and supplementary estimates would no doubt be required subsequently. He would have preferred realistic estimates for costs, which could then have been reduced by eliminating posts not essential to the tasks which the Secretariat had to perform. While any measure for estimating inflation would be prone to error in the current volatile monetary situation, he suggested that the average rate of inflation in various locations during the year preceding preparation of the estimates might be a viable measure.

7. Of the three methods of estimating real growth described in paragraphs 13 to 21 of the Advisory Committee's report, his delegation considered methodology B, whereby the growth period included the delayed recruitment factor while the base period took account only of actual appropriations, to be the most realistic, and suggested it should be used in future budgets. His delegation did not oppose programme growth, but merely wished to know what was involved in approving the budget. Without referring to the desirability of zero-based budgeting, he said that the methodology of drafting budget estimates to maintain the current level of activities should be more selective; good programmes should be expanded, while mediocre programmes should be reduced or eliminated.

8. He endorsed the views expressed at the 1701st meeting by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany with regard to the medium-term plan. Apart from the perennial problem of determining whether the plan should fit the programme or the programme fit the plan, the United Nations also had to co-ordinate its many different decision-making bodies and was constantly changing its priorities. Accordingly, his delegation would prefer the "rolling-plan" approach.

9. The conclusions reached by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery and recorded in its report (A/10117 and Corr.1) should be given proper consideration in the Economic and Social Council and in the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. Representatives should, he suggested, keep their colleagues in other bodies informed about the work of the Working Group, which had been established on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee. The Working Group's recommendation that the medium-term plan and the programme budget should be considered in alternate years, beginning in 1976, should be implemented without delay.

10. The Secretary-General's request at the 1700th meeting (see A/C.5/1685) that the size of the Working Capital Fund should be doubled involved two closely related problems: the first was the existing deficit of approximately $90 million, excluding the second UNEF deficit; the second problem was the cash flow situation, the Secretary-General being required to meet obligations before funds to do so were made available to him, but that problem could be resolved by a full Working Capital Fund or by prompt payment of contributions. He called on Governments whose fiscal practice hindered payment of contributions on time to give sympathetic consideration to the Secretary-General's appeal for all Members to pay contributions within the set time limit. Doubling the Working Capital Fund would ease the cash flow problem temporarily, although eventually it would be eroded because of the continuing and increasing deficit. His delegation believed that the problem had to be attacked at the root. It was prepared to contribute to the search for an over-all solution to the deficit problem.

11. The seventh special session of the General Assembly, in September, had given rise to hopes that the rift between the developed and developing countries might begin to heal and that a new co-operative approach towards a new economic order was being formulated. It had recognized that the United Nations would have to be restructured if it was to be a prime mover in implementing a new economic order. It had not, however, explicitly stated that solvency of the Organization was essential if it was to discharge its new responsibilities. It was not a question of figures alone, but of whether Members could generate the political will to give the United Nations the necessary potency.

12. Mr. GORITZA (Romania) said that programme budgeting had proved useful and was a more effective method of programming and evaluating United Nations activities than the previous one. The proposed programme budget under discussion was an improvement on the previous one in that it was clearer and replaced descriptions of activities by the statement of medium-term objectives. He agreed, however, with the Advisory Committee that inconsistencies in the various sections should be eliminated to make even clearer the relationship between appropriations and programmes. If possible, the volume of documentation should be reduced.

13. He endorsed the view of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 34 of its report that the resources of the United Nations should be used as effectively as possible and concentrated in the areas of greatest priority. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 amounted to $737 million, 22 per cent more than the appropriations for the preceding biennium. While the Secretary-General maintained that the growth rate of the budget was approximately the same as in previous years, the Advisory Committee had shown that the growth rate was 38 per cent if the initial estimates for 1976-1977 were compared with the initial estimates—not the revised appropriations—for the previous biennium. That increase was, he felt, unjustified, particularly because growth was not distributed equally among the various sections. He was concerned by the fact that budgetary growth did not always reflect increased activity. While budget growth as a whole was more than 20 per cent, programme growth was only about 5 per cent. More than $65.8 million had been requested to offset the effects of inflation, which was about twice as much as the amount requested for programme growth. Member States were to be made responsible for the Secretariat's difficulties

caused by inflation and currency instability, although they themselves were already adversely affected by the imbalance in the world economy, and the increase in the budget to offset the effects of inflation would increase the problems of developing countries in particular. More rational planning of expenditure was therefore essential. Suggestions had been made relating to saving by such methods as reducing administrative expenditure, redistributing resources and priorities and replacing certain programmes by other more important programmes, to ensure a balanced budget in keeping with the real needs of Member States.

14. Much of the budgetary increase was due to increases in staff costs and the request for 826 new posts. More restraint should be shown and more effective use made of the existing 10,000 staff members, who could cope with the administration of current and new programmes. He agreed with the Controller that increased output could be obtained with reduced input by making maximum use of the intellectual and organizational capacity of existing staff. Approximately 75 per cent of the budget related to staff costs, and care should be taken to ensure that staff growth rates did not exceed programme growth rates.

15. Programmes to accelerate the economic and social development of the developing countries enjoyed the support of his delegation, while those that ran counter to the spirit and principles of the United Nations did not.

16. The proposals of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery were a valuable contribution to the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations which had been begun at the seventh special session. Those proposals should be taken into consideration by the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. Joint efforts in that direction would lead to measures which could enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations, increase its role in solving major problems, and establish a new international economic and political order.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the document, see 1705th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 14. INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL *(concluded)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

17. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) replied to questions put by various representatives concerning the presentation of expenditure estimates under section 14 in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006). As a general preliminary remark, he noted that an effort had been made for the first time in the budget presentation to show the full range of expenditure attributable to programmes of substantive and operational work. As table 14-8 showed, the total amount of that expenditure had been divided into direct costs (heading A)—financed from "(1) regular budget" and "(2) extra-budgetary funds"—and apportioned, or indirect, costs (heading B), also financed from the regular budget and extra-budgetary resources, and, finally, expenditure for operational activities (heading C), financed from extra-budgetary funds. It should be borne in mind that the Committee had only to decide on the direct costs financed from the regular budget, that is, for section 14, the amount of $2,222,800 shown under heading A (1) in table 14-8. All the remaining figures were given merely for fuller information, and in so far as they referred to extra-budgetary resources, no further decision in the matter would have to be taken by the Fifth Committee. However, to the extent that they included resources from other sections of the regular budget, the Committee would have to decide on them when those sections came under discussion.

18. With regard to the relationship between sections 14 and 15, he pointed out that section 15 showed expenditures within the normal budget for operational activities and was therefore not linked with extra-budgetary resources. However, an amount of some $10 million was shown under heading C (Operational activities) under section 14 and reported partially again under section 15 because those activities referred to substantive programmes under section 14, except that they were financed on a different basis. It would be noted that section 15, showing the technical assistance provided under the regular budget, contained only about $26,000 for narcotic drugs control. The appropriation of $100,000 prior to the establishment of the Fund for Drug Abuse Control had been reduced to that figure and used exclusively for training 10 fellows a year in law enforcement and narcotic drugs analysis.

19. With regard to the danger mentioned by the representative of Belgium at the 1703rd meeting that posts financed by extra-budgetary funds might be forced into the regular budget, he pointed out that the Secretary-General administered both the regular budget and the Fund for Drug Abuse Control, applied the same criteria in ascertaining the need for posts whether budgetary or extra-budgetary resources were involved and subjected all requests for posts to the same scrutiny. Moreover, for the time being, the Secretary-General had no intention of transferring the posts referred to by the Belgian representative to the regular budget and, in any case, that could be done only with the consent of the Advisory Committee.

20. Commenting on the Advisory Committee's suggestion in paragraph 14.12 of its report that CPC be invited to study the programme aspects of existing secretariat arrangements in narcotics control, he said that it might be more appropriate to transmit the question directly to the Economic and Social Council, which could deal with it itself or pass it on to the successor of CPC.

21. In reply to the USSR request, at the 1703rd meeting, for clarification concerning the methods of calculating the inflation factor, he said he would endeavour to elaborate somewhat on the information given in the working paper on the subject (A/C.5/XXX/CRP.2) submitted by the Secretary-General. For the first time, the programme budget showed the inflation factor as a separate element of

* Resumed from the 1703rd meeting.

the estimated expenditure requirements, and the method of calculating it therefore applied to all sections of the budget. His explanation would be without prejudice to the methods which might be used in treating inflation in future budget estimates.

22. In each section, the starting point was the estimated requirements expressed in 1975 rates—under section 14 amounting to $3,680,000. In order to forecast how those estimates would be affected by further inflation during 1976 and 1977, assumptions had had to be made about the average inflation rates applicable to each of those years. For Geneva, 9 per cent had been assumed conservatively for 1976 and 8 per cent for 1977. However, the over-all rate for the biennium had had to be calculated by applying the 8 per cent rate for 1977 to the price level for 1976, which, in turn, was made up of the 1975 price level, inflated by the 9 per cent applicable to that year. Thus, if the 1975 price level was 100, the 1976 level became 109 and, after an 8 per cent increase in that index, the 1977 level became 117.72. The total increase for the two years would therefore be 9 plus 17.72, equalling 26.72. Assuming that expenditure during each of the two years would be approximately the same, the average rate of inflation for the biennium would be half of 26.72 or 13.36 per cent.

23. In addition, however, the exchange rate had to be taken into account. Having calculated the 1975 price level at a rate of 2.98 Swiss francs to the United States dollar, the calculations for the biennium 1976-1977 were based on an exchange rate of 3.10. As a result, the 1976-1977 estimates expressed in dollars were lower than they would have been if the previous rate of 2.98 had been maintained. When that conclusion was introduced in the inflation calculation, the figures had to be adjusted downward by about 4 per cent of the amounts reflecting the impact of inflation. The result was that the average inflation rate of 13.36 per cent for the forthcoming biennium was adjusted to 9.2 per cent.

24. Another factor which had entered into the calculation of the inflation rate was the fact that expenditure for each year of the biennium would not simply represent half of the total estimated requirements. An effort was therefore made to reflect the actual time pattern of expenditure depending on the situation under each budget section. It was found that expenses for the second year of the biennium were generally higher than those for the first year and that fact was also built into the calculation. Other adjustments had also had to be made because different categories of expenditure were affected by inflation to different degrees and some, such as commitments established in fixed dollar amounts, were not affected at all. For example, Professional salaries did not entail increased expenditure commensurate with the general rate of inflation. Instead, the inflation factor was reflected by adding post adjustments to the base salary and granting such adjustments only when the cost-of-living index reached a certain level, with a time lag of four months. Although increases in post adjustments were one of the effects of inflation, the estimates of increases in Professional salaries did not reflect full inflation rates, as was the case in respect of costs such as those for electricity and stationery.

25. The budget presentation could show only the final net result of certain assumptions regarding the inflation rate. However, painstaking efforts had been made to refine the calculations so far as possible and to ascertain the timing and extent of the inflationary impact on the expenditure pattern. Nevertheless, any calculation which attempted to measure the future impact of inflation was inevitably subject to change in the light of actual developments. The Secretary-General's calculations had been made on an extremely conservative basis in order to avoid any suspicion that a financial cushion was being built up over and above what was actually required to carry out the programmes endorsed by the Committee. The proof was that, on the basis of the current financial situation of the Organization, $16 million more was required to finance those programmes.

26. Mr. BACHE (United States of America), stressing the importance of the narcotic drugs control problem, said that his Government had consistently supported United Nations activities designed to assist other Governments in suppressing illicit traffic and in finding alternative means of livelihood for growers of the raw materials for narcotic drugs. It had originally supported the recommendations under section 14 for staff increases for the Division of Narcotic Drugs and for the International Narcotics Control Board because of the new responsibilities being assumed by the latter in connexion with the 1972 Protocol Amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961 and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the continuing challenge to the Division posed by the current drug epidemic. He regretted that the Advisory Committee had not been convinced of the need for the additional posts requested, which his delegation regarded as fully justified, but would acquiesce in the Advisory Committee's recommendations for the time being. His delegation hoped that both the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee would consider new proposals for strengthening the activities of both organs more sympathetically in future.

27. The United States delegation was strongly opposed to the consolidation of the secretariats of the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the Control Board. The latter's secretariat serviced a treaty organ that predated the United Nations, it was an executive-judicial agency with increased responsibilities and it was not under the direct control of Governments. It was essential to maintain its independence and integrity. The Division of Narcotic Drugs, on the other hand, was responsible to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, a legislative body in which Governments were represented. The Economic and Social Council had twice gone on record as favouring separate secretariats for the two organs, namely by its resolutions 1196 (XLII) and 1775 (LIV), and the Advisory Committee was recommending, in paragraph 14.12 of its report, only that CPC study the programme aspects of existing secretariat arrangements and advise the Council whether they should be retained unchanged or not. Pending receipt of CPC's findings, any decision by the Fifth Committee to change those arrangements, particularly by consolidating the two secretariats, would be prejudicial and of questionable validity.

28. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation fully supported the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 14. It agreed with that Committee that proposals to transfer posts financed from

voluntary funds to the regular budget were justified only when the General Assembly had been forewarned at the time it established a trust fund such as the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control that such transfers might eventually have to be made. Otherwise, any Member State could induce the Assembly to establish a programme on a voluntary basis in order to satisfy its special interest and after a few years, pleading that it could no longer be financed on that basis, attempt to place it under the regular budget. He agreed with the Belgian representative that such transfers would tend to distort the manning table because there was inevitably a concentration of high-level posts in the units previously financed from extra-budgetary funds. For all those reasons, he opposed the transfers requested under section 14.

29. Although the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Control Board were distinct entities with specific functions, the existence of two secretariats to service them appeared *prima facie* to be a case of duplication and overlapping. The existence of two organs should not mean two secretariats: there were various units in the Secretariat which serviced more than one organ or commission. Consequently, he did not agree with the United States representative that the two secretariats servicing narcotic drug programmes should be maintained as separate administrative units. He was not discussing the merits of their programmes or priorities; he was concerned that the administrative arrangements in the field of narcotic drugs should be those best suited for implementing programmes. The Fifth Committee was fully competent to decide that question.

30. It was open to debate whether the Economic and Social Council had been the appropriate body to approve the administrative arrangements for International Narcotics Control Board and the Division of Narcotic Drugs in its resolution 1196 (XLII). There was no question, however, that in its most recent resolutions on the question—namely, resolutions 1777 (LIV) of 18 May 1973 and 1935 (LVIII) of 6 May 1975—the Council had recognized the failure to co-ordinate multidisciplinary action against drug abuse and had urged that co-ordination should be improved. In the light of that recognition, the Fifth Committee should not hesitate to exercise its competence to establish a more rational system of secretariat servicing. However, his delegation would go along with the Advisory Committee's proposal for a study, but agreed with the Controller that the Council itself, not CPC, should examine the programme aspects of the secretariat arrangements concerning control of narcotic drugs.

31. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Controller for his explanation concerning the method of calculating the inflation factor, adding that his delegation reserved the right to discuss the working paper on the subject submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/XXX/CRP.2) in greater detail at a later stage. However, his delegation had requested data on the actual level of inflation based on national statistics in countries where United Nations bodies were located. The information provided in the working paper and orally did not fully answer that question: the figures in paragraph 5 should not have been adjusted for changes in the exchange rate, and the Committee should be given another table which would really clarify that point. Referring to paragraph 7 concerning General Service staff, his delegation felt that, since it was recognized that increases in basic pay were not automatically geared to increases in the local cost-of-living index, the assumed inflation rate given in paragraph 5 should not have been applied. Referring to paragraphs 9 and 10, he pointed out that a distinction must be made between expenditures that would be affected by inflation and those that would not. That calculation should be made for approved programmes and real programme growth. His delegation would not be ready to vote on the question until it had received information in answer to the questions it had raised.

32. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that his delegation fully supported the cuts and recommendations suggested by the Advisory Committee under section 14 but would like to make clear its position on the opinion expressed in paragraph 14.12 of the Advisory Committee's report. His delegation agreed with the United States delegation that there was a real distinction and division of labour between the Control Board and the Division of Narcotic Drugs. Any suggestion to merge the secretariats of the two bodies should be carefully considered, as it might impair their effectiveness. There might indeed be areas in which the two secretariats overlapped and they should be identified and the overlapping eliminated. Since the Fifth Committee was not the appropriate body to make such a determination, his delegation supported the suggestion that the matter be referred to CPC, which would make any recommendation it saw fit to the Economic and Social Council.

33. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that, since inflation affected the entire budget of the Organization, it might be advisable to ask the Joint Inspection Unit to include in its work programme for 1976 a study on the methodology and impact of inflation on the United Nations budget. If the Committee agreed, he would make a formal proposal to that effect.

34. Mr. NAUDY (France) thanked the Controller for replying to the question raised by his delegation concerning full budgeting, adding that it reserved its right to return to the matter once it had studied carefully the Controller's remarks.

35. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) thanked the Controller for assuring him that the Secretariat did not endorse the proposed transfer of 4 posts currently financed from extra-budgetary resources to the regular budget. However, he had also wished to know who decided the number and level of posts to be financed by extra-budgetary resources.

36. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that he would reply more fully to the question raised by the French delegation at a later stage.

37. He regretted the discrepancy in the total amounts mentioned in paragraph 5 of the working paper, which was due to the fact that in individual multiplications the figures had been rounded upwards or downwards. He deeply regretted that the representative of the Soviet Union felt that the working paper fell short of expectations. It had been his understanding that the Soviet representative had asked for a written explanation of how the Secretariat had

arrived at the figures for inflation given in table 14-3 under section 14. If the answer was not satisfactory, he would do his best to remedy the deficiency. However, he pointed out that nobody could state definitely what the future inflation rate would be, and any figure could be only a forecast. The Secretariat had simply looked at the over-all trend in the world and the figures arrived at reflected a conservative view of what was the general opinion. Little would be gained by providing forecasts of national inflation rates because those, too, were only forecasts. He agreed that if a complete picture was required the inflationary factor should not be coupled with the exchange rate problem. However, separating the two would have meant making the budget document even more voluminous. The Secretariat had attempted to give examples of how certain elements of expenditure were affected by inflation. Naturally, there were different elements in different sections of the budget and, although some might be refined further, he did not think that it would really alter the basic content of the document.

38. He would be exceeding his authority by attempting to answer at the current stage the question raised by the representative of the Philippines.

39. Responding to the question raised by the Belgian representative, he said that posts funded from extra-budgetary resources were under the control of the Secretary-General and that the same criteria were applied to them as to posts financed under the regular budget. However, he pointed out that, if a high standard of performance was expected, the level of the posts requested must be such as to reflect those expectations.

40. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that he did not think that the methodology used in section 14 could necessarily be applied to all the other sections. He did not understand what effect inflation had had on travel expenses, and paragraph 8 of the working paper had not provided much clarification. Nor did he understand the effect of inflation on supplies and printing, since the printing was done at the United Nations and he assumed that the Organization must have a stock of supplies bought several years earlier. While inflation was currently blamed for the increase in the budget, other reasons might be found later for further such increases. His delegation would revert to the matter at a later stage.

41. With regard to the question raised by the representative of Belgium, his delegation was somewhat concerned to note that the staff financed by extra-budgetary resources were in a different category from those financed under the regular budget. It appeared that, when the Fifth Committee did not approve the financing of a particular post as being too high, that post was included among those financed by extra-budgetary resources and transferred back to the regular budget at a later stage.

42. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had not asked the Secretariat to perform the impossible task of accurately forecasting inflation but to explain the reasons behind the percentage increase of expenditure related to inflation. He would like to know what was the basis for calculating the growth of inflation and which expenditures were being affected by inflation and which were not.

43. The CHAIRMAN said that a decision might be taken on section 14, subject to two considerations. The first consideration was the questions raised by the Soviet Union representative and to some extent supported by the French and Algerian representatives; those questions, though important, were of a general nature and were not related to any one section of the budget; the Committee might therefore follow the same procedure as it had previously and agree that the decision would be subject to any later decision concerning the inflation factor. The second consideration arose from the programme aspects on which a decision appeared necessary; the primary issue seemed to be the extent to which the activities of the secretariats of the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board might overlap and the possibility for streamlining their activities by a merger of the two secretariats. Although there had been no concrete proposal that the Fifth Committee recommend such a merger, there had seemed to be a decided majority in favour of studying that possibility. It was true that the United Kingdom, while supporting the Advisory Committee's recommendation, had expressed reservations and that the United States had expressed its opposition to a merger. However, he assumed that the latter would not be opposed to a study of the question to determine whether a merger was in fact possible.

44. The Committee might wish, therefore, to endorse the comments of the Advisory Committee in taking a decision on the appropriation for the section. If the Committee so wished it could vote on section 14 on the understanding that it recommended to the General Assembly that the Economic and Social Council be requested, through its appropriate organ, to examine the programme aspects of the existing secretariat arrangements for narcotics control with a view to identifying any duplication and overlapping of activities that might exist and to consider within that context the possibility of streamlining or combining both secretariats in the interest of economy and expeditious administration and management. Any decision by the Committee on the appropriation under section 14 would not prejudge any decision it might take later on the inflation factor.

45. He proposed that the Committee should vote in first reading on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee (see 1702nd meeting, para. 45) that an appropriation under section 14 for the biennium 1976-1977 in the amount of $3,854,000 be approved.

An appropriation in the amount of $3,854,000 under section 14 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 76 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

1707th meeting

Tuesday, 7 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1707

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1705th meeting)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion (continued)

1. Mrs. BASTOS SANDIFER (Portugal) said that the United Nations financial crisis had had a serious negative effect on the administration and goals of the Organization and that the time had come to find a solution, or a series of possible solutions. It seemed that the administrative apparatus was no longer a means to an end but part of the end itself. In fact, peace-keeping, decolonization, legal, economic and social activities accounted for only 43.7 per cent of the budget. Since that figure did not apply only to project delivery but included administrative costs, the real percentage of benefit received by nations was even smaller. Clearly something was wrong with the priorities not only of individual programmes but also of the management. Efforts must be made to limit the expenditures of the Organization so that they corresponded more closely to the real revenue it received and to increased productivity. However, account must be taken of programme priorities when implementing the economies.

2. A thorough examination of the structure of the United Nations, its division of labour and productivity must be made in order to streamline the staff and distribute work more evenly. Her delegation supported the Secretary-General's comments at the 1700th meeting (A/C.5/1685) on the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System (E/AC.62/9) and their proposals regarding UNIDO. It believed that savings could be made in the every-day administration of the Organization, for example in the area of documentation, and was opposed to the reclassification of posts without full proof of the need for such upgrading. It fully agreed with the comments by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraphs 60 and 61 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) and joined that Committee in hoping that the International Civil Service Commission would make recommendations to the General Assembly on the questions of career development and promotions.

3. Her delegation was not completely satisfied that the Advisory Committee had sufficiently trimmed the Secretary-General's request for additional posts and would have liked a more detailed exposition of the reasons why so many posts were considered necessary at that time. It wondered whether many of them, if created, would remain unfilled; although there were 310 vacant posts, the United Nations continued to function. If the new posts were approved, every effort should be made to fill them, particularly those at the higher levels, with candidates from countries that were currently under-represented. In addition, more emphasis should be placed on fixed-term contracts so that the candidates chosen would be able to return to their countries having gained valuable experience at the United Nations.

4. Her delegation shared the Advisory Committee's concern at the proposal to transfer to the regular budget posts previously financed from extra-budgetary resources and at the methodology and data used in calculating the programme budget, specifically the inconsistencies it contained and the failure to give sources. Her delegation agreed that the methodology used in calculating so-called programme growth and real growth was questionable and considered the Secretary-General's estimates of future inflation rates to be inadequate. It would like to know how those figures had been arrived at and why they had not been applied to the budget across the board. Considering the fact that the exchange rate had been less than 3.25 Swiss francs to the dollar for about one year, it questioned the calculations based upon that rate.

5. Her delegation supported the idea of considering the medium-term plan and programme budget in alternate years. While sympathetic to the Secretary-General's request that the Committee should consider doubling the Working Capital Fund, it was not convinced that the Fund would not be used to hide the United Nations deficit instead of for its intended use.

6. Miss GARCIA DONOSO (Ecuador), noting that inflation was cited as the main cause of the budget increase, said that the budget figures should not be based on estimated rates of inflation and exchange rates for 1976 and 1977, as they could only be assumptions, but should reflect current realities. Separate provision should be made for inflationary effects, which could be calculated from the inflation indices so far registered in the current year. The budget would thus take account of the effect of inflation on programme costs as appropriate, and the effects of inflation could be offset until inflation was controlled world-wide.

7. Her delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the new budget format was not entirely satisfactory and it contained certain inconsistencies and discrepancies. Similarly, it endorsed the Advisory Committee's suggestion that the term "programme growth" should be replaced by "growth in expenditures expressed in real terms", since it covered additional posts and other resources and was not synonymous with increased programme delivery.

8. The fact that the budget estimates represented a gross increase of 21.6 per cent over the revised appropriations for the current biennium was due to the full budgeting system, which took account of estimated inflation rates. Her delegation was deeply concerned at the dangers inherent in a continuous rise in inflation. With regard to the Organization's need for additional finance, it should be remembered that inflation had dislocated the economies of the developing countries, which would probably find it difficult to increase their contributions. Consequently, it was only fair that the developed countries, particularly those whose economic policies were responsible for the current inflation, should shoulder the burden of the Organization's additional expenditure. In addition, the Secretary-General should redistribute the resources, at the same time eliminating duplication between the various units of the Secretariat, and transfer staff from units that were overstaffed to units that needed additional staff either because they had been assigned additional work or because they had just been established. That would ensure better staff distribution and greater efficiency.

9. Turning to the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/1017 and Corr.1), she said that its recommendations should be adopted as soon as possible. Her delegation favoured strengthening the continuing evaluation of programmes and activities in the United Nations system to determine their effectiveness and agreed that CPC should be the intergovernmental body to review evaluation reports on United Nations activities.

10. Mr. MATSEIKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation shared the general concern expressed in the Committee over the continuing increase in the budget estimates. The effectiveness of the United Nations should be enhanced and its administrative and financial system improved by rational planning of the budget and other measures to stabilize the budget. He had expected the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) to take a more rational approach and make fuller use of the advantages of the biennial budget cycle; while it was an improvement on the previous biennial budget, it had not avoided all pitfalls. For example, as the Advisory Committee noted in paragraph 9 of its report, it had sometimes been difficult to relate requests for increased resources to programme material, justifications of requests were too vague, and no information was provided on the redeployment of resources made available because of the termination of activities. Those short-comings had been evident in the previous programme budget and had been criticized at the time, but they had not been eliminated.

11. The budget amounted to an unprecedented $737 million, 21.6 per cent higher than for the current biennium, and it was to be supplemented by perhaps $45 million pursuant to decisions taken during the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, recent sessions of the Economic and Social Council, the General Conference of UNIDO and the sessions of the General Assembly, and also because of currency fluctuations. Careful attention should be given to the causes of the increase in the budget. Approximately half the increase was to offset the effects of inflation and, as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had pointed out at the 1700th meeting (A/C.5/1686), was over and above the effect of cost increases built in the base of $642.7 million used to calculate the 1976-1977 requirements. That implied that there had been no proper analysis of the effectiveness of existing programmes in order to establish priorities, eliminate marginally useful programmes and duplication and redistribute resources thus made available, in spite of the fact that the Advisory Committee had previously drawn attention to the need for such an analysis. That question had been mentioned by various representatives during the general discussion, in particular by the representative of Poland (1703rd meeting), whose questions he hoped would be answered fully.

12. In addition to that failure to analyse existing programmes, the Secretariat had introduced an element of programme growth in the initial budget estimates in advance of action by the legislative organs concerned; as the Advisory Committee stated in paragraph 28 of its report, that practice was open to question. His delegation considered that the Secretariat had exceeded its power and violated the rules of procedure of the General Assembly by including in the budget estimates about $40 million for expansion of programmes not yet approved. Another defect of the programme budget was that the documentation did not indicate the estimated volume of manpower resources intended for particular activities, as noted in paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report. He agreed with the Advisory Committee's conclusion that in some instances programme material was couched in generalizations more appropriate to a medium-term plan then to a programme budget document. Not only had the Secretariat unconstitutionally increased amounts requested for certain programmes, but it had not even justified those requests fully.

13. His delegation had expected more in the way of recommendations and advice from the Advisory Committee on the question of inflation. As the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had said, that Committee had not found it easy to go along with the rates used by the Secretary-General, but had regarded those inflation rates as working hypotheses. Yet how could the Fifth Committee take decisions on the basis of working hypotheses when those decisions would involve additional expenditure totalling about $70 million for Members of the United Nations? Not even an outline of the methods used by the Secretariat in calculating inflation was given. The question had been raised in connexion with section 14 of the programme budget, but it applied equally to all sections. The working paper submitted by the Secretary-General as document A/C.5/XXX/CRP.5 did not give a satisfactory explanation either for section 14 or for other sections. The problem of how to deal with inflation had not been resolved, and the Committee would have to find a solution, which would establish a precedent. One approach, proposed by the Secretariat, was to require additional contributions from States, including States which were not responsible for the monetary crisis of the capitalist system or for currency instability. Another approach, the only proper approach, was to comply with General Assembly decisions, including resolution 2150 (XXI), which approved the recommendation of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies[1] that increases in expenditure due to

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 80, document A/6343, para. 40.

rises in prices should so far as possible be absorbed by savings, reassessment of priorities, redeployment of resources and adjustments within the budget. His delegation urged the Committee to endorse the latter approach.

14. While staff costs accounted for 75 per cent of the budget and there were already 10,000 employees–and, as of 1 May 1975, 310 Professional and higher category posts vacant–826 new posts, including 267 Professional and higher category posts, had been requested for the biennium 1976-1977. The United Nations must be cured of the chronic disease of unjustified expansion of the manning table. It should concentrate on increasing productivity of existing staff by effective organization of work, more rational redistribution of duties and reviewing of priorities for programmes. He opposed the proposed increase in the manning table, and endorsed the proposal at the 1704th meeting by the Soviet representative that the Joint Inspection Unit should be instructed to study the question of utilization of the Secretariat staff.

15. The Secretary-General's request for the reclassification of 63 posts in the Professional category was not justified. He fully agreed with the Advisory Committee's view as stated in paragraph 60 of its report that in many cases it was an attempt to improve promotion prospects.

16. Equitable geographical distribution of posts within the Secretariat and elimination of the current imbalance would help to improve the functioning of the Secretariat. Although some progress had been made in that direction recently, many countries, including the Ukrainian SSR which was one of the 10 major contributors to the United Nations budget, were still under-represented. The decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session[2] on that very important question should be implemented without further delay.

17. One way of improving the budget would be to exclude sections dealing with activities counter to the United Nations Charter, such as the servicing of the United Nations bond issue under section 24. Diverting United Nations resources to activities which were in the interest only of a small group of countries reduced the Organization's effectiveness considerably and prevented it from implementing important development programmes. He also opposed any suggestion that Members of the United Nations should pay off the Chiang Kai-shek debt.

18. Technical assistance should not be financed from the United Nations budget, as that was in violation of Article 17 of the Charter. It should be financed through UNDP on a voluntary basis. Accordingly, estimates for technical assistance should be excluded from the regular budget and consolidated in UNDP, leading to more effective international economic co-operation; such co-operation, as a result of the recent major decisions on the subject, was entering a new and decisive stage. It would be wrong to assume that any expansion of United Nations activities and unrestrained budgetary increases would facilitate implementation of those decisions or protect the interests of the developing countries. The willingness of Members to establish the new international economic order would be reflected in strenuous efforts in the Fifth Committee to find rational and effective ways of improving the financial administration of the United Nations.

19. Ms. ABELE-EMICH (Austria) commended the Secretary-General for the improvements in the presentation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and the medium-term plan for the period of 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1), which contained comprehensive and detailed information. Her delegation was in general prepared to support the framework of the budget estimates, as adjusted by the Advisory Committee.

20. Controlled expansion of the budget of the United Nations was both natural and desirable. A limited amount of programme growth could be achieved by more efficient use of resources without an increase in expenditure, but Members could not call upon the United Nations to perform new functions without providing it with the necessary means. That applied in particular to the decisions of the seventh special session of the General Assembly.

21. Her Government would study the Secretary-General's proposals that Member States should make their contributions on time and that the Working Capital Fund should be doubled in order to ease the cash flow situation. Those suggestions would not, however, resolve the basic financial problem of the accumulating deficit incurred because certain Member States withheld part of their contribution. It was necessary to resolve the basic problem, and she suggested that all countries concerned should review their policy. Her delegation could agree, reluctantly, to the system of full budgeting because it was, under existing circumstances, one way of easing the cash flow situation. Inflation was a world-wide phenomenon and United Nations finances could not be dealt with in isolation from the global economic situation. Valuable programmes should not be eroded because of inflation or currency instability, but the Secretary-General should be urged not to use the money provided as a built-in reserve that might tempt him not to observe utmost restraint in expenditures.

22. She regretted that there was not time for a thorough discussion of the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 which was a very interesting and instructive document, particularly its introduction, dealing with, *inter alia*, the concept of the medium-term plan, and its perspective analyses. The document had in part been considered by CPC and the Economic and Social Council, but such an important document should also be discussed by the Fifth Committee. Accordingly, she supported the suggestion by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery that the budget and the plan should be considered in alternate years. She expressed appreciation to the Working Group for providing a report highlighting a number of basic problems involved in the planning and programming process.

23. The Fifth Committee was meeting at a crucial moment in the history of planning, programming and budgeting. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 3043 (XXVII) of 19 December 1972, the Secretariat and Member States had improved their ability to cope with the problems of the new budget format and had realized how

2 *Ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 31* and corrigendum, p. 139, item 8, subparagraph *(b)*.

closely efficient programming was related to restructuring. The definition of objectives and the establishment of priorities between and within programmes was primarily a political task involving basic policy choices which could be taken only by Member States. Ways and means still had to be devised to eliminate projects that had outlived their usefulness, so that resources could be redeployed for new programmes. An integrated programme budget required an over-all approach and more co-ordination. Accordingly, she endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group that CPC be strengthened by enabling it to scrutinize all projects in the programme budget and giving it real responsibility for co-ordination. The Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System had requested that the recommendations contained in its report (E/AC.62/9) should be considered in the light of the work of the Working Group, and it had also endorsed the Working Group's recommendations relating to CPC. She suggested that the report of the Working Group (A/10117 and Corr.1) should be referred to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System for detailed consideration.

24. The Joint Inspection Unit always provided in-depth analyses of problems and thought-provoking solutions. She commended the report on medium-term planning in the United Nations system (see A/9646), and regretted that it was being given only cursory consideration. She specifically supported recommendation No. I, on harmonization of programme budget presentation. The Group of Experts had recommended that all organizations concerned should take immediate steps to adopt comparable programme budget presentation and a common methodology of programme classification, which was a question of great importance. She welcomed the endorsement of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit by ACC and by the Advisory Committee. She suggested that ACC should report on implementation of the recommendations of the Unit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

25. In conclusion, she said that her delegation would contribute to implementation of programmes and would co-operate with the Secretary-General to the best of its ability with a view to easing the financial difficulties.

26. Mr. FERNANDEZ MAROTO (Spain) expressed appreciation for the quality of the documents prepared by the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee. The size of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 was cause for concern. Although it could be argued that such a marked expansion was proof of the Organization's vitality, it was equally true that it was also due to factors that stemmed directly from the world-wide economic disturbances. It was therefore essential strictly to control expenditure by carefully administering the funds allocated for each activity, eliminating activities which no longer had any purpose and, as far as possible, transferring funds from activities that were over-financed to others which lacked the funds necessary for implementation.

27. The Organization's income was rather insignificant compared to its expenditure and it would clearly be very useful if the income could be increased as that would lessen the amount of costs to be distributed among Member States. His delegation supported the cuts recommended by the Advisory Committee, but, as they amounted to only 2.14 per cent of the total budget, it would welcome the possibility of further reductions in costs, provided they did not affect essential programmes.

28. With regard to the presentation of the programme budget, his delegation felt that greater synthesis could be achieved without prejudice to the detail necessary for in-depth analysis; however, the desirability of preparing a shortened document for use by delegations was questionable since delegations had to have easy access to all the details of programmes.

29. Programme evaluation was of the utmost importance in relation to both the budget and the medium-term plan. Consequently, while recognizing the difficulties involved in setting up adequate evaluation methods, his delegation felt that it was the only viable means of making programme selection objective. It agreed with the statement in paragraph 74 of the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) that it was reasonable to hope that appropriate techniques and procedures could be adapted to the needs and special nature of the United Nations. It hoped that it would not take too long to elaborate such techniques.

30. With regard to the full budgeting system, on which his delegation might subsequently express its views at greater length, his delegation felt that the best attitude to take would be a very realistic one, mid-way between outright rejection of the inclusion in the budget of any figure attempting to reflect inflation, which would undoubtedly continue to some extent, and indiscriminate acceptance of the inclusion of subjectively determined amounts for which no sufficient justification was given. In either case the evaluation should be as rational as possible and exclude considerations relating to the Organization's cash flow, since that was a separate problem.

31. His delegation fully supported the cuts in the number of new posts recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 47 of its report and the very appropriate comment in paragraph 50 and the following paragraphs concerning the transfer to the regular budget of posts initially financed by voluntary contributions. That was a pernicious practice and should be completely eliminated. His delegation was also against the reclassification of posts simply to provide promotion opportunities for specific staff members and it agreed with the Advisory Committee that no further reclassifications of posts should be requested until the International Civil Service Commission had considered and reported on that question.

32. His delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's comments in paragraphs 69 and 70 of its report concerning the delay in the publication of an authoritative document that would give details of the organization of the Secretariat.

33. The medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 marked a step forward in the Organization's efforts to achieve an integrated planning and programme budget system and correctly included all the activities listed in the programme budget. However, much remained to be done before such an integrated system was achieved: for in-

stance, the medium-term plan should contain an over-all estimate of the plan's cost and there should be greater intermeshing of the plan and the programme budget. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee's comments in paragraph 83 of its report concerning the short-comings of part II of the plan. It was to be hoped that such short-comings could be overcome in the future. His delegation agreed that the programme budget and medium-term plan should be considered in alternate years and basically endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery.

34. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said that it was clear from the presentation of the budget and medium-term plan for the period under consideration that, while many of the comments made on the same documents for the previous biennium had been taken into account, much still remained to be done. Further improvements would enable members to have a clear picture of the task before them and would facilitate careful distribution of the limited resources available. His delegation therefore endorsed the recommendation of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery that the medium-term plan and the programme budget should be considered in alternate years. It agreed with the Advisory Committee that the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 represented a major contribution towards a proper system of planning in the United Nations.

35. The seventh special session of the General Assembly had marked a milestone in the consolidation of the new international economic order, which should be reflected in a concerted effort to achieve greater order within the system. It was well known that the initial budget estimates of $737 million did not include the cost of peace-keeping operations, which were apportioned separately, or extra-budgetary funds which extended the Organization's financial obligations and which included additional funds relating to decisions adopted after the preparation of the budget estimates.

36. The estimates for the biennium 1976-1977 were in fact 36.4 per cent higher than the initial appropriations for the current biennium. Yet the average real income of the poorest countries had not risen at all over the past year, and there was no prospect for improvement. Those countries paid assessed contributions to the United Nations budget, and the increase in their contributions could not be justified politically unless the United Nations assured the populations of those countries that its activities were directed not only towards maintaining peace but also towards improving international economic conditions in order to ensure a more rational and equitable standard of living.

37. His delegation was in a position to support the programme budget proposals of the Secretary-General, subject to the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee and to any changes that might be made as a result of clarifications provided by the Secretary-General.

38. Commenting in more detail on the Advisory Committee's report, he accepted its definition of the term "programme growth" as used by the Secretary-General as "growth in expenditures expressed in real terms". He welcomed the Controller's assurance that that definition would be used in the next budget. The system of full budgeting should be studied carefully in view of the difficulty of forecasting future trends and the need to reduce the effects of inflation as far as possible by savings. At a time when many States had taken rigorous measures at considerable political cost to offset the effects of inflation, the United Nations should not advocate a policy of increasing expenditure. It was logical that the Advisory Committee had not recommended approval of all the new posts requested by the Secretary-General. The objectives of the United Nations could be attained not through increasing the number of staff but by increased productivity and dedication of the staff. United Nations staff members were clearly indispensable to the work of the Organization, and he hoped that the International Civil Service Commission would not only discuss better working conditions but would also seek solutions for the establishment of a suitable grading system and professional status for staff members.

39. The report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) was an extremely valuable document, and he expressed appreciation to the Working Group and its Chairman for the excellent work they had done. At a time when the whole United Nations system was about to be restructured, the report should be given very careful study. He advocated implementation of its recommendations.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1705th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 19. INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

40. The CHAIRMAN observed that, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 19.7), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had recommended a reduction of $116,000 from the amount of $5,197,000 requested by the Secretary-General in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006). The Advisory Committee had further recommended a reduction of $400 in representation allowances, in accordance with paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report.

41. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that section 19 contained estimates for the International Court of Justice amounting to $5,197,000, or 14.2 per cent more than the revised appropriation for 1974-1975. The estimate for real growth was set at 2.3 per cent, which was attributed largely to the request for 5 new posts: 2 Professional and 3 General Service posts.

42. As stated in paragraph 19.2 of its report, the Advisory Committee had received additional information in support of the request for 5 new posts. However, for the reasons clearly outlined in paragraphs 19.3 to 19.6, the Committee

was unable to endorse all the requests. In paragraph 19.6 it had made a recommendation that 2 General Service posts –requested in connexion with the expected move into new premises–be deferred because that move was unlikely to take place before 1978. The expenses connected with it could then be examined in the context of the 1978-1979 biennium.

43. In paragraph 19.3 the Advisory Committee dealt with the request for a D-1 post to accommodate a full-time public relations and information officer for the Court. The Advisory Committee was unable to satisfy itself that the Court needed its own full-time information service. It held to the view that the primary responsibility for meeting the needs of the Court in the area of public information should rest with the Office of Public Information. Accordingly, the Committee was unable to endorse that request. In paragraph 19.4 the Advisory Committee explained why it was also not convinced that an additional P-1 post to accommodate a deputy to the head of the typing department was necessary.

44. Finally, in paragraph 19.5 the Advisory Committee had indicated that it had accepted the request for 1 General Service post in 1976 for reproduction and distribution work, hitherto performed on a temporary assistance basis.

45. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that he was not entirely clear about the Advisory Committee's reasons for objecting to the addition of a D-1 post for a senior official who would assume full-time responsibiiity for information to meet the growing demand by Governments and academic institutions for expanded services. The Secretary-General was obviously endorsing the Court's request for the post in order that Governments could be adequately advised on the action open to them in accordance with Article 36, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Charter; the request for the post was therefore directly related to the United Nations primary objective, the maintenance of peace and security. It seemed logical to infer that the post would not have been requested if the Court were able to obtain the special assistance it required under existing arrangements. Moreover, the Advisory Committee reported that it had received additional information indicating that the Court required its own full-time information service. Consequently, he would appreciate more data from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on that additional information, on the nature of the post and the responsibilities it involved.

46. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew attention to the fact that the estimates before the Committee had been submitted by the Court itself, and not by the Secretary-General.

47. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) deplored the fact that the International Court of Justice had had only one case to decide in the entire year 1975–an indication of the failure of Member States to recognize the important role assigned to it under the Charter and to utilize the means available to the Court for the peaceful settlement of disputes. On the other hand, the Argentine delegation did not favour an increase in staff at The Hague because recognition of the possibilities offered by the Court to serve Member States would come not from staff increases but rather from a new spirit of international justice in which all States respected equality of rights without economic or political discrimination.

48. Drawing attention to the justification, appearing in paragraph 19.8 of the proposed programme budget of the Court's request for a reclassification of a post from the P-5 to the D-1 level, he expressed some dismay at the impression given that the staff of the Registry were present at the Court's deliberations and were relied upon to draft the Court's decisions and advisory opinions. Under the Court's rules of procedure, only the members of the Court could perform those functions; they could not be delegated to a secretariat.

49. The Argentine delegation supported the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee.

50. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that the Committee was at a disadvantage in considering the estimates submitted by the International Court of Justice because the Court had not submitted an annual report in 1975 on its programme of work. It should be requested to submit that report in future; otherwise, the Committee's task of approving the estimates for section 19 would continue to be a procedural exercise.

51. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), noting that a single post of a judge of the Court cost approximately $340,000 for the biennium, questioned the need for additional posts under section 19, particularly a D-1 post for a full-time information officer. Drawing attention to paragraph 19.10 of the proposed programme budget, he asked the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to clarify the nature of the payment made to the Carnegie Foundation for the Court's use of the Peace Palace at The Hague. Referring to paragraph 19.6 of the Advisory Committee's report, he was concerned to know the financial implications of the expected move to new premises provided by the Netherlands Government. It had been short-sighted not to have provided a separate building for the Court from the inception of the United Nations. Failing that, it should have made its headquarters in Geneva or Vienna, cities which had traditionally hosted international bodies. It seemed illogical to pay remuneration amounting to $6,000 a month to judges who, as retired officials of their respective countries, had other sources of income. He would welcome some explanation of that anomaly from the Secretariat.

52. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that, while his Government had the highest respect for the Court and the valuable opinions it had handed down over the years, it believed that with its projected caseload it could function effectively with the funds available to it after the deductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. The Court should avoid expenses that were not absolutely essential and he would therefore appreciate some clarification from the Secretariat on the projected need for travel and representation allowances.

53. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) emphasized that over the years the Court had developed a substantial body of jurisprudence and knowledge of great value to the legislative and judicial bodies of Member States, and that

better relations between the latter and the Court would enhance its prestige. The request for a full time information officer appeared justified because existing arrangements only partially covered the educational and liaison tasks involved.

54. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) observed that the arguments in support of the additional posts requested by the Court were very weak and the Advisory Committee had quite rightly found them unconvincing. With regard to the request for a full-time information officer at the D-1 level, he would remind the Committee that the United Nations employed about 700 information officers and that, if the Court needed one, the Secretary-General could certainly make arrangements to assign one to The Hague.

55. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning section 19. However, the inclusion in the Secretary-General's programme budget of a section containing estimates submitted by the Court raised a delicate point of law or constitutional principle. The inference to be drawn was that the Secretary-General supported all of the Court's requests.

56. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), in reply to the representative of Greece, said that the Advisory Committee had been informed that the activities of the Registry had expanded in the field of information about the Court. In response to the demand of Governments and international organizations and to past criticism, the function of disseminating information had been assigned to a senior First Secretary, who had been discharging it since 1968, in addition to his other duties. The Court had now concluded that it needed a full-time information service, justifying the creation of a new post. The new information officer would have primary responsibility in respect of the Court's relations with the world at large. Owing to the sensitive character of such relations, and considering that the information officer's responsibilities would include a considerable diplomatic element, a D-1 post was, in the Court's opinion, justified.

57. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the representative of Algeria, said that by agreement between the Secretary-General and the Carnegie Foundation, a contribution was paid to the Foundation for the use of the Peace Palace at The Hague. The Secretary-General had received full information from the Foundation justifying the reassessment of the costs of maintaining the Peace Palace taking account, in particular, of the inflation factor, and the new amount of the contribution by the Court for sharing the premises was actually very low in comparison with the new costs. The new building to be constructed by the Netherlands Government would also be on the premises of the Carnegie Foundation and the Court's contribution would be reviewed once again when the move took place.

58. Replying to the point raised by the United States representative, he said that there had actually been a reduction in the size of travel requirements; the estimates for travel had increased only because of the inflation of airline fares.

59. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no concrete proposal in contradiction to the recommendation of the Advisory Committee had been placed before the Committee, invited the Committee to vote on a total appropriation under section 19 recommended by the Advisory Committee (see para. 40 above).

An appropriation in the amount of $5,080,600 under section 19 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 71 votes to none, with 10 abstention.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

1708th meeting

Wednesday, 8 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1708

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Matseiko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1705th meeting)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

***General discussion* (continued)**

1. Mr. HALÁSZ (Hungary), commenting on the presentation of the programme budget, said that the method of calculating estimated requirements by adding to base costs the costs of maintenance, programme growth and inflation did not offer sufficient justification for current and future programmes. Furthermore, the principle of full budgeting, when applied to a biennium, was not conducive to economy.

2. The rate of increase in the budget was unjustifiably high, initial estimates for 1976-1977 being 36.4 per cent higher than those for the previous biennium. That was all

the more alarming because additional requirements of the order of $45 million were likely to emerge during the biennium. The whole impact of inflation, which accounted for much of the increase, should not be passed on to Member States. Moreover, greater budgetary restraint should have been exercised by ensuring that programme increases followed and did not precede action by legislative bodies by subjecting all existing programmes to critical analysis and by eliminating obsolete programmes before undertaking new ones.

3. A relationship should be established between the rate of increase of the United Nations programme budget and the capacity of Member States to pay for it. At a time when States were being forced to resort to austerity measures, the Organization should certainly be able to conduct its activities with greater economy, concentrating strictly on areas of greatest priority. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions was to be commended for its efforts to achieve that objective, but the proposed programme budget before the Committee still did not satisfy those requirements.

4. Referring to staff increases, the item of expenditure which accounted for most of the budget increase, he said that even the 590 additional posts to which the Advisory Committee had reduced the Secretary-General's request were not warranted. So long as the work of some Secretariat units was characterized by inefficiency, duplication and lack of co-ordination, there must be reserves of manpower in the existing staff which could be utilized for the performance of the additional duties. His delegation also agreed with the Advisory Committee that requests for the upward reclassification of posts as an instrument for granting promotions should not be made pending the outcome of the International Civil Service Commission's study on career development and promotions. Finally, much remained to be done to achieve equitable geographical distribution of the staff by regions.

5. The Hungarian delegation took exception to the inclusion in the programme budget of the United Nations bond issue and the regular programme of technical assistance. The latter should be financed from voluntary funds. For the reasons he had given, his delegation could not support the budget proposals for the biennium 1976-1977 as they stood.

6. Mr. LADOR (Israel) attributed the critical financial situation confronting the United Nations to the rapid inflation, the fluctuations in currency exchange rates, the delay in the payment of Member States' assessments and the increasing budget deficit. He foresaw an increasing need for resources and administrative changes resulting from the consensus reached at the seventh special session of the General Assembly. From the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General for the biennium 1976-1977, it appeared almost certain that the budget increase would be largely nullified by continuing inflation and currency fluctuations. In order to counteract the effect of those two factors, it was urgent to streamline the Organization, effect real economies and avoid duplication and overlapping between departments and agencies. For that purpose, it was imperative to find new methods of analysing functions and establishing priorities which would give due weight to essential activities, cut back or eliminate unproductive ones and adjust spending, so that maximum resources could be used for positive results and development. The change in the system of budgeting to a programme budget and medium-term plan was not in itself a guarantee of the rational and most efficient utilization of the limited funds available. Before funds were allocated to a specific programme or activity, it was essential to ensure that the data on which the initial determination was made were fully presented and that the decisions based on the date could be carried out as intended or revised promptly if that became necessary either because the activity no longer was achieving the intended objective or because the objective had to be changed.

7. Waste in the execution of desirable tasks and spending on unproductive activities could not be eliminated by imposing a budget ceiling. Savings could be effected, however, by a progressive reduction in documentation. UNCTAD, for example, had demonstrated the feasibility of such a measure by reducing the volume of documentation from 55 million pages in 1975 to an anticipated 48 million in 1976. In addition, economies could be made by more careful scrutiny of requests for new posts for "continuing" or traditional activities. Departments should be encouraged to investigate the real needs and the practicality of utilizing existing posts for additional functions, if necessary by upgrading them. Whenever possible, existing economic and social development agencies should be entrusted with United Nations tasks in that field in order to avoid the establishment of parallel undertakings and to ensure that full advantage was taken of global or regional opportunities. As the Advisory Committee had recommended, a detailed study should be made of the relationship between the programmes of work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies with a view to streamlining operations and expediting development projects in developing countries. Requests for additional resources for development should not be approved until the work programmes for which those resources were to be used had been carefully examined. Substantial funds could also be made available by increased co-operation between bilateral and multilateral assistance schemes. Finally, savings could also result from a reduction in the number of international and regional conferences.

8. Mr. HUCKE (German Democratic Republic), observing that the unprecedented rate of increase of the budget for the biennium 1976-1977 far exceeded the average growth rate of the national income of Member States, said that urgent measures should be taken to halt what might become uncontrollable budget growth. His delegation fully supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations for improvement in the programme and budget planning.

9. The growth of United Nations activities required the utmost discipline on the part of the Secretariat in planning, preparing, implementing and supervising approved programmes to ensure optimum economy and efficiency in the use of Member States' contributions. In calculating personnel costs, for example, the existence and level of each post should be justified in terms of qualifications required and anticipated workload, and the need for additional staff should be assessed in terms of number, level of competence and timing so that staff released by the completion of some

activities or lapse of others could be redeployed for new tasks.

10. The calculation of the resources required to offset the effects of inflation and currency instability had been based on arbitrary percentages and apportioned to programmes without regard for the Secretary-General's obligation to offset such costs by greater savings, transfers of funds or voluntary contributions from States responsible for those extra costs because of the instability of their prices and currencies. It was unjustifiable that all Member States should be burdened with those costs as translated in fixed budgetary items.

11. In order to adjust the growth of the United Nations budget to the average growth of the national incomes of Member States, it was essential to identify priorities after exhausting all potential existing resources, improving co-ordination and eliminating overlapping. Every effort should be made to carry out programmes without additional staff by raising productivity and efficiency, thus eliminating the need for experts and consultants. The Committee on Conferences should be relied upon to reduce the number of conferences and meetings and make optimal use of existing conference facilities.

12. He looked forward to hearing the replies of the Secretariat to the specific questions put by the representative of Poland–in working paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.1–and associated his delegation with the view expressed by the latter with regard to supplementary estimates, namely that criteria should be established to justify requests for additional funds during the budget period.

13. He reaffirmed the view of his delegation that the expenditure items relating to the United Nations bond issue and to technical assistance should be eliminated from the regular budget. If all technical assistance was financed from voluntary contributions, States would be enabled to increase their contributions to various funds, and especially to UNDP. The German Democratic Republic would, as in the past, make its share of the technical assistance component of the budget available in national currency.

14. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) commended the Secretariat upon the improvement in its budget presentation, but hoped that it would be even more precise in future, particularly in its explanations of the tables relating to programme changes.

15. United Nations expenditure was approaching $1 million daily–an amount out of all proportion to the GNP and national income of Member States–and it was imperative that the steady increase in costs should be curbed through stricter control on the part of Member States in the various legislative bodies of the Organization. The Secretary-General was once again requesting too many additional posts and there was no direct relationship between approved programmes and the efficient use of the staff engaged in them. As recommended by the Advisory Committee, only 590 of the 826 posts requested should be approved.

16. No information had been given in the Secretary-General's programme budget on the volume of resources which would be released when the programmes of the 1974-1975 biennium were completed and how those resources would be reallocated. On that point, he supported the observations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 9 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2). He also agreed with that Committee that "programme growth" meant "growth in expenditures expressed in real terms".

17. The impact of inflation and currency instability calculated on the basis of 1975 rates would swell the budget by $65.8 million, according to the Secretary-General. However, that hypothesis had not been applied uniformly to all sections of the budget: uniform costs had been used for salary scales, some sections were not affected at all by the inflation factor and others were unchanged by the currency instability factor. There were so many different hypotheses applied to the budget document that it was difficult to follow.

18. His delegation believed that inevitable increases in the budget should be financed by savings, reordering of priorities, redeployment of resources and readjustment of the budget itself when necessary, provided the adverse effect on programmes benefiting the less developed countries could be minimized. The medium-term plan for 1976-1979 should be adapted to the activities which would be generated by the seventh special session of the General Assembly.

19. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that, although the proposed programme budget from the biennium 1976-1977 had short-comings some of which had been pointed out by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 9 of its report, it was a major improvement over the first one and the Budget Division deserved to be congratulated. Not only was the proposed budget easier to read in its current form; it had cost some $100,000 less than if it had been printed in two volumes.

20. His delegation agreed with the suggestion made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee in his opening statement (A/C.5/1686) that the Secretary-General's foreword to the proposed programme budget should be more comprehensive so as to provide an easy reference for those who did not have time to examine the document in detail. His delegation hoped that the next programme budget proposals would be further improved in the light of the comments made during the discussions in the Fifth Committee, the Advisory Committee and other relevant bodies. His delegation generally subscribed to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee which covered all the necessary points in that regard.

21. The suggestion put forward by some delegations that a ceiling should be imposed on the growth of the United Nations budget was impracticable, not only because a healthy growth in the budget of any institution was to be expected, but because the increased activities which were partially responsible for the budget increase stemmed from decisions of the General Assembly. It was hard to see how the Fifth Committee could override the Assembly and cut those programmes. Instead, the Secretary-General should make a genuine attempt to economize, specifically by redeploying staff resources. The indifference to the need for economy in some areas was truly alarming: for instance,

the current estimates for section 23 relating to conference and library services, were 30 per cent higher than in the previous biennium. Moreover, that amount was not all-inclusive, for additional credits were being requested for conference services under other sections in a total amount of $43.3 million. The Advisory Committee had also pointed out that the justification for that tremendous increase was incomplete. The Secretary-General should therefore alert the officials concerned, particularly those who were nationals of countries that traditionally advocated economy.

22. While the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1) was an improvement over the earlier one, it was still far from perfect. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that the first step should be to determine an over-all rate of real growth for the base period as well as programme priorities before an attempt was made to plan the Organization's future activities. It was happy to note that CPC had adopted a positive attitude towards the Secretary-General's methodology but recognized the dangers inherent in a purely incremental approach to the programme budget. Flexibility was therefore required in certain areas.

23. The question of the differing priorities of various programmes had long been a major problem, which the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery had been set up to study. Although the recently established *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sector of the United Nations System had been charged with considering the future of the Organization, while the Working Group had reviewed existing United Nations machinery, his delegation believed that work in those areas should be synchronized in order to avoid duplication. The area covered by the Working Group was sensitive and any progress would be of immense benefit to the Organization. Moreover, the report of the Working Group (A/10117 and Corr.1) could provide a suitable point of departure for a serious discussion of the question. His delegation fully endorsed the Working Group's recommendation that the programme budget and medium-term plan should be considered in alternate years.

24. Turning to the question of the representation of developing countries at the policy-making levels in the United Nations system, he said that the position continued to be unsatisfactory. He would appreciate information on the number of posts in New York at the D-1 level and above that were held by nations of developing countries.

25. Finally, in view of the serious financial problems confronting the Organization, he hoped that the Committee would not confine itself to a routine analysis of the proposed programme budget, but would seek new solutions to the problems. His delegation strongly supported the proposal of the Secretary-General that the Working Capital Fund should be doubled. However, that would merely be a palliative, not a remedy. Serious measures must be taken to find real solutions to the problem concerning the accumulated debts of Governments that had refused to contribute to various United Nations activities on what they claimed were grounds of principle. He did not wish to reopen the discussion of that sensitive political problem, but simply to point out that such Members had a responsibility to ensure the proper functioning of the Organization and that they must take some action.

26. Mr. DAVILA MENDOZA (Mexico) urged the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure that in future the programme budget was ready at the appointed time so that the Advisory Committee might have time to study it thoroughly, adding that the inconsistencies referred to in paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report had done nothing to facilitate its task.

27. His delegation felt that the budget estimates were fairly high, particularly in view of the fact that, since the Organization's revenue had registered only a moderate increase, most of the added costs would be directly reflected in the assessments of Member States. The size of the increases clearly showed the need for more detailed and useful data to help the Committee determine whether or not the increases were reasonable. Although the Secretary-General had obviously made a great effort to justify them and although the programme budget system was still relatively new, the analysis had serious short-comings, as had been revealed by the discussion on individual sections so far. Specifically, the programme budget was merely a list of appropriations. The Advisory Committee had pointed out inconsistencies in the information and emphasized the need to establish a terminology that would be clearly understood by all those participating in the preparation of the budget. His delegation therefore proposed that consideration should be given to the need to accelerate the establishment of a complete programme budgeting system so that the appropriate methodology might be introduced and the planning, programming, budgeting, implementation and evalution functions involved in the budget preparation might be co-ordinated, as necessary. He pointed out that the budget failed to define general and specific objectives for most sections and to set targets for the biennium 1976-1977. Such information, if provided, would make it easier to evaluate at any given time whether the Secretary-General's estimates were reasonable. Since no suitable machinery yet existed for the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets, his delegation proposed that the Joint Inspection Unit, the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee should be requested to provide such information as was at their disposal in order that the Fifth Committee might better be able to evaluate the figures before it, specifically those relating to programme maintenance and programme growth.

28. Mr. HAGGAG (Egypt) said that his delegation attached great importance to the efficient operation of the Organization. He was sure that all Members believed that the United Nations had an important role to play and that, in order to succeed, the Organization must have sufficient resources. Assuming that the estimates of future inflation rates proved correct, the size of the budget for 1976-1977 should not cause alarm, particularly when viewed within the context of the varied activities performed by the Organization and the growing aspirations it was called upon to fulfil. In that connexion, he pointed out that it cost as much to produce one fighter plane as it did to finance United Nations activities for two weeks.

29. Since the United Nations would undoubtedly grow in the future, it was only natural that its resources should also increase. That did not, of course, mean that resources should be allocated without careful scrutiny of the results achieved. Indeed, every attempt should be made to channel

an increased share of the appropriations towards operational activities and to reduce administrative and related costs. That would require a high degree of efficiency, better performance on the part of the Secretariat, optimum utilization of resources, greater efforts to improve programming and to effect economies in less essential activities and to elaborate careful criteria to determine programme priorities in order that resources from programmes nearing completion might be redirected to new programmes. Every effort should be made to ensure that the growth rates fixed by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council were not exceeded and to avoid overlapping.

30. Since inflation was a general phenomenon, it should be dealt with practically in such a way that it was not detrimental to the United Nations. His delegation agreed with the representatives of France (1703rd meeting) and Japan (1701st meeting) concerning the need to amend the method of preparing the budget and to discard the full budgeting system under which the inflationary factor for the full two years was calculated in advance. It would be better to calculate the inflationary factor for the first year only and to leave it to the Secretary-General to submit supplementary estimates for the second year. That would ensure greater precision in calculating the inflationary factor and would give the Secretary-General greater flexibility in ensuring a balanced budget. Referring to the comments made by the Secretary-General in his statement before the Committee (A/C.5/1685) concerning the cash flow position and the possibility of doubling the Working Capital Fund, he associated his delegation with the remarks made by previous speakers who had emphasized the need for prompt payment of assessments. The idea of doubling the Working Capital Fund was interesting and deserved serious consideration.

31. Finally, turning to the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1), he endorsed the recommendation that the programme budget and medium-term plan be considered in alternate years and the recommendation concerning the terms of reference and form of CPC. The *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System should consider adopting those recommendations within the framework of the restructuring of the United Nations.

32. Mr. PONCE (Peru) said that his delegation considered the Secretary-General's proposal to double the Working Capital Fund and his suggestion that Member States should make their internal mechanisms more flexible, so that they could pay their assessments promptly, very reasonable. He expressed concern at the fact that, according to figure 2 in the Advisory Committee's report, 35.7 per cent of the total budget had been allocated to common services. That was surprising in view of the fact that the more important peace-keeping activities and decolonization activities accounted for only 5.4 per cent and 1 per cent of the budget, respectively.

33. Recalling that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had stated that it had not been easy to accept the inflation rates assumed in the budget and that it was difficult to determine them accurately since the United Nations work was carried out in various countries, his delegation wondered why, in addition to hypothetical rates of inflation, the budget proposals used percentage rates that were not uniform. It might be better to try to find a mean percentage or to calculate the weighted average. His delegation would welcome more information on the criteria used to determine the priorities for the utilization of United Nations resources, so that it might judge whether they had been allocated in the most rational manner. Finally, his delegation pointed out that the increased financial burden resulting from inflation and economic instability would have to fall mainly on the developed countries.

34. Mr. OCHIRBAL (Mongolia) said that his Government supported the United Nations, as an important instrument for maintaining international peace and security and promoting goodwill and understanding among nations. While the far-reaching positive changes of recent years had opened up wider perspectives for enhancing the Organization's role and authority, there were still deficiencies that hampered its effectiveness. United Nations activities must be streamlined and concentrated on the tasks of highest priority in order to attain the main goal, the elimination of war. In that connexion, he endorsed the proposal submitted by the Polish delegation at the 1703rd meeting (A/C.5/XXX/CRP.1), which would greatly improve the decision-making process in the United Nations. The fact that over 80 per cent of the financial and human resources of the United Nations was being used for purposes other than the maintenance of international peace and security was of concern to his delegation. The effectiveness of the United Nations was not necessarily commensurate with the size of its bureaucratic machinery or budget; it rather depended on its readiness and capacity to respond effectively and quickly to international crises and, as stated in Article 1, paragraph 1, of the Charter, to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace.

35. United Nations financial policy must be rational and sound, its management and administration effective, and its budget based on rational and economically justified criteria. Its financial requirements should reflect the financial and economic situation of Member States, and its growth rate should not exceed the average growth rate of the national incomes of Member States. Yet the budget was growing much faster than the national incomes of Member States or living costs in the world as a whole and the United States of America in particular. Moreover, supplementary estimates were submitted every year—a practice which was, in the light of earlier General Assembly decisions, illegal. Additional requirements should be covered first by savings from regular budgetary appropriations, by giving priority to the most urgent items of expenditure and deferring the less urgent items.

36. The Secretary-General in his statement before the Committee had cited inflationary trends and the devaluation of the United States dollar as some of the main reasons for the high rate of growth of the budget. Inflationary trends in Western countries, particularly the United States, had been affecting the budget for many years. However, increasing the regular contributions of Members to offset the effects of inflation was absolutely unjustified and, in the long run, might even acquire a certain political

connotation. The problem should be given very careful consideration, particularly by those responsible for the day-to-day financial operations of the United Nations. On the other hand, Mongolia had never objected to increases which were fully justified and corresponded to the growth of United Nations activities pursuant to General Assembly decisions fully conforming to the provisions of the Charter.

37. The unprecedented increase in staff costs, accounting for more than three quarters of the budget, was unjustifiable. The United Nations would, he believed, be able to carry out its tasks successfully by ensuring better untilization of existing personnel and transferring staff to priority tasks. Serious thought should be given to the possibility of freezing recruitment for a given period. He expressed dissatisfaction that no serious action had been taken to implement fully the decisions of the General Assembly on rectifying the existing imbalance in the distribution of posts among countries of different regions. The practice of filling existing vacancies in the Secretariat with candidates from under-represented countries should be pursued more consistently.

38. His Government did not consider itself bound by decisions adopted in violation of the United Nations Charter, and his delegation would accordingly vote against expenditures related to the United Nations bond issue. He reiterated his delegation's position of principle that technical assistance should be financed through voluntary contributions and not from the United Nations regular budget which, under Article 17 of the Charter, was to be used exclusively for administrative purposes.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1705th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 20. LEGAL ACTIVITIES (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

39. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Secretary-General, in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), had requested an amount of $7,904,000 under section 20. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 20.16) had recommended a reduction of $35,000 in the initial estimates and, pursuant to the Advisory Committee's recommendation relating to representation allowances in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report, a further reduction of $800 would be required. The total amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 20 for the biennium 1976-1977 was thus $7,868,200.

40. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General's estimates under section 20 for the biennium 1976-1977 were 14.5 per cent higher than the adjusted revised appropriations for the biennium 1974-1975. As was noted in paragraph 20.1 of the Advisory Committee's report, the total resources required under section 20 would include $8,048,000 in apportioned costs budgeted under other sections. The Secretary-General's request for 2 new posts—1 at the Professional level and 1 at the General Service level—had been approved by the Advisory Committee, as could be seen from paragraph 20.13 of its report. Minor reductions had been recommended in paragraphs 20.7 and 20.8 of the report. The total reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee, including the reduction pursuant to the recommendation in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report, was thus $35,800, and the amount recommended $7,868,200.

41. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) endorsed the reasonable recommendations made by the Advisory Committee.

42. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) noted that many of the Advisory Committee's comments related to printing costs. There was a considerable backlog in printing, and in that connexion he asked whether it would be possible for the Secretariat to enter into printing contracts earlier than was its custom in order to reduce costs. If printing contracts were not made, allocations for printing were not used, and by the time new contracts were made prices had risen. He requested clarification of the statement in paragraph 20.8 of the Advisory Committee's report relating to travel costs of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law staff. He also requested further information on the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs.*

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) took the Chair.

43. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to the representative of the Philippines, said that the Secretariat was aware of the advantages of early contracts, and tried to follow that policy as far as possible. It was, however, limited in that it could not enter into contracts before the budget period since it had to wait for authorization by the governing bodies. The budget proposals for the biennium 1976-1977 reflected printing costs more clearly and accurately than in the past and gave figures for varying external printing costs and the savings that could be made by in-house printing. The documentation on legal questions did entail considerable expenditure on printing, but excessive restraints would mean that proper documentation on international law could not be provided for the United Nations and for Member States.

44. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that the four services covered in section 20, the Office of Legal Affairs, the International Law Commission, the United Nations Administrative Tribunal and UNCITRAL, carried out work which was extremely important to the Organization and Member States. The amount recommended by the Advisory Committee would enable them to operate effectively during the biennium 1976-1977. Like the representative of the Philippines, he wondered whether reordering the printing schedule might not reduce the proposed increase in printing costs. He also would like information on the *Repertory* and on UNCITRAL staff travel costs.

45. The amount included in table 20-20 in the proposed programme budget concerning fellowships and grants in connexion with technical assistance was opposed by his Government, which maintained that technical assistance

should be financed from voluntary contributions. If there was a separate vote on that part of section 20, his delegation would vote against it. If that amount was included in the amount for section 20 as a whole, his delegation would abstain in the vote on section 20.

46. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), commenting on the question of printing costs, said that, while it was advisable to enter into contracts as soon as possible to avoid rising prices, contracts could not be signed until the documentation was ready. Any amounts allocated for printing costs which were not used were transferred to other sections by the central administration.

47. Replying to questions about the *Repertory*, he said that *Supplement No. 4* would not be ready until early 1977.

48. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to the question about UNCITRAL staff travel expenses, said that the Advisory Committee usually requested additional information when it felt it necessary to reach decisions. The travel estimates for UNCITRAL staff had led the Advisory Committee to request further information, which the Secretariat had provided, about the schedule of meetings, the site, duration and subject-matter of meetings, and also the estimated cost of staff travel. On the basis of that further information, the Advisory Committee had decided that the travel estimates could be reduced slightly, and it was confident that the Secretary-General would be able to accommodate travel requirements within the amount recommended.

49. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) felt that the increase by 48.3 per cent in the amount requested for the International Law Commission was excessive. He requested a breakdown of the $866,000 estimate so as to see what amount was required for travel and subsistence costs for staff and what was required for travel and subsistence costs for members of the Commission. He also questioned the allocation for printing for the Commission, which had been raised simply because the annual session was to be extended from 10 to 12 weeks.

50. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) thanked the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for his clarification of the UNCITRAL staff travel expenses. He simply wished to remind the Secretariat of the General Assembly decision on travel and to ensure that it was respected.

51. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) requested clarification of the inflation rates assumed for the travel of the Chairman and staff of UNCITRAL in table 20-9 of the proposed programme budget.

52. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that his Government was opposed to the inclusion of technical assistance costs in the regular budget, in particular the amount of $176,000 under section 20. He believed such expenditure should be financed from voluntary contributions. His delegation would, however, vote in favour of section 20, as adjusted by the Advisory Committee.

53. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) supported the Secretary-General's estimates for section 20, as adjusted by the Advisory Committee.

54. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) drew the attention of the representative of Algeria to table 20-8 in the proposed programme budget, which indicated the travel costs for members and staff of the International Law Commission separately and showed that there was no programme growth, all increases being due to inflaction. Travel and subsistence costs had been estimated in accordance with the relevant General Assembly decision. The printing costs for the Commission would rise for the reasons given in the report.

55. Replying to the representative of Iran, he said that the inflation rate for travel of the UNCITRAL Chairman in table 20-9 in the proposed programme budget had been rounded to $1,000 and was in fact lower than that.

56. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) asked to what extent the practice of rounding figures had been used by the Secretariat in the proposed programme budget.

57. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that figures had been rounded throughout the budget, both upwards and downwards, so that increases and decreases equalled out.

58. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should vote on the appropriation in the amount $7,868,200 under section 20 for the biennium 1976-1977, as recommended by the Advisory Committee (see para. 39, above).

An appropriation in the amount of $7,868,200 under section 20 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 62 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

1709th meeting

Wednesday, 8 October 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1709

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1705th meeting)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion (continued)

1. Mr. RIVAS (Colombia) stressed the importance of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) and the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1). His Government believed that the trend among the great Powers to seek solutions outside the United Nations was dangerous, and actually weakened the Organization.

2. His delegation wished to affirm its confidence in the United Nations system and remained convinced that the strengthening of the Organization redounded to the advantage of the developing countries, since the United Nations afforded the most appropriate machinery for initiatives in favour of the third world. The United Nations was therefore assuming a greater role and was constantly being entrusted with new responsibilities—as had been the case at the seventh special session of the General Assembly—and there were plans to restructure the Secretariat in order to make it better suited to the new international economic order.

3. If the Organization was to play a crucial role, it should be allowed the wherewithal to do so. Greater consistency was needed. It was difficult to understand how some countries could seek a reduction in the resources of the Organization, as their statements before the Fifth Committee had suggested, while at the same time standing by the results of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and accepting the new international economic order as the framework for the activities of the Secretariat. His Government was in favour of the proposals of the Secretary-General concerning the budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and the medium-term plan being considered by the Committee. The proposed budget of $737 million implied a mere 6.2 per cent rate of growth. That appeared inadequate, considering the rate of inflation, and would lead to the freezing of a number of programmes and activities. His delegation was also in favour of the proposed full budgeting system, which was a logical way to approach the planning objective.

4. The medium-term plan marked an important step forward in that direction. In the restructuring of the United Nations system, the significance of CPC in formulating guidelines should be emphasized. An intergovernmental organ would therefore determine priorities, an activity which was actually of a political nature.

5. His delegation was in favour of the Secretary-General's proposal to consider the budget and the medium-term plan in alternate years. That would allow a better distribution of work and would correspond to the real function of the plan.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1705th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 22. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL SERVICES (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

6. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), the Secretary-General had requested an appropriation of $126,698,000 under section 22. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 22.124), had recommended a reduction of $2,663,000 in the initial estimates. Furthermore, the reduction proposed by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 63 to 65 of the report, with regard to representation allowances, would require an additional reduction of $5,000 from the initial estimates under section 22. Finally, the Secretary-General had estimated that, of the total reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 61 of its report for reclassification of posts, an amount of $16,000 corresponded to that section. Therefore, the total amount recommended under section 22 by the Advisory Committee was $124,014,000.

7. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that section 22 was one of three sections under which budgetary resources were requested for common services, the other two being section 21 (Public Information) and section 23 (Conference and Library Services). Nevertheless, section 22 required the most substantial budgetary resources. As the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 22.1 of its report, the amount of $126,698,000 requested by the Secretary-General was $26,444,000, or 26.4 per cent, greater than the revised appropriation for 1974-1975, as adjusted. The Advisory Committee had proposed a reduction of $2,663,000 in the initial estimates; moreover, the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee with regard to reclassification and representation allowances

would require an additional reduction of approximately $21,000, bringing the total reduction proposed for section 22 to $2,684,000, or approximately 2 per cent of the budgetary resources requested by the Secretary-General.

8. A recapitulation of the various reductions proposed by the Advisory Committee could be found in paragraph 22.124 of its report. The most substantial reductions were in the following four programmes: Office of General Services (New York); Division of General Services (Geneva); Policy and Direction; Staff Training Activities. The reductions recommended for those four programmes amounted to $2,085,000, or 78.3 per cent of the reductions proposed for section 22 by the Advisory Committee. That total included the amount of the provisional reduction accruing from the tentative deletion of the estimate for the United Nations share of the costs of the Staff Office of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions, as was indicated in paragraph 22.18 of the report of the Advisory Committee.

9. In recommending reductions, the Advisory Committee had been guided by two main considerations, namely the need for a more economical utilization of personnel resources, and the fact that there had been insufficient justification for a number of the Secretary-General's requests for new posts. Out of the 163 requests made by the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee had recommended that only 121 should be approved.

10. The Advisory Committee had reviewed in detail the estimates for the Joint Inspection Unit for 1976-1977, and its observations thereon were contained in paragraphs 22.7 to 22.17 of the report. He had communicated those observations in a separate letter to the Secretary-General, who, as Chairman of ACC, had to inform his colleagues in that Committee of the Advisory Committee's conclusions regarding the estimates for the Joint Inspection Unit.

11. In paragraphs 22.28 to 22.39 of its report the Advisory Committee discussed the request for the Electronic Data Processing and Information Systems Service. The Advisory Committee wished in particular to draw attention to its comments in paragraph 22.37. In paragraph 22.34, the Committee recommended that "the Secretary-General submit to the General Assembly, in the context of his progress report on the programme budget, a clear and concise account of developments in electronic data processing and information systems since the twenty-eighth session of the Assembly".

12. Lastly, the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 22.61, recommended non-acceptance of the request for an appropriation of $91,000 for rental of electronic data processing equipment at Geneva. The purpose of that recommendation was not to compel the United Nations Office at Geneva to revert to manual data processing techniques, but rather to encourage it to make full use of the electronic data processing services of the International Computing Center. Pending the report by the Secretary-General on developments in that field, as recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 22.34 of its report, and until the General Assembly pronounced itself on the matter, it should be possible to meet costs for electronic data processing at Geneva within the limits of the estimates for the Administrative and Financial Services at the Geneva Office.

13. In paragraph 22.38 of its report, the Advisory Committee observed that the size of the budget of the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems called for a review of future estimates by the General Assembly instead of only by ACC.

14. The Secretary-General requested $1,662,000 for the Administrative Management Service. The Advisory Committee wished to recall in that connexion that at the twenty-ninth session it had recommended[1] that the Fifth Committee—which had endorsed the recommendation—should discontinue the practice of having the Administrative Management Service submit an annual report to the Fifth Committee, on the understanding that, if deemed necessary, it would always be possible to draw the Fifth Committee's attention to any questions which it felt were of particular interest.

15. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), speaking on a point of order, said that it would be most unwise to continue the consideration of section 22 in the absence of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management.

16. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) believed that, in view of the importance and complexity of section 22, it would be preferable to defer consideration of it until a later meeting in order to allow the members of the Committee more time for a thorough study of the problems involved.

17. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) supported the proposal by the representative of the Upper Volta.

18. The CHAIRMAN said that if there were no objections he would take it that the Committee wished to defer the consideration of section 22.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.

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1 *Official Records of the General Assembly Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 8,* document A/9608/Add.10, para. 13.

1710th meeting

Thursday, 9 October 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1710

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1705th meeting)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion (continued)

1. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) agreed with the general view that the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1) and the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) represented a considerable improvement over previous efforts but that further improvements were still needed. His delegation would have welcomed more analytical information on the experience of programme budgeting during the previous biennium and a clearer picture of the total resources available, and the programmes to which they would be applied. Information had been provided orally by the Controller that, he felt, should have been included in the budget documentation. With further improvement, however, the Organization would have a planning and budgeting system fully attuned to its objectives.

2. The fact that the medium-term plan and the programme budget were prepared and presented in the same year led to delays, which could be eliminated if the plan and budget were considered in alternate years, as proposed by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery in its report (A/10117 and Corr.1). The other recommendations made by the Working Group should also be adopted.

3. The size of the proposed budget for the biennium, $737 million should not blind the Committee to the fact that the figure represented only a 3.5 per cent real growth. He considered that rate of growth the very minimum acceptable for the United Nations; a lower rate would represent a standstill budget and therefore be incompatible with the dynamic image which the United Nations should project, particularly at a time when it was assuming new responsibilities. His delegation was, of course, in favour of economy, good management, and sound budgeting and administrative procedures, but they were not necessarily incompatible with a dynamic approach to programme budgeting. He was glad that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), had recommended a cut of only approximately 2 per cent in the Secretary-General's estimates; the Advisory Committee's report provided a telling answer to the arguments of those who were seeking to impose an artificial ceiling on the budget.

4. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee in his introductory statement (A/C.5/1686) had said that the two main tasks of the Fifth Committee at the current session were the review of progress in programme budgeting and the examination and approval of the new programme budget and medium-term plan; he himself believed that the Committee had a third important task, that of finding a solution to the financial difficulties of the United Nations. The financial situation was critical and, although it had been troubling the Organization for well over a decade, a solution was urgently required if the United Nations was to function with the effectiveness its Members were entitled to expect. The General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session had adopted resolutions on the over-all problem of accumulating deficits and on the late payment of assessed contributions and the depletion of the Working Capital Fund. The solutions recommended had unfortunately proved less than adequate. As General Assembly resolution 3049 (XXVII) indicated, the solution to the problem of accumulating deficits lay ultimately in voluntary contributions by the larger contributors which could afford them. The deficits were the result mainly of a stand on principle taken by certain Members on certain items, but the passing of time, the current circumstances of the Organization and the assurance that Members would no longer consider any contribution a compromise of principle, together with the changing international political climate, should lead to action to resolve the problem. The need to strengthen the United Nations and make it more effective should be the overriding factor. No measures to restructure or streamline the United Nations could be absolutely effective as long as financial insecurity continued.

5. The Secretary-General's arguments in his introductory statement (A/C.5/1685), for doubling the Working Capital Fund were persuasive, but would impose an immediate additional financial burden on smaller Member States at a time when international economic developments had had disastrous effects on national economies. His delegation therefore requested more time to consider that proposal before taking a stand on it. The largest contributors to the budget could make the most effective effort to ease the cash flow situation of the United Nations by paying assessed contributions on time. Legislative impediments could surely be overcome if the necessary political will existed. A special effort was necessary on the part of all Members of the United Nations to enable it to overcome its financial problems, and his delegation would support any initiative with a reasonable prospect of success.

6. Mr. PLÁŠEK (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation called for increased effectiveness of the United Nations, particularly the Secretariat; elimination of expenditures contrary to the Charter or to General Assembly resolutions based on the Charter; better co-ordination of activities of the various United Nations bodies through the elimination of duplication and the introduction of accountability for individual programmes; balanced distribution or redistribution of financial resources among the various units; responsible budgeting, planning and evaluation; discontinuance of bureaucratic recruitment and unjust and ineffectual growth of the Secretariat; and elimination of expenditures incurred through inflation and currency instability resulting from speculation by powerful international corporations.

7. His delegation regretted the large increase in the Secretary-General's budget estimates and, accordingly, welcomed the reductions proposed by the Advisory Committee. He shared the concern of other delegations that the time and capacity of the various Secretariat units was not used efficiently, that time was wasted during conferences, and that documentation costs were increasing; in that connexion he awaited with interest the Secretary-General's response to the questions posed in the Polish working paper (A/C.5/XXX/CRP.1). His delegation could not accept the inclusion in the budget of more than $118 million to take account of the inflation factor, as that was contrary to the relevant decisions of the General Assembly. Increased expenditure due to inflation should be absorbed through voluntary contributions of the developed countries, particularly those mainly responsible for inflationary trends. He supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Secretary-General should take steps to ensure that expenditures and services rendered by units in the Secretariat to the various United Nations agencies were reimbursed.

8. He reiterated his Government's position that it was not under any obligation to contribute to illegal operations undertaken in violation of the Charter, such as the operations in the Congo and the Middle East, to expenditures on technical assistance, or to expenses incurred in connexion with the United Nations bond issue.

9. He associated his delegation with the comments of various delegations, particularly that of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1704th meeting) on the question of the United Nations personnel, particularly recruitment. His country, which was under-represented in the Secretariat, believed in the principle of just geographical representation on the basis of quotas and also from the point of view of the importance of the posts held. He regretted the trend towards so-called permanent contracts, which was a considerable obstacle to the implementation of the principle of just representation. The Secretariat unfortunately took a rather lax approach to the problem and did not adequately comply with General Assembly decisions.

10. The Secretary-General, in his statement before the Committee (A/C.5/1685), had drawn attention to the need to improve the financial situation of the United Nations, and had suggested doubling the Working Capital Fund to $80 million. His delegation, however, shared the apprehension of the French delegation (1703rd meeting) that the Fund might be used, overtly or covertly, to pay for other debts instead of financing the activities for which it was originally earmarked.

11. The United Nations certainly had the capacity to cope with the tasks facing it, but there was serious doubt as to whether rapid budgetary growth had the requisite impact on its effectiveness. If the United Nations failed to make effective use of its resources, to show proper responsibility towards all Member States or to ensure that decisions were always in conformity with the Charter and the interests of Members, the situation would not improve. His delegation supported the Polish proposal *(ibid.)* that the General Assembly should consider requiring a two-thirds majority in voting on questions with major financial implications.

12. Mr. KEISHING (India) said that the current presentation of the programme budget and medium-term plan was a definite improvement on the previous one since it provided much detailed information and some references to plan objectives. Progress was being made towards a real programme budget that could be examined in the light of objectives of the legislative organs. He suggested that the seven volumes of the proposed programme budget should be condensed into a simpler and shorter format for the General Assembly, while the Advisory Committee would be provided with a more detailed document, in order to enable the Fifth Committee to concentrate on major issues of policy. Information on some points, such as sources of extra-budgetary funds, should be provided in greater detail.

13. His delegation had reservations on the methodology used in the medium-term plan for setting priorities, for reasons stated in the spring of 1975, at the fifteenth session of CPC, and at meetings of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery. The criteria listed in the medium-term plan should be redefined, the weight given to each criterion varying from sector to sector in accordance with the decisions of the legislative bodies. Accordingly, he had difficulty in endorsing the medium-term plan without reservation. The proposed programme budget as a whole was acceptable, although it was not certain that the means provided would achieve the objectives outlined by the legislative bodies. Performance and effectiveness of the various ongoing activities would have to be subjected to continuous review. He supported the proposal that the plan and budget should be examined in alternate years, and he also supported a four-year cycle rather than a six-year cycle for the medium-term plan. Further refinement of the programme budget would make it an effective tool for ensuring best use of resources and effective monitoring of performance.

14. His delegation supported the Working Group's recommendations (A/10017 and Corr.1, para. 77)—most of them relating to CPC which to a considerable extent complemented the work of the Advisory Committee. Clearly, there should be closer co-ordination between those two bodies. The Advisory Committee's competence to consider programmes should not be limited too much; it was unrealistic to isolate programmes from budgetary elements, both of which were equal and essential elements of the Advisory Committee's work. The Advisory Committee should remain an expert body, but its membership might have to be increased depending upon the volume and scope of work it was called upon to undertake.

15. The Secretary-General's budget estimates were realistic, although more justification for several of the new posts requested should have been provided. The proposed total of $737 million for the biennium represented a 23 per cent increase over the previous biennial budget, but a real growth rate of only 3.5 per cent. Much of the increase was due to global inflation and currency fluctuations, for which most Member States were not responsible but of which they were the victims. In general, his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommended reductions. As more than one third of the budget was allocated to "common services" and 826 new posts had been requested –more posts being the easiest answer to legislative requests for action programmes–he called for a careful reassessment of the performance and value of existing posts and the under-utilization of staff in the Secretariat. Better performance could be achieved if promotion was based on proved efficiency and experience rather than on political considerations. It was important to prevent the development of an enormous secretariat that could quite easily become demoralized and debased as a result of political considerations being given undue weight in appointments and promotions. More money and new posts could not secure the requisite degree of efficiency that could be obtained only by careful management and conditions ensuring good morale in the international civil service.

16. While the total budget estimates for the biennium were not excessive, many countries were more seriously affected than others by the current economic conditions, and that fact could not be altogether ignored in assessing contributions. He hoped that the more fortunate and affluent countries would come forward with substantial voluntary contributions. The Secretary-General's proposal relating to the Working Capital Fund, which had not been changed for 12 years and was clearly inadequate, merited serious consideration.

17. The programme budget and medium-term plan were the vital instruments enabling the United Nations to carry out the tasks required of it by its Members. Majority decisions could certainly not be regarded as tyrannical, particularly in view of the performance of the United Nations over the past 30 years. The Secretary-General must be provided with the means to fulfil the objectives outlined by the legislative organs, and it was essential to take account of the link between legislative will and executive performance. The world community was seeking to establish a more equitable international economic order and, while that was not the task of the Secretariat, it did have a vital role to play in providing assistance and guidance.

18. Due consideration should be given to the political character of the United Nations, particularly the growing awareness of the interdependence of nations, in implementing the decisions of the legislative organs. Almost all countries in the world were Members of the United Nations, a few of which were rich and many poor. The confrontation that sometimes characterized the legislative bodies should not be reflected in the Secretariat, which should try to reflect more adequately the public image of an efficient and purposeful United Nations.

19. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) expressed the hope that the new political will which had made it possible for Member States at the seventh special session of the General Assembly to agree on issues on which they had previously been strongly divided would be applied to reconciling the political differences of opinion which had brought about the critical financial situation of the United Nations. For its part, the Netherlands delegation was prepared to engage in constructive negotiations with a view to arriving at an over-all solution which would deal with all aspects of the problem as a "total package". The task would be made easier if the Secretariat could produce a short, factual working paper on the current financial position of the Organization.

20. The desire of Member States to strengthen the role of the United Nations by assigning new and important functions to it should be accompanied by a willingness to reinforce it not only financially but also structurally, particularly by revitalizing the Economic and Social Council and ACC. Since the Council's role as a policy-making and priority-setting organ depended largely on the performance of CPC, that Committee should be invigorated by raising the level of governmental representation, improving Secretariat support and lengthening the duration of its sessions. CPC might be further improved by appointing a part-time or full-time Chairman. As the functions of the Advisory Committee and those of CPC were complementary, there should be a closer working relationship between the two bodies. In addition, the Council's role might be further enhanced by having it meet continuously in a series of short subject-oriented sessions directed at specific problems. The ability of intergovernmental organs to take an over-all view would also be strengthened by a further harmonization of the programme budget presentations and synchronization of budget cycles and medium-term planning periods. Interagency co-ordination would be improved if the budget documents of the various organs in the United Nations system were readily comparable. Both ACC and the Advisory Committee had endorsed the proposals along those lines made by the Joint Inspection Unit (see A/9646, para. 189) and the interagency report on the question would be welcomed.

21. A key role in the United Nations system was played by ACC: for all practical purposes, it was a cabinet of responsible executive heads from all branches of the system and should act as such, combining a central over-all view of all activities with the required input from all parts of the decentralized structure. Its role might be strengthened by the creation of an advisory committee on economic co-operation and development in which the United Nations and the major agencies would be represented and which would serve either as a sub-committee of ACC or as its consultative subsidiary body.

22. He commended the Secretariat for having produced a markedly improved programme budget and medium-term plan. However, both documents still fell short of being full-fledged policy instruments and tools of management. Their quality could be enhanced if they were considered in alternate years, as recommended by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery.

23. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that, although the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 represented a considerable improvement over the

previous budget document, it was alarmingly voluminous and the Secretariat should find some way to reduce its size without sacrificing essential information. The breakdown of indirect costs gave a clearer idea of the expenses for common services generated by the various substantive programmes, but was not sufficiently detailed to enable the reader to establish a clear relationship between costs and programmes. Similarly, the enumeration of expenditure items financed from extra-budgetary resources gave no indication of the source and volume of those resources or the duration of the programme financed in that manner. A large number of high-level posts were financed from extra-budgetary funds and he deplored the increasing tendency to request transfers of such posts to the regular budget.

24. He expressed appreciation for the explanations given by the Controller (1702nd meeting) concerning the meaning of "real growth" as used in the programme budget. In connexion with personnel costs, he understood that, because of the reduction for delayed recruitment, there was automatically an additional cost in each new budget for maintaining the level of posts already approved; however, that procedure did not apply to other budget sections so that, as the Director of the Budget Division had explained, the figure for programme maintenenace was sometimes highly elastic. Moreover, regardless of the rate of real growth assumed, in the absence of evaluation machinery, expenditure was bound to be inflated.

25. His delegation did not agree with certain Member States that inflation was a phenomenon produced only by the capitalist economies and that its cost should not be borne collectively. So long as the United Nations programme budget was calculated in dollars and the bulk of the Organization's expenditure was in dollars, it had to compensate for the impact of inflation and assume an inflation rate for the forthcoming biennium. Of course, he would prefer a system whereby dollars were replaced by some other convertible currency not subject to inflation or currency fluctuations. Failure to compensate for those two factors would result in reduction in the level of United Nations activities in real terms. The assumption made concerning the rate of inflation for the following biennium was actually very optimistic; the Secretary-General would have been justified in calculating the costs for that period at the current rate of 12 per cent. Should the actual rate exceed the 9 and 10 per cent assumed, he was confident that the increased costs would be absorbed by instituting an austerity régime in the United Nations.

26. He endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation, in paragraph 62 of its report, concerning the reclassification of posts, but felt that the 33 reclassifications it had approved in the preceding paragraph had not been substantively justified.

27. He favoured the recommendation that the programme budget and the medium-term plan be considered in alternate years but wondered whether, if work began in 1976 on the plan for the period 1978-1981, the various legislative organs concerned would be able to consider the draft plan in time for its submission to the General Assembly at the thirty-first session. The "rolling plan", on which the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee agreed, had the disadvantage that, by changing the plan's objectives in accordance with the world situation, the priorities agreed upon might be blurred, with the result that it would be difficult to evaluate the performance of the plan. His delegation preferred a "fixed-horizon" plan, as suggested in the Joint Inspection Unit report (see A/9646 para. 140): it could be flexible enough to deal with eventualities.

28. The report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) which he found excellent, should be transmitted to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. Commenting on the recommendations it contained, he said that CPC, irrespective of the way it was restructured, should remain an intergovernmental organ, and that its work would be greatly assisted if all the organs in the United Nations system adopted a common period for their medium-term plans.

29. Mr. HENČIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that the biennial programme budget and the medium-term plan represented the beginning of a modern management system, designed to ensure a more rational and effective utilization of Member State's contributions, to reconcile the world-oriented workload of the United Nations with the paucity of its resources and to combat attempts to restrict United Nations activity by imposing budget ceilings.

30. The new system would be progressively improved, provided activities could be budgeted for on the basis of realistic considerations which were not coloured by arbitrary evaluations and a tendency to programme strictly in terms of available resources. That could be done only if the medium-term plan and the programme budget it generated were predicated on an agreed and clearly defined order of priorities. The proposed programme budget and the medium-term plan were a tribute to the painstaking efforts of the Secretary-General and his staff, but the intergovernmental bodies dealing with planning, programme and budget had been slow to adapt to the new budgeting system and to participate actively in the preparation of the relevant documents. As a result, there was a real danger that the whole operation would be left to the Secretariat. For example, the comments of the Economic and Social Council and CPC on the medium-term plan were conspicuously absent from the documentation before the Committee, which had only the Advisory Committee's report to guide it in its deliberations. Pending completion of the study on the restructuring of the United Nations system, that unsatisfactory situation should be temporarily remedied by having the medium-term plan and the biennial programme budget considered by intergovernmental bodies in alternate years, so that they would have ample time to express their views on priorities. That procedure would make the tasks of the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee much easier. It would also encourage stricter compliance with General Assembly decisions and avoid arbitrary interpretations of those decisions at a later stage. Moreover, it would strengthen the role of the intergovernmental bodies as policy-making and priority-setting organs and prevent recurrence of the kind of situation illustrated by Economic and Social Council resolution 1910 (LVII), adopted on 2 August 1974, in which the Council, unable to take a stand on priorities, simply asked the Secretary-

General, in preparing the programme budget and the medium-term plan, to take full account of the views expressed in the course of the fifty-seventh session of the Council. The net effect of that procedure was to saddle the Secretary-General with responsibility for identifying and establishing priorities, a task which was exclusively within the competence of Member States.

31. His delegation regretted the fact that the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery had considered only the roles of the Economic and Social Council and of CPC, for it was not convinced that the measures proposed would do much to improve the situation of those two bodies. It was essential to determine to what extent the regional commissions, which were the most representative intergovernmental bodies at the regional level, could assist the Economic and Social Council in co-ordinating the activities of United Nations organs and agencies, with respect to both the adoption of the medium-term plan and the establishment of priorities. Strengthening the role of the regional commissions and increasing co-ordination in the field would not only improve the entire system of planning, programming and budgeting of the United Nations but also eliminate many duplications. That would reduce expenses and contribute to a more rational utilization of the funds provided by the Member States.

32. His comments should not be interpreted as meaning that his delegation was alarmed by the increase in the budget estimates for the biennium 1976-1977. Indeed, if activities expanded it was only natural that costs should also go up and his delegation fully supported the Secretary-General's view that every effort should be made to ensure that the Organization was able to meet fully its new responsibilities. Another reason for the increased costs was that decisions were no longer adopted by a majority but only after long and sometimes arduous consultations to bring the positions of the majority—whose financial resources were modest—into line with those of the minority—who possessed the financial resources needed to implement any decision. As a result, there were now more conferences and meetings and that, in turn, had increased the Organization's expenses.

33. The best way to cut costs without cutting back on programmes was to institute better methods of planning and programming and to strengthen the co-ordination among United Nations bodies and between the Organization and the specialized agencies. Savings could also be effected by reducing staff costs which currently accounted for roughly 75 per cent of total expenditures. It was not true that any expansion of activities must necessarily be accompanied by a request for additional staff; accordingly, the Secretary-General's request for 826 new posts could not be justified merely on the grounds that activities had expanded. If the Secretary-General wanted the Committee to consider that request he should provide details of the number of permanent and temporary posts, the number of temporary staff whose employment had terminated once the programmes for which they had been hired had been completed, and any other relevant information. That would considerably lessen the distrust with which delegations currently greeted any request for additional staff. In the absence of such information, his delegation, like most others, could only endorse the reservations expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 13 to 15 of its report.

34. A manual on the organization of the Secretariat might prove very useful in judging whether or not requests for new posts and for reclassification of existing posts were justified. It would make it impossible for departments to extend their activities into areas that were within the competence of others, thereby contributing to the staff increase. As stated in paragraph 70 of the Advisory Committee's report, lack of such an organizational manual could be seized upon as an excuse for reorganizations within departments where the primary motive was to create pre-conditions for the request for upgrading of individual posts on the grounds that their incumbents had increased responsibilities. His delegation fully supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that no further reclassifications of posts should be requested by the Secretary-General until the International Civil Service Commission had considered and reported on the question.

35. Finally, he said that his delegation would vote in favour of the proposed programme budget, as modified by the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

36. Mr. DIPP-GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that, although the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 did not fully meet the guidelines laid down in General Assembly resolution 3199 (XXVIII), it was clear that the Secretary-General had tried to implement that resolution. Since one of the factors which had contributed to that less-than-total success was the pressure of time, his delegation supported the recommendation made by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery that the medium-term plan and programme budget should be considered in alternate years.

37. Although his delegation was not opposed to the normal growth of programmes and services of the Organization, it was concerned to see that the current increased budget reflected a growth in expenditure rather than in services rendered. That increase was due not only to inflation, which accounted for slightly more than half of the $131 million increase, but also to bureaucratic inflation, namely, the tendency to upgrade existing posts and to establish new ones at senior levels. His delegation therefore endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation that there should be no further reclassifications of posts until the International Civil Service Commission had looked into the matter. His country was feeling the effects of inflation, as were all countries, and it did not believe that inflation was an evil for which there was no remedy or that it could be measured by the same yardstick in all parts of the world. In that connexion, his delegation shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 22 of its report at the fact that the inflation rates used by the Secretary-General were not the product of a faultless mathematical prediction or formula and that they had not been applied uniformly to all elements of expenditure. The problem affected not only the Organization but also Member States that must pay contributions; accordingly, his delegation hoped that the appropriate bodies would study the matter.

38. Finally, he endorsed the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) and thanked its Chairman for his contributions to the Working Group's efforts.

39. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that his delegation felt that the increases in the proposed programme budget reflected the dynamism of the United Nations activities and were the product of normal expansion, and that most of the programmes referred to in the budget were quite sound. It did, however, feel some concern about certain sections of the budget which it would voice in due course.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

1711th meeting

Friday, 10 October 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1711

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1705th meeting; A/C.5/L.1226)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1700th meeting)

General discussion (continued)

1. Mr. WOLDE-AREGAY (Ethiopia), noting that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) represented an increase of approximately $131 million over the current programme budget, said that, however modest Ethiopia's assessed contribution might be, the increase would be no light burden since his country was grappling with the effects of the worst drought in its history and with the energy crisis. It was, nevertheless, prepared to accept the Secretary-General's budget estimates as revised by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), for it believed that the United Nations should grow and that it should have the moral and material resources to fulfil its obligations. All the same, the search for a better formula for determining the budget estimates should be continued in order to reduce the rising expenditures, without prejudice to important programme activities.

2. With regard to personnel matters, adequate justification must be produced in support of requests for funds for additional posts, and reclassification of posts must cease to be used to improve promotion prospects. Once the requests were approved, due regard should be given to the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional and higher categories.

3. Finally, he endorsed the proposal that the medium-term plan and programme budget should, in future, be considered in alternate years and said that his Government would consider carefully the Secretary-General's request that Member States pay their contributions promptly.

4. Mr. GHAFOURZAI (Afghanistan) said that his delegation appreciated the improvement made in the proposed programme budget which was, on the whole, a well-prepared document, although it did not provide adequate justification for some of the requests. While his delegation believed that the United Nations needed the moral and material support of all its Members in order to successfully fulfil its responsibilities, and was aware of the Organization's expanding role, the $131 million increase over the current budget would place too great a burden upon the developing countries, and might adversely affect their progress. Accordingly, it endorsed the reduction of some $15.7 million recommended by the Advisory Committee on condition that the programme of assistance to developing countries, particularly the activities in the social, economic and humanitarian fields, was not affected. The developing countries, particularly the least developed among them, were seriously concerned at the effect of inflationary pressures upon the Organization's budget and would welcome assurances that measures would be taken to offset the impact of those pressures if the current high rate of inflation continued. It might be advisable to have the matter considered in depth by the Joint Inspection Unit or other appropriate bodies.

5. His delegation shared the concern expressed by the Secretary-General in his opening statement to the Committee (A/C.5/1685) at the general financial situation of the Organization. It would give careful consideration to the remedies he had proposed and would express its views on them at a later stage. In the meantime, it hoped that the Organization's current financial difficulties would be remedied through voluntary contributions from the developed countries, because countries with vast financial resources should be expected to contribute to strengthening the Organization's financial position.

6. His delegation supported the recommendation of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget

Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1, para. 77) that the medium-term plan and programme budget should be considered in alternate years.

7. While his delegation generally agreed with the Advisory Committee's recommendations, it could not support the $17,297,000 estimate submitted under section 24, concerning the United Nations bond issue. It felt that the costs of peace-keeping operations should not be met through the regular budget and also had reservations about apportioning the expenditure for the repayment of the bonds according to the same criteria as were applied to expenditures under the regular budget.

8. It was clear that little progress had been made towards achieving a more equitable geographical distribution of posts. It should not be assumed that the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity could be maintained only by continuing to recruit personnel from States that were already over-represented. Due consideration should be given, particularly at the Professional and higher levels, to candidates, including women, from under-represented countries, and emphasis should be placed on fixed-term appointments. His delegation concurred with the Advisory Committee's recommendation that 590 of the 826 new posts requested should be approved and with the suggestion regarding delayed recruitment allowances and the need for restraint in reclassifying existing posts.

9. Turning to the question of the financing of UNEF and UNDOF, in the Middle East, he stressed that the expenses of those forces constituted a burden which had resulted from Israel's aggression. Member States should not be under permanent obligation to shoulder costs necessitated because of a situation brought about by aggression committed by one State against another. While his Government had supported the establishment of those forces and appreciated what they had done to preserve peace in the Middle East, it hoped that the mandate of UNEF, which would expire on 24 October 1975, and that of UNDOF, which would end the following month, would be the last ones and that a peaceful, just and durable solution would be found. Such a solution could only be ensured by the withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied territories and the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

10. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation hoped that the Fifth Committee would concern itself especially with the question of how best to ensure that all Members of the Organization received full value for the funds they contributed to it through the formulation, implementation and follow-up stages of the approved programme and budget.

11. Turning to the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1), his delegation was pleased to note that the Working Group generally agreed that further strengthening of the evaluation function in the United Nations was desirable. That attitude seemed to reflect a growing consensus that a strengthened evaluation capacity within the United Nations needed to be established in the very near future. The seventh special session of the General Assembly had further emphasized that need. Only through adequate review and evaluation of programme implementation could the governing bodies make intelligent decisions regarding programme changes. Simply expanding existing programmes without adequate knowledge of how well objectives were being achieved was a highly questionable practice which no one in the current period of austerity could any longer afford. His delegation therefore agreed with those who had stated that some of the procedural recommendations of the Working Group should be adopted at the current session, at least on an experimental basis, while those of a more far-reaching character might best be referred to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System.

12. His delegation endorsed the Working Group's recommendation that the medium-term plan should be prepared and reviewed in non-budget years and the conclusion reached by CPC in the report on its fifteenth session[1] that an effort should be made to establish a more direct connexion between long-term goals, medium-term objectives and day-to-day activities of the various elements of the Secretariat. While the latest medium-term plan marked an important step in that direction, more needed to be done.

13. His delegation would comment on the various sections of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 as the Committee came to them but would reserve its position on the document as a whole until it had evaluated the results of the first reading. It shared the concern expressed by a number of delegations at the continued unrestrained growth of expenditures, but recognized that certain recent decisions—the most notable being resolution 3362 (S-VII), adopted by the General Assembly at its seventh special session—might require additional resources. Nevertheless, it expected that a certain proportion of the additional expenditure would be absorbed through the redeployment of existing resources.

14. His delegation agreed with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General's presentation would be improved through more concise documentation, more solid justifications for resource increases, a better definition of real programme growth and replacement of the so-called "incremental" budgetary approach by the "zero-base" method of budget preparation and presentation. One way of doing that would be to make a more detailed review each biennium of programmes that were more than six years old in order to determine whether or not they should be phased out. His delegation would like to propose that the Fifth Committee should request the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on programmes and other activities more than six years old that were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective.

15. A number of the comments made by the Advisory Committee regarding administrative practices within the United Nations called for even greater reductions than had been recommended. During the section-by-section analysis his delegation would suggest where further reductions could be made without detriment to the Organization's continuing work. Noting that the largest part of the budget

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 7.*

increase was to provide for additional staff resources even though about half of the approximately 830 new posts approved for the current biennium remained unfilled, he said that such expansion could not be justified, especially given the world economic situation, the budgetary stringency practised by a number of Member States and the Organization's financial predicament. In particular, his delegation seriously questioned the method of expanding staff resources through the conversion of temporary posts to permanent ones. It also urged the Secretary-General to take immediate steps to correct the trend towards a large number of senior posts which resulted from the "grade creep". Instead of expanding the Secretariat to meet each new need, efforts should be made to improve the utilization and productivity of existing staff.

16. His delegation, like many others, did not support the concept of full budgeting used in the programme budget, since it eliminated a major incentive for economy and savings. In that connexion, he asked the representative of the Secretary-General to furnish information as to the amount of money included in the estimates to meet inflationary costs in the second year of the biennium, i.e. 1977. He agreed with the position taken by the representative of Egypt on that question (1708th meeting) and would propose that that amount be deleted from the appropriation requested.

17. His delegation took particular note of the views expressed by the Secretary-General in the introduction[2] to his annual report and in his statement to the Committee (A/C.5/1685) regarding the Organization's deteriorating financial situation. It had long been concerned about that situation, which posed a particular threat to the Organization's ability to assist the developing countries, and it hoped that the discussions currently under way to find a solution would be successful: his delegation was prepared to work with others to that end. It could not, however, support any increase in the size of the Working Capital Fund since to do so would only delay the time when the total membership would be compelled to face up to the Organization's financial problems.

18. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) welcomed the progress made towards an effective planning system for the United Nations and also the improvements in the form of presentation of the second biennial programme budget.

19. The medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1) contained excellent analyses, comments and suggestions, and the Fifth Committee, or if necessary a working group, should complete the initial examination of the plan made by CPC at its fifteenth session, in March 1975. The medium-term plans of the various organizations in the United Nations system must be harmonized, if necessary through a longer-term "rolling plan", although his delegation, for the same reasons as those cited by the representative of the Upper Volta (1710th meeting), preferred a "fixed-horizon" plan. That would improve the distribution of available resources and the co-ordination of programmes within the administrative units of the United Nations and within the organizations in the United Nations system. The description of programmes in the medium-term plan, however, was of debatable quality, often vague and incomplete, and he hoped that the necessary corrective measures would be taken.

20. Commenting on programmes, he said it was essential to eliminate overlapping and duplication in the activities of the various organizations in the United Nations system. In that connexion, he quoted paragraph 38 of the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) concerning the programme sectors in which the United Nations proper and the agencies had common or closely related activities. The Fifth Committee was not aware of all the activities in fields of common interest and was thus unable to determine the need for programmes of the United Nations in fields covered by the agencies which had three times as many staff as the United Nations.

21. The Committee should be given full information on the amounts, sources and use of extra-budgetary resources and should ensure that activities financed through extra-budgetary funds, over which the legislative bodies had little authority, and programmes financed from the United Nations regular budget were carefully co-ordinated and in conformity with the decisions of the competent legislative bodies. Extra-budgetary resources should not be diverted from their main objective, usually operational programmes, to establish or maintain permanent administrations. In general, and subject to decisions taken when funds financed through voluntary contributions were established, the General Assembly should not transfer to the regular budget Secretariat posts financed from extra-budgetary resources once those resources were exhausted. The Committee should request the Advisory Committee to examine that question and report on it to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

22. The medium-term plan should be prepared and given in-depth consideration by the competent bodies before the programme budget was prepared. Accordingly, he supported consideration of the plan and budget in alternate years and also recommendations 2 and 3 made by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery in paragraph 77 of its report.

23. Expressing concern over the accelerating growth rate of the United Nations budget and the expenditures of the United Nations system as a whole, now approaching $4 million per day, he reiterated the questions asked by the representative of France at the 1703rd meeting. He was not convinced that all possible measures had been taken to ensure implementation of programmes at minimum cost. Yet the United Nations should show a real concern to achieve savings at a time when so many countries were experiencing serious economic problems and a reduced capacity to contribute. His delegation endorsed the view of the Advisory Committee on the concept of programme growth.

24. The adjusted revised appropriations for the biennium 1974-1975 had been used as a base for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. That meant that old programmes continued with the same staff, while any new activity required new staff, which was

2 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 1A.*

completely unacceptable in a dynamic administration. As the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had suggested (A/C.5/1686), the Secretary-General should at least attempt in future to present a justification for the requests for additional resources in the light of the totality of existing operations. No information was given on the activities terminated during the biennium or on the redistribution of resources made possible as a result. The Advisory Committee, because of the "incremental" method used by the Secretariat, had not been able to determine what current activities could be replaced by new or more important activities, and had thus only tried to determine whether proposed new expenditures, mainly on staff, were justified. Outmoded programmes should be replaced by new programmes without additional expenditure, and he suggested that CPC, if necessary together with the Advisory Committee and the Joint Inspection Unit, should in the following few months recommend necessary pruning. Redeployment of personnel should, at least in part, meet new requirements, except of course in the language services.

25. On the question of full budgeting, his delegation did not favour inclusion in the budget of estimates to cover the effects of inflation at rates assumed by the Secretariat. The amounts included to offset inflation should be limited to a 4 or 5 per cent increase, and the Secretary-General should be requested to make savings by redeploying under-utilized staff.

26. Some of the recommendations of the Working Group on Programme and Budget Machinery could be implemented immediately, while others would have to be referred to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, established by the General Assembly at its seventh special session. His delegation supported the Working Group's report in general. He endorsed the views expressed by the representative of Pakistan at the 1704th meeting concerning CPC, although not on travel costs and subsistence allowances. He associated his delegation in general with the comments of the Advisory Committee on the excellent report of the Joint Inspection Unit on medium-term planning in the United Nations system (see A/9646).

27. His delegation would comment on specific questions later, such as the Working Capital Fund. Meanwhile, he hoped that the Committee would seek ways and means of enabling the United Nations to carry out the tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly without imposing excessive financial burdens on its Members.

28. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) said that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, in an unprecedented seven-volume form, contained several new features intended to give a clearer picture of how money was being spent. He suggested, however, that more information should have been included to explain why the United Nations budget was expanding so rapidly. Firm measures should be taken to halt that trend by stressing the need for savings and improving the administration and organization of work. The legislative bodies should keep programmes under constant review in order to eliminate projects no longer of top priority, and the Fifth Committee could help by requesting them to review programme priorities. Moreover, the Secretariat should regularly inform the legislative bodies when programmes were completed or became irrelevant.

29. Two important principles should be respected in preparing the budget, namely, detailed classification of expenditures and income, and the distinction between the prerogatives of bodies that approved the budget and those that administered it. A clear distinction should be drawn between budgetary documents providing information and budgetary documents requiring approval, which would make them binding on the Secretary-General. Appropriations should be broken down by main field of activity, programme and object of expenditure. The new format of the programme budget was not entirely satisfactory: the presentation varied from section to section; more detail was needed on extra-budgetary resources; vague or inadequate justification was sometimes given for requests for new posts; information was not provided on activities that were being terminated, on redeployment of resources or on the volume of manpower resources to be devoted to particular activities, and some programme material was couched in generalization, as the Advisory Committee had observed in its report. Moreover, some sections of the budget had been prepared in violation of General Assembly resolutions and rules of procedure.

30. He endorsed the suggestion made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee (A/C.5/1686) that in future budgets the Secretary-General should focus on planning and programme bottle-necks and identify areas where changes might be made. Some indication should be given of how United Nations resolutions were reflected in its programmes, and total resources available from all sources should be indicated along with the programmes to which those resources would be applied.

31. Staff costs accounted for 75 per cent of the budget, and his delegation's position was that the Secretariat had been expanded to an unjustifiable and excessive degree, and that the Secretariat should abandon its practice of creating new offices and expanding its staff whenever new programmes were initiated. More efficient use should be made of existing staff by raising productivity and taking fuller advantage of experience and qualifications. Posts financed from extra-budgetary resources should not be transferred to the regular budget; he agreed with the Advisory Committee's view that vacancies should be filled only when the work load of the unit concerned so required, in other situations the resources being reallocated to priority areas. He also agreed with the Advisory Committee's criticism of the Secretariat's use of the incremental approach to budgeting and with its recommendation that more careful analysis of the base of existing resources was necessary to determine which activities could be replaced by new and more important ones. Under-utilization and inefficient use of staff was rife in the Secretariat. The geographical distribution of posts was still unsatisfactory; to remedy that, nationals from over-represented countries should not be recruited, the retirement age should be respected and the system of permanent contracts should be reviewed with a view to reducing their number.

32. The Secretary General's assumptions on inflation rates for 1976 and 1977 could be regarded as no more than working hypotheses and were unacceptable to his delega-

tion. Added costs because of inflation should be absorbed by savings within the budget or financed through contributions, mainly from the developed host countries where additional expenditures due to inflation were made. The Secretary-General should implement effective measures to offset the effects of inflation, such as strict economy, better planning of purchases, and consultation with the developed host countries with a view to reaching agreement on contributions to cover the effect of inflation.

33. One way of economizing was to eliminate duplication. For example, the two organs dealing with narcotics, covered by section 14 of the proposed programme budget, could be serviced by one secretariat office with a considerable reduction in the number of employees required. Another way of economizing was to reduce the cost of documentation, which was a matter that should be given serious attention. Materials and equipment should be purchased at competitive prices; in that connexion, he asked in which countries purchases were made, what direct and indirect taxes and duties were paid and the percentage of taxes in the total amount spent on purchases and services, and he also asked whether the United Nations made any effort to be exempted from payment of such taxes. He also suggested that urgent measures should be taken to ensure reimbursement to the Secretariat of money it had lent to other organizations in the United Nations system.

34. The Controller had said that proposed growth in expenditures did not claim to be synonymous with growth in programmes as measured by results; that was true, and such a situation should not be permitted.

35. He reiterated his delegation's position of principle that expenditures on unlawful action contradictory to the United Nations Charter, such as expenditures related to the United Nations bond issue, should not be included in the regular budget. Technical assistance should be financed, not from the regular budget, but on a voluntary basis, and contributions should be paid in national currencies.

36. While the medium-term plan represented a considerable improvement over the previous plan in respect of presentation by programme rather than by organizational unit, further improvement was needed. The General Assembly decision that the plan should be the framework for the budget was respected in simultaneous preparation and presentation of the four-year plan and the two-year budget, but that procedure created problems for those preparing them and also led to perfunctory debate in the Committee instead of in-depth analysis. His delegation thus supported the recommendation of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery that the budget and plan should be considered in alternate years.

37. In view of the unjustifiably high growth rate of the budget, he suggested that serious consideration should be given to the Soviet proposal for a ceiling on the annual increase in the budget, which should not exceed the average growth rate of the gross national product and/or national income of Member States. He recommended that the Fifth Committee should provide more active support to the Advisory Committee to encourage it to take a more critical approach to the proposed budget estimates, thus helping the Secretary-General and Member States ensure implementation of programmes with maximum efficiency and minimum expenditure.

38. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) requested the Secretariat to produce a paper explaining the short-range and long-range purposes of the Working Capital Fund and include a table comparing the level of that Fund with that of the regular budget for each year beginning with 1946. That information would provide Member States with a better idea of the functions of the Working Capital Fund and might encourage them to contribute to it.

39. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said he welcomed the Philippine suggestion because, although it involved much time and effort, the paper he had requested would make a useful contribution to a better understanding of an important aspect of the financial structure of the Organization.

40. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should temporarily suspend the general discussion and revert to consideration in first reading of section 13.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* for the previous documentation, see 1705th meeting; A/C.5/L.1226)

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)

SECTION 13. UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME *(continued)*** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

41. Mr. VON RUCKTESCHELL (Federal Republic of Germany) said that, although his delegation supported the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), it was concerned by the increase in the number of UNEP posts financed out of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme, particularly as there was still no clear-cut definition of the various tasks to be undertaken by UNEP. The composition and size of the staff should be carefully controlled.

42. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina), emphasizing the cardinal importance of UNEP and its impact on the maintenance of friendly relations among States, said that the General Assembly and the policy-making organs of the United Nations must continue to supervise the work of UNEP and to update its guidelines. While the Advisory Committee had not recommended a reduction in the expenditure requested by the Secretary-General under section 13, it had made important critical comments concerning the use of those funds. He was confident that the Executive Director of UNEP would give those comments very serious considera-

* Resumed from the 1709th meeting.

** Resumed from the 1705th meeting.

tion and that the problems raised would be satisfactorily resolved. The Argentine delegation supported the figures proposed for the 1976-1977 biennium.

43. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation appreciated the importance of the service already rendered by the Executive Director of UNEP and his staff and would vote in favour of the expenditure requested under section 13. However, it shared the concern expressed in the Committee about the high rate of growth of administrative costs: the effectiveness of the Programme would not be measured by the size of its staff, particularly as the Assembly resolution establishing UNEP (resolution 2997 (XXVIII)) had called for a "small secretariat". On the other hand, there was no justification for financing the large number of posts for the next biennium from the regular budget; as was the case for UNDP, they should continue to be paid for out of voluntary contributions. The Governing Council of UNEP did not appear to have attached much weight to the Advisory Committee's critical comments on the Programme's high administrative costs.

44. Mr. STRONG (Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme) assured the Committee that UNEP shared the concern expressed about the magnitude of its administrative costs and would welcome guidelines which would enable the Executive Director to reconcile staff requirements with the demands of Governments for the performance of tasks. An objective examination of UNEP's functions would show that those costs were not disproportionate to the tasks involved and the difficulties of getting them done.

45. It should be borne in mind that the functions entrusted to UNEP by the General Assembly required the closest possible communication links with the organizations of the United Nations family and other intergovernmental groups. The major impediment to the maintenance of those contacts was the remoteness of UNEP's headquarters at Nairobi. Since, however, those communications were essential to the effective operation of the Programme, the high costs they entailed could not be avoided. It was costing UNEP additional time, money and personnel because its headquarters was so distant from the sites of other organizations with which it had to work. On the other hand, in Nairobi, with the generous co-operation of the Kenyan Government, it was able to get things done expeditiously. For example, the temporary premises constructed on land made available by that Government for the permanent headquarters would be ready for occupancy by 1 December, a month earlier than anticipated. Thus, the problem was not location, but remoteness.

46. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), conceding that UNEP might well have to incur administrative and programme support costs owing to the geographical location of its headquarters and the need to co-operate with all members of the United Nations system at long-range, still found that a *prima facie* case could be made that it was overstaffed. Geographical remoteness could not account for the fact that 47 per cent of total expenditure in 1974 had gone for administrative and programme support costs and that the ratio of those costs to substantive expenses was 88 per cent, even though UNEP did not execute its own projects. That ratio was three times as high as that of UNIDO, which had been criticized for high overhead costs.

47. The solution was not, as the Algerian representative had suggested, to reduce the regular budget establishment of UNEP; that would be an arbitrary measure which did not get to the root of the problem. Instead, the Fifth Committee should request the General Assembly to decide that the regular budget component of the UNEP secretariat should remain static until the end of the 1978-1979 biennium, so that it could not transfer posts for which voluntary funds had been exhausted to the regular budget. It should further request the General Assembly to invite the Advisory Committee to study the problem of establishing extra-budgetary posts in units of the Secretariat generally and to report on the question at the thirty-first session.

48. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee), reading out the figures supplied by the Executive Director of UNEP, said that the amount spent for communications—a total of $540,000—was divided as follows: $50,000 for the Mexican office; $30,000 for the Bangkok office; $60,000 for the Beirut office; $30,000 for the Geneva unit; $40,000 for the New York office and $330,000 for the Nairobi headquarters. The posts subject to geographical distribution totalled 82, broken down as follows: Africa: 12; Asia and the Pacific: 10; Eastern Europe: 7; Western Europe: 23; Latin America: 6; the Middle East: 4; North America and the Caribbean: 19; others: 1.

49. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that, although he would support the Advisory Committee's recommendation under section 13, he considered that table 13-7 in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006)—which contained the manning table of UNEP—reflected an abnormal situation: out of the total of 129 posts, Professional and above, 48 were P-5 and above. That meant that there was 1 Director for every 2 Professional staff. He appreciated the information given by the Executive Director of UNEP and would welcome further comments on his plan for normalizing that ratio.

50. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) considered that it would be no more arbitrary for the Advisory Committee to recommend a reduction in the regular budget establishment of UNEP than for it to make drastic cuts, as it had done, in expenditure for the regional commissions, notwithstanding the importance of those regional bodies to the development effort.

51. While he appreciated that the cost of communications from Nairobi was high, UNEP was not the only United Nations body with headquarters at a great distance from the site of other intergovernmental organs and it could undoubtedly find ways of reducing its communication costs. In that connexion, he would like to know when the Nairobi communications network would be installed.

52. Commenting on the additional information given by the Committee Secretary, he observed that over 40 per cent of the UNEP posts subject to geographical distribution had been allocated to developed countries, a situation which could not be said to be equitable. Finally, he requested the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to review the figures for UNEP once more with a view to presenting a case to the General Assembly for curbing its disproportionate growth.

53. Mr. STRONG (Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme), replying to the point

raised concerning the ratio of support costs to programme costs, said that UNEP was significantly different from UNDP in that it was a programme and policy co-ordinating agency, not a funding agency, and had not been intended to have the capacity to finance activities. It had endeavoured to use funds as sparingly as possible to get its programme started and to secure funding for its projects from Governments, other United Nations bodies and private sources. Its high support costs should be seen against the background of the total programme it generated; the programme it funded directly was only a small part of that total programme.

54. Explaining the preponderance of high-level posts in the manning table, he said that, since UNEP did not itself execute projects and merely organized and co-ordinated programme activities with the support of other organs of the United Nations and the scientific and technical community, it did not require a vast infrastructure of lower level staff. Indeed, it was understaffed in that respect.

55. The two years of UNEP's existence in Nairobi represented its period of maximum growth. That growth rate should level off in the next few years so that, when the General Assembly, at its thirty-first session, came to examine the relationship between the functions and staffing of UNEP and the financial resources it required, the situation would be considerably more balanced.

56. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) suggested that in future, in order to avoid confusion, the Advisory Committee should direct its critical comments only to items under the regular budget and should not deal with those financed from extra-budgetary sources.

57. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand), supported by Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), proposed that further consideration of section 13 and any decision on expenditure under that section should be postponed until a future meeting.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

1712th meeting

Monday, 13 October 1975, at 3.15 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1712

AGENDA ITEM 103

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly:
***(a)* Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10151, A/C.5/1691)**

1. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy), who had been nominated for reappointment to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (see A/C.5/1691), declared that, since the representative of another European country had come forward as a candidate for the vacancy, he would withdraw his own candidacy in a spirit of European solidarity.

2. He thanked the Chairman of the Advisory Committee with whom he had had occasion to work during the past five years for their co-operation.

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 97

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1705th meeting; A/C.5/L.1226)

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1700th meeting. A/C.5/L.1227)

***General discussion* (concluded)**

3. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece), referring to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), joined other delegations in commending the Secretary-General on the many improvements he had made in the presentation of the document and said that the Secretary-General, in paragraph 3 of his foreword, had given a good description of the difficult task confronting the Fifth Committee, namely searching for solutions to the problem of "seeking to satisfy, within relatively restricted means, a wide variety of virtually unlimited needs and aspirations". It had been decided to try to solve that problem by an integrated system of planning, programming and budgeting. Progress towards that goal, however, was hampered by certain impediments. The first obstacle was a possible lack of co-ordination at the national level: Member States did not always have an integrated long-term approach to United Nations problems; their national policies might change, and the same country might adopt different stands in different intergovernmental bodies. Secondly, it was difficult to achieve a consensus between a large number of States because of the multiplicity of their points of view. It was to that difficulty that the FAO Programme Committee had referred when it had expressed "its deep concern about the impossibility of incorporating national priorities in the definition of regional and, even more, of world priorities", as Mr. Bertrand had noted in paragraph 129 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on medium-term planning in the United Nations system (see A/9646). Another obstacle was the inadequate co-ordination and co-operation between United Nations organizations: harmo-

nization of programme budget presentation would constitute an important step in that direction, but it should be noted that international organizations appeared to be as solicitous of preserving their autonomy as States were. A further difficulty lay in the multiplicity of the departments which serviced the various programmes and which competed for scarce resources; that could sometimes be conducive to the emergence of innovative approaches. It was heartening, however, that the Secretary-General and his principal advisers were trying to prevent excessive compartmentalization.

4. The whole idea of budgeting, of allocating resources, presupposed a certain amount of flexibility in the distribution of those resources. But that flexibility was limited if it was accepted that programmes and policies must be maintained from one budget period to the next and that units which had been created to implement them must necessarily continue to exist. There seemed to be a tendency to perpetuate units, and thereby policies and programmes which might have been better terminated. That tendency might have been reduced by a judicious reallocation of resources, in particular personnel resources, to other progamme goals, where appropriate. That, however, presupposed a cogent personnel policy and the means to implement it, which meant, *inter alia*, that the authority of the Division of Personnel Administration must be reinforced, so that it could transfer staff from one sector of activity to another, and that there must be training and career development policies and programmes which would ensure the effectiveness of the new appointments.

5. The Secretary-General had admittedly attempted to introduce such concepts, which were both modern and constructive. His delegation strongly supported those efforts, which were designed to enhance the quality of the Secretariat. It also unreservedly endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraph 33 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) to the effect that when posts fell vacant, the Secretary-General should fill them only when that was required by the workload of the unit in which the vacancy occurred and that, in situations of declining workload, the vacant posts should remain unfilled and the resources should be reallocated to priority areas.

6. His delegation viewed with some alarm the inexorable increase in the regular budget of the United Nations coupled with the deteriorating financial situation of the Organization. It was all the more alarming in that important activities were not, and could not be, included in the proposed programme budget: for instance, the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus still depended on voluntary contributions to discharge its task, despite the full co-operation it received from the host Government, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. In that connexion, his delegation wished to thank those countries which contributed contingents and money to the Force.

7. With regard to the over-all problem of the financial situation of the United Nations, a co-ordinated approach was required. Until a consensus on that matter had been reached, the specific measures suggested by the Secretary-General could alleviate the immediate situation. The Secretariat would facilitate the search for more general and more long-term solutions if, as the representative of the Netherlands had proposed at the 1710th meeting, it could produce a short factual working paper on the current financial position of the United Nations.

8. His delegation shared the view that the General Assembly should consider the medium-term plan and the proposed programme budget in alternate years. It also supported the suggestion put forward by the Turkish delegation at the 1702nd meeting that the Secretariat should consider the presentation of the next biennial budget proposals in two formats: a concise and integrated format for the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly, and a detailed format, containing all the required information, for the Advisory Committee and for implementation and accounting purposes.

9. On the question of medium-term planning, he believed that the views expressed by the Joint Inspection Unit in its report on the subject and by ACC (A/9646/Add.1), as well as the comments of the Advisory Committee (A/10081) deserved further serious consideration. The *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System would certainly make use of those studies, as well as of the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1), the comments made thereon by CPC in the report on its fifteenth session[1] and by the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-eighth session, and the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1). Those matters were dealt with in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1227, which had just been circulated and which its sponsors would no doubt wish to introduce. In that connexion, however, his delegation felt that it was important to avoid differentiating between interrelated recommendations of the Working Group, except where absolutely necessary. It was not, for instance, by dwelling on the recommendation urging that CPC should have longer sessions that that organ would necessarily be strengthened. Moreover, any recommendation by the Fifth Committee to the *Ad Hoc* Committee asking it to give favourable consideration to the improvement of the work of CPC would be incomplete if the attention of the *Ad Hoc* Committee was not at the same time drawn to the need to find pragmatic solutions to the financial problems arising from the changes recommended by the Working Group. The General Assembly, by its resolution 3362 (S-VII), had requested the *Ad Hoc* Committee to submit a report to it at its thirty-first session, but it would take more than one year to implement, even only once, all the recommendations of the Working Group aimed at improving the work of CPC. Even if the implementation of those recommendations started in 1976, as was desirable, the *Ad Hoc* Committee would not be in a position, before submitting its report to the Assembly at its thirty-first session, to take into account the whole experiment.

10. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) felt that the presentation of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 and of the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 showed a very marked improvement compared with previous documents. The proposed programme budget now showed the relation-

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 7.*

ship between United Nations programmes and the resources available for their implementation. The Fifth Committee was therefore in a better position to approve the programmes and activities on which the limited resources of the United Nations would be spent. Although the synthesis between programmes and budget was not yet perfect, it was fair to say that programmes would in future reflect the political will of the international community. The programme budget was a more useful and rational instrument for Member States than the traditional budget.

11. The appropriations requested by the Secretary-General amounted to approximately $737 million. His delegation concurred with the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee, which were well reasoned and deserved the Committee's attention. It shared the concern of the Advisory Committee about increases which did not really appear to relate to the activities planned in the budget. The Advisory Committee had noted in paragraph 9 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) that the justifications provided in support of requests for new posts were often too vague or inadequate and that increased resources were often requested for areas which consisted only of "continuing activities" governed by legislative decisions taken several years back. A clear distinction should be made between the increases which related to "continuing activities" and those concerning non-continuing activities. The programme budget should be more precise than the medium-term plan and should provide more data on the development of organizational priorities, which presupposed that the Fifth Committee would be informed about obsolete programmes and that those programmes would be terminated.

12. With regard to programme growth, which amounted to 3.8 per cent, and real growth, which amounted to 3.5 per cent, the term "programme growth" was indeed ambiguous. The Advisory Committee was correct in stating that the increase in resources, particularly staff, would not necessarily involve a growth in programmes. Such growth was measured by the effective use of the limited resources available with a view to fulfilling objectives, namely, United Nations programmes. The Committee must therefore study the problem of evaluating growth before it determined the growth rate.

13. The Secretary-General was requesting 826 additional posts, 100 of which were Arabic language posts; since staff costs accounted for three quarters of the United Nations budget, one must hope that restraint would be shown in future in that area. The Secretary-General tended to reclassify posts as a means of promoting officials. While that method, which resulted in a "grade creep," was regrettable, the Secretary-General must, nevertheless, be allowed a certain flexibility in that regard, at least in the areas where he considered reclassification to be absolutely necessary. His delegation therefore endorsed the recommendations of the Advisory Committee that all reclassifications of posts to the P-4 and lower levels and the reclassification to D-1 of 5 out of 12 posts requested by the Secretary-General should be approved. Promotion questions should be solved in a systematic way and the International Civil Service Commission should study those problems and report to the General Assembly as soon as possible.

14. The Secretary-General had shown restraint in the use of experts and consultants, since there had been a reduction of $129,000 in the appropriations requested under that item for the forthcoming biennium ($6,655,000) compared with the preceding budget ($6,784,000). Such savings might make it possible to complete a programme in a developing country which otherwise might not have been completed. The Secretary-General should therefore continue to engage experts and consultants only when the necessary expertise was not available in the Secretariat.

15. His delegation had no difficulty with the fact that under the full budget principle the Secretary-General had envisaged in the budget hypothetical inflation rates, provided that those rates were not too hypothetical. Perhaps the Committee could look into the possibility of adopting the principle of "semi-full" budgeting, which would enable the Secretariat to provide more accurate figures for inflation by submitting the proposed budget in two parts. That would, however, increase documentation and pose problems of timing and cost. His delegation would, in any case, be interested in having the opinion of the Committee on that matter.

16. He shared the view of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1685) about the critical financial situation of the Organization. Member States should pay promptly and fully their assessed contributions. The cash flow situation was such that the United Nations might not be able to meet its basic obligations. His delegation would consider very seriously the Secretary-General's request to double the Working Capital Fund. Some action would have to be taken to free the United Nations from its current deficit of $90 million.

17. The presentation of the medium-term plan was noticeably better than that of the previous one. The perspective analysis which appeared in part one was particularly stimulating and provided an explanation of how the political and historical objectives of the United Nations were put into effect in specific plans and programmes. The fact that the plan and the proposed programme budget established a relation between available resources and programmes proved that progress was being made in the right direction. Programme planning was the only answer for a complex organization like the United Nations, since in most cases wise choices could be made only in the light of analyses submitted by the Secretariat. Priority setting was therefore an essential factor in understanding how the resources of the United Nations could be allocated in a rational manner to the various programmes, all of which, it must not be forgotten, were based on resolutions.

18. Kenya was a member of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery, which had produced a balanced report. It now devolved upon the Committee to study the recommendations of the Working Group.

19. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that he had endeavoured to determine the extent to which the voluminous information before the Committee was useful to it in performing its two tasks of assessing the progress made in the field of medium-term planning and programme budgeting and considering the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977. His delegation was in full agreement with the view of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee (see A/C.5/1686) that the Fifth

Committee was hardly in a position to perform the first of those tasks, since there was no document before it containing information on the experience with programme budgeting and medium-term planning in the United Nations. Although his delegation was of the view that, without an analysis of the results achieved in programme management and the use of resources, it was practically impossible to make an objective assessment of the system adopted for drawing up the budget, it had nevertheless tried to evaluate the new system of presenting the United Nations budget, and was by no means satisfied.

20. In its first report[2] on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975, the Advisory Committee had stated in paragraph 18 that only the presentation of the proposed budget and the period covered by it had been changed, but that the method used to ascertain the volume of anticipated expenditure had scarcely been improved, since the concept of a modern resource management system had not been fully appreciated within the Secretariat; there was a real danger that form would become the main end result of the change to programme budgeting, and that the real advantage of the new system, namely the improved utilization of United Nations resources, would be lost. In its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) on the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977, which was the only document containing a detailed analysis of the methods used to prepare the plan and the programme budget, the Advisory Committee, in paragraphs 7 and 8, had welcomed with satisfaction the changes which had been made, but had not found the new format entirely satisfactory and had noted serious short-comings; it had, in particular, criticized the bulkiness of the proposed programme budget and the abundance of questionable information; for instance, instead of indicating in the proposed programme budget (A/10006, foreword, para. 14) that the proposed percentage increase in growth requirements for the next biennium was lower than it had ever been since 1969, or stressing that, should a further upward revision of the appropriations for 1974-1975 become necessary, the percentage increase would be proportionately reduced (*ibid.*, para. 28), it would have been more useful to remind the Committee that in the proposed budget for 1974-1975 the anticipated increase had been only 19 per cent, whereas it had actually been 37 per cent, and that over the years the amounts on the basis of which those percentages were calculated were becoming larger.

21. As to the methods used in the proposed programme budget to plan activities, calculate programme growth and evaluate the probable impact of inflation, they were even less effective and convincing than before. Consequently, the plans and programmes in the proposed programme budget had serious gaps: there were not enough details about the programmes, no mention was made of the duration of implementation, there was no evaluation of activities and the programmes were not related to available resources and to the resources, including extra-budgetary funds, needed to implement them. One of the most serious weaknesses of the new proposed programme budget was that it had not been calculated on the basis of programmes as a whole, taking into account all the elements and the changes in the programmes during the previous biennium, but only on the basis of programme growth and the resources needed for that purpose. Consequently, the budget did not reflect the considerable savings that might be expected from the modification, completion or cancellation of certain programmes.

22. The most serious defect in those methods of calculation was that at all levels and in all departments of the Secretariat the need to economize was completely lost sight of. The Secretariat was therefore not in a position to propose specific measures to the Committee, designed, for example, to make better use of personnel, to utilize technical resources more effectively, to call less frequently on outside experts or to reduce travel expenses, and there was no indication in any document of probable and actual savings. It was therefore no exaggeration to state that the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 was not the result of the judicious application of a new system of planning, programming, budgeting, evaluation and control, as understood by the competent organs of the United Nations, but that the Secretariat had sought instead to reconcile obsolete procedures for calculating the budget with a new method of presentation.

23. In the foreword to the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977, the Secretary-General once again cited the "question of adequate time and opportunity for the preparation of the plan and budget by the Secretariat and of a more logical and workable sequence for their review and approval at the intergovernmental and expert level" (*ibid.*, para. 4). Those excuses were too simplistic.

24. In fact, the Secretariat had not taken the necessary steps to implement the decision of the General Assembly to adopt the new system of programme budgeting; it had not submitted the necessary documentation to the expert and intergovernmental organs and it now claimed that those organs had not carried out their tasks. And yet, when they had examined the documents prepared by the Secretariat, the organs in question had encountered the same obstacles as had the Fifth Committee: excessively vague justifications for proposals, lack of precision in formulas, over-abundance of elementary tables. And yet the bureaucratic machinery had swallowed up everything without taking into account the specific proposals which had been designed to improve the new method of programme budget presentation or the observations made by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee on the first programme budget. The Fifth Committee's main task at the current session was therefore to take decisions in order speedily to implement the resolutions of the policy-making bodies concerning the new system of programme budgeting, the specific proposals made during the general discussion and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee; for instance, it should decide to halt programme growth for which additional resources were required, finance new activities by redeploying available resources among programmes and by allocating to new activities the resources thus freed, and consider establishing a ceiling on programme growth.

25. With regard to the Secretariat's claim that it had no time, it should be recalled that the United Nations had had a budget since the Organization's inception and that the current task was to improve the methods utilized for

2 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8* and corrigendum.

planning resources and implementing the approved budget. That was something which the Secretariat should always have done, particularly during the past five years. Moreover, two years were more than enough to devise such elementary methods as those which had been utilized to calculate the proposed programme budget, which consisted of the appropriations for 1974-1975, the additional expenses for 1975, "programme growth" and the effects of inflation. In that connexion, he recalled that the proposed programme budget for 1974-1975 had not been endorsed by many States Members of the United Nations, including four permanent members of the Security Council, because it had made allowance for extremely high rates of growth without analysing the effectiveness of ongoing programmes; that element of the current programme budget proposals could not be approved therefore without appropriate examination and review. Moreover, the Secretariat had not only provided, in the proposed programme budget, for the continuation of nearly all activities currently under way but, on its own initiative, had provided for an increase in programmes, contrary to the resolutions adopted in that connexion. That was inadmissible. The method utilized to calculate "programme growth" and "real growth" had quite rightly been criticized by the Advisory Committee and by most delegations.

26. His delegation was also concerned at the considerable sum—over $118 million—requested in the proposed budget to cover expenses attributable to the crisis in the monetary and financial system of the capitalist countries and to currency fluctuations, even though the General Assembly and most Member States had recommended that such expenses should be covered mainly by savings in budget implementation or by contributions from the developed countries where Secretariat units were located.

27. The most important item of expenditure in the programme budget was staff costs, which accounted for 80 per cent of the estimates. Of course, the United Nations budget was above all administrative but the Secretariat had not reached maximum productivity and was not efficient enough. Instead of taking radical measures to make better use of available personnel, it preferred to adopt the questionable practice of automatically increasing the number of staff and reclassifying posts. Thus, in the proposed programme budget, the Secretary-General proposed adding 826 new posts to the Secretariat manning table and reclassifying 63 posts, even though every year there were hundreds of vacancies in the Secretariat. His delegation supported the proposal that the Joint Inspection Unit should study the utilization of personnel in the Secretariat with particular reference to the nature of the vacancies.

28. Finally, the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 contained appropriation requests which his delegation considered to be contrary to the Charter, namely, for the repayment of the United Nations bond issue. Such expenses were a burdensome and regrettable consequence of operations undertaken in the Congo and in the Middle East in violation of the Charter, and the States which had imposed those operations on the United Nations should bear the financial responsibility for them. As it had in the past, the Byelorussian delegation refused to meet those illegal expenses. It also considered that the inclusion in the regular budget of technical assistance expenses was unjustified and contrary to the spirit of Article 17 of the Charter; those expenses should be removed from the regular budget and financed by UNDP on the understanding that States would, as a result, increase their contribution to that Programme. His country would continue to pay the share of its contribution corresponding to technical assistance activities in its national currency.

29. The representatives of the Secretariat had repeatedly stated that the proposed programme budget represented the minimum amount of resources essential to the normal operations of the Organization; yet out of a proposed budget of $737 million, the Advisory Committee had recommended reductions of $15 million, which the Secretariat had accepted, at the same time proudly emphasizing that that reduction represented only 2 per cent of total costs. If the expenses thus eliminated were unnecessary, one might wonder why they had been included in the budget and, if they were indispensable, why the Secretariat was giving them up without a protest.

30. His delegation wished to assure the Committee that, in considering the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977, it was concerned above all with improving the administrative and financial activities of the United Nations in order to increase the Organization's effectiveness as an instrument to strengthen international peace and security. It sincerely hoped that it would have nothing but praise for the next proposed programme budget.

31. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the major improvements in the over-all presentation of the budget made many of the sections easy to read. Like the previous biennial budget, the budget for the coming period showed an upward trend in expenditure, which had increased by $130 million. His delegation did not feel, however, that the increase was to be attributed to the new method of presentation adopted on an experimental basis in 1972 but rather to the expansion of United Nations activities, which it would not be in the interests of Member States to restrict.

32. The total of $737 million provided for in the current proposed programme budget was shocking to even the most hardened observers, particularly when one compared it with the $19 million spent by the United Nations in 1946. It was therefore important to economize, not by reducing the number of seminars, meetings and conferences but by cutting, for example, expenditure on staff, which accounted for 75 per cent of the budget.

33. Generally speaking, it was by planning, programming and co-ordinating United Nations activities that substantial reductions could be made in certain expenditures. The budget should therefore be based on the medium-term plan, thus making it possible to establish in detail the total resources regarded as necessary by the Secretary-General and to define the type and number of goods and services in terms of which United Nations activities as a whole could be measured.

34. However, the fact that the medium-term plan and the proposed programme budget were prepared the same year and submitted at the same session of the General Assembly

presented definite disadvantages in that regard. It would be preferable to consider the plan one year and the budget proposals the next year, so that the Economic and Social Council and CPC could give the medium-term plan all the attention that it required.

35. Programme budgeting was, it was true, still in its beginning, but the current programming methods left much to be desired. It was therefore essential to sift and assimilate the mass of data on current and future programmes and, for that purpose, to strengthen the programming and planning functions of the legislative bodies, particularly the regional commissions. In practice, the budget was one thing and its execution, which had to be measured in terms of programme implementation, was another, and the two were not well integrated. That was a matter that should receive attention from the Advisory Committee, whose members consistently refrained from making judgements on programmes–perhaps out of fear of having to take political decisions. That attitude prompted his delegation to call for enlarging the Advisory Committee, a step that would not in any way impair its effectiveness and would make it possible at last to ensure an equitable geographical distribution of the membership by doing away with the so-called permanent seats and opening the way for the application of the principle of rotation.

36. Increased requests for staff and inflation were the two curses of the programme budget, and the Secretary-General was aggravating that situation by padding his staff requirements and taking as a working hypothesis rates of inflation which he did not apply uniformly to all elements in the budget. The Secretary-General was calling for 826 new posts, which represented an increase of 4.7 per cent in staff over the current figure. Since senior posts made up most of those requested, the upward trend was continuing and seemed even to be accelerating before the International Civil Service Commission made definite arrangements regarding careers and promotions. It was incomprehensible that total staff should be constantly increased even though many staff members were not fully employed. More efficient utilization of regular staff would make it a simple matter to dispense with consultants, some of whom were retired staff members who had previously not been thought qualified to serve as experts. It was essential to stop recruiting retired staff members as consultants, including in the regular budget, without a specific decision to that effect by the General Assembly, posts which had previously been financed from extra-budgetary funds, and requesting the reclassification of posts without valid reasons simply in order to provide promotion opportunities, as the Advisory Committee pointed out in paragraph 62 of its report. Duplication and overlapping must be eliminated, and staff serving in certain programmes which had now been completed must be reassigned to other duties.

37. The geographical distribution of Secretariat posts was not satisfactory, and there was continuing recruitment of nationals of overrepresented countries. He therefore formally requested the Secretary-General to suggest to the Fifth Committee a new formula for determining the desirable range of posts which would assign a larger coefficient to the "membership factor": a minimum of 2 to 9 posts instead of the current minimum of 1 to 6, thus permitting an increase for underrepresented States.

38. With regard to inflation, the budget now set aside a total of some $65 million to allow for its anticipated effects–a decision that substantially reduced the real growth of the programmes proposed for 1976-1977. That so-called integrated budgeting was characterized by neither integrity nor proper procedure, and it had adverse effects on Member States, particularly the developing countries. It was not fair for those countries to be saddled with expenses attributable to inflation and monetary realignments, and it was the developed countries, particualrly those in which United Nations offices were located, which should meet the cost of inflation. He questioned whether it was reasonable to take the factor of inflation into account in preparing the budget estimates, particularly since the rate of inflation assumed by the Secretary-General represented only a working hypothesis, and he thought it unfortunate that the United Nations should help to import inflation into the developing countries.

39. Turning to a question which was of great concern to his delegation, he observed that the Office of Technical Co-operation, which dealt with matters of strategic importance to the establishment of the new international economic order, was theoretically responsible for the execution of projects but was in fact dependent for that purpose on various other units, i.e. technical, administrative and financial divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and staff recruitment and procurement units of the Department of Administration and Management. That fragmentation of responsibility greatly slowed the work of the Office of Technical Co-operation and did not make its work any easier. The Commissioner for Technical Co-operation should therefore be given an opportunity to perform in an effective manner the central role which had been assigned to him in 1959 and which he had never performed up to the current stage. The inadequate authority and resources of the Commissioner for Technical Co-operation and the Office of Technical Co-operation had permitted UNDP to take undesirable initiatives, to expand its role in defining technical co-operation policy and to inject itself increasingly into direct project execution through private research firms (employed as subcontractors) without going through the specialized agencies. That meant in effect bilateralizing assistance, whereas Governments often turned to the United Nations in order to obtain impartial aid with no political or commercial strings attached or to extricate themselves from an onerous bilateral arrangement. Moreover, UNDP did not have the means of technical supervision available to the specialized agencies for the purpose of ensuring that a subcontractor was doing his job properly. Finally, the element of training national cadres and associating them closely with projects was completely missing. The Office of Technical Co-operation should therefore be given the structural and material means it needed in order to perform more effectively. That would enable it to tackle without delay the tasks envisaged in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) without prejudice to the more basic structural reforms which were to be studied by the *Ad Hoc* Committee set up for that purpose.

40. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that fresh impetus had been given to the work of the United Nations as a result of decisions taken at the seventh special session of the General Assembly. It was the task of the Fifth

Committee, guided by the Advisory Committee, to recommend to the General Assembly the actual level of resources necessary in the forthcoming biennium to implement decisions taken by the legislative organs, bearing in mind the totality of programmes in the United Nations system, and efforts should be made wherever possible to effect economies. Members of the Committee should satisfy themselves that the proposals put before them by the Secretary-General had been prepared with proper regard to the need to make efficient use of the contributions of Member States, particularly since, in the current economic climate, the latter were being forced to trim all but the most essential aspects of their own programmes. As the Secretary-General himself had explicitly acknowledged, the United Nations could not escape the consequences of the current period of austerity.

41. The New Zealand delegation had taken note of the prefatory statement by the Secretary-General in paragraph 12 of the foreword to the proposed programme budget, in which he assured Member States that he had exerted his "best endeavours, as a matter of policy, to strike a reasonable balance between a justifiable expansion of activities of a particularly essential or important nature and the need for moderation and restraint . . . called for in the prevailing economic circumstances". However, in paragraph 33 of its report, the Advisory Committee had commented that it was "not convinced that those efforts have always been pursued with the same vigour".

42. The Fifth Committee had been entrusted with several delicate and difficult tasks. In the first place, there was an implicit requirement imposed on the Committee to pass judgement on the level of real growth that should be considered appropriate with respect to existing programmes, having regard to the current economic climate and the expected addition of new activities to be legislated at the current session. Before one could properly get to grips with the growth question, the method of measuring real growth should be determined. Once the level of real growth had been agreed, the Committee should then consider how the real growth in programme activities should be financed. The question was whether all programme growth should be financed by the simple allocation of additional resources, whether growth in new programmes of high priority and current interest should be accommodated by eliminating older activities of lesser interest, or whether it would be appropriate to combine elements of both approaches. Again, there was a fundamental methodological question, namely, whether the Secretary-General, in drawing up the biennial budget, should adopt an incremental approach (the existing practice) or the zero base approach. Another methodological question of considerable importance was whether the Secretary-General should adopt a full budgeting approach–in which full allowance was made for all inflation and currency movements during the biennium–or a semi-full approach. The crucial issue was to determine which of those two methods was more likely to lead to a reduction in unnecessary expenditure and the promotion of efficient management.

43. In connexion with the question of growth, the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany had pointed out at the 1701st meeting that the fact that the United Nations budget dealt mainly with employees of the Organization told something about the meaning of budgetary growth: it was always a question of maintaining existing personnel or acquiring new staff. While most delegations might accept as reasonable a level of over-all growth in activities that roughly approximated to the real growth in the economies of Member States, it should be borne in mind that growth in the United Nations system did not always result in growth in programme activities of direct benefit to Member States. That was why his delegation much preferred the over-all definition of programme growth offered by the Advisory Committee.

44. In introducing the proposed programme budget to the Committee, the Secretary-General had described it (see A/C.5/1685) as providing "a modest measure of programme growth . . . in critical areas". While most delegations might agree that the proposed over-all growth in real terms of between 4.5 and 6.1 per cent–depending upon one's choice of methodology–was not altogether unreasonable for a two-year period, when compared to the current performance of the economies of Member States, annex III to the foreword of the proposed programme budget showed that the level of real growth varied considerably in individual sections of the budget. Thus, while those subsidiary organs of the General Assembly which were most familiar with the precarious financial situation of the United Nations –namely, the Advisory Committee, the Committee on Contributions, the Board of Auditors and the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board–had all commendably restrained themselves to negative or zero-growth rates in real terms, some units of the Secretariat had apparently not been able to exercise equivalent restraint.

45. If one looked at the figures for section 1 (Over-all policy-making, direction and co-ordination) in annex III, one would see that for the entry entitled "Secretary-General" a real increase of 8.1 per cent was proposed and for the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs a real increase of 12.5 per cent. On the other hand, the budget figures proposed in section 22, for the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management showed no increase in real terms. Even if it was true that the proposed over-all growth of between 4.5 and 6.1 per cent in real terms was relatively modest, one should be aware that there were very wide variations. Moreover, the most rapidly expanding areas of the budget did not necessarily correspond to what one might expect, *prima facie*, to be the most critical areas of United Nations activities. It appeared from annex III that direct development-related activities were not always favoured with high growth rates.

46. At the 1700th meeting the representative of the United Kingdom had very usefully drawn attention to the conflict in methodology used by the Secretary-General to measure growth in expenditures in real terms in various parts of the programme budget. He agreed with the representative of the United Kingdom that the Secretary-General's methodology was seriously misleading because it conjured out of sight a substantial amount of real growth which ought to be revealed to the Fifth Committee. His delegation was grateful to the Advisory Committee for the thorough discussion of that topic contained in paragraphs 13 to 21 of its report, and supported those delegations which had expressed a preference for methodology B, explained in

paragraph 18. That approach, by taking into account the delayed recruitment deduction factor in both biennia, most accurately identified the growth in expenditures expressed in real terms between one budget biennium and the next. More fundamentally, it also had the elementary virtue of comparing like with like.

47. On the question of how the agreed growth in programme activities should be financed, he recalled that the Advisory Committee had pointed out in paragraph 12 of its report, that the computation, at 1975 rates, of the cost of maintenance in 1976-1977 of the 1974-1975 programmes was the foundation of the whole budget exercise. The Advisory Committee had again called into question the basic approach used in constructing the estimates for the forthcoming period. In his opening statement (A/C.5/1686) the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had pointed out that the Secretary-General's approach was based upon the concept that, in building the programme expenditures for the next biennium, a first step was to establish the resources required to maintain at rates prevailing at the moment of estimation the level of activities currently in operation. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee had added that while that incremental approach was conceptually simple and perhaps politically much more defensible, it nevertheless tended to discourage any meaningful inquiry into the utility, productivity and performance of ongoing activities. A number of delegations had commented upon that particular issue. There was no disagreement that older activities of lesser relevance should be terminated and replaced, wherever possible, by activities of current interest and greater priority. The question was to determine by what institutional means the Secretary-General could be encouraged to intensify his efforts to weed out obsolete activities in the Secretariat. In his intervention at the 1704th meeting, the representative of the USSR had cogently reminded the Fifth Committee of General Assembly resolution 2150 (XXI), approving the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies. Included in their recommendations[3] was one directing that unavoidable increases of expenditures caused by price increases and other reasons should be, as far as possible, absorbed through savings, reassessment of programme priorities, redistribution of resources and internal budgetary adjustments. As the Austrian delegation had observed at the 1707th meeting, there were limits to that process, though there seemed to be general agreement in the Advisory Committee and among delegations in the Fifth Committee that more could and should be done. As the Advisory Committee had pointed out in paragraph 34 of its report, it was in the interest of all Member States that the resources of the Organization should be used as effectively and economically as possible.

48. With regard to institutional changes which could encourage the Secretary-General to carry out a more rigorous assessment of programme priorities, there were strong arguments in favour of adopting semi-full budgeting. The Advisory Committee had pointed out in paragraph 32 of its report that much of the increase built into the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 resulted from the application of the policy of full budgeting, which consisted in anticipating the impact of factors such as inflation, instead of reacting to them *ex post facto* through the submission of supplementary estimates. In view of the cash-flow situation of the United Nations, his delegation did not advocate that the Secretary-General should make no allowance at all for the effects of inflation and currency instability in the forthcoming biennium. However, there were serious drawbacks to the policy of allowing for such factors in both years of the biennium. One of the drawbacks of the full budgeting approach was that the estimates of inflation and currency movements became more and more uncertain. Any errors in the analysis for the first year of the biennium were compounded in the second year.

49. His delegation did not advocate the introduction of semi-full budgeting simply for the sake of reducing the estimates of expenditure, but also because it was a good means of encouraging restraint and the austere management of scarce resources on the part of the Secretariat, provided of course that supplementary estimates requests were subject to close scrutiny. Other delegations had expressed views, and in some cases reservations, regarding the application of full budgeting in the United Nations system. Some felt that no account should be taken of the effects of inflation, while others believed that efforts should be made, using the most precise analytical means available, to predict and make allowance for the full effect of inflationary and currency movements over the full period of the biennium. Semi-full budgeting might therefore be described as a half-way house between those two extremes.

50. The topic of semi-full budgeting was naturally linked to the question of the submission of supplementary estimates. The latter were an unavoidable phenomenon, whether budgeting was full or semi-full. The important point was that the supplementary estimates, no less than the regular budget estimates, must be submitted in sufficient time to allow Governments to give them reasonable consideration. At the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the progress report of the Secretary-General on the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975,[4] which had contained, *inter alia*, a presentation of the supplementary estimates, had not been made available to delegations until the week before the end of the session, and the corresponding report of the Advisory Committee[5] had not been circulated to delegations until the day before the session was adjourned. With that experience in mind, his delegation noted with concern the statement in paragraph 3 of the current report of the Advisory Committee to the effect that the Committee's task had been considerably hampered by the late submission of the proposed programme budget which had become available in its entirety only towards the very end of the Committee's session. His delegation appreciated the constraints under which the Secretariat was operating, but felt nevertheless that greater efforts must be made to circulate documentation central to the consideration of regular and supplementary budget estimates at an earlier stage.

3 *Ibid., Twenty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 80, document A/6343, para. 40.

4 *Ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 6.*

5 *Ibid., Supplement No. 8*, document A/9608/Add.16

51. He then read out a working paper which his delegation intended to submit to the Committee and which would be circulated later.[6]

52. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that he would confine himself to replying to comments made in the general discussion on general issues and would submit a paper[7] shortly containing answers to the more detailed questions.

53. In view of the constraints imposed on the Secretariat by the need to reconcile theoretical concepts with the practical needs prescribed by the nature of the Organization, to express reservations in respect of some of the criticisms made by delegations was not to reject their validity but to engage in a candid exchange of views on the realities of the Organization's life.

54. The fact that the budget proposals were discussed together with the medium-term plan raised at the very outset the question of how the two documents should be seen in relation to each other. To date no consensus had been reached on the purpose to be served by the medium-term plan, as distinct from the role to be played by the programme budget: that was not surprising, since the selection of programme targets was a question of choices and political evaluation. The medium-term plan could be viewed as a document fixing the over-all objectives—in which case it would be for the budget to choose one possible action proposed to achieve those objectives and to provide the necessary resources—or it could be seen as an addition to the budget period under consideration, in which case it would be more of an outline of budget prospects beyond the current budget period. The difficulty of specifying objectives, which had been the subject of much discussion in the Committee, could be illustrated by attempting to describe, say, conference activities in terms of objectives. One had to decide whether the measurement should be the number of meetings, the volume of documentation prepared or the overriding substantive objective involved, such as the attainment of international agreement on the issues dealt with at those meetings. While the last approach was a vague one, it reflected the basic idea of the formulation of objectives in the context of medium-term planning. In addition to the difficulty of delineating the objective itself, many of the basic goals of the Organization lent themselves only to a very limited degree to being framed in terms of programme objectives. For instance, it was difficult to define in terms of medium-term planning the steps to be taken to maintain peace and security. That difficulty had led to some departures from the ideal of formulating objectives in all cases.

55. To fix priorities was the essential task of the medium-term plan. However, in the context of the pattern of activities of the Organization, establishing priorities presented great difficulties. Moreover, in view of the substantive choices involved, the final answer could be given only by the governing bodies. For that reason the Secretariat had taken note with particular interest of the Economic and Social Council's reactions to the document before the Committee. However, further clarification was needed in order to arrive at a firm basis for the medium-term plan.

56. Further uncertainty was created by the fact that it was not yet known to what extent the governing bodies considered a medium-term plan, once approved, as binding, and by the fact that the Organization's over-all plans had to be reconciled with those formulated at the regional level. The latter might have definite justification in themselves but, when considered within the framework of the over-all programming of the Organization, they might receive a quite different rating. Desirable as the decentralization of planning responsibility might be, it could not be dissociated from the over-all responsibility of planning for the Organization as a whole.

57. As many delegations had pointed out, programme evaluation was an essential aspect of programme planning. In order to reap all the benefits of programming, a common understanding had to be reached on the methodology for a continuing evaluation of programme results. Continuing evaluation was equally essential in the case of the budget. In that connexion, he fully agreed with the Advisory Committee's comment that one of the most important tasks before the Secretariat was to base its programme evaluation in firm methodologies and to develop meaningful criteria for substantive judgement. If the medium-term plan was to serve the function originally envisaged for it, it had to serve as a guideline for budgeting. Accordingly, he was pleased to note the support expressed for the recommendation of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery that the plan and the budget should be prepared and considered in alternate years.

58. On the subject of budget presentation, he said that the central question was how to justify the additional requirements that had been anticipated. In order to facilitate a realistic evaluation, the Secretariat had tried to differentiate between the elements of maintenance, growth and inflation. As to the growth element, the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008 and Corr.2) pointed out that programme increases should normally follow rather than precede action by the legislative organs, and some representatives had maintained that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 had been drawn up in violation of the rules relating to budget preparation. The Secretary-General fully realized that his budget submission could not propose any new programme which had not been endorsed first by the legislative organs involved; on the other hand, he had been guided by the legal authorization in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 3199 (XXVIII), which requested the Secretary-General "to ensure that there is a meaningful element of real growth in important programmes". Besides, it should be borne in mind that programme implementation could not be divorced from programme development, and that it was not only impracticable but often a waste of resources to give a programme its full financial weight at the time it was first decided upon. Financing had to reflect the basic experience that most programmes grew as they developed, without, of course, changing their character. Consequently, to deny the Secretary-General the right to request additional capacity for that purpose would merely jeopardize proper programme implementation and, since the whole field of common

6 Subsequently circulated as conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.3.

7 *Idem.*, A/C.5/XXX/CRP.4.

services constituted support for the substantive programme, the Secretary-General should have the authority periodically to reassess real needs in those fields as well.

59. In view of the manner in which the budget was administered, the presentation was a sound compromise between pure programme presentation and a breakdown reflecting the functional structure of the Organization. Accordingly the requirements of central management and conference services continued to be in separate sections, even though, in terms of pure programming, the costs should have been incorporated in the estimates for substantive programmes. However, in order to show the impact of such a concept, the cost of common services had been apportioned to programmes for information purposes in annex VI to the foreword of the budget document. Although, at first glance, the figure of 35.7 per cent of expenditure attributable to common services might seem high, it should be borne in mind that the services involved constituted support for substantive programmes. In fact, the small increase in requirements for those services was attributable to conference services resulting from the need to service additional meetings in response to the programmes adopted by the governing bodies.

60. The Secretariat did not believe that the budget submission was the best solution to the problem of presentation by programme; calls for improvement should, however, be backed by specific suggestions on alternatives. In that context the distinction between the so-called "incremental" and "zero-base" approaches to budgeting had been emphasized. The incremental approach, as explained by certain delegations, implied that the existing budget was taken as an unquestioned starting-point, thereby limiting decision as to what should be added in the new budget. Understood in that sense, the Secretary-General had not applied the incremental approach. He could not, however, follow the zero-base approach, which would have meant completely re-examining and justifying all requirements from scratch, for in the real world such an approach was simply impossible, as the Joint Inspection Unit had pointed out in its report on medium-term planning in the United Nations system (see A/9646). While the Secretariat did not claim that the best balance had been achieved between the two methods of budgeting, it had not confined itself to an examination of additional requirements, on the assumption that the pattern of expenditure in respect of existing programmes was unalterable. It might, indeed, be true that not enough emphasis had been given to re-examining existing programmes, partly because the machinery to cope with the task of final evaluation of completed programmes was not yet available. Constructive proposals on the subject were most welcome, however, and every effort would be made to improve the situation.

61. Some of the difficulty in understanding the Secretariat's budget approach might be due to the size of the budget document; two thirds of the documentation consisted of tables and charts which had been requested by the Committee itself during its discussion of the previous budget. While the cost of preparing, as had been suggested, two budget documents, one containing the full budget, the other a summarized version, would be prohibitive, it might be possible to incorporate the main figures and explanatory narrative in a "central" document, with all charts and detailed information being placed in the annexes.

62. Referring to the comment made at the 1704th meeting by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the effect that, while the increase in the national income of most Member States had not exceeded 5 to 6 per cent annually, the United Nations budget had risen by almost 30 per cent, he pointed out that the comparison was not a valid one. The magnitude of 30 per cent, if actually reached, would reflect, not real growth, but growth in current money terms; moreover, it would relate to a biennium. In fact, the real growth as reflected in the initial estimates–assuming the Advisory Committee's figure of 6.2 per cent for the biennium, or approximately 3.1 per cent annually–compared with increases forecast for 1976 in gross domestic product, in terms of constant prices, ranging from 4.7 per cent for France and 5.9 per cent for the socialist countries of Eastern Europe to 6.4 per cent for the Federal Republic of Germany. The increases forecast for 1977 were, in most cases, higher; consequently, the budget submission was fully in line with the approach taken by the delegation of the Soviet Union. Comparisons with budgets of Member States were, however, of questionable validity, since the budget of the United Nations contained relatively minor provision for operational programmes and investments. That was characteristic of a servicing organization and accounted for the fact that approximately 75 per cent of expenditures was for salaries and common staff costs.

63. Understandably, in any evaluation of United Nations programmes, particular attention was given to the expenditure for personnel. The proposed increases in the manning table had been made following careful examination, as a result of which the initial estimates had been substantially revised. Moreover, 100 of the 826 additional established posts related to Arabic language staff currently financed under trust fund arrangements, and 275 were posts currently occupied on a temporary assistance basis, so that the real addition would amount to only 451 posts. With regard to the proposed conversion of 275 temporary assistance posts to established posts, he pointed out that only 29 were in the Professional category; 18 of those Professional posts and 41 of the General Service posts related to Geneva where, in view of the fact that there was a more continuous pattern of activities throughout the year, it seemed reasonable to propose converting to established posts staff previously employed on a short-term basis. Another 69 General Service posts also related to the Geneva Office for which a lump sum had been included in the current biennium for engaging personnel to operate and maintain the recently completed extension to the Palais des Nations. When sufficient time had elapsed to make it possible to determine the exact number of staff permanently required for that purpose, it would seem proper to convert those posts, too, to established posts. A further group of posts related to ECA and again involved posts which experience had proved needed to be filled on a full-time basis.

64. He agreed that extreme restraint should be observed in respect of proposed reclassification of posts and that that procedure should not be used merely for purposes of promotion. However, the number of proposed reclassifications for the forthcoming biennium was considerably less than that for the biennium 1974-1975. With regard to the Advisory Committee's comments on "grade creep", he said that, if he had understood them correctly, there appeared

to be no strong objection to the small number of reclassifications proposed in the lower grades. Indeed, the needs of proper management and career planning of staff in those grades required an element of flexibility which should, of course, be exercised with restraint; at the same time, the harm resulting from undue rigidity might in the end outweigh any monetary gains.

65. Strict standards had to be applied also in respect of reclassifications at the higher grades, but it should be remembered that the requirements imposed on the Secretariat by the governing bodies necessitated the recruitment of highly qualified specialists and that the Organization was competing with well-paying private and public institutions. Since the International Civil Service Commission would not be able to make any recommendations on the matter in the near future, it would be appreciated if the Committee would express its confidence in the Controller by not ruling out entirely the possibility of reclassification, on the understanding that restraint would continue to be applied.

66. On the subject of the criticisms concerning the deployment of personnel, he said that the problem did not lend itself to easy solution, since a staff member was seldom engaged solely in one activity and could, on its completion, be reassigned immediately to another area. It was impossible that maximum effectiveness had not been achieved in the utilization of the Organization's resources. Indeed, that objective continued to be given high priority by the Secretary-General and those of his staff who were concerned with administration and management. Every effort would be made to achieve optimum utilization of resources.

67. Referring to the comment made by the representative of France at the 1703rd meeting that expenditures during the biennium did not normally occur in equal parts in the first and second years, whereas contributions were assessed in equal shares, he said that to link contributions to the actual volume of expenditure in each of the two years would vitiate the essential concept of the biennial programme budget. Moreover, practice had been followed in the first programme budget document and had been disapproved of by the Advisory Committee. Of course, careful calculations still had to be made to ascertain the flow of actual expenditures in the two years in order to determine the effects of inflation as precisely as possible. Naturally, the 10.9 per cent increase in the budget estimates attributable to inflation could not but be viewed with concern, and although every effort would be made to absorb additional expenditures due to inflation, there were limits to what could be done. The Organization could not be expected to perform increasingly important tasks and accept new responsibilities without the necessary financial support or without some allowance for the effects of inflation. Given that the concept of programme budgeting had been accepted, it had to be recognized that the consequence of a refusal to provide resources to cope with inflated prices would be a reduction in the effective performance of programmes; by so acting, governing bodies would be contradicting the decisions they had already taken.

68. Several delegations had asked whether there would be some merit in having the impact of inflation for the second year removed from the estimates and made subject to a later decision. He was apprehensive about the consequences of such a procedure. After achieving the benefit of full-scale budget discussions at two-year intervals, the Committee would again be faced with budgetary discussions every year. While that did not seem too much of a problem at first glance, in practice it would mean reverting to annual calculations and isolating what had been spent in the first year from the requirements of the second year in order to justify the additional resources needed to offset the impact of inflation in the second year. While he fully agreed that there had to be strict control to ensure that no unjustified use was made of resources originally designed to offset the impact of inflation, that control was already assured by the Organization's internal procedures and by the Secretariat's obligation to provide performance reports containing detailed information on the pattern of expenditure and the impact of inflation on actual spending.

69. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) replied to the Controller, who had questioned the soundness of the approach taken by the Soviet delegation when, in criticizing the high rate of growth of the United Nations budget, it had made reference to the fact that the gross national product, expressed in terms of constant prices, grew at a rate several times lower. He emphasized that his delegation had wished to point out that, since Member States paid their contributions to the United Nations budget on the basis of their real resources, whose volume was determined by their national income and gross national product, they could not fail tc be disturbed by the fact that the United Nations budget was growing at a rate several times higher than the rate of growth of the resources which Member States could make available to the Organization. The national product and national income of the socialist countries were produced by workers and peasants who had the right to ask why they should have to pay to compensate for the effects of an inflation in capitalist countries for which they were in no way responsible. At the same time, the Controller had tried to compare the growth of national income and of the gross national product with the "real growth" of United Nations programmes. Those elements, however, were not at all comparable. The budget of the United Nations served only to pay for administrative expenditures and the salaries of personnel. Administrative activity, as was well known, created no material product, and expenditure connected with such activity was not included in the gross national product and the national income; on the contrary, it was unproductive expenditure, covered at the expense of national income. Such a comparison was therefore erroneous and arbitrary. It was however valid to take into account the rate of growth of the national income of States, expressed in terms of constant prices, in the preparation of the United Nations budget, because that budget could not grow faster than the real resources of Member States and the proportion of those resources which they would be able to devote to the Organization.

70. The CHAIRMAN said that the three-weeks general discussion on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 and the review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets had highlighted many new issues and revived many concerns and questions with which the members of the Committee and the Organization

as a whole had been dealing for some time. The discussion had indicated that there was over-all acceptance of and satisfaction with the policy of programme budgeting in itself. Nevertheless, views had varied as to the details of its formulation and content, particularly with regard to the issues of full budgeting, programme analysis and programme growth, the establishment of priorities in formulation and content, the use of voluntary funds for programme support and the phenomenon of "grade creep."

71. A number of suggestions and proposals had been made as to how the programme budget might be better adjusted to fit the changing needs of the Organization. One of the proposals concerned the over-all elaboration of programmes as regards their content and thrust. In that connexion, it seemed that most Members favoured a greater role for CPC in interpreting, formulating and co-ordinating programmes. It had even been suggested that the role of the CPC in respect of programmes should be similar to that of the Advisory Committee in respect of budget examination. Most Members had recognized the necessity of giving greater perspective to programme budgeting. There also seemed to be unanimous support for a staggered time-table whereby the medium-term plan and the programme budget would be considered in alternate years, an idea which had been incorporated into draft resolution A/C.5/L.1227.

72. With regard to the proposed programme budget, there were three main areas of attention. The first was measurement of programme growth. There seemed to be some dissatisfaction with the methodology used by the Secretary-General in evaluating real growth, and many representatives seemed to have preferred the alternative methodology proposed by the Advisory Committee which sought to identify the amount of growth and expenditure in real terms. In that connexion, the question of the desirability of target programme growth had also been raised and a proposed ceiling for over-all programme growth had been advocated.

73. The second area of attention was inflation. The majority of delegations seemed to feel that inflation had to be considered as a reality in budget formulation, although they had not given any clear indications as to how that should be done. A proposal by the Philippines delegation (A/C.5/L.1226) on that matter was before the Committee. The Secretary-General's projected inflationary component in the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 had been described as no more than a working hypothesis, and it would seem that many delegations would have preferred a more standardized mechanism, based on clearly defined criteria.

74. The third area was the utility value of existing programmes. There seemed to be general agreement that it would be advantageous to examine such programmes to determine which programmes were of only marginal utility and thus might be phased out and which others might be streamlined and redefined consistent with more up-to-date objectives. In that regard, the role of CPC might be directly relevant to the future work of the Fifth Committee.

75. In his statement to the Committee at its 1700th meeting (A/C.5/1685), the Secretary-General had referred to the question of the need to increase the Working Capital Fund of the Organization. Various delegations had expressed their views on that question and some difference of opinion had arisen. New views on that question would no doubt emerge after the Committee received the clarifications to be contained in the working paper it had requested from the Secretariat.

76. Unfortunately, owing to a lack of time, the Committee had not been able to discuss adequately the medium-term plan, the broader question of medium-term planning in the United Nations system or the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery. If, however, concrete proposals emerged out of the general discussion on the focal points he had just outlined, the medium-term plan itself would be given fuller treatment in future sessions of the Committee.

77. Having heard the statement made by the Controller, the Committee would no doubt want to give further consideration to certain questions before making other concrete proposals. He was sure the representative of the Philippines would agree to have consideration of his proposal deferred until such time as other proposals had been made, so that all interrelated proposals could be considered together.

78. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that his delegation had still not received a reply to its request for information regarding the geographical distribution of Secretariat posts occupied by nationals from developing countries.

79. The CHAIRMAN assured the representative of Iran that the Secretariat had duly taken note of his request and that the desired information would be provided shortly.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.

1713th meeting

Tuesday, 14 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1713

AGENDA ITEM 102

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions (A/10011 and Add.1 and 2)

1. Mr. Amjad ALI (Chairman of the Committee on Contributions) introduced the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/10011), together with two addenda to the report: the first (A/10011/Add.1) listed assessed and voluntary contributions paid by Member and non-member States to the United Nations, the specialized agencies and IAEA in 1973 and 1974; the second (A/10011/Add.2) indicated that the Member States enumerated in paragraph 48 of the report who were in arrears in the payment of their assessed contributions within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter had made payments in sufficient amounts to reduce their arrears below the prescribed limit.

2. The Committee on Contributions had proposed that for 1976 the rates of assessment for the three new Members –Bangladesh, Grenada and Guinea-Bissau–should be added to the 100 per cent scale for the triennium 1974, 1975 and 1976, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 3062 (XXVIII). He drew attention to the special arrangements made by the General Assembly in its resolutions 3101 (XXVIII) and 3211 B (XXIX) for financing the United Nations Emergency Force and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force by apportioning costs among four groups of Member States "in the proportions determined by the scale of assessments for 1974-1976". The Committee on Contributions had recommended rates of assessment for the three new Members, but the Fifth Committee would have to recommend to which group of contributors they should be assigned before their share for financing UNEF and UNDOF could be determined.

3. Four new States, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, and Papua New Guinea, had just been admitted to membership in the United Nations, and he suggested that the Fifth Committee might wish to follow the usual procedure of referring the matter of assessments to the Committee on Contributions at its next annual session.

4. The Committee on Contributions had considered in detail the question of the desirability of establishing uniform regulations to govern contributions of States not Members of the United Nations to the expenses of activities, including conferences, in which they participated. Under regulation 5.9 of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations, contributions to the expenses of such activities were required from non-members of the United Nations only when they became parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice or to treaty bodies financed from United Nations appropriations. However, in the case of UNCTAD, participating non-members were assessed under the General Assembly resolution establishing it and in the case of UNIDO participating non-members were assessed under subsequent resolutions. The Economic and Social Council had not consistently imposed the payment of contributions as a condition of membership in the regional commissions of non-members of the United Nations; and convening organs had not obliged non-member States to contribute towards the cost of conferences in which they participated. The procedures governing non-member States' contributions had evolved somewhat haphazardly over the years. The Committee on Contributions, believing that financial responsibility was implicit in participation, had recommended in draft resolution B, submitted in paragraph 53 of its report, that regulation 5.9 of the Financial Regulations should be amended.

5. At the request of the Fifth Committee, the Committee on Contributions had reviewed various matters relating to the scales of assessment of the specialized agencies, including the extent to which agencies had taken action to harmonize their scales with that of the United Nations. The Committee's findings were contained in chapter VI of its report.

6. The Committee had also conducted a preliminary examination of certain matters bearing upon Members' capacity to pay, including the problem of differential price changes in relation to exchange rates, with a view to formulating recommendations for a new scale of assessments the following year; although not all data had been available, it was clear that changes in the world economy meant that steep increases in individual rates of assessment would be unavoidable.

7. He drew attention to paragraph 50 of the report, in which the Committee reaffirmed its recommendation that Member States arrange for the payment of their assessed contributions, including arrears, as early as possible. He hoped that a real effort would be made to respond to the Secretary-General's appeal to Member States to advance the date of payment of their contributions.

8. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should defer consideration of the item until a later meeting.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 97

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1700th meeting; A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1)

9. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the documents relating specifically to the item on programme

and budget machinery, although the question had been dealt with by many representatives during the general discussion on agenda items 96 and 97 together. The Committee had before it the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) and also a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1) submitted by nine countries.

10. Mr. SETHI (Chairman of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery), introducing the report (A/10117 and Corr.1), recalled that the Working Group had been established by the General Assembly on 18 December 1974. Two years had passed since the Assembly in its resolution 3199 (XXVIII), had recognized the need for reform of the programme and budget machinery. The Working Group had recommended, on the basis of consensus, measures to remedy the short-comings that had been noted already in 1973.

11. In general, it had tried to define more clearly the responsibilities of the various intergovernmental organs involved and of the Secretariat, so as to ensure that the necessary decisions at the various levels were taken at the proper time and in the right order; it had called for a review of the effectiveness of programmes with a view to determining priorities; and it had recommended the preservation of whatever worked well in the existing system. The Working Group had concluded that there were too many, rather than too few, organs involved in the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets, and that the problem resided not so much in the inadequacy of their terms of reference as in the irrationality of schedules and a certain failure to relate means to tasks. The Secretariat had prepared model time-tables annexed to the report of the Working Group showing how the time between the two consecutive financial periods could be used to facilitate the work of the Secretariat and to enable the competent organs to play their role fully.

12. The Group had proposed that the medium-term plan and the budget should be considered in alternate years, an idea widely supported in the Fifth Committee. Since many technical or regional intergovernmental organs prepared and considered programmes and to a certain extent supervised their implementation, the Group felt that the consideration and evaluation of programmes at the central level could remain the responsibility of the competent central co-ordinating body, namely the Economic and Social Council and its Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. The Group thus recommended that the repeated requests of CPC for the necessary time and money to carry out its mandate should be acceded to. Moreover, to enable CPC to fulfil its tasks, its mandate should be expanded and it should become a subsidiary body of the General Assembly as well as of the Economic and Social Council; that reform would not give rise to any legal or constitutional problem.

13. The Group had made some recommendations concerning the regional commissions, UNCTAD and UNIDO, and others concerning the methods and organization of work of the Secretariat and the competent intergovernmental organs dealing with programmes. The proposed reforms were not very ambitious as the Working Group had recommended only the minimum changes necessary for a rational, harmonious and effective operation of the programme and budget machinery.

14. On some topics the Working Group had not been able to reach a consensus. The first was the question of the payment of travel costs and subsistence allowances for members of CPC, as was done for members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Some members felt such a step was necessary to ensure equitable geographical representation within CPC. A second question on which agreement had not been reached concerned the role and future of the Advisory Committee; that question had been considered from the point of view of the scope of the Advisory Committee's competence, particularly regarding programmes, and also from the point of view of the number and geographical composition of its membership; the discussion on that question was reflected in paragraphs 61 and 62 of the Working Group's report.

15. He would have liked to propose that the Committee should endorse the Working Group's recommendations and transmit them to the General Assembly for adoption. However, a report on the structure of the United Nations system did exist, and the General Assembly had just established an *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. It had been said that the General Assembly would not wish to take a decision on the Working Group's report before having before it the conclusions of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, and that consequently the Working Group's conclusions should be referred to the *Ad Hoc* Committee. Yet, whatever the future structure of the system, United Nations programmes would always have to be given in-depth examination by a competent organ which, he suggested, should be CPC. In that respect, the views of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the future of the Economic and Social Council and CPC coincided with the views of the Working Group. The advantages of considering the plan and the budget in alternate years would also remain, regardless of the structure. Moreover, the *Ad Hoc* Committee might, like the Working Group. conclude that the current structures could operate satisfactorily if adapted to objectives and circumstances. There was also the danger that the recommendations might be referred from Committee to Committee without being implemented, as had happened in the past to similar proposals. A more valid reason for delay in approving the recommendations was that, in addition to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council was involved through its subsidiary organ, CPC. Accordingly, the Fifth Committee could probably not simply recommend immediate adoption of the recommendations by the General Assembly.

16. Yet the debate in the Committee had shown that members appreciated the advantages of considering the plan and the budget in alternate years, and that they would like to have information about programmes in addition to the administrative and financial information the Advisory Committee provided. Some members had regretted the absence of any evaluation of programmes; the Working Group had concluded that Secretariat efforts at evaluation should be directed by an intergovernmental organ, which could be none other than CPC.

17. In conclusion, the Working Group recommended, with a view to securing further improvements in planning, programming and evaluation, that the budget and the plan

should be considered in alternate years; that for the year 1976 a revised version of the current plan with preliminary data on the biennium 1980-1981 would be sufficient; and that the next complete planning exercise should be ready for submission to the General Assembly in the autumn of 1978. The Group also strongly recommended that the Economic and Social Council should extend the forthcoming session of CPC in the spring of 1976 to a period of four weeks.

18. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) introduced the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1) and announced that Brazil had decided to become a co-sponsor. It had been discussed widely and account had been taken of the many suggestions made. It dealt with three very closely related questions, namely the medium term plan, the timing and methodology of future plans, and the report of the Working Group. He expressed appreciation to the Working Group for the many useful and workable solutions it had proposed.

19. By section I of the draft decision the General Assembly would take note of the medium-term plan which was the basis for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, endorse the suggestion for consideration of the plan and the budget in alternate years, and request the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-first session a medium-term plan for the period 1978-1981.

20. Referring to section II, he said that attention had been paid to the methodology aspect of the medium-term plan. Due account had been taken of the reservations expressed by some representatives on that question. For that reason, it had been considered advisable to endorse for the moment only the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10081). It was regretted that the methodology aspects of the medium-term plan and the report of the Advisory Committee could not be discussed in greater detail.

21. With regard to section III, he drew attention to minor grammatical changes to be made in paragraph 7 of the English text. There had been wide agreement on the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group. Since planning was closely related to structure, a final decision could not be recommended before the results of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System were available. Furthermore, since CPC was a subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council, it was for the Council to make final recommendations to the General Assembly. Those were the reasons for the middle-of-the-road approach in paragraph 7. The object was to set in motion the machinery for 1976, by which time CPC would be required to start examining the new medium-term plan. That Committee should be strengthened as much as possible in order to make its practical work more effective. Larger structural changes would have to await the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors.

22. The CHAIRMAN said that, in view of the importance of the proposals just made by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, it would be advisable for the Committee to adopt them as a draft resolution, rather than as a draft decision. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that change.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1705th meeting; A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1688, A/C.5/L.1226)

23. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the Arabic version of the first report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008 and Corr.2), noted that the Arabic Service was finding it difficult to provide prompt translations of all the relevant documents. He appealed to Arabic-speaking representatives for their continued understanding.

24. Referring to a proposal made by the representative of New Zealand relating to the second report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies,[1] he wondered if that representative would clarify his proposal.

25. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said he considered paragraphs 34 to 51 of the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee extremely valuable and relevant to the work of the Fifth Committee and suggested that, since the report had been issued in 1966 and was not easily obtainable, those paragraphs should be reproduced on a single page in a working paper for the Committee's convenience.

26. Miss GARCIA DONOSO (Ecuador) and Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) supported the proposal by the representative of New Zealand.

27. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to have the relevant paragraphs reproduced as a conference room paper.

It was so decided.[2]

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)*

SECTION 13. UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME *(concluded)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

28. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation wished to withdraw the proposal it had made at the 1711th meeting to the effect that the General Assembly should freeze the regular budget component of the UNEP secretariat for the biennium 1976-1977 and the subsequent biennium 1978-1979. His delegation wished, however, to proceed with its proposal that the General Assembly should

* Resumed from 1711th meeting.

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 80, document A/6343.

2 Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/XXX/CRP.3.

invite the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to carry out, in 1976, a study of the relationship between posts in United Nations Secretariat units which were funded from extra-budgetary sources and the regular budget posts. That proposal concerned not only paragraphs 49 to 54 of the first report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008 and Corr.2), but also various paragraphs of the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1), in particular, paragraph 99, which stated that "although the United Nations legislative authority has full power of allocation of resources to programmes within the regular budget, the priorities thus set by the General Assembly may be significantly bent by decisions taken by the sponsors of extra-budgetary funds". The problem had not only budgetary significance but also programme significance, and required serious consideration by the Advisory Committee.

29. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), referring to the proposal made by the United Kingdom, asked for clarification by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on the form of the proposed study.

30. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that the problem of extra-budgetary resources had previously been considered in its various aspects. Before replying to the question, he wished to ascertain whether a similar study had not been undertaken by the Joint Inspection Unit or a similar body.

31. The CHAIRMAN said that the questions raised were important and that replies would be considered when the United Kingdom proposal was taken up.

32. He believed that, because of the reservations expressed in the report of the Advisory Committee concerning section 13, a decision by the Committee on that section might require some reflection of the Committee's position in respect of those reservations. It was perhaps accurate to say that the reservations of the Advisory Committee had been in large measure supported by a majority of speakers. The Executive Director of UNEP had given many thorough explanations on the points raised in the Committee, and he was sure that members of the Committee had taken due account of them throughout its consideration of section 13. The Committee might, none the less, wish to record its reservations in its decision on that section.

33. If the Committee so wished, it might—subject to whatever decision it might subsequently take—recommend to the General Assembly that it should: *(a)* take note of the reservations expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 13.5 and 13.7 to 13.10 of its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2); *(b)* request the Governing Council of UNEP to take account of those reservations in the administration and management of its programme; and *(c)* request the Advisory Committee to follow up the matter, as indicated in its report.

It was so decided.

34. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the total appropriations recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 13 amounted to $7,281,800 (see 1705th meeting, para. 11) and invited the Committee to vote on that recommendation.

An appropriation in the amount of $7,281,800 under section 13 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 86 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.

35. Mr. MURG (Romania) stressed the need for greater concern about the uneconomical aspects UNEP, such as excess staff and unjustified reclassifications. The concern of his delegation was shared by most other delegations. It was to be hoped that in the implementation of the budgetary provisions under section 13, the Executive Director of UNEP would take due account of the numerous recommendations made in that regard.

36. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), supported by Mr. McCARTHY (Australia), suggested that in the decision made by the Committee on section 13 the word "reservations" should be replaced by "comments and observations". Such a change would give a more accurate reflection of what had been discussed.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that change.

It was so decided.

SECTION 22. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL SERVICES *(continued)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

38. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee discuss section 22 as a whole, and then part by part. A vote would then be taken on the whole section.

It was so decided.

39. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said his first comment related to the exchange rate used in calculating the budget estimates. As stated in paragraph 27 of the foreword to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) an exchange rate of 3.10 Swiss francs to the United States dollar had been used for the 1976-1977 budget estimates. However, as indicated in paragraph 22.15 of the proposed programme budget, as well as in paragraph 22.7 of the Advisory Committee's first report (A/10008 and Corr.2), the budget estimates of the Joint Inspection Unit had been based on a rate of 2.55 Swiss francs to the United States dollar.

40. The second comment related to the rate used in estimating the cost of United Nations participation in the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems and Related Activities. As indicated in paragraph 22.60 of the proposed programme budget, as well as in paragraph 22.36 of the Advisory Committee's report, the total estimates for the Board had been calculated at a rate of 2.55 Swiss francs to the dollar.

41. Those were two exceptions to the basic rate used by the Secretariat. Yet the actual exchange rate used by the

* Resumed from the 1709th meeting.

United Nations had fallen to 2.57 Swiss francs to the dollar in May 1975, while the current figure was about 2.72. Clearly, therefore, the rate of 2.55 was too pessimistic; it should not be taken into account at the budget preparation stage. On the other hand, the basic rate of 3.10 Swiss francs to the dollar was still too optimistic, according to world monetary authorities.

42. As a matter of principle, his delegation preferred a programme budget based on a more realistic rate for each currency. The rate selected should also be applied without exception. His delegation's primary concern was that the normal rate of budget implementation should not be impeded by requests for supplementary appropriations, especially in the economic, social and humanitarian sectors, to which the developing countries attached great importance.

43. He also wished to request additional information on a number of other questions. First, he would like to know the latest developments concerning the reduction of $100,000 in common staff costs of the Joint Inspection Unit recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 22.9 of its report, an amount that corresponded to the Organization's contribution to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund for that Unit.

44. Second, he wished to query the deletion of the estimate of $141,000 for the United Nations share of the costs of the Staff Office of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions which the Advisory Committee had recommended in paragraph 22.18 of its report. It had recommended that, when submitting revised estimates for that Office to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session, the Secretary-General should indicate the work programme on which those estimates would be based, and the relationship between that programme and the work programme of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). He wished to know the current situation.

45. Third, in paragraph 22.54 of its report, the Advisory Committee had noted that, although UNDP, UNICEF and other units funded from extra-budgetary resources availed themselves of the United Nations Medical Service, they defrayed the emoluments of 2 General Service staff only, His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Secretary-General study the question in consultation with the organizations concerned and submit proposals in the context of his progress report on the programme budget.

46. Fourth, in connexion with staff training activities, his delegation shared the Advisory Committee's concern and therefore supported the recommendation that Committee had made in paragraph 22.73 of its report for a reduction of $20,000 in the amount requested. The Secretary-General should also take steps to encourage the host countries to pay all or part of the costs of conducting examinations in their countries for such training, in the form of voluntary contributions.

47. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) requested clarification of a number of questions. First, he wondered whether the substantial increase in travel costs requested under sections 22A and 22C arose from increased air fares or from increased travel.

48. Second, he wondered whether the increased estimate for the salaries in the Joint Inspection Unit was due to a salary increase. If that was so, he wondered how such increases were determined, and whether the Committee had ever been informed of the exact salary scale of the Inspectors.

49. Third, with regard to the programme of work of ICSC referred to in paragraph 22.6 of the Advisory Committee's report, it was noted that, throughout 1975, that Commission would devote its time to the United Nations salary system and the post-adjustment system. However, it should also concern itself with an equally important problem, namely, the guidelines and criteria for promotions in place of reclassifications, on which the Advisory Committee had expressed reservations. He wondered when the Commission could consider the matter.

50. Fourth, he noted from paragraph 22.18 of its report that the Advisory Committee had anticipated the submission of revised estimates for CCAQ. He believed that to be premature, since there was no indication of an increased work programme for ICSC.

51. Fifth, his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 22.21 of its report for the deletion of the estimate of $4,000 for overtime and night differential in the Administrative Management Service. He also wondered whether a progress report was expected from that Service in 1975.

52. Sixth, his delegation was handicapped in the consideration of section 22D by the absence of a progress report from the International Computing Centre, and supported the comments expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 22.34 of its report. He wondered whether the Committee could therefore be given an oral report on the Centre. He also wondered when the Committee would receive the project proposals of the specialized agencies with regard to the Common Register of Development Activities. It would be difficult to consider the estimate for the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems and Related Activities without the information requested by the Economic and Social Council in paragraph 3 of its resolution 1889 (LVII), so that the higher cost to the United Nations could be justified. Since Member States shared in the cost of the project, he supported the Advisory Committee's view that the future estimates for the Board should be reviewed by the General Assembly instead of only by ACC. He also wondered what was the basis for the Secretary-General's opinion, as reflected in paragraph 22.39 of the Advisory Committee's report, that the United Nations share in ICC would be reduced.

53. Seventh, he wished to know whether the $20,000 for work on the accounting manual had been used, and whether the new request for $23,000 was in addition to that sum. He supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 22.45 of its report to reduce the provision for consultants.

54. Eighth, he wondered what had happened to the lump-sum credit of $250,000 provided for the Office of Personnel Services in 1975, and in what context it was being re-examined in the budget for the biennium.

Ninth, his delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 22.54 of its report that the Secretary-General should submit proposals for a more equitable distribution of the related costs of the United Nations Medical Service, after consultation with other organizations utilizing its services. He wondered when the proposals would be available.

56. Tenth, with regard to the Advisory Committee's suggestion in paragraph 22.73 of its report that Member Governments should be encouraged to defray all or part of the costs of conducting examinations, his delegation wished to have clarification of the procedure to be adopted by Governments in conducting the examinations. Since the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of $20,000 on the assumption that Member States would participate in that endeavour, he wondered whether revised estimates would be submitted if the objective was not attained.

57. Eleventh, his delegation wished to know the Advisory Committee's views on the Secretary-General's estimates of real growth concerning the Office of General Services, since its views had not been included in paragraph 22.76 of its report.

58. Twelfth, he wished to have information on the number of units which would move to the UNDC building. If the cost-sharing arrangements were on a pro-rata basis, what costs would be assumed by UNDP, which would also move to the building? Maintenance costs should not be borne entirely by the United Nations budget, if the services were shared by all units.

59. Finally, his delegation supported the proposed upgrading of the New York-Geneva communications channel, provided UNDP defrayed half the costs and usage was carefully supervised. It also agreed with the Advisory Committee's recommendation for reduced appropriations for the Division of General Services, Geneva.

60. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that section 22 of the programme budget reflected even greater short-comings than those which characterized the budget estimates as a whole. He noted that the amount requested reflected a 26.4 per cent increase over the revised appropriations for 1974-1975. The growth in section 22 was therefore even higher than the average increase in the budget estimates. Under some subsections, there were unprecedented increases of over 30 per cent. The budget document had tried to attribute that to inflation and currency instability, and to the request for a large number of new posts or reclassification of posts. While his delegation welcomed the Advisory Committee's recommendation for a reduction in the posts requested, it felt that the recommended reduction was inadequate. His delegation had already pointed out that staff requirements should be determined on the basis of fully justified needs for the implementation of priority programmes, and should also be covered by a redistribution of programmes rather than an automatic increase in manning tables.

61. His delegation could not support the request for additional expenditure to cover inflation and currency instability. As suggested by many delegations, the additional costs should be absorbed by economies and by resetting of priorities and the redistribution of available resources.

62. Full assessment of the effects of inflation could be made only when the Secretariat had provided the additional information requested, namely, details of those components that had been greatly affected by inflation, those partially affected, and those not affected at all. The representatives of the Secretariat apparently found time to engage in polemics with individual delegations but had not found time to answer questions or provide the information requested. His delegation assumed that the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management would take steps to rectify that matter.

63. His delegation greatly valued the work carried out by the Secretariat, but there was still unused capacity. Consequently, it could not support the request for new posts or reclassification of posts. In general the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee were welcome, but insufficient. In the light of the foregoing considerations, his delegation would be obliged to vote against section 22 as a whole.

64. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) noted with appreciation the efforts made to streamline communications and various other services. In the rapidly developing field of technology, while hardware was becoming relatively less expensive, the costs for staff and software steadily increased. Consequently, further efforts should be made to increase efficiency and reduce costs. In that connexion, he too welcomed the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 22.34 of its report that the Secretary-General should submit, in his progress report on the programme budget, an account of developments in electronic data processing and information systems. He also noted with satisfaction the constructive approach to modernization investments expressed by the Advisory Committee in certain paragraphs of its report.

65. It was a matter of some concern that expenditure on staff training activities tended to rise at a much slower rate than did other costs under section 22. For the biennium 1976-1977 they had risen by only 6.6 per cent, compared with the average increase of 26.4 per cent. Furthermore, that small increase had been almost completely deleted in the Advisory Committee's recommendations. While he had no special proposal as to the level of expenditure for training activities, he wished to emphasize the importance of allocating the necessary resources for that important task, which was carried out either by the Secretariat itself or with the assistance of UNITAR.

66. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that section 22A of the proposed programme budget clearly indicated expenditure on Joint Inspection Unit salaries and other costs, but it was difficult to ascertain how much the incumbents were actually paid. While his delegation had the highest regard for the Inspectors, and was not requesting a reduction, it appeared that they were receiving some $53,000 per year. He was not necessarily implying that that figure was too high. It was more a question of methodology: paragraph 22.14 of the proposed programme budget indicated that ACC had decided to transmit the budgetary proposals submitted by the Unit, as received, to the General Assembly. He therefore welcomed the advice given by the

Advisory Committee, without which the Fifth Committee would receive no guidance at all. He wondered whether the fact that the proposals had been included in the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget meant that he approved them.

67. He also noted from paragraph 22.7 of the Advisory Committee's report that the estimates had been converted at a rate of 2.55 Swiss francs to the United States dollar, whereas the rate of 3.10 had been used elsewhere in the proposed programme budget. Since the exchange rate was currently 2.68 Swiss francs to the dollar, he hoped further economies could be effected.

68. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) asked for information on what direct and indirect taxes had been included in the cost of purchasing goods and equipment and of carrying out United Nations activities. He wondered to what extent taxes and duties had been paid by the United Nations, and what percentage of total expenditure they represented. He also wished to know whether the United Nations had tried to obtain exemption from such taxes and duties.

69. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) expressed great concern with regard to the inflated expenditure and manning table under section 22. The net increase over the initial appropriations for 1974-1975 represented nearly 50 per cent. The Secretary-General had requested a 10 per cent increase in established posts, namely from 1,608 to 1,771.

70. He also noted that the rate of increase in expenditure under section 22 was greater than that of the budget as a whole. It was therefore particularly important to try to effect savings under that section. While the Advisory Committee had taken the first step, it should have recommended additional reductions.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

1714th meeting

Wednesday, 15 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1714

AGENDA ITEM 102

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions *(continued)* (A/10011 and Add.1 and 2)

1. Mr. BENKHAYAL (Libyan Arab Republic), referring to chapter VII of the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/10011), entitled "Capacity to pay", requested further information concerning the economic situation which the Committee would project for 1977, and concerning the date set for the application of new criteria to the formulation of the scale of assessments.

2. His delegation had opposed the principle of capacity to pay because it was vague and had formally objected to the *per capita* income allowance formula used in assessing the contributions of Member States. As applied, those criteria failed to take into account the real situation of the developing countries, in particular the very great difficulties they experienced as a result of the inflationary pressures and price fluctuations. Libya would continue to oppose the application of those formulas until they were reshaped to take account of the difficulties in question and the resources spent on development projects in the developing countries. His delegation would have preferred a more detailed treatment in the report of the new criteria which the Committee on Contributions planned to apply; the older principles governing the scale of assessments could not be replaced by unknown factors. Libya was not seeking to evade its international obligations; it merely sought to ensure that an equitable principle was applied to those obligations.

3. His delegation wished to protest the delays in transmitting essential Fifth Committee documents to the Arabic Service for translation. Despite its best efforts—and it was to be commended for the progress it had made in translating current documentation—the Arabic Service was prevented from producing translations of certain key documents, including the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in time. The cause of the delays could be traced to poor organization of the flow of documents in the Secretariat. The competent Secretariat authorities should give priority to the transmission of documents for translation to the Arabic Service.

4. Mr. KEISHING (India) commended the Committee on Contributions on its achievements, in particular its recommendation that uniform principles should be adopted for contributions from non-member States and that contributions of developing Member States should be fixed in accordance with capacity to pay as determined by external indebtedness, low *per capita* income and problems of economic development.

5. His delegation had always been against deviations from the principle of the capacity to pay as determined by the "mix" of factors described in the report of the Committee on Contributions to the twenty-eighth session,[1] because they were arbitrary. The *per capita* ceiling, for example, constituted such an arbitrary deviation from the principle. His delegation also felt that India's assessed contribution

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 11* and corrigendum, chap. VI, sect. A.

had been only partially adjusted to its capacity to pay. The Committee on Contributions had apparently concluded that India should not receive the full benefit of a reduction in its assessed contribution. That conclusion was neither fair nor appropriate. However, his delegation had merely recorded its views and pointed out that some of the Committee's recommendations for the current triennium required more abrupt changes–something the Committee wished to avoid–than would have resulted if India's contribution had been fully adjusted.

6. Assessed contributions should correspond precisely to capacity to pay, and adjustments in those amounts should fully reflect advantages to some States and disadvantages to others created by the rapidly changing world economic situation. His delegation recognized the drawbacks in greater frequency of review of the scale of assessments and was pleased to note the intention of the Committee on Contributions, as recorded in paragraphs 45 and 46 of its report, to give further study to the low *per capita* income allowance and external indebtedness factors. It hoped that more reliable data for 1974 would become available before the next session of the Committee on Contributions.

7. In assessing the contributions of the countries defined after the sixth special session of the General Assembly as those most seriously affected by the current economic situation, full consideration should be given in particular to their reserves of foreign currency, their balance-of-payments situation and the volume of their external debt. Sufficient weight should be given to short-term or temporary circumstances, because the assessed contribution of any Member State was not such a burden on its national economy as to affect significantly its long-term productive potential or economic infrastructure. The Committee on Contributions should define as precisely as possible the factors influencing the criteria for assessing contributions; its work should not be subject to the imponderables of remote economic forecasts.

8. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that, while he agreed generally with the observations and recommendations of the Committee on Contributions, he hoped that, in its study of changing factors influencing capacity to pay, it would take into account the enormous effort of the developing countries to build up the infrastructure of their economies. Regardless of the rises in income, those countries still had a long way to go before those economies could be comparable to those of the highly developed nations.

9. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), referring to paragraph 17 of the report of the Committee on Contributions, said that he would welcome clarification on the relationship between non-member States and the United Nations and the scale of assessments governing their contributions.

10. Turning to paragraphs 43 and 44 of the report, he chided the Committee on Contributions for failing to explain the impact of inflation and currency fluctuations on the capacity to pay of the developing countries and for merely implying that those factors would reduce the capacity to pay of the major contributors.

11. He drew attention to the tendency to exaggerate the situation created by the surplus assets being accumulated by the oil-exporting countries and to use it as an argument to divide the developing countries and provide an excuse to the developed countries for evading their responsibility and for lacking the political will to promote balanced international economic co-operation. In reality, the developing countries were the main victims of the economic crisis in the developed world. The Committee on Contributions should not be deflected by conjunctural factors, particularly when it considered the criteria for the scale of assessments in 1976. It should take into account the tremendous adverse effects of the inflationary price spiral on the primary commodities of the third world countries, which had led to the deterioration in their terms of trade and seriously compromised their capacity to pay. That reality should also influence its thinking on any revision of the low *per capita* income allowance formula. It should establish an equitable scale of assessments which would enable all Member States to participate effectively and realistically in the common effort towards international economic co-operation.

12. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina), referring to paragraphs 43 and 44 of the report of the Committee on Contributions, said that the developing countries suffered most from the unprecedented changes in the world economy: their average real income had in no way increased and there was little prospect that the situation would improve. The impact of the recession on the developing countries was borne out by the *Annual Report 1975* of the World Bank,[2] which noted that one of the significant effects of the deceleration of industrial development and anti-inflation measures had been the general reduction in the prices of the primary commodities supplied by those countries. On the other hand, the prices of manufactured goods, which constituted more than two thirds of their total imports, had continued to rise. Most of them had experienced a deterioration in the terms of trade, and the purchasing power of their primary commodity exports was expected to decline by about 13 per cent in 1975. The Latin American countries had been among the hardest hit by the deceleration of the world economy. The World Bank estimated that their exports of manufactured goods could decline by some $1,000 million in 1975.

13. The developing world was attempting to reverse that alarming situation by instituting the new international economic order. The situation should be reflected in the evaluation of the capacity to pay, which was the only valid and appropriate criterion for assessing Member States' contributions. In that connexion, his delegation strongly supported the request made for up-to-date information on external public debt, and formally requested the Committee on Contributions, in considering the new scale of assessments, to bear in mind that the yardstick for measuring *per capita* income should not be regarded as immutable, particularly in view of the sharp decline in the real value of the United States dollar.

14. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that *per capita* income was an elusive factor that often camouflaged the real economic situation and, in the absence of a detailed economic analysis of the actual conditions prevailing in the

2 Circulated under cover of document E/5751, of 15 October 1975.

oil-producing and other developing countries, was not a good yardstick for measuring their capacity to pay. The productivity of the oil-producing countries was a controversial element and because a country had acquired surplus assets from oil it should not be expected to contribute more to international agencies. The oil-producing countries had already committed very large sums to financial and economic aid to the developing world; indeed, some were running short of resources for such assistance. For all those reasons, his delegation would urge the Committee on Contributions to reconsider the use of *per capita* income as a criterion for assessing contributions; it should base its evaluation of capacity to pay on the whole range of factors which went to make up that capacity.

15. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) requested the Committee on Contributions, in its general review of the scale of assessments in 1976, to give thought to the possibility of changing the duration of the scale. The current system of basing assessments on data for a triennium was more appropriate when the Organization had an annual budget cycle. With the current biennial budget, Member States would pay contributions for the first year of the next biennium according to the current scale of assessments and for the second year, according to the new scale. It might be useful and was certainly more logical to synchronize the duration of the scale with the budget cycle and either draw up a scale for each biennium or for a four-year period, i.e. two biennia.

16. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh), referring to paragraph 5 of the report of the Committee on Contributions, observed that a 0.08 per cent rate of assessment had been recommended for Bangladesh for the years 1974, 1975 and 1976. Prior to 17 September 1974, Bangladesh had paid an assessed contribution of 0.10 per cent for its participation in the activities of other United Nations organizations of which it was a member. Representations had been made to the Committee on Contributions requesting a downward revision of the assessment for Bangladesh for the following reasons.

17. First of all, the economic indicators and data required to calculate the national income for Bangladesh for 1971 had not been available because of the conflict prevailing at the time, and the United Nations had arrived at a figure for the national income by extrapolation. Consequently, the average *per capita* income for 1969-1971 had been estimated by the United Nations at $110, although the World Bank had estimated it at $70, and a high-level United Nations consultants' group in 1972 had reported that real *per capita* income had remained almost static at about $60 or $70 per annum for the past decade.

18. There had been little increase in economic production during 1972 as the Government of Bangladesh had been concerned mainly with post-war relief and rehabilitation; the magnitude of the task could be seen from the fact that the United Nations had had to mount the biggest relief operation of its history in Bangladesh.

19. His delegation maintained that since the *per capita* income in Bangladesh was among the lowest in the world, it should be assessed in accordance with the criteria in General Assembly resolution 2961 D (XXVII) at 0.02 per cent. In keeping with other Assembly resolutions, due attention should be given to the heavy losses suffered as a result of natural disasters: in 1970 Bangladesh had suffered a major cyclonic storm and tidal wave and in 1974 had experienced the worst flood in living memory, which had submerged one third of the total land surface.

20. Bangladesh also fell within the category of States identified as the most seriously affected by the current global economic crisis. The cumulative impact of the world energy and food crises and inflation in the prices of essential imports had exacerbated the increasingly adverse terms of trade; in that connexion, he referred to the minimal price increase for the two main export items of Bangladesh, jute and tea, compared with price increases for other commodities. The balance-of-payments deficit was expected to rise to $1,200 million for 1975-1976.

21. In view of the foregoing, the Committee on Contributions had lowered the rate of assessment for Bangladesh to 0.08 per cent. That figure, however, was still too high in the view of his Government. The estimated population of Bangladesh in 1970, according to the United Nations, was about 60 million, while according to the World Bank it was about 70 million; that affected the calculation of the *per capita* income, one of the factors used in determining the rate of assessment. The World Bank had estimated the *per capita* income in 1972-1973 at below $60.

22. Another factor was that the total export earnings had dropped from $515 million in 1969-1970 to $385 million in 1972-1973.

23. On the basis of the World Bank's assessment of the economic situation in Bangladesh, the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1976 (LIX) of 30 July 1975, had decided to include Bangladesh in the list of the least developed countries. All other least developed countries paid the minimum assessment of 0.02 per cent. It seemed that the World Bank's findings proved that the estimates used in establishing the original assessment of 0.10 per cent had been too optimistic. Moreover, the Committee on Contributions did not seem to have made any allowance for the damage due to natural disaster or for war destruction. He felt that the assessment for Bangladesh should have been more in line with the assessment for the other least developed countries and those most seriously affected by the current economic situation.

24. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) said that his delegation, while regretting the stress placed on the principle of *per capita* income as a basis for the scale of assessments, would vote in favour of the proposed scale.

25. At its twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 3228 (XXIX) by which it abolished the principle of the *per capita* income ceiling–a principle that had been used since the founding of the United Nations–as a basis for formulating and establishing the scale of assessment. The resolution had called for a new formula, the formula of the capacity to pay, to replace the principle of the *per capita* ceiling. The details of the new formula were unknown, however, and there was, regrettably, no detailed reference to it in the report of the Committee on Contributions. Yet that Committee should focus its atten-

tion on the new scale of assessments for Member States which would be applied during the coming biennium. The *per capita* income should not be the basis for the scale of assessments as it was not the determining factor in the economy of a country; other factors should be taken into consideration, such as technology, industry, infrastructure, agriculture, literacy and the supply of specialists and skilled and semi-skilled workers.

26. Kuwait was a developing country which depended on one non-renewable mineral commodity as its finite source of income. The *per capita* income figures did not reflect the economic structure of the country. Kuwait was certainly able to pay a larger contribution at the current stage, but whether it would continue to be able to do so would be determined largely by factors beyond its control.

27. In conclusion, he stressed that the Committee on Contributions should take account of other factors in conjunction with the *per capita* income figure in determining the scale of assessments.

28. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), referring to paragraph 17 of the report of the Committee on Contributions, asked whether the proposed amendment to regulation 5.9 of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations meant that States which were not Members of the Organization but which participated in certain organs or conferences would contribute to the expenses of those conferences or organs only in so far as they were financed from the United Nations regular budget; and that they would not contribute to expenses covered by voluntary contributions.

29. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) expressed concern over the use of the *per capita* income criterion in determining the capacity to pay of Member States. The *per capita* income did not really reflect the economic or financial structure of a country. His country, for example, had considerable income because of one non-renewable commodity, but it was still a developing country from the point of view of other indicators. He hoped that the Committee on Contributions would take account of the structure of the economy of a country as a whole in determining the scale of assessments.

30. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan), recalling with satisfaction the recommendation made in 1974 by the Committee on Contributions concerning the abolition of the *per capita* ceiling rule, said that he was also prepared to accept the observations and recommendations of that Committee in the report under review. He accepted its recommendations on the assessment of new Members, on the need for uniform regulations to govern contributions of States not Members of the United Nations, on the assessment of non-member States and on the collection of contributions. He noted with satisfaction that most specialized agencies had now taken steps to harmonize their scales of assessment with that of the United Nations. He supported the proposed amendment of regulation 5.9 of the Financial Regulations, considering it only fair that non-members of the United Nations should pay their share of the expenses of organs and conferences financed from United Nations appropriations, it being the prerogative of the General Assembly to exempt certain States or bodies from such contributions. On the question of the impact of price changes and exchange rates on the capacity to pay, he agreed that the statistics before the Committee on Contributions had been insufficient and supported the idea that the question should be thoroughly examined in 1976.

31. In paragraph 44 of its report, the Committee had indicated that steep increases would be called for in individual rates of assessment in the next scale. That was a highly sensitive issue. Major economic changes had taken place in the world which could be said to signify a shift in the balance of world economic power, and as a result, certain Governments had acquired an increased capacity to contribute to the United Nations budget. Those Governments had not hesitated to use their new-found economic power on enlightened programmes of international economic assistance to other developing countries and in many cases had provided 10 to 20 times as much in official development assistance as the industrialized countries, in terms of percentage of gross national product. An increase in their assessment would be in keeping with their enlightened policies, particularly as the increases would be modest in absolute terms, compared to their other aid programmes.

32. The Committee on Contributions should not reject new approaches outright in its efforts to establish an acceptable scale of assessments to cover United Nations expenditure. He welcomed the fact that the Committee on Contributions had taken note of the impact of public indebtedness on the capacity to pay, many States having to use 30 or even 40 per cent of their export earnings on servicing external debts. That factor should be borne in mind when the scale of assessments for the next triennium was established. The Committee should also take account of the impact of natural disasters on the capacity to pay.

33. In conclusion, he said that he would vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in paragraph 53 of the report of the Committee on Contributions.

34. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) took note with satisfaction of the new chapter in the report of the Committee on Contributions dealing with the specialized agencies. He supported the amendment of regulation 5.9 of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations proposed in paragraph 17 of the report, which was in keeping with the principle of financial responsibility. He suggested that, in future reports, a table might be included showing the contributions made by non-member States to the cost of conferences, so that the Fifth Committee would be able to see how the expenditure on conferences was shared.

35. In connexion with paragraph 14, he asked which members of ESCAP did not contribute to its costs.

36. He endorsed the view stated in paragraph 46 concerning the adverse effect of external public indebtedness and suggested that the Committee on Contributions might provide information on that question, which would be helpful in determining the relative capacities to pay of States. The inflated rates of interest being paid by the developing countries was a very heavy burden for them.

37. He requested information from the representatives of the specialized agencies on how far their scales of assess-

ment had been harmonized with that of the United Nations, for example by changing to a three-year, instead of the two-year, scale, and on their criteria and guidelines. He also asked for further information on the scales of assessment used by some of the smaller specialized agencies. He wondered whether any of the specialized agencies had plans to abolish the *per capita* income ceiling.

38. In conclusion, he asked whether the statistical information used for non-member States was the same kind of information as that used for Member States.

39. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) referred to paragraph 45 of the report of the Committee on Contributions relating to the low *per capita* income allowance formula. At the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly his delegation had called for a review of the formula on the grounds that the basis for the existing formula had changed because of economic developments which had taken place since the scale for 1974-1976 had been established. He was glad that the Committee on Contributions had recognized that changes in the world economic situation justified a review of the formula, and he awaited with interest the Committee's report on it at the thirty-first session, in connexion with its general review of the scale of assessments.

40. In conclusion, he said that his delegation would support the draft resolution contained in paragraph 53 of the report of the Committee on Contributions.

41. Mrs. BASTOS SANDIFER (Portugal) expressed appreciation for the report submitted by the Committee on Contributions which she found excellent. Her delegation supported the principle of capacity to pay as the basis for calculating the scale of assessments. That principle was far more meaningful than the criterion of *per capita* income, which, among other deficiencies, did not give an accurate indication of the structure of an economy. As the representative of India had said, in determining capacity to pay account should be taken of such crucial factors as the balance of payments and the external debt situation. Inflationary pressures and frequent changes in currency exchange rates should also be taken into consideration.

42. Her delegation hoped that consideration would be given to the idea of calculating the scale of assessments on a biennial basis so as to ensure fairer treatment for Member States, particularly the developing nations and those industrialized countries which had experienced or might experience a significant decline in their gross national product. The greatest possible flexibility was desirable in order to make it possible for Member States facing new difficulties to comply with their financial obligations to the United Nations.

43. Mr. Amjad ALI (Chairman of the Committee on Contributions) said that the Committee on Contributions, in determining the scale of assessments, did its utmost to ensure equitable treatment for every Member State and at the same time comply with the directives and guidelines developed over the years by the General Assembly.

44. Replying to questions raised in the discussion, he said that the non-member States which contributed to certain United Nations activities, for example, those of UNCTAD and UNIDO, were: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Holy See, Lichtenstein, Monaco, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of South Viet-Nam, San Marino, Switzerland and Tonga.

45. The contributions from non-member States under an amended financial regulation 5.9 would be used only for activities financed under the regular budget.

46. With regard to the very fair comments made by the representative of India, he said that the Committee on Contributions paid special attention to the low *per capita* income countries and would continue to do so in future.

47. He assured the representative of Bangladesh that the Committee on Contributions had viewed with especial sympathy the difficulties of his country, taking into account the economic conditions, the disruptions, the non-availability of statistics and the very severe floods. At its thirty-fifth session, the Committee on Contributions had reviewed the situation of Bangladesh in the light of the data then available, which showed a *per capita* income of $72 and an estimated population of 60 million. The higher population estimate of 70 million had not reached the Secretariat until after June 1975. Even if it were based on the latest population estimate, the rate of assessment would not be lower than 0.08 per cent.

48. The question of a two-year period for the scale of assessments in line with the biennial budget had been discussed by the Committee on Contributions in the past and would be re-examined at its next session in the light of the comments and suggestions made in the Fifth Committee.

49. The States that were not Members of the United Nations but were members of ESCAP were the Republic of Korea and the Republic of South Viet-Nam.

50. The information on the specialized agencies sought by the representative of the Philippines was contained in paragraph 39 of the Committee's report.

51. He assured members who had spoken on the principle of capacity to pay that over the years the Committee on Contributions had conducted a very thorough investigation of a wide range of economic indicators, including *per capita* energy consumption, *per capita* food consumption, *per capita* gross domestic product, the percentage of economically active population engaged in agriculture, infant mortality rates, the number of trained physicians, and literacy rates.

52. Explaining how the scale of assessments was drawn up, he said that the Committee on Contributions used national income and related data provided by Member States themselves. The scale which emerged from those data was adjusted to take account of the criteria laid down by the General Assembly, for example, the low *per capita* income allowance. During its examination of the data, the Committee exercised its judgement concerning economic factors which impinged directly on a country's capacity to pay, including exchange rate fluctuations, differential rates of inflation, external public debt burden and natural calam-

ities, and took such mitigating action as it deemed appropriate. Since the General Assembly defined the basic criterion of capacity to pay as being national income, it was natural that a Member State whose economy benefited from steep rises in the price of a single commodity should be called upon to contribute at a higher rate. In exercising its judgement, however, the Committee on Contributions had always borne in mind that in such a country the development of national infrastructure, particularly that of the social sectors, lagged behind the high level of activity indicated by the newly acquired wealth. In such an instance the Committee would estimate a lower capacity to pay than was actually indicated by the country's national income. Moreover, if the single commodity upon which a country's wealth was based was finite, depletable and non-renewable, future scales of assessment would reflect that fact.

53. In conclusion, he pointed out that the Committee on Contributions based its calculations on the criteria and principles recommended by the Fifth Committee and approved by the General Assembly. If the Assembly were to amend its directives, his Committee would be guided accordingly.

54. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) observed that the principle of capacity to pay and the yardstick of national income had been discussed many times without any changes being introduced. He suggested that it was high time for the United Nations to take some action in that matter and requested the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions to give members some guidance in that respect.

55. Mr. Amjad ALI (Chairman of the Committee on Contributions) said that it would be difficult for him, as an individual, to give guidance that would be approved by the Committee on Contributions as a whole. He assured the representative of Iraq that his suggestion would be discussed by the Committee on Contributions at its next session.

56. The CHAIRMAN invited members to vote on the draft resolution submitted by the Committee on Contributions in paragraph 53 of its report (A/10011).

The draft resolution was adopted by 97 votes to none.

57. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) suggested that it would be easier for the Fifth Committee to conduct its work if it had recourse to the electronic voting facilities.

58. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that only one of the Committee rooms was equipped with electronic voting machinery. When the time came for the Committee to hold a number of consecutive votes, the Secretariat would take the Algerian representative's suggestion into account.

59. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee recommended that the General Assembly should take note of the report of the Committee on Contributions and its addenda (A/10011 and Add.1 and 2).

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 97

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1700th meeting; A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1)

60. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the great merit of the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1) was that it shed light on the operation of existing programming machinery and proposed practical measures for strengthening planning, programming and evaluation within the United Nations system. He very much hoped that the Working Group's recommendations would not grow mildewed with age but would instead receive the General Assembly's blessing at the current session.

61. His delegation had found particularly salient the following observations in the Working Group's report: that the terms of reference of CPC should be changed so that that Committee would no longer be affected by problems related to the extent of its competence, its calendar of work, the duration of its sessions, the timing of submission of its documentation and its relations with other related bodies (*ibid.*, para. 36); that the terms of reference of CPC should cover all the programmes contained in the medium-term plans of the United Nations and that CPC should report both to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly (*ibid.*, para. 37); that CPC should be informed in detail about extra-budgetary resources and the activities they covered and about programmes in fields of common interest that were being or were about to be carried out in other parts of the system so that it might suggest necessary measures of harmonization; that CPC should give precise guidance to the Secretariat for the latter's use in developing the United Nations programme and in conducting programme evaluation and that it should also identify and make recommendations on the termination of obsolete, marginal or ineffective programmes (*ibid.*, para. 52); that, within the framework of a realistic division of labour, there must be a link between the planning and programming process and the budgetary process, responsibility for the latter being borne by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. His delegation attached particular importance to the comments in paragraph 52 and hoped that they would be put into effect by CPC as soon as possible.

62. His delegation considered that the General Assembly should have no difficulty in endorsing recommendations 1, 2 and 3, contained in paragraph 77, of the report which had been generally agreed by the Group, and in transmitting them to the Economic and Social Council with a view to their implementation. In order to make the provisions of the draft before the Committee (A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1) more explicit, he wondered whether it would not be appropriate to include in paragraph 6 a reference to the recommendations of the Working Group, particularly recommendations 1, 2 and 3, and to replace *"Takes note"* by *"Welcomes"*. It would also, in his opinion, be advisable to clarify in paragraph 7 what he believed to be the sponsors' intent, namely, that the Assembly wished the

Council to implement those recommendations as early as possible in 1976, i.e. at its organizational session in January.

63. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) submitted an amendment,[3] by which the following text should be incorporated in the draft as a new paragraph between existing paragraphs 7 and 8:

"*Requests* the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System to examine the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions within the context of possible modifications in the structure and functioning of the United Nations, including, *inter alia*, the mandate and composition of the Advisory Committee."

[3] Subsequently circulated as A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1.

64. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that, while he had not had time to consult the sponsors about the suggestions made by the representatives of Belgium and Algeria, he thought that the idea of making paragraph 7 more precise by including a reference to the organizational session of the Economic and Social Council would be acceptable to them.

65. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) suggested that the sponsors might wish to reconsider paragraph 3 of the draft and to replace "1978-1981" by "1977-1981" as the period for the medium-term plan. In that way, the Secretariat would be able to reflect in the plan the decisions taken at the seventh special session and the current session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

1715th meeting

Thursday, 16 October 1975, at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1715

AGENDA ITEM 97

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1700th meeting; A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1228)

1. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany), speaking with reference to the draft (A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1), before the Committee, said that the sponsors had considered the amendment submitted by Algeria (A/C.5/L.1228) and the suggestions made at the preceding meeting by the representative of Belgium and the Controller and had reached the following conclusions. Although the reasons advanced by the Controller for incorporating 1977 into the next medium-term plan were sound, the sponsors preferred to retain the idea of a four-year plan. Accordingly, they had decided to insert in paragraph 3 after the words "for the period 1978-1981," the words "including a revised plan for 1977,". In order to reflect the suggestion of the representative of Belgium concerning paragraph 7, the sponsors had agreed to replace the words "recommends it to take" by the words "recommends that at its next organizational session it should take". However, the sponsors preferred not to reflect the Belgian suggestion concerning paragraph 6 because the singling out of three recommendations would not be acceptable to all delegations. For the same reason, the sponsors were unable to accept the new paragraph proposed by Algeria (A/C.5/L.1228), which was somewhat controversial.

2. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) expressed support for the revision to paragraph 3 and for the draft as a whole. He felt that the views of the representative of Belgium concerning the recommendations of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery could be determined from a reading of the summary record.

3. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) requested clarification from the sponsors of the draft on two points. First, his delegation wondered why the report of the Working Group (A/10117 and Corr.1) had not been mentioned in paragraph 1 along with the other documents cited. That omission seemed particularly strange in view of the fact that paragraph 2 was also based on recommendation 1 of the Working Group, contained in paragraph 77 of the report, namely, that the medium-term plan and the biennial programme budget should be considered in alternate years. Secondly, his delegation felt that it would have been expedient, in paragraph 7, to request the Economic and Social Council to report on the recommendations of the Working Group other than those pertaining to the strengthening of CPC and the improvement of its work, not directly to the General Assembly, but instead, to the Assembly, through the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System.

4. Mr. HENČIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation supported the procedure outlined in the draft with respect to the report and recommendations of the Working Group. That procedure was appropriate because the full value of the suggestions and recommendations of the Working Group could not be ascertained until the *Ad Hoc* Com-

mittee had submitted its conclusions. The implementation of an integrated system of planning, programming, budgeting and evaluation required an in-depth examination of the terms of reference, the role and the membership of the intergovernmental and expert bodies responsible for the preparation, consideration and approval of programmes and budgets. Accordingly, his delegation endorsed the amendment proposed by Algeria (A/C.5/L.1228), which would draw the *Ad Hoc* Committee's attention to the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the possibility of enlarging its terms of reference and membership. The inclusion of that paragraph in the draft could only facilitate the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee.

5. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany), replying to the comments of the representative of Greece, pointed out that the idea of alternating consideration of the medium-term plan and the programme budget had been suggested not only in the report of the Working Group but also in the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 submitted by the Secretary-General (A/10006/Add.1) and in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (see A/9646). As far as the schedule for reporting was concerned, he said that the deliberations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee and those of the Economic and Social Council would probably overlap in the summer of 1976 and, furthermore, it was difficult to form a clear picture of the order in which the reports of the various bodies concerned would be submitted.

6. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) thanked the sponsors for taking into account his suggestion concerning paragraph 7.

7. With regard to paragraph 6, he said that he would not insist upon a specific mention of recommendations 1, 2 and 3 of the Working Group, since that appeared to be giving rise to difficulties among the sponsors. However, his delegation would like to make a minor amendment to the text of that paragraph, which was too weak as it stood. The amended text would read:

> "6. *Welcomes* the report and recommendations of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1)."

If the sponsors could not accept that change, he would propose it as a formal amendment.

8. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation supported the intent of the draft under discussion but could not take a final position on it until the revised text and all the amendments had been issued in writing.

9. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) observed that the sponsors would need time to consider the amendment submitted by the representative of Belgium.

10. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that the answers by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to his questions concerning paragraph 7 were not altogether satisfactory. He still failed to understand why mention of the Working Group's report had not been included in paragraph 1. Regarding paragraph 7, he reminded members that the General Assembly in resolution 3362 (S-VII) had requested the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System to submit its report to the Assembly at its thirty-first session.

11. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) endorsed the comments of the representative of the Soviet Union and suggested that the voting on the draft and the amendments thereto should be deferred until Monday or Tuesday of the following week. In that way, delegations would have time to hold consultations and adopt a position.

12. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) agreed with the representative of Algeria that a decision could not be taken at the current meeting and said that the sponsors needed time to consider the amendments. It would be difficult to co-ordinate the Belgian oral amendment with paragraph 7; if the General Assembly were to "welcome" the report of the Working Group, it would be prejudging the conclusions of the Economic and Social Council.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to defer the voting on the draft (A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1) and any amendments thereto until Monday or Tuesday of the following week.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)** **(for the previous documentation, see 1705th meeting; A/10008/Add.2 and 3, A/C.5/1688, A/C.5/L.1226, A/C.5/L.1229-1231)**

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)

SECTION 22. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL SERVICES *(continued)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

14. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that his delegation regarded highly the uniquely excellent performance of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, Mr. Davidson, and his staff; however, it was giving section 22 particularly close scrutiny, partly because it expected central management to set a high standard of efficiency and economy. Its main concern was that it had not received full justification for the $4.8 million in programme growth reflecting small increases in almost every organizational unit covered by the section. It wondered whether those units could not have practised a greater measure of austerity or, alternatively, offset the new functions involved in the increases by reducing expenditure on lower priority items. It shared the view of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as expressed in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), that the requirements for additional posts should have been given in greater detail and urged the Secretary-General to provide more data on the subject in future.

* Resumed from the 1713th meeting.

15. With regard to specific items under the section, he asked whether the figure of some $3.6 million representing the costs of Arabic in 1977 referred only to the items which were previously financed from the Arabic language trust fund or included other amounts intended to make Arabic language facilities permanent.

16. He reiterated the position of the United States that technical assistance activities should not be financed from the regular budget, but by voluntary contributions.

17. In connexion with the Internal Audit Service, he noted that while funds for upgrading the Geneva unit had been requested, no commensurate reduction had been made to reflect the downgrading of the New York unit. Moreover, it was not clear why temporary assistance funds had been requested for maternity and other leave in Geneva instead of absorbing those costs within available staff resources.

18. With regard to the International Computing Centre, he asked whether it would not be more effective and less expensive to contract for special services rather than use additional temporary assistance, which tended to be converted into permanent posts. He would also welcome further explanation of the request for funds to rent computerized message switching units for Geneva and New York and for the upgrading of the New York/Geneva teleprinter link to a teleprinter/telephone link.

19. Under the expenditure for the Office of General Services, he suggested that the funds requested for rental of office space should be reduced at least to correspond with posts disallowed by the Advisory Committee.

20. Finally, his delegation was not certain that the increases requested for rental of data processing equipment and personnel in the Administrative and Financial Services of the United Nations Office at Geneva (A/10006, para. 22.130) were essential, particularly in view of the Advisory Committee's view that they were not justified and that the United Nations should have an interactive system with the International Computing Centre. Furthermore, it did not seem necessary to request temporary assistance to code data into computer-readable form and still request additional permanent posts. His delegation would appreciate clarification on those points before it could take a position on section 22.

21. Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone), observing that contributions from Member States must have the endorsement of national legislative bodies, said that increases could only be justified if they realistically reflected the needs and possibilities of States and were supported by concrete explanations and actual figures. His delegation concurred with the Advisory Committee's opinion that certain justifications for added costs were too vague, but it would have wanted that Committee to recommend a more drastic reduction, taking into account the international financial situation. Particularly at a time when the average real income of most developing countries was deteriorating, their contributions should go not only toward maintaining peace, but toward improving the living standards of all peoples.

22. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee on the need for greater scrutiny of the Secretary-General's requests to determine what existing activities could be displaced by more important ones and to explore alternative ways of accomplishing stated objectives. For example, instead of expanding the staff of the Secretariat, more effective utilization should be made of existing staff and the 826 proposed new posts should be cut to 590 posts, so distributed as to ensure greater representation for the underrepresented developing countries. The Secretary-General should provide information on the number of staff representing those countries now in the Secretariat.

23. The term "programme growth" did not mean increased programme delivery. The Secretary-General's method of calculating programme growth and real growth was open to question. For example, there was nothing to indicate how he had arrived at the figure of $12,000, representing the element of programme growth included in the request for $51,000 for consultants in the Office of Financial Services at Headquarters, and his delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the total figure for consultants should be reduced from $51,000 to $12,000 (see A/10008 and Corr.2, paras. 22.44 and 22.45).

24. In connexion with the request for rental and maintenance of premises dealt with in paragraph 22.96 of the Advisory Committee's report, it would be preferable for the Secretariat to explore ways of acquiring more property to reduce the burden of escalating rents. He therefore supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 22.99 and was prepared to support the estimates in section 22 as a whole, subject to the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

25. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was very concerned about the size of the growth of section 22 (26.4 per cent) of the Secretary-General's estimates for 1976-1977 when compared with the growth of the budget estimates as a whole (21.6 per cent). It was regrettable that a section concerned with administrative services only, which, although vital, were of only secondary importance when compared with programmes more directly related to the fundamental objectives of the United Nations, should show more than average growth. Despite its concern, however, his delegation would restrict itself to general support for the recommendations and observations of the Advisory Committee.

26. His delegation was particularly concerned about one feature of the estimates under section 22 and would appreciate some further information in that regard. The Advisory Committee, in its report, had observed at several points in their comments on section 22 that it was not at all clear that the United Nations was being fully and equitably reimbursed for services provided to other organizations or activities funded from extra-budgetary resources. In that connexion, his delegation had noted the draft decision submitted by the Soviet Union (A/C.5/L.1230) and hoped to be able to support it. The examples of inadequate reimbursement commented upon by the Advisory Committee concerning the Internal Audit Service (A/10008 and Corr.2, 22.24), the New York Computing Centre (*ibid.*, para. 22.34), the United Nations Medical Service (*ibid.*, para. 22.54), the Communications, Archives and Records Service (*ibid.*, para. 22.82), the financing of security posts

(*ibid.*, para. 22.89) and the Purchase and Transportation Service (*ibid.*, para. 22.91) appeared to indicate clearly that in a number of cases the United Nations regular budget was bearing a disproportionate share of expenses for services it provided which were also used by other organizations. His delegation believed that the expenses should be shared equitably between the users of the various services and therefore fully supported the comments of the Advisory Committee. It would welcome assurances from the Secretariat that measures to deal with the problem were being, or had been, formulated.

27. Mr. DASHKEVICH (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said he could not support the Secretary-General's requests for increased expenditure under section 22. The estimate submitted was higher than the revised appropriations for the biennium 1974-1975 and represented a rate of growth exceeding the over-all rate of growth of the budget. The estimate of more than $59 million for the Office of General Services at Headquarters for the next biennium was among the more shocking figures. His delegation did not believe that the Secretariat was trying hard enough to curtail growth in expenditure and found the justification given for the Secretary-General's requests unconvincing. The funds requested for additional posts could be utilized more effectively for other purposes and the over-all reduction of some 2 million recommended by the Advisory Committee was not sufficient. His delegation could not support the Secretary-General's estimate under section 22 and would vote against it.

28. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that estimated expenditure under section 22 deserved the closest scrutiny because the services covered substituted the backbone of the Organization. Unfortunately, however, the expenditure was often incurred not out of necessity but as a result of habit and failure to appreciate the impact on the budget as a whole. He would like some explanation from the Under-Secretary for Administration and Management, for example, of the large number of staff requested to operate the Organization's computer system despite the very large technical capacity of the system, a more precise specification of the units it served and a more convincing justification of the need for additional consultants.

29. His delegation was also concerned by the costs of the rental and maintenance of premises. He recalled that most countries of the third world had been reluctant to agree to the 10-year lease entered into by the Organization with the United Nations Development Corporation (UNDC) and to participate in the related costs. If, as the Advisory Committee stated in paragraph 22.98 of its report, the lease on the most expensive rented premises ran until 1979, there appeared to be a real danger of duplicating expenses for leasing both present premises and space in the new building.

30. The Algerian delegation supported the reduction of some $2 million recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 22.

31. Mr. BARRAGÁN MATA (Mexico) pointed out that the large increase in estimated expenditure under section 22 could not be properly appreciated without an evaluation of the results of the expenditure approved for the previous biennium and full justification for the new costs. For example, it was impossible to judge from the table following paragraph 22.31 of the Advisory Committee's report whether the computer hours used by the various services were well used without knowing the technical capacity of the computer system. His delegation therefore supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 22.34.

32. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said that his delegation had voted in favour of signing a 10-year lease with UNDC for the rental of space in the new building because it believed that there was a need to centralize Secretariat services near the Headquarters building. It shared the concern expressed by the Algerian representative that, despite the availability of the new space, the Organization might have to continue to pay not only rent, but maintenance costs, until 1979 for premises it presumably would no longer need. He would like the Secretariat to explain what it would cost to break that long lease or what arrangements could be made to release the United Nations from the costly obligation it had assumed.

33. Mr. PONCE (Peru) also expressed concern about the large increase in the estimates under section 22 over the 1974-1975 revised appropriations and said that, while the Advisory Committee's comments and recommendations were satisfactory, he hoped that the Fifth Committee would be provided with more details so that it could decide what further adjustments had to be made in proposed costs under that section.

34. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) said that, while he appreciated the key importance of section 22 to the functioning of the Organization, the expenditure involved could be explained in more concise form in future without sacrificing essential data. He shared the general concern about the high rate of growth in that expenditure, the large number of additional posts requested, the disparity in the exchange rates used in calculating the estimates and the exceedingly high estimate for United Nations participation in jointly financed administrative activities: 128.8 per cent higher than the revised and adjusted figure for 1974-1975.

35. For the Joint Inspection Unit, the Staff Office of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) the estimated reimbursement by the specialized agencies of their share in jointly financed administrative activities should be computed and deducted from the expenditure sections of the United Nations budget and shown in its income sections. The same procedure should be followed in respect of the Medical Service. Moreover, in evaluating requirements, the Secretary-General should not make assumptions when even probabilities could not be assessed, as in the case of pension coverage for the members of the Joint Inspection Unit. The cost should be stabilized in the budget at the level required for maintenance pending a General Assembly decision on the question. The same procedure should be followed for all administrative units or organs which had not yet established their programmes. In any event, the practice of revised estimates offered them recourse in case of real need.

36. His delegation had noted a measure of overlapping between the Office of General Services and the Office of

Public Information regarding communications activities. Their respective functions should be clearly delimited, as should those of ICSC and the Office of Personnel, in the interest of economy. He also deplored what his delegation regarded as an unjustified increase in expenditure for the Division of General Services of the Geneva Office. The increasing use of modern management techniques in the Organization should result in economies, not such spectacular rises in costs. He would welcome recommendations from ACC on the budgets of United Nations subsidiary organs and generally supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

37. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to complete its consideration of section 22 as a whole before proceeding to consider individual subsections.

38. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that, just as there could be no leaves or branches on a tree without a trunk and roots, so there could be no substantive programmes in the United Nations without the support machinery provided by the Departments of Administration and Management and Conference Services. The budget estimates under section 22 (Administration, management and general services) included considerable amounts to be allocated to substantive bodies which carried out more popular activities. For example, the budget estimates under section 1 (Over-all policy-making, direction and co-ordination) that related to the General Assembly amounted to $7.5 million, but the actual total costs for the Assembly were approximately $55 million, $47.5 million of which was included in the budget estimates for other departments, such as the Department of Administration and Management and the Department of Conference Services. By giving that example, he simply wished to put into perspective the use to which the budget estimates under section 22 were put.

39. In replying to general comments on section 22 as a whole, he would leave more detailed questions on the subsections to his colleagues in the Budget Division.

40. The representative of Turkey had asked about sharing by the organizations in the United Nations system of costs on items of an interagency nature, such as the Joint Inspection Unit and the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions, as subsidiary organ of ACC. The Advisory Committee, in paragraph 22.9 of its report, had quite rightly recommended the elimination of the $100,000 estimate for common staff costs for the Joint Inspection Unit, pending a policy decision by the General Assembly on pension coverage for members of the Unit. In its resolution 3354 (XXIX), section V, the General Assembly had requested the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board to consider the eligibility of members of the Unit for participation in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, and had authorized the Secretary-General and ACC to explore alternative methods of providing pension coverage. Pursuant to that resolution, the Pension Board would be submitting a report at the current session, and ACC would be meeting to discuss the Secretary-General's proposals and would then report to the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee. In connexion with the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions, the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 22.18 of its report, had recommended deletion of the estimate of $141,000 for the United Nations share of the costs of the Consultative Committee, pending revised estimates. That Committee was a technical expert body which advised ACC on personnel and finance management questions to enable the organizations in the United Nations system to maintain their common policies, practices and procedures; the Consultative Committee would also be carrying out technical and advisory functions in respect of ICSC when the latter considered the priority question of a salary review. The revised estimates for the Consultative Committee would most probably be higher than the initial estimates.

41. Responding to questions about work programmes, he suggested that the question of the work programme of ICSC should be raised when its Chairman submitted his first annual report to the Committee. The work programme of the Consultative Committee would take into account the fact that ICSC had been requested to give priority consideration in 1976 to the United Nations salary system, which was an extremely complex question. At the twenty-ninth session the estimates for ICSC had been reduced considerably and it had begun work with limited staff, transferred from the agencies, with the result that it relied heavily on the agencies' resources; that placed a heavy burden on the Consultative Committee, particularly its personnel branch which would be submitting studies tc ICSC.

42. Replying to the representative of Italy, who had asked about separate budget estimates submitted within the context of the budget as a whole, he said the question referred mainly to such interagency bodies as the Joint Inspection Unit and the Consultative Committee which were financed jointly by the agencies, and to the International Court of Justice which was a special case. The Court was constitutionally in a slightly different situation: article XV of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations stated that its estimates would be prepared by the Court, in consultation with the Secretary-General, and would be submitted to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General, together with such observations as he might deem desirable. The Secretary-General thus did not have the authority to alter the Court estimates. Some other elements of the budget—for example, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees—also had a special status. In the case of the Joint Inspection Unit and the Consultative Committee, the Secretary-General submitted estimates arrived at by the heads of the agencies and requested approval by the General Assembly, not of the total costs, but only of the United Nations share.

43. Responding to the representative of the Philippines who had asked about a progress report by the Administrative Management Service, he said that in 1974 the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had made a recommendation, accepted by the Fifth Committee, that progress reports of that Service should be submitted first to the Advisory Committee, which would then decide whether any part of the report merited submission to the Fifth Committee. The current progress report had been submitted to and considered by the Advisory Committee.

44. The representatives of Algeria and Argentina had asked about rental of premises at the UNDC building. He

assured them that the United Nations did not pay double rental for office space in the new building and for office space in other buildings for which leases had not expired. The arrangements made with UNDC stipulated that no office space in the building reserved for the United Nations would be paid for until United Nations leases for other buildings had expired and the United Nations units were occupying space in the new building. The United Nations did not intend to move out of other buildings it was occupying until its leases expired. Negotiations of leases currently held were under way.

45. The representative of the United Kingdom had asked about the relationship between the United Nations regular budget and the extra-budgetary activities financed to some extent from the regular budget. Increasingly, concern had been voiced over the extent of support services provided under the regular budget. It should be borne in mind, however, that services were provided on a reciprocal basis to some extent; the United Nations provided support services to UNDP and in return relied on the world-wide UNDP network to carry out activities for the United Nations, which could not be regarded as specifically the responsibility of UNDP. Some General Assembly resolutions, for example resolution 57 (I) establishing UNICEF, stated that staff and facilities would be provided by the United Nations without charge, within the limits of the United Nations budget.

46. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) replied to some of the specific questions which had been raised. Replying to the representative of Turkey, who had asked about the exchange rate of 2.55 Swiss francs to the dollar used in the estimates for the Joint Inspection Service, he said that the estimates had been prepared by ACC, which had used the rate of exchange prevailing at the time it considered the estimates, and the Secretary-General had simply transmitted the estimates to the Committee.

47. On the question of the costs of the United Nations Medical Service at Headquarters, and the apportionment of the costs among the users of the Service, he said that the Secretary-General had been requested to review the activities undertaken on behalf of the United Nations and extra-budgetary organizations and programmes and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session; the Advisory Committee had made similar comments regarding the Office of General Services in respect of communications, security, and purchase and transportation (see A/10008 and Corr.2, paras. 22.82, 22.89, 22.91).

48. It had been suggested that host Member States should be encouraged to pay all or part of the costs of conducting examinations in their countries for recruitment to Secretariat posts. So far three examinations had been held: in Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan; most of the costs had been paid by the host Governments, the United Nations having paid only a small daily honorarium to the Chairman of the Board of Examiners and the United Nations staff members participating in each Board, in the case of Italy $10,400, the Federal Republic of Germany $16,275, and in the case of Japan $3,128, a provisional figure. It was felt that in terms of cost benefit United Nations expenditure on competitive examinations compared favourably with expenditure on recruitment missions where the cost was also shared with Governments.

49. Replying to the question by the representative of the Philippines about additional travel requested under sections 22A and 22C, he said that in the case of section 22A the increase in travel was only for the Joint Inspection Unit, and the figure of $160,000 reflected changes in the rate of exchange and inflation; in the case of section 22C, concerning the Internal Audit Service, the proposed increase was requested mainly because it had been found that a more effective audit could be performed by two auditors rather than one at large offices, such as those of the regional commissions.

50. In reply to the representative of the Philippines, he said that the International Computing Centre (ICC) in Geneva would move to a use-related budget, under which each participating agency would contribute to its costs in proportion to its use of the facilities. Each participating agency had pledged a minimum level of support and had tried to forecast its future requirements. In addition to the three founding organizations—the United Nations, WHO and UNDP—seven others had begun participating and supporting the ICC. The ICC Management Committee, at its meeting in September 1975, had reviewed the terms of reference, organization and purposes of the Centre and affirmed that no change was required. It had endorsed requirements of $2.17 million for 1976 and $2.33 million for 1977, with 10 Professional and 26 General Service staff; equipment rental and supplies were expected to total $1.14 million in 1976 and $1.16 million in 1977. The United Nations was relying on ICC increasingly for data processing support for the administrative, financial, personnel and budgetary activities of the United Nations Office at Geneva, and UNCTAD, as well as the Statistical Division and other units in Geneva, were also using it. United Nations usage was growing, but its percentage share in the costs remained constant or was declining slightly because agency usage was growing more rapidly. The Common Register of Development Activities (CORE) project was continuing, the major contributor being UNDP, although the ILO and WHO also participated; evaluation of the benefits of CORE was also being carried on. The United Nations share of the costs of ICC had been reduced because, as could be seen from paragraph 22.129 of the proposed programme budget (A/10006), it had been agreed that some programmes could be handled more effectively under the Administrative Systems Section at Geneva than by ICC.

51. In connexion with the $20,000 allocated for an accounting manual in the Office of Financial Services for the biennium 1974-1975, he said that a draft accounting manual had been prepared with the assistance of outside consultants and would soon be issued. In the coming biennium the scope of the manual was to be extended to cover transactions from extra-budgetary funds, particularly those relating to the United Nations as executing agency of development programmes.

52. The $250,000 in temporary assistance allocated to the Office of Personnel Services for the biennium 1974-1975 to commence implementation of a classification system had been only partly used. An amount of $108,000 had not been spent because of difficulty in recruiting qualified experts in classification systems. As the experts had not been recruited, additional support staff had not been hired either. Experts were now being recruited, however, and work on the project was expected to begin in early 1976.

53. The representative of the Philippines had also requested information on units to be relocated in the United Nations Development Corporation building and on the share of maintenance costs to be paid by UNDP. Apart from the two floors to be occupied by Permanent Missions to the United Nations, the Secretariat–in particular as many staff as possible from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs–and UNDP would share the office space. The United Nations would occupy about 60 per cent, while UNDP would occupy the remaining 40 per cent, and maintenance costs and rental would be shared proportionately.

54. Replying to the representative of Italy, he said that members of the Joint Inspection Unit received remuneration comparable to the D-2 level, and their salaries were estimated on the basis of projected requirements at Geneva for that level.

55. The representatives of Belgium and the Soviet Union had asked questions about the rapid growth under section 22 compared to the growth of the budget as a whole. The reasons for that growth would become clear during consideration of the subsections.

56. He said that he would reply to other questions, including the question by the representative of Bulgaria about taxation of purchases by the United Nations, at a later meeting.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

1716th meeting

Friday, 17 October 1975, at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1716

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1705th meeting; A/10008/Add.2 and 3, A/C.5/1688, A/C.5/L.1226, A/C.5/L.1229-1232)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 22. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL SERVICES *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

1. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) replied to some of the questions asked at the previous meeting. In connexion with the inquiry by the representative of the United States of America as to whether any reduction could be made in the estimate for electronic data processing at Geneva given in paragraph 22.130 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), he recalled that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraph 22.61 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) had recommended elimination of the total estimate of $121,000. If the Advisory Committee's recommendation was approved, the United Nations Office at Geneva would not have any data processing equipment and would have to process data manually with a resulting increase in staff. He had been reassured, however, by the comments of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, when introducing section 22, at the 1709th meeting, that electronic data processing should continue until the General Assembly discussed the matter at its thirty-first session, and he interpreted that statement as permitting the Secretary-General to maintain the existing configuration, within available resources, until further review. The United States representative had also questioned the additional posts and the temporary assistance requested by the Administrative and Financial Services at Geneva; in response, he pointed out that, without the savings made by using the computer, far more than 4 General Service posts would have been required to deal with the administration of a growing number of employees at Geneva, including the secretariat of the Division of Human Rights. While expert contractual services could be engaged to perform certain specific programming tasks, it had seemed more cost-effective to hire 3 junior-level programmers for the biennium, while the permanent staff of the Administrative Systems Section (3 Professional and 5 General Service), would be engaged in the long-term process of designing and installing electronic data processing support in the Geneva Office.

2. Replying to the representative of Mexico, who had asked about the capacity of the United Nations computer system, he said that the computer use hours noted in the table following paragraph 22.31 of the Advisory Committee's report represented a technical unit designed to measure computer tasks of different sizes and not to provide a measure of capacity. A clearer picture of the workload could be gained from an analysis of the actual hours of computer rental. In 1973 the average number of hours of computer rental per day had been 14, in addition to 25 per cent of the week-ends; in 1974, 16 hours with 50 per cent of the available week-ends; and, in 1975, almost 20 hours per day with approximately 55 per cent of the week-ends. Taking into consideration preparation for computer tasks, the International Computing Centre had been functioning two 8-hour shifts per day in 1973 and three 8-hour shifts per day, five days per week, in 1975. The workload projections for 1976 and 1977 indicated that additional shifts would be required, together with an increase in computer capacity.

3. The representative of Algeria had asked about allocation of personnel resources at the New York Computing Centre. Staff members of the Centre included 16 at the General Service level for entering data into machine-readable form, 8 General Service and 1 Professional for actual operation of the computer equipment, 6 General Service and 1 Professional for preparation of work for the computer and record-keeping, 3 Professional for maintenance of the basic operating programmes of the system and instructions to users, 2 Professional and 2 General Service for executive management and direction, 4 senior analysts, 5 programmers and 3 junior-level programmers. Utilization of the computer services could be broken down as follows: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 50 per cent; Department of Conference Services, 6 per cent; administrative support, 20 per cent; and utilization by other agencies and on behalf of Governments which made appropriate reimbursements to the United Nations budget, 24 per cent.

4. Replying to the United States representative, who had recommended that rental be reduced in proportion to the reduction of staff, he said that the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 22.96 of its report, had recommended that the $382,000 requested for renting office space for the proposed 150 new posts should be reduced by $306,000. In that connexion, he pointed out that the remaining $76,000 might not be sufficient to meet requirements for office space for the 108 new posts recommended by the Advisory Committee.

5. In connexion with the United Nations Development Corporation (UNDC) building, he said that the United Nations had signed a lease on 21 June 1974 reserving office space in the building, for which the United Nations would pay rent only when the office space was actually occupied. The United Nations had not participated in financing the construction of the building, and had not yet paid any rent. The lease stated that the new building would be occupied gradually as existing leases signed by the United Nations for other buildings expired, so as to avoid double rental. He drew attention to the Joint Inspection Unit report on the utilization of office accommodation at United Nations Headquarters (see A/9854), which indicated that by 1979 the United Nations would require more office space in addition to the Secretariat and UNDC buildings. It would therefore be necessary to find office space for units currently located outside the Secretariat building which could not be housed in the UNDC building.

6. Replying to the question of the United States representative concerning the computerized message-switching device and improvement of the communications between New York and Geneva, he said that Geneva was the principal relay station for all United Nations communications with Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Far East. It was essential that New York and Geneva be able to cope, partly through modernization, with the increase in communications. The technical advantages of the device were described in detail in paragraph 27 of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Survey of United Nations telecommunications and forecast of requirements for the period 1974-1983".[1] Automation would lead to increased capacity during peak periods, greater accuracy, speed, and decreased staff costs. That report, in paragraph 47, also referred to upgrading the telex channel between New York and Geneva to provide telephone capacity, and the Advisory Committee in its corresponding report[2] had raised no objection to implementing that proposal in 1975.

7. The United States representative had asked whether the introduction of Arabic as a working language would lead to increased budget estimates, compared to the expenditures financed from extra-budgetary funds in 1974, 1975 and 1976. He said that the amount of $3,562,000 represented, in real terms, the same level of expenditure as in previous years. That amount covered the existing 100 established posts, and no increase had been envisaged for 1977 for temporary assistance during the General Assembly, and rental of office space, communications and office supplies.

8. Replying to the representative of Madagascar, who had requested information on the participation of the specialized agencies in covering the cost of jointly financed bodies, he said that in the case of ICSC total expenses were included in the United Nations budget and reimbursement by the specialized agencies was included in income section 2. In the case of other joint activities, the United Nations indicated in its budget only the share it would pay, leaving the agencies to include their share in their own budgets. The question asked by the representative of Madagascar about pension coverage for members of the Joint Inspection Unit had already been answered by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management at the 1715th meeting.

9. The representative of Madagascar had also referred to the inclusion of estimates for communications under section 22 as well as under section 21 (Public information). The Office of Public Information was the major communications user in the United Nations and had traditionally been responsible for its own communications costs. Programme budgeting would justify including communications costs for each unit in its own section; an alternative would be to include all communications costs under section 22, the regional commissions retaining responsibility for their own communications costs, however.

10. The United States representative had asked why the transfer of one post for auditing to Geneva had not led to a corresponding reduction in the Headquarters auditing section: the question had already been answered by the Advisory Committee which, in paragraph 22.25 of its report, had recommended a $9,000 reduction in the estimate for New York auditing, to correct the inadvertent omission. The need for temporary assistance for auditing had been felt during the current biennium and the estimates had included $7,000 for temporary assistance, an amount reduced to $5,000 by the Advisory Committee.

11. The United Kingdom representative had asked about extra-budgetary auditing at Geneva in connexion with paragraph 22.24 of the Advisory Committee's report. In reply, he said that extra-budgetary funds were used to audit expenditure of extra-budgetary funds; while the operation

1 Document A/C.5/1540/Rev.1, of 8 August 1974.

2 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 8*, document A/9608/Add.7, para. 35.

was usually carried out at New York, some aspects of it were now being dealt with by the Geneva Office.

12. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the various parts of section 22 individually.

Section 22A. Policy and direction

13. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked why the United Nations regular budget was expected to cover approximately one third of the expenses of ICSC, when the Organization's Secretariat was only one quarter of the total size of the secretariats of all organizations in the United Nations system.

14. Referring to the Joint Inspection Unit, he asked why the common staff costs, even as reduced by the Advisory Committee, had increased from $69,000 to $133,000. He asked why there had been approximately a 50 per cent increase in the travel costs of members of that Unit. He also asked why the United Nations paid 42.6 per cent of the total expenses of those members and why other organizations in the system did not contribute more. Once the estimates for the Joint Inspection Unit had been approved by the General Assembly, other organizations in the United Nations system simply accepted the estimates submitted to them; the Fifth Committee should be aware of the implications of its action in approving the estimates for the Unit.

15. By and large he endorsed the Advisory Committee's views on CCAQ, but he requested further information on its functions.

16. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) paid a tribute to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management on its zero programme growth and small but efficient manning table. He compared it favourably to other units which had too many high-level posts. He requested clarification of the common staff costs for the Joint Inspection Unit in the table appearing in paragraph 22.15 of the proposed programme budget.

17. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) asked whether the work programme of ICSC had now been drawn up and when the revised estimates for the Commission would be submitted.

18. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the representative of Belgium, said that the costs of the Joint Inspection Unit were distributed among the United Nations and the agencies in accordance with the amounts which the organizations actually disbursed in the year preceding the year in question. In the case of other jointly financed bodies, it was the cost of the number of posts financed from the regular budget and posts for project implementation carried by each organization that determined the distribution of costs among them. The increase in the travel costs for the Joint Inspection Unit was due to inflation, which particularly affected subsistence allowances, and to changes in the exchange rate. Common staff costs for the Unit for the biennium 1976-1977 had been based on 33 per cent of the salaries; that method differed from the old method and had led to higher costs. Concerning CCAQ, he pointed out that it was a subsidiary organ of ACC that had been established in 1947 to make proposals relating to standardizing the personnel and financial administration of organizations in the United Nations system.

19. The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management had already replied at the 1715th meeting to the question asked by the representative of Iran.

20. Replying to the representative of the Upper Volta, he said that the Secretary-General would submit revised estimates for ICSC during the month of November.

21. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) invited the Committee to reflect on the fact that the United Nations was paying one third of the total expenses of ICSC. That seemed to imply that posts financed from extra-budgetary funds were considered to be financed from the regular budget for the purpose of assessing the United Nations share of ICSC costs.

Section 22B. Administrative Management Service

22. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) noted that the Administrative Management Service had largely completed its task of conducting manpower utilization surveys and follow-up reviews, and that its major preoccupation appeared to be shifting towards studies carried out on its own initiative or in response to requests from individual departments of the Secretariat. His delegation welcomed that new orientation and hoped that the Service would be able to provide much-needed management advice to as many units of the Secretariat as possible. It wondered whether the principal role of the Service in future would be to identify internal expertise available for performing any *ad hoc* tasks that might arise, thereby keeping recourse to outside expertise to a minimum; it hoped that that possibility would be explored.

23. With regard to staffing, his delegation hoped that in future the Secretary-General's budget proposals would take greater account of the anticipated smaller workload and that the Service would be made more compact. Consideration should be given to a possible merger of the Administrative Management Service and the Internal Audit Service; those Services would maintain separate identities within a unified division, thereby facilitating a steadier flow of ideas between them.

24. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), referring to the Secretary-General's intention, as expressed in paragraph 22.26 of the proposed programme budget, to outpost one of the Professional staff to Geneva, asked why it had been deemed necessary to strengthen the administrative management capability of the Geneva Office. He requested some further information on that proposal, including details of the grade of the post concerned and of the anticipated date of and arrangements for the transfer.

25. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal to prune the staff of the Administrative Management Service, taking into account the declining workload. It also endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 22.21 of its report. It wondered what the intentions were regarding the

future role of the Service and suggested that it might be appropriate for the Service to conduct surveys or reviews relating to, for example, the planning and programming systems of the different Secretariat departments and the situation with regard to inter-office co-ordination of projects and the evaluation of project implementation. His delegation further suggested that the Joint Inspection Unit and the Administrative Management Service should meet at the beginning of every year in order to co-ordinate their programmes of work.

26. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he was not at all satisfied with the Secretary-General's budget proposals for the Administrative Management Service. In the light of the Advisory Committee's comments in the first sentence of paragraph 71 of its report, namely that the Service's recommendations had led only to requests for additional resources and not to any reductions in resources, he was not at all convinced that the results of the Service's work justified the size of its staff. His delegation believed that economies should be made and that the amount budgeted for staffing the Service could be reduced by half without any ill effects. It intended to submit a proposal recommending a sharp reduction in the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General.

27. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management), referring to the possibility of merging the Administrative Management Service and the Internal Audit Service, as suggested by the representative of Japan, said that he personally saw merit in the idea because their functions coincided to some extent and each was obliged, as part of its functions, to send staff on visits to organizations located in different parts of the world. The Secretariat was already studying the possibility of such a merger; in the light of the Japanese representative's suggestion, it would conduct a more detailed examination and would report the outcome to the Committee at the thirty-first session.

28. He assured the representative of Algeria that the proposal to transfer one staff member of the Administrative Management Service to Geneva had not been made because the administrative capability of the Geneva Office was deficient; rather it was a recognition of the fact that since all the Service's staff were currently at Headquarters, frequent visits to Geneva were required to deal with administrative management problems, as they arose. It therefore seemed more rational to have one member of the Professional staff in Geneva and to provide a continuing service there. The staff member outposted to Geneva would be at the P-4 grade. The Secretariat felt that the experiment was worth while and believed that it would generate savings in the long term. If it did not, the staff member would be transferred back to Headquarters.

29. He informed the representative of Iran that the Director of the Administrative Management Service and the members of the Joint Inspection Unit did in fact meet at the beginning of every year in order to concert their work programmes and co-ordinate any studies planned. That arrangement was designed to ensure that there was no duplication of functions, as had arisen once when both the Service and the Unit had conducted simultaneous studies on personnel matters.

30. With regard to the comments made by the representative of Belgium concerning the value of the Administrative Management Service's work, he recalled that the Service had originally been instructed to examine manpower utilization in each of the major units of the Secretariat. Those manpower studies had been carried out and formed the basis on which the Advisory Committee submitted to the Fifth Committee its recommendations concerning the manning tables of individual units. The Service had made recommendations concerning reductions, increases and redeployment of staff and, in his opinion, had performed a useful task. It had been at least partially successful in pointing to areas in which redeployment was necessary. The task of recommending and implementing reductions in staffing was not easy at a time when new demands were being placed on the Secretariat. The Service had now moved into a new phase, in which its function was to provide internal management consultant services to the Organization as a whole. It was generally felt that the Secretariat required advice in managing its organizational affairs. The Organization was faced with two alternatives: either to rely for advice on outside expertise or to maintain a small team within the Secretariat whose advice would be entirely objective. While some members of the Fifth Committee had expressed support for the first alternative, it was the second that had been adopted by the General Assembly and the Secretary-General. In 1975–the first year of the new phase–the Service had received a large number of requests for assistance from heads of departments and units through the Organization. A report had been submitted to the Advisory Committee describing the various studies which the Service was conducting in the current year. It was his opinion that the Service was acting responsibly and was performing a useful function in the Secretariat; he would even go so far as to say that, if the Service were disbanded, it would be necessary to replace it with another service performing the same kind of duties.

31. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), referring to his statement at the 1709th meeting, wished to emphasize that it was the Advisory Committee, not the Administrative Management Service, that would draw the Fifth Committee's attention to any questions pertaining to the Service which it felt were of particular interest. He recalled that he had referred to the Advisory Committee's recommendation,[3] in which it had recommended that the annual reports submitted to the General Assembly by the Administrative Management Service should be discontinued and that instead the Service should submit a progress report to the Advisory Committee; the Advisory Committee would then draw the attention of the Fifth Committee to any matters that it considered pertinent. He had further informed members that the Advisory Committee had received a progress report from the Service and had concluded that it did not contain anything which warranted the attention of the Fifth Committee.

32. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he had not heard any explanations that caused him to alter his opinion of the Administrative Management Service. As he saw it, the Service was not indispensable and it would be quite possible for the Joint Inspection Unit to perform some of its

[3] *Ibid.*, document A/9608/Add.10, para. 13.

tasks—a view which was borne out by some of the comments in the documentation before the Committee. In keeping with his earlier statement, he reserved the right to make a proposal to reduce the amount budgeted for the Service.

Section 22C. Internal Audit Service

33. Mr. BARRAGAN MATA (Mexico) asked what action had been or would be taken on the 162 observations issued by the Headquarters Section of the Internal Audit Service, as referred to in paragraph 22.30 of the proposed programme budget.

34. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked, in the light of paragraph 22.24 of the Advisory Committee's report, whether the 7 posts financed from extra-budgetary sources matched the proportion of auditing activities undertaken outside the framework of the regular budget.

35. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that he would reply to the questions on section 22C at the following meeting.

Section 22D. Electronic Data Processing and Information Systems Service

36. Mr. HART (Australia) noted that, according to paragraphs 22.59 and 22.60 of the budget proposals, the United Nations share of the cost of the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems and Related Activities (IOB) was estimated by the Secretary-General at $334,000 for 1976-1977 compared with $194,000 for 1974-1975, and that the projected increase in the operating costs of the Board included an increased provision to allow for the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1889 (LVII). He drew attention to the relevant provisions of that resolution, which were reproduced in paragraph 22.37 of the Advisory Committee's report. He further noted that the Advisory Committee considered that despite the much higher cost of United Nations participation in IOB, the detailed proposals requested by the Economic and Social Council had not been provided. That comment was causing his delegation some concern, since it might be inferred that the first step towards an integrated planning and programming system was faltering. In order to dispel that impression, his delegation wished to draw attention to a progress report submitted by ACC to the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-ninth session:[4] paragraph 10 of that report indicated that the responses of the organizations of the United Nations system to the Council's recommendations in resolution 1889 (LVII) had been favourable, although organizations would face certain constraints in implementing the recommendations within a specified time-frame; paragraphs 11 *et seq.* of the same report described how each organization was implementing or would implement the Council's recommendations. His delegation therefore welcomed the Advisory Committee's acceptance of the Secretary-General's budget estimate. It reaffirmed its commitment to information support for systemwide planning and programming and expressed the hope that the Council, at its sixty-first session, would be able to report that the development of the Common Register of Development Activities was progressing satisfactorily and that all the organizations in the system realized the importance of integrated planning.

37. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that, in view of the last sentence in paragraph 22.37 of the Advisory Committee's report, it would be interesting to hear what progress had been made so far with the CORE project.

38. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation supported the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 22.38 of its report. That Committee should consider with particular care the budget estimates for IOB, the New York Computing Centre and ICC which would be submitted to it in the next biennium.

39. In response to a question from the CHAIRMAN as to whether that was a formal proposal, Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) recalled that in other Committees such a suggestion was usually recorded in the Committee's report to the General Assembly.

40. The CHAIRMAN said that the suggestion would be incorporated in the decision which the Committee would take later on.

41. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) recalled his earlier statement that CORE was developing satisfactorily; the main agencies likely to utilize it were already doing so. The ILO, WHO, FAO and UNESCO, like the United Nations, were increasingly developing their own systems for checking projects and such data were all fed into the Common Register.

Section 22E. Office of Financial Services (Headquarters)

42. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to table 22-22 of the proposed programme budget, said that, while variations in the amounts needed to offset the effect of inflation were understandable to some extent, it was impossible to be sure that they were correct without knowing on what basis the inflation factor had been computed. He hoped that the information which he had already requested would be forthcoming as soon as possible, since it was pertinent to other sections as well. The additional sums requested for consultants under section 22E, though rather insignificant, were unjustified and it would be interesting to know what criteria had been used to arrive at the figures. He recalled that at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly it had been felt that too much money was spent on consultant services.

43. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that he, too, would appreciate receiving that information. He asked the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management why, now that ICSC had been established to deal with all matters relating to personnel, the Salaries and Allowances Unit was to continue studying matters that were within the competence of the new Commission. There appeared to be some duplication. He asked for clarification of paragraph 22.81, subparagraph *(c)*, of the proposed programme budget, which related to exceptional cases regarding allowances, and asked what the Salaries and Allowances Unit would deal with after the Commission

4 Document E/5662, of 30 April 1975.

took over its full responsibilities and why the Unit still required 9 posts for 1977.

44. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that he could find no reference to the medium-term plan, although it was his understanding that the Budget Division had dealt with that matter. He asked whether the volume of work of the Budget Division would be reduced if the General Assembly accepted the recommendation of the Working Group on United Nations Programmes and Budget Machinery that the medium-term plan and programme budget be considered in alternate years (A/10117 and Corr.1, para. 77).

45. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) endorsed the comments of the representative of Algeria concerning the Salaries and Allowances Unit. While he understood that the Unit would have to deal with certain activities until ICSC was able to take them over, he wondered whether the 9 posts requested for 1977 were really necessary.

46. The CHAIRMAN said that the questions raised under section 22E would be answered at the following meeting.

47. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to an earlier question of the representative of Bulgaria concerning whether the United Nations was exempt from both direct and indirect taxes on the goods and services which it bought, said that the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations specifically provided that the Organization should be exempt from all direct taxes. Under section 8 of that same Convention, the United Nations was entitled to request reimbursement of any indirect taxes it had paid when making important purchases of property for official uses. Claims for reimbursement were made in the United States and in Switzerland, and in certain European countries the Organization was reimbursed for the value added tax added to the price of goods. There was only one area where the tax was not clearly shown and where it was therefore hard to maintain that there was an indirect charge on the Organization. However, every effort was being made to recoup indirect taxes and it was unlikely that any further savings could be achieved in that respect.

AGENDA ITEM 103

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly *(continued):**

(a)* Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions *(continued)* **(A/10151, A/C.5/1691)**

48. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to hold elections to fill four vacancies in the membership of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, resulting from the expiration on 31 December 1975 of the terms of office of Mr. García del Solar, Mr. Grodsky, Mr. Majoli and Mr. Stottlemyer. Nominations for appointment or reappointment had been received from their respective Governments in respect of Mr. García del Solar (Argentina), Mr. Grodsky (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. Kivanç (Turkey), Mr. Majoli (Italy), who had subsequently withdrawn his candidacy, Mr. Schmidt (Federal Republic of Germany), and Mr. Stottlemyer (United States of America). Members of the Committee could, of course, vote for any candidate, whether formally proposed or not.

49. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) announced that his Government was withdrawing his candidacy, its prime concern being to preserve unity and to facilitate the elections. He thanked all regional groups and delegations which had pledged to support him.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Harding (Sierre Leone) and Mr. Vandergert (Sri Lanka) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	99
Invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	98
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	98
Required majority:	50

Number of votes obtained:

Mr. Lucio García del Solar	95
Mr. Anatoly V. Grodsky	87
Mr. David L. Stottlemyer	80
Mr. Rudolf Schmidt	76
Mr. Mario Majoli	5
Mr. Turan S. Kivanç	5
Four other persons	4

Mr. García del Solar (Argentina), Mr. Grodsky (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. Schmidt (Federal Republic of Germany) and Mr. Stottlemyer (United States of America) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended their appointment as members of the Advisory Committee for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1976.

50. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly on the matter to the General Assembly.

It was so decided.

51. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) welcomed the new members and paid a tribute to Mr. Majoli, the outgoing member, who during his years of service on the Committee had proved one its most faithful members.

52. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) thanked the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for his kind words.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

53. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the revised programme of work of the Committee (A/C.5/L.1225/Rev.1), adding that it contained certain errors: item 97 had been omitted, and item 107 had been wrongly grouped. A revised text would undoubtedly be issued. With regard to item 107, concerning the financing of UNEF and UNDOF, the Security Council was expected to take a decision before

* Resumed from the 1712th meeting.

24 October, and the Secretariat would prepare its report for the Committee as soon as possible. However, it appeared that the Committee would not be able to dispose of that item before the end of the following week and that it would be more realistic to plan to take it up during the last week of October. The Committee should also be prepared to repeat the pattern of the twenty-ninth session, namely, to take an interim decision and postpone consideration of the item to the latter part of November. If there was time and if the data concerning candidates were available, he proposed to hold the election to fill a vacancy in the membership of the Board of Auditors in the latter part of the following week.

54. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) asked whether the Committee was behind schedule in its work and whether the Secretary-General had tried to contact the President of the Security Council in order to urge that the Council might meet earlier than 24 October.

55. The CHAIRMAN replied that he did not know when the Security Council planned to take up the matter but that, at any rate, it would be before 24 October. The Committee was slightly behind in its work; however, its original schedule had been somewhat ambitious.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

1717th meeting

Monday, 20 October 1975, at 3.15 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1717

AGENDA ITEM 94

Financial reports and accounts for the year 1974 and reports of the Board of Auditors (A/10007/Add.1-7, A/10239)

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, in accordance with the decision of the Committee,[1] the financial report and accounts of the United Nations would henceforth be submitted on a biennial basis and were due at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

2. Mr. HAMID (Chairman of the Board of Auditors) said that, in accordance with that decision, the Board would submit its report in 1976 on the accounts of the United Nations for the current biennium. According to the same decision, the Board of Auditors was to discuss its observations on the accounts of the United Nations for the first year of the biennium with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. That had been done and the Advisory Committee, in its report (A/10239, para. 3), had informed the Fifth Committee that those observations did not call for action by the General Assembly at its thirtieth session.

3. In 1974 the Advisory Committee had recommended, in its report on the study of the role, organization and functioning of the United Nations Board of Auditors,[2] that, with a view to economizing on expenditure, the Board should hold three sessions in a biennium; that the audit programme should provide for only three visits of auditors in a biennium, instead of four, to various audit points outside New York; that the audit assignments should be reallocated between the three members of the Board; and that in doing so the proximity of the country of an Auditor General to an audit point should be kept in mind. In response to those recommendations, the Board had decided not to hold its special session in the autumn of 1975. The audit assignments would be reallocated in June 1976 for the biennium 1976-1977, and in doing so the Board would endeavour to follow, as far as possible, the guidelines provided by the Advisory Committee. The recommendation concerning the number of visits of auditors to points outside New York could not be implemented immediately. It had been decided, as an interim measure, that the accounts of the United Nations would be closed and reconciled, more or less, in the usual manner for the first year of the current biennium. As a result, the Board's programme for audit could not be changed. Should the Fifth Committee decide to dispense with the annual certification, as a result of the review which the Advisory Committee would carry out in 1976, the Board would modify its programme accordingly.

4. Turning to the reports (A/10007 and Add.1-7) before the Committee he drew attention to significant shortfalls in the delivery of programmes in more than one organization. The extent of the shortfall as well as the reason for it varied in each case. Delay in the implementation of programmes not only delayed resultant benefits, but inevitably increased costs. Administrative and programme support costs were also disproportionately high. The Board had suggested in one case that, if those costs were not susceptible to reduction, the possibility of increasing programme activity should be explored. The administrations of those organizations were endeavouring to remove bottle-necks, but the situation called for more concerted efforts.

5. The Board had drawn to the attention of UNICEF and UNHCR the need for strengthening procedures for planning, execution and monitoring of projects and programmes. It had been noticed that in UNICEF in several cases the unutilized commitments continued to be carried for-

1 *Official records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 73, document A/9960, para. 102.

2 *Ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 8*, document A/9608/Add.1.

ward even though the programmes had been completed. Similarly, in UNHCR, commitments for approved projects relating to earlier years had been carried forward despite the absence of any financial activity in those projects for several years. The Board had suggested that a periodic review of commitments should be made and that a time-limit should be set beyond which those commitments should not be carried forward. That would permit fuller utilization of available resources by releasing unspent balances of commitments.

6. The Board had drawn attention also to the unsatisfactory financial position of UNRWA.

7. Regarding UNDP, the Board had noted the adverse effect on the Programme's financial position of non-payment of balances by various Governments.

8. In regard to UNICEF, the Greeting Card Operation had been making a handsome contribution to the income of the Fund. Nevertheless, if the Operation could reduce the level of over-production of cards and calendars, it could make still higher profits. It was to be noted, however, that the Greeting Card Operation had reduced its production for the 1973 campaign. While it was appreciated that some over-production was unavoidable, no in-depth study had so far been made to determine a reasonable level of production for any year. The Board had therefore suggested a detailed analysis of the demands from consignees; only when such a study had been completed and a more realistic appraisal of the sales potential made, could the Greeting Card Operation plan production of cards and calendars more efficiently.

9. He welcomed the constructive response and follow-up action on the part of the Administration to the Board's previous recommendations. The Board had indicated in its reports areas requiring further attention.

10. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee's report (A/10239) did not contain its comments and observations on the United Nations accounts and the report of the Board of Auditors thereon, because of the new procedure outlined by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 14 of its report for 1974,[2] which also appeared as foot-note 8 in document A/10239.

11. The Advisory Committee, during its spring session, had had a very useful exchange of views with the Board of Auditors on the interim accounts of the United Nations, and had concluded that there were no matters in the interim accounts which needed to be brought to the attention of the General Assembly. As indicated in paragraph 3 of the report, the Advisory Committee understood that the Board's observations and recommendations on the interim accounts would be taken into consideration by the Secretary-General when he was preparing the financial reports and accounts for the biennium 1974-1975.

12. The comments of the Advisory Committee on the Board's report on the accounts of UNDP were contained in paragraphs 4 to 7 of its report. In paragraph 5 the Advisory Committee agreed with the Board that reconciliation should be made on a continuing basis between project budgets, allocations recorded by UNDP and the executing agencies' reports on those project budgets. The problem of shortfalls in project delivery was dealt with in paragraph 6, where the Advisory Committee expressed the hope that the recommendations made by the Board and the measures currently under implementation by UNDP would prove effective.

13. In paragraphs 8 to 10 the Advisory Committee offered its comments on the Board's report on the accounts of UNICEF. In paragraph 9 the Advisory Committee agreed with the Board that an annual review of programme assistance, in consultation with field officers, would be useful and might help in making annual adjustments in the unspent balance of commitments. The Advisory Committee had been informed that the over-production of greeting cards would be the subject of an in-depth study by the UNICEF Administration.

14. The Committee's comments on the Board's report on the accounts of UNITAR, UNHCR and the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme were contained in paragraphs 12 to 20. In paragraph 13, the Advisory Committee agreed with the Board that all benefits payable to UNITAR special fellows and research associates should be specifically mentioned in their letters of appointment. In paragraph 19 mention was made of short-comings in the internal control procedures of UNEP and project budget presentation. In paragraph 20, in its comment on the Board's observations on programme support and administrative costs financed from the Fund of UNEP and the United Nations regular budget, the Advisory Committee agreed with the Board that there was a need to ensure that programme support and administrative capacity were commensurate with a realistic level of programme delivery.

15. The Advisory Committee had no comments on the Board's report on the accounts of UNRWA and UNFPA.

***(a)* United Nations Development Programme (A/10007/Add.1; A/10239, paras. 4-7)**

16. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that his Government strongly supported the concept of external audit as performed by the Board of Auditors, and favoured continuing attention by the auditors to the efficiency of administration in accordance with financial regulations. His Government had reviewed each report carefully and commended that practice to all Member States, since the audits provided a useful approach to the evaluation of programme and management. It also favoured consideration of further measures to strengthen the audit process itself. His delegation regretted that no audit report had been made on United Nations regular budget expenditures and administration in 1974, and urged that in future a report should be made in each year of a biennium.

17. It was unfortunate that under current procedure replies by the UNDP Administrator to the major findings and recommendations of the auditors were made in the financial report of the financial year after the year of audit. As a result, the General Assembly did not have the UNDP Administration's comments until almost two years after the year of audit. His Government would suggest that in the future the Administrator should make at least preliminary

comments on the recommendations of the auditors at the time when their report was published.

18. His delegation had noted that according to paragraphs 33 to 37 of the Board's report (A/10007/Add.1, chap. IV), unidentified deposits amounted to $4.1 million as at 31 March 1975. It had also noted the auditors' statement that, since those deposits were unidentified at the end of the year, 1974 income was some $7 million less than it should have been. His delegation would be interested in the comments of the UNDP secretariat on that question.

19. His delegation was also disturbed by the auditors' finding, mentioned in paragraph 41 of their report, that the level of field office imprest bank accounts had increased by $9.4 million at the end of 1974 over the previous year. A team of expert consultants which had recently studied the control and administration of UNDP funds had recommended that imprest levels world wide should be reduced. His delegation hoped that the Administration would take immediate effective steps to implement that recommendation, thus releasing funds for programming purposes.

20. He noted that in schedule 5 of the accounts there were nine housing loans listed at 3.5 per cent interest. His delegation would be interested to know the maturity dates of those loans and the degree of liquidity of the investments.

21. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) expressed appreciation of the useful information contained in the reports of the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee. His Government supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that a comparison of actual expenditures at the end of the financial year with estimates made early in the year by all executing agencies should be included in the financial report of UNDP.

22. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that his delegation was satisfied with the reports of the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee, but was anxious to know what steps had been taken to normalize the situation referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Advisory Committee's report.

23. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the financial report for 1974 gave more substantial information and showed a significantly greater degree of responsibility and accountability on the part of the Administrator than the report for 1973. Pursuant to the amendment to the UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules approved by the Governing Council at its nineteenth session in January and February 1975,[3] comprehensive information had been provided which showed that the financial operations had been carried out in accordance with the Regulations and the directives of the policy-making bodies.

24. He agreed that there had been shortfalls in project delivery. He disagreed, however, that a more realistic indication of the progress of implementation was the comparison of actual expenditures at the end of the financial year with estimates made early in the year. A better method would be to compare the actual expenditures with the estimates of specific costs of projects on the basis of information provided by technical experts or UNDP resident representatives. That would also facilitate redistribution of unspent allocations, which in 1974 had amounted to some $666 million, according to schedule 8 of the accounts.

25. His delegation had doubts about the practice followed in 1974 whereby expenditures on goods and services not disbursed by 31 December 1974 had nevertheless been included in the 1974 expenditures. That had led to a distortion of the over-all picture: for example, the deficit for 1974 listed as $18.1 million had in fact been $13.4 million. UNDP had sufficient sources of income to pay those expenses in 1975—for example, unpaid contributions for 1974 which amounted to $42.6 million. Schedule 4 of the accounts outlined programme support and administrative costs and obligations incurred for the year ended 31 December 1974. He drew attention to the fact that the appropriations under sections 1 and 2 were approximately the same as the obligations incurred during that period. Staff assessment income was, however, over $232,000 less than the estimate. He wished to know whether that was due to an error in computing staff assessment or to a difference in accounting methodology.

26. In 1974, $3 million had been transferred from UNDP to the Special Measures Fund for the Least Developed Countries. As a result of the transfer, the Special Measures Fund during 1974 had increased from $4.1 million to some $7 million, whereas the UNDP deficit had grown from $15.1 million to $18.1 million.

27. Mr. SADDLER (United Nations Development Programme) expressed his appreciation of the constructive comments made.

28. If such was the will of the Fifth Committee, the UNDP Administrator would have no difficulty in following the United States suggestion that he should make at least preliminary comments on the auditors' findings at the time when their report was published.

29. The $4.1 million had been recorded as unidentified deposits because of the Programme's method of operation. Under current procedure, the Secretary-General received funds on behalf of UNDP. In cases where incomplete information accompanied such a deposit, it was customary to record it as an unidentified deposit. Certain new procedures would be recommended at pledging conferences to enable a better identification of funds contributed.

30. More information would be provided at a later date on the nine housing loans listed in schedule 5 of the accounts. The UNDP Administrator was authorized to make such loans, which were designed to finance the construction of houses for experts working on projects in developing countries. The loans were negotiated with recipient countries and the funds were repaid over a period of time.

31. The problem of project implementation had been a perplexing one, but with the help of external auditors new procedures were being implemented. In 1975 notable progress had been made in eliminating difficulties, although a number of temporary factors had frustrated efforts to

[3] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 2*, para. 332.

reduce shortfalls in project delivery. UNDP would attempt to obtain the best estimates of delivery, would compare those estimates with project delivery results at the end of the year, and would comply with the auditors' recommendation that such information should be provided in the annual accounts.

32. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, the text of which he read out.[4]

It was so decided.

(b) United Nations Children's Fund (A/10007/Add.2; A/10239, paras. 8-10)

33. Mr. HEYWARD (United Nations Children's Fund), replying to a question from Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), said that the number of children covered by UNICEF-assisted projects was approximately 900 million.

34. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, the text of which he read out.[5]

It was so decided.

(c) United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/10007/Add.3; A/10239, para. 11).

35. Mr. VAN WIJK (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) said he was glad that the accounts of UNRWA (see A/10007/Add.3) were in order. He expressed appreciation to the Board of Auditors for their valuable advice and suggestions (*ibid.*, chap. III).

36. The financial situation of UNRWA had been very serious in 1974 and was deteriorating still further in 1975. The Board of Auditors had commented on the chronic financial difficulties and sizable 1975 deficit of UNRWA. The $50 million deficit of early 1975 had now been reduced to $13 million through strenuous efforts and thanks to special contributions from the United States of America and Saudi Arabia. There was still, however, a danger that funds would not be sufficient to carry out the programme for the rest of the year. The UNRWA administration would do its utmost to ensure that there was no serious breakdown in the programme. The annual report of UNRWA would be issued the following week and considered by the Special Political Committee.

37. The CHAIRMAN observed that the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 11 of its report (A/10239), had stated that it had no comments on the report of the Board of Auditors on the UNRWA accounts.

38. He proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, the text of which he read out.[6]

It was so decided.

4 The draft resolution was subsequently adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 3370 A (XXX)).

5 *Idem* (resolution 3370 B (XXX)).

6 *Idem* (resolution 3370 C (XXX)).

(d) United Nations Institute for Training and Research (A/10007/Add.4; A/10239, paras. 12 and 13)

39. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) supported the recommendations in paragraphs 19 to 21 of the report of the Board of Auditors (A/10007/Add.4/chap. IV) that available resources from the General Fund and the Special-purpose Grants Fund should be more fully utilized. He also supported the use of a project budget, formulated by UNITAR in 1973, as an internal UNITAR management device, as a means of clarifying the benefits to Governments of the various projects, and as a means of constantly reviewing the relative priorities of projects both within UNITAR and between UNITAR and other organizations. He awaited with interest the results of the new expenditure coding system used on an experimental basis in 1975 to implement the project budget format. He drew attention to paragraphs 23 to 25 of the report of the Board of Auditors, which recommended that allotment advices between sections even within the same chapter should be made by means of formal transfer orders. Although statements II and III of the accounts listed expenditure by items which gave no insight into the comparative costs of the various programmes, schedules 2 and 3 supplemented those statements with valuable data on expenditures, broken down by general programme categories. He endorsed the suggestion made by the Board of Auditors in paragraphs 17 and 18 of its report that UNITAR should devise means of breaking down administrative expenditures as much as possible to show which programme activities they supported.

40. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) requested clarification of the amounts listed in statement II of the accounts for the entries "Home leave, appointment and separation travel" and "Other travel".

41. In connexion with the question of property taxes paid by UNITAR to New York City, he suggested that, since no action had been taken on the question, UNITAR should consider relocating its offices.

42. Mr. MILLAR-CRAIG (United Nations Institute for Training and Research), responding to the comments by the United States representative, said that UNITAR was making efforts to improve the format of expenditure control to relate it more closely to project expenditure, and was co-operating with the Office of Financial Services on that question. One problem which had not yet been completely resolved was that, in a small organization where salaries accounted for much of the expenditure and staff were involved simultaneously on various projects, it was difficult to process the data.

43. Replying to the representative of Algeria, he said that the amount listed for the entry "Other travel" in Statement II of the accounts covered the travel costs for participants in the courses organized by UNITAR. Concerning the property taxes paid to New York City by UNITAR for the premises it occupied, he said that the Office of Legal Affairs was still looking into the question. UNITAR would consider the comparative costs and benefits of moving to another building.

44. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, the text of which he read out.[7]

It was so decided.

(e) Voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/10007/Add.5; A/10239, paras. 14-17)

45. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, the text of which he read out.[8]

It was so decided.

(f) Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/10007/Add.6; A/10239, paras. 18-20)

46. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) observed that the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had made some justified criticism of UNEP; he drew attention in particular to paragraph 16 of the report of the Board of Auditors (A/10007/Add.6, chap. IV) referring to the need for improved project budget presentation. He hoped that the recommendation would be taken into consideration. He also expressed concern over the high level of support costs.

47. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq), referring to paragraph 20 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10239) and the fact that programme support and administrative costs for 1974 had constituted 47 per cent of total expenditure, partly owing to a shortfall of 71 per cent on the delivery of programmes, asked what were the main reasons for the delay in programme delivery.

48. Mr. JOBARTEH (United Nations Environment Programme) said that UNEP appreciated the efforts made by the Board of Auditors to identify the deficiencies in the Programme's procedures and administration. UNEP had sought to comply in the shortest time possible with the recommendations of the Board, particularly in respect of problems which UNEP had been aware of but had not had the necessary expertise to correct.

49. Responding to the comments by the representative of Belgium, he said that the various agencies with which UNEP worked had their own programme budget procedures; that fact made it difficult to implement a uniform presentation. A meeting was to be held in December 1975 to agree on a new project budget presentation effective 1 January 1976.

50. In response to the representative of Iraq, he referred to the statement made at the 1711th meeting by the Executive Director of UNEP explaining the ratio between programme support costs and programme delivery. He drew attention to the fact that UNEP was not a funding body but a co-ordinating body, and the programmes it funded directly were only part of the total programme it generated.

51. The Programme had been in existence only three years and could not be expected to have achieved the same level of performance as other agencies with more experience. It was now elaborating its objectives and devising ways and means of attaining them. Its difficulties were compounded by changing demands made on it, and UNEP, with its small secretariat, had to avoid undertaking activities which it might not be able to continue. The specific reasons for the shortfall in programme delivery could be provided only as part of an over-all evaluation of UNEP achievements over the preceding three years.

52. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, the text of which he read out.[9]

It was so decided.

(g) United Nations Fund for Population Activities (A/10007/Add.7; A/10239, para. 21)

53. The CHAIRMAN observed that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had stated, in paragraph 21 of its report (A/10239), that it had no comments on the report of the Board of Auditors (A/10007/Add.7, chap. IV) on UNFPA.

54. He proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, the text of which he read out.[10]

It was so decided.

* * *

55. The CHAIRMAN recalled in connexion with the reference made by the Chairman of the Board of Auditors to biennial accounts, that the Committee had decided the previous year to continue annual certification on an experimental basis. He suggested that the Committee might defer until the thirty-first session consideration of the question of biennial certification.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1705th meeting; A/10008/Add.2 and 3, A/C.5/1688, A/C.5/1692, A/C.5/L.1226, A/C.5/L.1229-1232)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 22. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL SERVICES *(continued) (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)*

Section 22C. Internal Audit Service (continued)

7 *Idem* (resolution 3370 D (XXX)).

8 *Idem* (resolution 3370 E (XXX)).

9 *Idem* (resolution 3770 F (XXX)).

10 *Idem* (resolution 3370 G (XXX)).

Section 22E. Office of Financial Services (Headquarters) (continued)

56. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the question asked by the representative of Belgium at the previous meeting, said that in the biennium 1973-1974 80 per cent of extra-budgetary activities had been audited in New York, 20 per cent at Geneva. As for the proportion of budgetary to extra-budgetary resources, he said that 79 per cent of the total in 1973 had been provided from the regular budget, approximately 21 per cent having been provided from extra-budgetary sources; the proportion had changed slightly and now extra-budgetary sources accounted for 25 to 30 per cent of the total.

57. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) noted that a number of questions had been raised regarding the staffing and functions of the Salary and Allowances Unit in the light of the establishment of ICSC. In 1974 the Fifth Committee had agreed to the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that the manning table of ICSC should be limited to the posts that were to be transferred from the various organizations and that that Commission should begin its work by giving priority to completing the comprehensive review of the United Nations salary system. Moreover, the Advisory Committee had recommended that the Commission's budget for the biennium 1976-1977 should be based on the initial staffing level. Prior to the Committee's vote on the ICSC budget, the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management had observed that the proposed arrangements would inevitably make it difficult for the Commission to start its work expeditiously and effectively and that the no-growth staffing situation might hamper its ability to meet the high expectations of all the parties concerned.

58. From the work methods and work programme adopted by ICSC, it was apparent that the secretaries of all the organizations should be prepared to participate fully in the work of the Commission. Such participation would take the form of preparing studies and position papers and co-ordinating proposals on all the related aspects of the United Nations salary system. It was understandable and desirable that ICSC should make demands on the organizations. As a consequence, however, each organization should make suitable arrangements to ensure that it could meet its responsibilities, not only by assisting and making representations to the Commission, but also by expeditiously implementing and administering the decisions taken either directly by ICSC or by the General Assembly.

59. The Salary and Allowances Unit included the Insurance Unit, which accounted for 6 of the 9 established posts set out in section 22E: 1 Professional and 5 General Service posts. The staffing and functions of the Insurance Unit were not affected by the establishment of ICSC. That left 2 Professional posts and 1 General Service post in the Salary and Allowances Section proper. One D-1, 1 P-4 and 2 General Service posts had been transferred to the Commission. Under that transfer arrangement, it had been agreed that the Salaries and Allowances Section would retain 2 Professional posts. That smaller manning table was based on the assumption that the reduction in the functions and responsibilities of the Section would take place immediately. However, in fact the Section had retained many of its functions during the transitional period. In addition to the functions described in paragraphs 22.79 to 22.81 of the proposed programme budget (A/10006), the Salaries and Allowances Unit provided advice on all policy aspects of salaries and allowances and on the conditions of service of staff and project personnel; it conducted consultations with staff representatives on the subject of reviews of salary scales and allowances of staff in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters; it advised on rates of allowances for military personnel and observers assigned to United Nations peace-keeping missions and on the salaries to be paid to locally recruited personnel on those and other missions; it co-ordinated the establishment of stipend rates for United Nations fellows for the various duty stations on behalf of all the organizations in the United Nations common system and it established the salary scales and rates of allowances for General Service staff at more than 140 duty stations.

60. Regarding the latter two functions, it had been the assumption that a large part of the analytical work involved would be transferred to ICSC. However, on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Commission had delayed taking over any of the operations concerning General Service salaries. According to its budget estimates for 1976-1977, ICSC did not envisage operational involvement in the General Service area before the second quarter of 1977 and then only for Headquarters duty stations. Its staffing requirements had been estimated accordingly. In the meantime, the responsibilities in that area would have to be carried out in very large part by the Salaries and Allowances Unit.

61. In summary, two major tasks had been completely transferred to ICSC, namely, the administration of the post-adjustment system and the establishment of daily subsistence allowance rates. The Salaries and Allowances Unit continued to discharge all the other functions which had been its responsibility over the years. In addition, it continued to serve as channel to ICSC in respect of United Nations problems and the feed-in of essential data in respect of the post-adjustment system and the daily subsistence allowance rates. The current manning table in section 22E did not appear to reflect adequately the scope and importance of the role that the Salaries and Allowances Unit would continue to play in the immediate future.

62. Turning to the Secretary-General's requests for consultancy services, which were dealt with by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 22.44 and 22.45 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), he explained that the consultant for the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General (Controller) would be required to complete the work on the control and administration of UNDP funds and, in particular, to take account of some 60 observations in an earlier study. The consultant for the Accounts Division would be expected to improve the present accounting manual, which dealt with Headquarters, and to enlarge its scope so that it could be utilized at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

63. With regard to the follow-up given to the reports of the Internal Audit Service, he said that the reports of the Service contained such matters as the auditors' criticisms,

suggestions and requests for clarification, and were addressed to the staff members in charge of the operations which had been audited. Replies to the reports were requested and, if necessary, reminders were sent until a reply had been received. It was difficult to assess accurately the benefits deriving from those reports since the recommendations were of varying weight. In some cases major changes had been effected; for example, in 1974 the accounting systems of two large regional offices had been completely revised and modernized as a result of the Service's reports. There was a very close working relationship between the Internal Audit Service and the Board of Auditors.

Section 22F. Office of Personnel Services

64. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) welcomed the strengthening of the Division for Policy Co-ordination, mentioned in paragraph 22.50 of the report of the Advisory Committee. In the past he had deplored the lack of a consistent personnel policy to enable the Secretariat to withstand special interest groups and to raise morale by establishing a fair international civil service. In that connexion he had endorsed many of the relevant recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and the Administrative Management Service. He hoped that the Secretary-General would continue to improve personnel policy co-ordination in respect of the more routine activities of the Office of Personnel Services, and that care would be taken to ensure there was no overlapping between that Office and ICSC.

65. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), referring to the various offices of personnel services at United Nations Headquarters, in the economic and social sector of the United Nations, at Geneva, and also in the regional commissions, requested clarification as to how personnel policy was co-ordinated. He also asked exactly how many posts for personnel officers were financed from the regular budget of the United Nations.

66. Mr. IVANKO (Director of the Division for Policy Co-ordination, Office of Personnel Services) said that the various units of the Office of Personnel Services were part of the organizations where they were located but acted in accordance with the policy established by the Secretary-General and followed at Headquarters. It had been decided to delegate more authority for the routine activities of personnel offices so that the Office of Personnel Services at Headquarters could concentrate on policy matters. The Office consisted of 68 Professional posts, including the staff of the Medical Service, and several General Service posts. The number of personnel officers elsewhere was not specified, but in the case of the regional commissions there were 1 or 2 Professional posts for each commission and not more than about a dozen in all.

Section 22G. Administrative and Financial Services (Geneva)

There were no comments.

Section 22H. Technical Assistance Recruitment Services

67. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) estimated that some 1,200 to 1,400 experts would be recruited by the Technical Assistance Recruitment Service in the biennium 1976-1977 at a cost of between $2,500 and $3,000 each. The recruitment costs, if he had calculated them accurately, were excessive and he hoped that everything possible would be done to reduce them.

Section 22I. Staff training activities

68. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation supported any training measures that would enhance the competence, efficiency and morale of the Secretariat staff. It regretted the disappearance of the Junior Professional Trainee Programme, which had helped to alleviate difficulties encountered in recruiting young staff members. Better orientation courses for all new recruits, particularly those in the Professional category, and training and refresher courses for mid-career staff were required. However, he cautioned against the use of United Nations funds for providing Professional staff with an educational grounding which they should have acquired before entry, as, for example, in the case of the special training programme referred to in paragraph 22.162 of the proposed programme budget. The same comments applied to language training and, in that connexion, he reminded members of the comments of the Secretary-General in paragraph 38 of a report on personnel questions,[11] concerning an improved balance between language and other training programmes.

69. Competitive recruitment examinations and tests were of cardinal importance in the recruitment of young staff members and should be expanded in order to attract fresh blood and to remedy the chronic under-representation of a number of Member States. He therefore welcomed the Advisory Committee's decision to approve $77,000 out of the amount of $97,000 requested by the Secretary-General for the holding of examinations. It was to be hoped that the successful candidates from the competitive examinations held in Japan and two other Member States would be promptly absorbed. He welcomed the Secretary-General's stated intention to experiment with examinations on a regional and subregional basis, despite the difficulties caused by disparate cultural standards and educational systems, and agreed with the Advisory Committee that the host Governments should be invited to defray all or part of the cost of conducting those examinations in their countries.

70. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that although the Committee would discuss the Secretary-General's report on the composition of the Secretariat[12] under the item on personnel questions his delegation wished to comment on paragraphs 33 to 39 of that report in the current discussion on section 22I. According to the report, the Secretary-General's efforts to recruit more qualified women candidates for Professional and senior posts in the Secretariat had apparently been unsuccessful. Following a screening of a total of 741 applicants in the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan, only 8 women had been placed on the roster of candidates eligible for appointments to posts in the Secretariat. Furthermore, very few names of women were being suggested by Governments for posts in United Nations organizations. From paragraph 39 of the report, his delegation had learnt that some United Nations organiza-

11 Document A/C.5/1601, of 6 September 1974.

12 Document A/10184, of 28 August 1975.

tions had initiated reviews of their recruitment and career development procedures in order to determine what measures might be taken to bring about a better balance between men and women staff members. His delegation believed that it would be easier for the Secretary-General to implement the General Assembly's recruitment guidelines if he were given more resources for promoting the careers of women already in the service of the United Nations. There were undoubtedly many well-educated, skilled and highly experienced women in the Secretariat who could be trained for more senior posts if training programmes existed. Unfortunately, it was impossible to determine from the budget proposals whether there were such programmes. If there were not, he suggested that the Committee might consider the inclusion of resources in the budget for that purpose or, alternatively, examine other possibilities of promoting training programmes for women staff members.

71. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked whether the resources requested for the professional studies programme, as referred to in paragraph 22.163 of the proposed programme budget, were for the purpose of training young staff members. He expressed the hope that the cost of language courses, which he estimated at approximately $50 an hour could be reduced; he wondered how many of the current level of 10 Professional and 5 General Service staff actually had teaching duties.

72. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) endorsed the comments made by the representative of Sweden and suggested that the Committee should formulate a draft resolution or decision on the subject. His delegation intended at a later stage to make further comments on equal employment opportunities for women and improved opportunities for nationals of the developing countries.

73. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) associated his delegation with some of the comments made by the representative of Sweden and expressed his intention of speaking on the principle of geographical distribution when the Committee took up agenda item 104.

74. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) endorsed the comments made by the representative of Iran and said that his delegation would make a statement on the subject at a later stage.

75. Mr. WEBB (Office of Personnel Services) thanked the representative of Japan for his encouraging comments regarding the competitive recruitment examinations.

76. In reply to the representative of Sweden, he said that the Secretariat would welcome suggestions as to how it might recruit more women. The failure of Governments to recommend more women candidates was a major obstacle in that regard.

77. In reply to the representative of Belgium, he said that the professional studies programme catered to the needs of all staff members, both young and mid-career, who were required to develop their managerial skills.

78. He would reply to the questions concerning the cost of training courses at the following meeting.

Section 22J. Office of General Services (Headquarters)

79. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), referring to paragraph 22.192 of the proposed programme budget, suggested that it would be more logical to assign the cost of providing radio, television and motion picture services to the Office of Public Information.

80. Mr. TIMBRELL (Office of General Services) said that provision for technical services in connexion with telecommunication operations was currently made in section 22J following a decision taken some years earlier to combine all such operations under a single management for economy reasons. The actual costs were shared by the Office of General Services and the Office of Public Information.

Section 22K. Division of General Services (Geneva)

There were no comments.

Section 22L. Miscellaneous expenses

There were no comments.

* * *

81. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked whether the Advisory Committee intended to submit a report on the Administrative Management Service.

82. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of thy Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew attention to the summary of his statement at the 1716th meeting in which he had informed the Committee that the progress report received from the Administrative Management Service did not contain anything which warranted the attention of the Fifth Committee. Consequently, the Advisory Committee would not be submitting a report on the Service.

83. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) thanked the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for his explanation and announced his intention of submitting a proposal concerning section 22B.

84. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in the light of the statement by the representative of Belgium, the Committee should defer a decision on section 22 as a whole.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

1718th meeting

Tuesday, 21 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1718

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (A/9854 and Add.1, A/10006 and Add.1, A/10008 and Corr.2, A/10008/Add.1-3, A/C.5/1669, A/C.5/1671, A/C.5/1673-1675, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1678, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/1681, A/C.5/1682, A/C.5/1685, A/C.5/1686, A/C.5/1688, A/C.5/1692, A/C.5/L.1226, A/C.5/L.1229-1233)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 9. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that the initial estimates under section 9 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) amounted to $18,887,000, which represented an increase of $4,979,000 or 35.8 per cent over the revised appropriation for the current biennium. The estimates contained an amount of $848,000 at 1975 rates, as programme growth, but because $546,000 of that related to one-time installation expenditure for the extension of Africa Hall, at Addis Ababa, real growth for ECA was estimated by the Secretary-General at 1.92 per cent.

2. The current manning table for ECA comprised 425 posts, of which 164 were in the Professional category. As of 1 May 1975 there had been 26 vacancies in ECA, that is, slightly more than twice the average rate used for ECA for the application of a 5 per cent turnover deduction on existing posts. In paragraph 9.4 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) the Advisory Committee had recommended that the turnover deduction applicable to existing Professional and senior posts should be increased from 5 to 10 per cent.

3. For 1976-1977 the Secretary-General was requesting 105 additional posts, that is, 4 Professional and 101 other-level posts, 79 of which represented conversion from temporary to established posts. In view of the fact that in 1976 ECA would be moving into the enlarged premises of Africa Hall, the Advisory Committee had accepted that conversion and had also accepted the other posts requested, except for 1 P-5 post and 3 posts for reproduction clerks, which had not been accepted for the reasons set out in paragraphs 9.8 and 9.9 of its report. As for the 3 reclassifications requested, the Advisory Committee had dealt with them in the context of paragraph 61 of its report.

4. The Advisory Committee believed that there was room for improvement in the presentation and description of ECA programmes, as was pointed out in paragraph 9.10 of its report. The new Executive Secretary of ECA had informed the Committee that a review of ECA activities was in progress and that such a review might affect the current proposals, as was mentioned in paragraph 9.1 of the Committee's report. It was hoped that the review would take into account the observations made in paragraph 9.10 of the report of the Advisory Committee.

5. The effect of the Advisory Committee recommendations, including the effect of its decision on representation allowances, described in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report, was to reduce the Secretary-General's request under section 9 by $689,400 to $18,197,600.

6. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that his delegation supported the reduction proposed by the Advisory Committee and its recommendations. It agreed with the Advisory Committee that there appeared to be a lack of specificity in the justifications for some of the requests, that there might be some overlapping of programmes and that co-ordination measures might be more clearly described. Those observations suggested that perhaps presentation and description of programmes in that area could be improved.

7. The Secretary-General proposed the conversion of 79 posts to established posts—47 manual workers and 32 guards—by transfer from temporary assistance funds to regular funds. In general, the United States delegation was not in favour of that "back-door" approach to staffing, which had been questioned by many delegations and by the Advisory Committee. In the case of ECA, it might prove less expensive over the long run to make local contracts for such services, and savings of as much as $500,000 for the biennium might be possible if such contracts were used. The United States delegation would be interested to hear the comments of the Secretariat on that point.

8. Mr. NSUBUGA (Uganda) said that the appropriations requested for ECA were comparable in terms of crude figures to the United Nations budget in 1946, which, when one considered that ECA had not been established until the late 1950s, represented a great evolution of the United Nations in the past 30 years. While waste could not be excused, it was important to consider whether an attempt was being made to achieve the objectives that had to be achieved. The 35 per cent increase in the budget for 1976-1977 over the revised appropriation for 1974-1975 might seem frightening *prima facie*, but when viewed in the perspective of the decolonization of Mozambique and Angola, the Sudano-Sahelian drought, the malnutrition and the desirable goals in such fields as industry, housing, education, statistics, water and inter-State communication, the figure dimmed into insignificance. ECA needed the tools to do the job. All it took was the political will, and it seemed that that will was there.

9. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that on the whole he was quite in favour of the Secretary-General's budget proposals, as revised by the Advisory Committee, since ECA, which was one of the commissions most deserving of the General Assembly's attention, must be given the means to carry out its programmes. However, he noted from table 9-5 of the proposed programme budget that there was a very considerable increase in administrative expenses (Programme support), which were 61.2 per cent higher than the appropriations made for that purpose in 1974-1975. That increase represented a real growth of 5.9 per cent, in other words, it was distinctly higher than the growth justified for substantive programmes. With regard to the ECA "Science and technology" programme (programme 12), his delegation wondered if the department concerned was working in consultation with the Office for Science and Technology at Headquarters and possibly with the appropriate UNESCO department, and he noted some very interesting comments made in that connexion by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 5.28 of its report. It would, in fact, be necessary to ensure very close co-ordination of activities, not only between United Nations bodies but also between the United Nations and the specialized agencies.

10. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), referring to the point raised by the representative of the United States of America, who had suggested that the United Nations might effect savings by concluding contracts locally for indoor and outdoor maintenance services, said that the Secretariat would certainly bear in mind what the representative of the United States had said on the subject. As a general rule, the Secretariat used permanent staff for routine work and that was the point made in paragraph 9.42 of the proposed programme budget. There was no reason to believe that the United Nations would benefit in the long run by recruiting local workers for such jobs, but the Secretariat would look into the question.

11. In reply to the question asked by the representative of Belgium, he wished to assure that representative that, in addition to the regular co-ordination provided by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, ECA activities in the field of science and technology were subject to co-ordination not only with UNESCO but also with the Organization of African Unity, as could be seen from the last annual report of the Economic Commission for Africa.[1]

12. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation, recommended by the Advisory Committee for section 9 (see para. 5 above).

An appropriation of $18,197,600 under section 9 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 74 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

13. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on section 9 as it could not agree to the increased appropriation requested to offset the effects of inflation and currency fluctuations or the establishment of the additional posts requested. The extra expenditure should be met through savings, reassessment of priorities, redistribution of staff and increased staff output, improved organization of work and the elimination of obsolete programmes.

SECTION 6. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

14. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General's initial estimate under section 6 of the proposed programme budget (A/10006) amounted to $13,477,000, representing an increase of $2,799,000, or 26.2 per cent, over the revised 1974-1975 appropriation as adjusted to exclude staff costs amounting to $572,000 which, for 1976-1977, were budgeted for under section 22G. However, since the United Nations Office at Geneva provided conference and general service support for ECE, the total costs for that Commission's activities were considerably more than the $13.5 million shown under section 6. As shown in paragraph 6.2 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10018 and Corr.2), total resources estimated by the Secretary-General for implementing ECE programmes amounted to some $36,339,400. It was also worth noting that ECE had a complement of 221 established posts under the regular budget for the current biennium and 24 posts from extra-budgetary resources. That was a total of 245 posts, of which 130 were in the Professional and higher categories. In the light of those considerations, and on the basis of the justification provided, the Advisory Committee had concluded that of the additional 5 Professional and 8 General Service posts requested for 1976-1977, 2 Professional and 4 General Service posts should be accepted. The effect of that recommendation, as well as that on delayed recruitment deduction on new posts (*ibid.*, para. 55), and the recommendation on representation allowances (*ibid.*, paras. 63-65), would be to reduce the initial estimates for section 6 by $305,400, making the total recommended $13,171,600. Finally, the request to reclassify 1 Professional post from P-4 to P-5 in the "Natural resources" programme was covered by the Advisory Committee's recommendation (*ibid.*, para. 61).

15. Mr. TALVITIE (Finland) said that on 1 August 1975 the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe at Helsinki had adopted a Final Act which embodied a number of decisions on economic co-operation among States and assigned new responsibilities to ECE. It was understandable that the competent organs should not have been able as yet to decide on and prepare action programmes to implement those decisions, which had not been taken into account fully in the proposed programme budget. The new posts requested by the Secretary-General for ECE had been reduced by the Advisory Committee to 2 Professional and 4 General Service posts. In view of the importance to the Conference of follow-up action by ECE, his delegation strongly deplored that reduction and hoped that the Secretary-General's proposals for increasing the capacity of ECE would be approved by the Fifth Committee and the Assembly. If that was not possible, his delegation hoped that ECE's increased staff requirements would be reviewed as soon as the necessary decisions concerning programmes were made.

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 10*, and corrigenda, vol. I, para. 111.

16. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation's position of principle with regard to budget restrictions and the use of available resources, which had already been outlined, applied to all sections of the proposed programme budget without exception, but that his delegation did not deny the real need for a justified growth of resources for the execution of new and expanded programmes, as was the case with ECE. The year 1975 had been marked by great achievements in economic and political co-operation in Europe–in particular the results of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe–which had a direct impact on the scope and volume of the work of ECE. His delegation had for years been striving to strengthen ECE, which was most important for East-West co-operation within Europe and for improving economic co-operation and the political climate; its many achievements and its experience in developing political and economic co-operation in Europe should be an example to all other regions of the world, in the interest of the entire international community.

17. His delegation had carefully reviewed the appropriations sought by the Secretary-General under section 6 and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on them, and had reached the conclusion that the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee failed to take into account the role which ECE should play. His delegation believed that the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General under section 6 should be approved. If they were not approved, it hoped that the Executive Secretary of ECE would give his assurance that the substantive programmes of the Commission would not suffer on account of the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee, if they were accepted, and it hoped to hear the opinion of the representatives of the Secretary-General on that subject. His delegation urged the Secretariat to devote to the execution of ECE programmes the material and human resources released by the elimination of completed, inefficient and marginally useful programmes and by the internal redistribution of resources.

18. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the appropriations sought by the Secretary-General under section 6, which represented an increase of some $2.8 million, or 26.2 per cent, over the revised appropriation for 1974-1975, included about $1.2 million to offset the effects of inflation and to finance additional posts. His delegation had already stated its position on the appropriations requested for that purpose, but it excepted from its comments the additional posts which the Secretary-General was requesting for ECE, because that Commission had definite new responsibilities in the matter of implementing the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. It was the duty of the Secretary-General to take practical measures to help ECE to perform that important task and, in particular, to facilitate the work of the ECE secretariat by assigning to it staff members who were not fully employed elsewhere. His delegation would, in order that ECE might be able to perform the task entrusted to it by the Conference, vote for the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General under section 6, as modified by the Advisory Committee.

19. Mr. MURG (Romania) said that the activities of ECE had grown substantially in recent years and that ECE had done much to strengthen co-operation in Europe. His country, whose co-operation with ECE was fruitful, hoped that that co-operation would continue to expand. His delegation approved the appropriations requested for ECE and would vote in favour of them. Nevertheless, unnecessary expenditure should be kept to a minimum, and his delegation accordingly hoped that the management of ECE would, in using the appropriations under that section, take due account of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and of the members of the Fifth Committee on the subject.

20. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he was impressed by the interesting comments of the representatives of Finland, Poland, the USSR and Romania, and shared some of the views they had expressed. One had to be reasonable, however, in discussing budgetary problems. The total expenditure estimates for ECE for the forthcoming biennium amounted to about $36 million, whereas expenditure for ECA was $18 million and expenditure for ESCAP $16 million. Moreover, real growth was approximately 4.1 per cent, in other words, higher than average real growth for the budget as a whole. The Advisory Committee had therefore acted correctly in making a small reduction in the appropriation sought for the section, and in future the provision for the real growth of ECE should not be higher than the real growth of the budget as a whole, unless ECE had unusual requirements. If such requirements arose during the coming two years, the Secretariat should be able to cope with them by redeploying resources.

21. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that the Secretary-General had requested an appropriation of $13,477,000 under section 6 and had asked for additional posts in such programme sectors as development, forest products, environment and industry, although there were no constraints on development in Europe and it was in a much better position than all other regions. The reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee amounted to $305,000, or nearly 3 per cent of the appropriation sought by the Secretary-General. However, as the report of the Advisory Committee showed, total real expenditure was not $13 million but $36 million, an amount much higher than the expenditure estimates for the other regional commissions. The reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee did not amount to even 1 per cent of the total of $36 million. Accordingly his delegation could not endorse some of the comments of other delegations opposing the Advisory Committee's recommendations on account of political successes which had been achieved in Europe. Although those achievements were gratifying, it should not be forgotten that ECE was an "economic" commission and that its purely economic activities should be emphasized. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee.

22. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that she had a general comment to make which applied to all the regional commissions: their programmes did not appear to be genuinely integrated with the activities of the Organization as a whole, and that defect should be remedied in the coming years. A number of delegations had rightly stressed the importance of ECE's activities, but that should not lead them to lose sight of the necessity for thrift in all sectors of the Organization.

23. In paragraph 6.6 of the proposed programme budget it was stated, in connexion with the programme "Agriculture and forest products" that no significant changes in activities were anticipated during the forthcoming biennium as compared with the work done during the period 1974-1975, which meant that activities would in fact be static. However, as table 6-4 of the budget estimates showed, the Secretary-General had provided for a rate of growth of 8.5 per cent for that programme. Paragraph 6.7 did contain a list of studies to be carried out, but the Secretary-General had requested for that purpose only 1 additional post for a First Officer (P-4). The increase of 8.5 per cent was explained in neither the proposed programme budget nor the report of the Advisory Committee, and her delegation would welcome details on the subject.

24. The expected growth in the "Human settlements" programme was 13 per cent; she asked how much had been provided to cover the cost of ECE's participation in Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, to be held in Vancouver, and what exactly was meant by "follow-up activities (A/10006, para. 6.20, subparagraph *(a)*).

25. Paragraph 6.34 of the proposed programme budget stated, on the subject of the "Science and technology" programme, that the work under that programme, which was conducted under the auspices of senior advisers to ECE Governments on science and technology, "may" be expected to expand significantly during the biennium. According to table 6-4, however, the expected growth of that programme was 106.2 per cent. She would welcome an explanation.

26. Her delegation would vote in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

27. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that the total of approximately $36 million in estimated requirements for ECE was a substantial sum; he shared the concern expressed in that regard by the representatives of Iran and Belgium and would therefore support the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee.

28. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said that none of the comments made so far regarding section 6 had succeeded in convincing him that the Advisory Committee's recommendations were not acceptable. While it did not deny the importance of ECE's activities, his delegation found the Advisory Committee's arguments most convincing and would therefore vote in favour of that Committee's recommendations.

29. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) associated himself with those delegations which had stressed the importance of ECE's activities and said that the Commission should be given all the resources it needed to do its job properly.

30. Mr. MINCHEV (Bulgaria) said that he shared the views expressed by the representatives of Poland, the Soviet Union and other countries regarding the very great importance of ECE's activities and of the role which the Commission would be called upon to play in the future in strengthening mutual co-operation in Europe. His delegation would vote for the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

31. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that while he was fully aware of the importance of ECE's role, he nevertheless felt that the appropriations requested for the Commission were somewhat too high, as could be seen in particular from the information analysed by the Advisory Committee. ECE's budget appeared to be truly substantial by comparison with those of the other regional commissions. His delegation would therefore support the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee.

32. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that he supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations and hoped that the Secretary-General would find it possible in the future to stabilize the growth of ECE's programmes.

33. With regard to the "Agriculture and forest products" programme, it was apparent from table 6-10 of the proposed programme budget that the number of Professional posts financed from extra-budgetary sources was much higher than the number charged against the regular budget. Furthermore, while only 3 P-2 posts and 1 P-3 had been charged to the regular budget in 1974-1975, the posts financed from extra-budgetary sources had included 2 D-1, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3 and 2 P-2 posts. He therefore wondered whether the programme was not being financed essentially from extra-budgetary sources.

34. Mr. MATSEIKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation had always attached very great importance to the role of ECE whose objectives for 1976-1977 were summarized in paragraph 6.2 of the proposed programme budget. The next biennium would be particularly important for ECE because of the highly important tasks that would be entrusted to it in various spheres under the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, held at Helsinki.

35. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding section 6, but that did not mean that it was departing from the fundamental position it had stated during the general discussion (1707th meeting) regarding inflation.

36. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the representative of Poland, who had requested assurances that ECE's programmes would not suffer from the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee, said that those reductions would unquestionably make it more difficult for ECE to do its work, but that the Secretary-General would do his best to cope with the Commission's various tasks with the resources allocated to it.

37. Replying to the representative of the Upper Volta regarding the exceptionally large number of posts financed from extra-budgetary sources under the "Agriculture and forest products" programme, he pointed out that, as could be seen from paragraph 6.8 of the proposed programme budget, the posts in question, which were specialist posts, were being financed by FAO.

38. The French delegation had deplored the lack of co-ordination between the regional commissions and other organs engaged in economic and social activities. In point of

fact, care had been taken to indicate in various paragraphs relating to section 6 the procedures employed for co-ordination with organs and agencies performing comparable tasks.

39. The representative of France had noted that the increase of 8.5 per cent envisaged for the "Agriculture and forest products" programme was higher than for certain other programmes. It should be borne in mind in that regard that the addition of a post or two naturally caused a more rapid increase in the growth rate of a small programme than it did in the growth rate of a programme which already had a very large staff.

40. With regard to the "Human Settlements" programme, no special appropriation was being requested for the implementation of any recommendations that might be made as a result of the forthcoming Conference, which in a sense already formed part of the regular budgetary programme in that field.

41. As to the growth rate of 106.2 per cent in the "Science and technology" programme, it could be seen from the foot-note to table 6.24 of the proposed programme budget that the additional posts resulted from a redeployment of resources from other programmes, particularly the programme relating to international trade. With regard to the statement made in paragraph 6.34 of the proposed programme budget, it should be borne in mind that, at the time when the initial estimates had been prepared, only preliminary information had been available on the anticipated workload of the "Science and technology" programme. It could now be stated definitely that the P-4 post requested in paragraph 6.37–which, he noted, had not been approved by the Advisory Committee–reflected a certain workload, regarding which he could provide the Committee with any information it wished.

42. Mrs. DERRE (France) thanked Mr. Lavau for his explanations but noted that he had not replied to her question regarding the appropriations required to cover the cost of ECE's participation in the Vancouver Conference.

43. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that ECE would be represented at the Conference and that the cost of its participation would be covered with appropriations already appearing in the budget, there being no need to request a special appropriation for the purpose.

44. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the total of $36 million requested for ECE's programme in 1976-1977 was far too much. In particular, the $15 million for conference services was enormous, and he did not see what there was in ECE's work that could justify the impressive total of 650 or 700 days of meetings held during 1974, a figure which truly set a record. He would like to know what the average cost of one hour of meeting time was.

45. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that working paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.4 showed that the average cost of one hour of a plenary meeting of the General Assembly was $6,961.

46. The CHAIRMAN said it appeared that a majority of the members of the Fifth Committee supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations. Some delegations were concerned at the proposed reductions and seemed to prefer that the Fifth Committee should approve the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General, but they had not made a formal proposal to that effect.

47. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) observed that some delegations had been astonished at the size of the appropriation requested for ECE.

48. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the amount recommended for section 6 by the Advisory Committee (see para. 14 above).

An appropriation in the amount of $13,171,600 under section 6 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 88 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

SECTION 7. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

49. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the appropriation of $16,436,000 requested by the Secretary-General under section 7 (A/10006) was $4,181,000, or 34.1 per cent, higher than the revised appropriation for 1974-1975. The Secretary-General attributed most of the increase to inflationary pressures. The estimates contained an amount of $529,000 at 1975 rates, for programme growth. However, as indicated in paragraph 7.1 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008 and Corr.2) the total resources needed to implement the Commission's programmes in 1976-1977 was estimated at $20,805,000.

50. The establishment of ESCAP in the current biennium comprised 454 posts, of which 161 were in the Professional category. As of 1 May 1975, the number of vacant posts in the Professional category had been 2.4 times the average used to apply a 5-per-cent turnover deduction on existing posts. In view of that fact, the Advisory Committee recommended the application of a further 5-per-cent turnover deduction under section 7, entailing a reduction of $558,000 in the appropriation requested.

51. The Secretary-General had requested the addition of 8 Professional and 36 local General Service posts. Considering the five areas of activity to which ESCAP had given priority (*ibid.*, para. 7.2) the Advisory Committee recommended approval of 7 additional Professional and 34 local General Service posts (*ibid.*, para. 7.7). Taking into account the recommendations made by the Committee in paragraph 55 of its report concerning a delayed recruitment allowance and the reduction of the provision for representation allowances recommended in paragraphs 63 to 65–which would entail a reduction of $400 under section 7–the total reduction recommended by the Committee amounted to $691,400, and the appropriation which it thus recommended under section 7 to $15,744,600.

52. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that the work of ESCAP was contributing greatly to the economic development of the region it served. Thanks to the co-operation which it made possible, ESCAP was doing pioneer work in many fields and Japan was happy to participate in its activities. It

was very pleased to note that the Advisory Committee had approved all but 3 of the posts requested by the Secretary-General.

53. The way in which the ESCAP budget was presented was such that it was not possible to have an idea as to the date on which certain programmes would be completed or as to the possibility which would then exist of redeploying resources among the most urgent programmes.

54. While it was cause for satisfaction that ESCAP had given priority to five areas of activity, there was nevertheless reason for concern, as indicated by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 7.3 of its report, at the danger of undue fragmentation and excessive compartmentalization in the activities of the United Nations. According to the relevant manning tables in the proposed programme budget, five ESCAP programmes had been entrusted to administrative units having less than 5 Professional posts: they included the environment programme (table 7-16), the human settlements programme (table 7-18), the public administration programme (table 7-28), the science and technology programme (table 7-30) and the management of technical co-operation programme (table 7-38). It was particularly surprising that the "Science and technology" programme should have been entrusted to a single Professional, who, to judge by paragraph 7.28 of the proposed programme budget, was in charge of six different activities. It would seem impossible for one person to accomplish all the tasks enumerated in that paragraph. ESCAP should surely be recommended to be more circumspect, to undertake only priority programmes and to intensify its efforts at co-ordination.

55. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) noted that the Advisory Committee, considering that a number of ESCAP programme sectors were essentially similar to those covered by other United Nations bodies or agencies such as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNIDO, UNEP, UNCTAD and FAO, in paragraph 7.3 of its report cautioned against undue fragmentation and excessive compartmentalization and drew attention to the need for co-ordination of activities and the development of effective programmes. His delegation accordingly questioned the need for an increase of 44 new posts in 1976-1977, particularly since 22 Professional posts authorized under the regular budget were still vacant 17 months after the beginning of the current biennium and ESCAP was drawing on extra-budgetary funds for an additional 21 posts. In the light of those considerations, his delegation would abstain in the vote on section 7.

56. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) stressed the importance of the activities to which the Commission, at its thirtieth and thirty-first sessions held, respectively, at Colombo in 1974, and New Delhi in February and March 1975, had decided to give priority.

57. In paragraph 7.3 of its report, the Advisory Committee stressed the need for co-ordination of activities and the development of effective joint programmes. The Joint Inspection Unit itself, in its report on what had then been called ECAFE,[2] had noted a lack of co-ordination. It was not known whether ESCAP had subsequently taken corrective measures, but it was to be noted that the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 7.6 of its report, had recommended precisely that the P-4 post and 2 local posts which would have enabled the Programme and Co-ordination Office to improve the situation should not be approved.

58. His delegation also had reservations with regard to the further turnover deduction of 5 per cent which the Advisory Committee recommended should be applied under section 7. ESCAP recruitment was difficult because of the fact that the countries which it served had already reached the limit of their quotas. Perhaps a regional quota could be established which would make it possible to recruit other Professionals from the countries considered who had a good knowledge of the problems of Asia.

59. In view of the importance of the work of ESCAP, having regard *inter alia* to the results of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and to the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, his delegation hoped that the Fifth Committee would give favourable consideration to the case of that Commission.

60. Mr. GHAFOURZAI (Afghanistan) said that the countries of Asia and the Pacific benefited continuously from the assistance provided by ESCAP. In paragraph 7.2 of its report, the Advisory Committee said it had been informed that the Commission had given priority to five areas of activity for the next biennium. Any reduction in the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General would hamper the carrying out of the actitivies which the Commission was to undertake in those areas. His delegation therefore had difficulty in supporting the Advisory Committee's recommendations and hoped that the Fifth Committee would approve the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General.

61. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) expressed the hope that ESCAP, which, with broadened responsibilities, had taken the place of the former ECAFE, would be able to play an effective role in the development of the countries of the Pacific.

62. In paragraph 7.4 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended a deduction of $558,000 from the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General for the establishment of new posts. The size of that deduction called for some further explanations. He would like to know why so many posts remained vacant in ESCAP, whether the 22 vacancies existing as of 1 May 1975 were temporary or long-standing, and what was the exact nature of the difficulties of recruitment in the region.

63. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) recalled that his delegation had already stated during the general discussion (1712th meeting) that the regional commissions should be associated with the process of preparing the United Nations budget, since only they were fully aware of the needs of the regions they served.

64. The Advisory Committee, which had always avoided making value judgements, claiming that under its terms of reference its tasks were strictly technical, seemed to have

2 Document E/4781, of 27 January 1970.

departed from that position in paragraph 7.3 of its report, for it cautioned against undue fragmentation and excessive compartmentalization of programmes being carried out by various United Nations bodies and agencies. It would seem that the Advisory Committee had not recognized that the common denominator of UNIDO, UNEP, UNCTAD and FAO, referred to in the paragraph in question, was underdevelopment. What was entailed was a joint endeavour and not fragmented activities. The Pacific region was witnessing the birth of new nations, sometimes in painful circumstances, and ESCAP was obliged to concern itself with their development.

65. His delegation hoped that the Fifth Committee would approve the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General for ESCAP without taking into account the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee, which was twice as high as that which it had recommended in the case of ECE.

66. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) expressed surprise that the representative of Australia should have considered unduly harsh the reduction of $691,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee, especially since the disallowance of posts amounted to only $133,000, or 0.9 per cent of the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General. In that particular instance the elimination of the P-4 post and 2 local posts requested by the Programme and Co-ordination Office was justified, for ESCAP should use its resources to improve its co-ordination, without asking for new posts which might be superfluous. With regard to the further turnover deduction recommended by the Advisory Committee, it should not be forgotten that that was a measure which had already been adopted under other sections of the budget. His delegation approved the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

67. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that he did not wish to take a position on the question of what amount should be appropriated for ESCAP. However, as had been stressed, the growth of the "Executive direction and management" programme would be directly compromised by the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the elimination of certain posts. A reduction in the growth of any other programme would not have raised such a problem, since, as the representative of Japan had observed, certain staff members were in charge of so many projects that one could well wonder about the effectiveness of their work. That was true in the case of the "Environment" programme (A/10006, paras. 7.11 and 7.12). In that connexion, it could be asked why the Secretary-General did not request new posts for that programme. Was it to be concluded that activities in that area would be exactly the same in 1976-1977 as in 1975-1976?

68. Turning to the question of the co-ordination of ESCAP activities with those of UNEP, he noted that table 7-16 of the proposed programme budget, concerning the permanent posts required for the "Environment" programme, mentioned no post financed from extra-budgetary funds, whereas it was known that UNEP financed certain projects in other regional commissions.

69. Despite those anomalies, his delegation would support the Advisory Committee's recommendations, assuming that the estimates had been approved by ESCAP itself. However, he would like some clarifications on the two points he had raised.

. . .

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

1719th meeting

Wednesday, 22 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1719

AGENDA ITEM 97

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(continued) (for the previous documentation, see 1700th meeting; A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2)**

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2, which incorporated the amendment submitted by Algeria (A/C.5/L.1228). As the result of negotiations between the sponsors and the delegations of Belgium and Greece, no further amendment would be forthcoming.

2. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2 differed from the previous draft in the following respects: a new paragraph 9 had been inserted at the end of section III, and the following paragraphs had been renumbered accordingly; in paragraph 3, after "1978 to 1981", the phrase "including a revised plan for 1977" had been inserted; in paragraph 7, the phrase "recommends it to take" had been amended to read "recommends that at its next organizational session it should take", the phrase "those recommendations to strengthen" had been amended to read "the recommendations for strengthening", and the word "improve" to "improving"; in paragraph 8, the phrase "the expertise of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination" had been replaced by "the expertise of that Committee".

3. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany), speaking on behalf of the sponsors said that, as a result of

* Resumed from the 1715th meeting.

consultations between them and a number of interested delegations, the Algerian amendment (A/C.5/L.1228) had been accepted. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2, which was before the Committee, embodied a "middle-of-the road" approach which attempted to reflect the interests of all who had participated in the consultations.

4. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that the previous draft (A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.1) had seemed to his delegation a balanced and uncontroversial text, whose chief merit had been to set in motion the implementation of a number of important reports, including that of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (A/10117 and Corr.1), without prejudging the results of the deliberations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. With the incorporation of the Algerian amendment, however, the new text (A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2) presented the short-coming of singling out the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions as deserving special treatment. New paragraph 9 did not seem to reflect faithfully the comments in paragraphs 61 to 64 of the report of the Working Group or those in paragraph 130 *(b)* of the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System (E/AC.62/9). Its value was therefore doubtful and it could even be said to be based on criticisms to which the majority of the Committee did not subscribe any more than did the French delegation. His delegation, however, was prepared to co-operate and, although unable to remain a sponsor, would not oppose the adoption of the draft resolution and would vote for it. It interpreted the Algerian paragraph as aimed at permitting, in a general way, a review of the role and functioning of the Advisory Committee. Since both the reports he had referred to had reflected a favourable opinion concerning the existing terms of reference and membership of the Advisory Committee, his delegation saw no reason for any change and was confident that the Advisory Committee would retain its effectiveness and balance and would continue to render the same outstanding services as in the past.

The draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2) was adopted without objection.

5. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) expressed support for draft resolution A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2. Over the past 30 years the Advisory Committee had performed its work in a highly professional manner and had rendered untold assistance to Member States. His delegation had not objected to the inclusion of new paragraph 9 in the draft resolution. However, that paragraph should not be interpreted as a criticism of the current role and functioning of the Advisory Committee; it did not imply that the mandate of that Committee was inadequate or that changes were advisable. His delegation would keep an open mind on that question until the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee were available.

6. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation was broadly in agreement with the draft resolution, and wished to thank the sponsors for their patient and tactful efforts. It disagreed, however, with the artificial and vague distinction in paragraph 7 between the logically interrelated recommendations of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery. Moreover, paragraph 7 left it to the Economic and Social Council to interpret the report of the Working Group—and, also, the will of the Fifth Committee—in order to decide which recommendations, or parts of recommendations, dealt with "strengthening the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and improving its work". His delegation was of the opinion that because CPC was a subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council, the Council should not be asked by the Fifth Committee to interpret recommendations about CPC—recommendations which the Fifth Committee had received, at its own request, from a Working Group which it had itself created for the express purpose of making those recommendations.

7. His delegation would have liked paragraph 7 to lay more emphasis on the need for co-ordination between the Economic and Social Council and the *Ad Hoc* Committee. That paragraph also seemed to ignore the fact that it would take more than a year to implement all the recommendations of the Working Group for strengthening CPC and improving its work. The attention of the *Ad Hoc* Committee should have been drawn, perhaps in paragraph 8, to the need to examine the possibility of granting members of CPC travel expenses and a daily allowance. The report of the Working Group should also have been mentioned in paragraph 1 of the draft resolution.

8. His delegation had had no difficulty in accepting the Algerian amendment, the text of which had become the new paragraph 9. The amendment did not contain any opinions on the advisability of modifying the role of the Advisory Committee. Also, under paragraph 10, the *Ad Hoc* Committee, in its deliberations, would take into account, *inter alia*, the report of the Working Group (A/10117 and Corr.1). Paragraphs 61 to 65 of that report dealt with the questions referred to in the Algerian amendment. Even if the matter were not to be mentioned in any of the reports or resolutions before the *Ad Hoc* Committee, his delegation would be surprised if the *Ad Hoc* Committee did not examine it.

9. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation, together with other delegations, endorsed draft resolution A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2. However, his delegation had already supported the recommendations contained in the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery, particularly those dealing with the machinery for formulation, review, approval and implementation of programme budgets. The question of the role, functions and composition of the Advisory Committee had been justly resolved by the Working Group, which in paragraph 63 of its report had expressed the view that the Advisory Committee, as currently constituted, could continue to work effectively within the United Nations system. His delegation supported that view, which was also strongly supported within the Fifth Committee.

10. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation would have voted in favour of the draft resolution, had there been a vote. The draft resolution contained a request that the *Ad Hoc* Committee should examine the role of the Advisory Committee. The United Kingdom remained opposed to any change in the role or mandate of the

Advisory Committee, but supported the draft resolution to demonstrate its confidence in the judgment of the *Ad Hoc* Committee and in the ability of facts to speak for themselves. His delegation was confident that the conclusions contained in paragraph 63 of the report of the Working Group would be borne out. The Advisory Committee had served the United Nations well, and, without it, the Fifth Committee could not have fulfilled its role adequately.

11. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation did not consider that the phrase "including a revised plan for 1977" in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution implied an extension of the current practice of having a four-year plan. The current medium-term plan had served its main purpose in providing the basis for the biennium 1976-1977 and the next medium-term plan would be the basis for the following biennium. There was no need for a new medium-term plan to serve as the basis for possible revised estimates.

12. His delegation, being anxious to preserve the effectiveness of the Advisory Committee, did not interpret paragraph 9 as a criticism of that Committee, but could not disregard the desire of some delegations to examine its current structure, function and machinery.

13. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution, but would have preferred to see the Fifth Committee play a more active role in the reformation and restructuring of the United Nations programme and budget machinery. It was inappropriate for the Committee to be passive at a time when exciting changes were imminent in the entire United Nations system in the field of economic and social development. His delegation was concerned that the recommendations of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery might not be implemented.

14. Perhaps the working group that would be established to consider the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System could carry out an in-depth study of the Advisory Committee. Such a study had its advantages. The question, however, should not be prejudged. The Advisory Committee was providing a valuable and indispensable advisory service to the Fifth Committee, and it was to be hoped that Member States might be able to transplant some of its strong points to CPC in order to make that Committee a stronger and more effective body. His delegation seriously doubted whether the measures recommended in paragraphs 7 and 8 would be sufficient to strengthen CPC.

15. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that, while his delegation supported the draft resolution, it would have appreciated a warmer welcome for the recommendations of the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery. The indifference of the Fifth Committee towards the valuable recommendations of the report was regrettable. Belgium interpreted paragraph 3 of the draft resolution to mean that CPC would, in 1976, undertake to revise the part of the medium-term plan that came under 1977.

16. Mr. ARAUJO (Brazil) said that his country was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution and his delegation appreciated the constructive spirit which had guided the amendment submitted by Algeria. The amendment reflected concern over the role of the Advisory Committee. Brazil subscribed to the opinion expressed in paragraph 63 of the report of the Working Group that the Advisory Committee had functioned to general satisfaction. No criticism of the work, mandate or composition of the Advisory Committee was implied in paragraph 9 of the draft resolution.

17. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that the views of his delegation were reflected in paragraph 63 of the report of the Working Group.

18. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) endorsed the views expressed in paragraph 63 of the report of the Working Group, and stated that his delegation supported the revised draft resolution on the understanding that it implied no criticism of the roles and functions of the Advisory Committee.

19. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) recalled his delegation's support for the draft resolution. Kenya had been a member of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery and its views were reflected in the report of that group. The Working Group had been greatly concerned with the role and functioning of CPC and, for that reason, much time had been devoted to a discussion of ways of improving that Committee. He shared the disappointment of the representative of Belgium over the unenthusiastic response in the Fifth Committee to the report of the Working Group. His delegation would continue, wherever and whenever appropriate, to make its position known in CPC and would oppose efforts to maintain the *status quo* of that Committee: it had to be improved and strengthened if the interests of the developing countries were to be protected.

20. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2. In connexion with paragraph 9 of the resolution, however, his delegation endorsed the view expressed by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budgetary Machinery in paragraph 63 of its report. As for paragraph 11 of the draft resolution, he suggested that the review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets should be considered together with the results of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations system, which would report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. Otherwise, the General Assembly would have on its agenda two separate items dealing with the same subject.

21. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that in the draft resolution it had just adopted the Committee had taken a very narrow approach to the item under consideration by restricting itself to financial matters. He hoped that at the thirty-first session the Committee would take a broader approach.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1718th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 7. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC *(concluded)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

22. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) said that, despite the clarifications given by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions at the preceding meeting, his delegation would find it difficult to agree to the large reduction recommended under section 7 by the Advisory Committee, as it would adversely affect the activities of ESCAP; rather, it hoped that the Committee would approve the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General in the proposed programme budget (A/10006). In terms of the work to be done, ECE was being treated more generously than ESCAP.

23. Mr. VANDERGERT (Sri Lanka) endorsed the comments of those speakers who had laid stress on the vital importance of ESCAP's programmes and activities to the region as a whole and also to national development efforts. His delegation could therefore not support the large reduction proposed by the Advisory Committee. In particular, it opposed the recommended reduction of $558,000, explanations for which were given in paragraph 7.4 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008 and Corr.2); rather, the delays experienced by ESCAP in the filling of Professional posts should be investigated and steps taken to improve recruitment procedures. It should be borne in mine that a number of important activities were being held up, owing to the Commission's lack of funds. Accordingly, his delegation agreed with the delegations of Afghanistan and Algeria who, at the preceding meeting, had urged that the Fifth Committee should approve the Secretary-General's original estimate. Although prepared to support a compromise solution, his delegation would abstain if the estimate recommended by the Advisory Committee was put to the vote.

24. Mr. GARRIDO (Phillipines) supported the proposal made by the delegations of Afghanistan and Algeria at the preceding meeting that a vote should be taken on the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General.

25. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) requested that the proposal to vote on the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General should itself be put to the vote. His delegation was unable to support that proposal in that it would constitute a departure from the procedure followed in the case of other sections of the budget. The appropriation approved in first reading under section 9 for ECA had been based on the estimate recommended by the Advisory Committee.

26. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that the area of activity covered by ESCAP and that of ECA were quite different and that it would be unfair to equate the estimates for the two Commissions.

27. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that his delegation would be prepared to abide by the Advisory Committee's opinion, unless it was satisfied that there were special circumstances which warranted a different approach. He suggested that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and the representative of the Secretary-General should be invited to provide some explanations before the Committee took a decision.

28. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) endorsed the suggestion made by the representative of New Zealand. He particularly wanted to know how many Professional posts were vacant at that stage; it was his impression from a reading of paragraph 7.4 of the Advisory Committee's report that, even if the necessary funds were appropriated, ESCAP would not be able to recruit all the Professional staff that it needed. In fact, the only posts requested whose approval the Advisory Committee did not recommend were the P-4 and the 2 local posts referred to in paragraph 7.6 of the same report.

29. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that it was his impression, in the light of the comments made at the preceding meeting, that the representative of Algeria felt that the Advisory Committee had exceeded its mandate by referring in paragraph 7.3 of its report to undue fragmentation and excessive compartmentalization. He therefore wished to make it clear that the Advisory Committee's comments in that paragraph merely referred to co-ordination and that it was not calling for the deletion of any ESCAP programme. The Advisory Committee, in accordance with its terms of reference, had complete and unquestionable authority to make observations on co-ordination matters. Accordingly, throughout its report, it had made numerous comments stressing the need to achieve better co-ordination, by pointing out instances of duplication of activities and of fragmented organizational structure. It was therefore not correct to say that the Advisory Committee had gone beyond its terms of reference in paragraph 7.3.

30. There appeared to be some misunderstanding concerning the Advisory Committee's recommendation for a reduction of $691,000 in the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General for ESCAP. Most of that reduction was of a technical nature and was based on an assumed vacancy rate of 10 per cent, rather than of 5 per cent, of Professional posts over the following two years. The same recommendation, i.e. a turnover deduction of 10 per cent, had been made in the case of the Professional manning table for ECA (*ibid.*, para. 9.4) which had already been endorsed by the Fifth Committee. The Committee would be dealing with a similar recommendation when it took up section 8, relating to ECLA. Thus the Advisory Committee's treatment of ESCAP was entirely consistent with its approach towards the other regional commissions in respect of the vacancy factor. In effect, the Advisory Committee was simply saying that ESCAP would not be able to fill all its vacancies by January 1976 and that the budget estimate should be pruned accordingly; that was not the same thing as saying that the posts should be abolished. If ESCAP succeeded in filling all the vacant Professional posts by, say, June 1976, the Secretary-General would be able to submit a request for additional funds at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. In other words,

there was nothing to prevent the ESCAP secretariat from recruiting the personnel it needed.

31. The only substantive recommendation for a reduction in the Secretary-General's estimate was that contained in paragraph 7.6 of the ADvisory Committee's report where it was suggested that 1 P-4 and 2 local posts should not be approved.

32. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to the representatives of New Zealand and Iran, said that ESCAP had been experiencing extreme recruitment difficulties which derived mainly from the Commission's specialist knowledge requirements and the problem of adequate geographical distribution. It had not been easy to resolve those difficulties quickly. However, the situation was improving and the number of vacant Professional posts had been reduced to 20. He assured the Committee that everything possible would be done to fill the other vacancies in the manning table, so that the implementation of ESCAP programmes would not be held up.

33. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) suggested that, in the light of the helpful explanations provided by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and the Controller, the Committee should approve the estimate recommended by the Advisory Committee. At the same time, it should take note of the observation by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that, if ESCAP was able to recruit the personnel it required in 1976, nothing in the report of the Advisory Committee prevented it from requesting a supplementary appropriation.

34. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said that his delegation would support the estimate recommended by the Advisory Committee because that Committee had studied the Secretary-General's proposals in detail and had made similar recommendations for all the regional commissions wherever recruitment delays were being experienced. Furthermore, the Controller had signified his acceptance of that estimate.

35. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that having consulted the delegations of Algeria and Afghanistan and a number of delegations within the Asian Group, he wished to propose the following wording for inclusion in the Committee's report to the General Assembly:

> "The Fifth Committee decides to adopt the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions under section 7 on the understanding that, in the event that the recruitment situation improves beyond the present projection, the General Assembly, at its thirty-first session, will consider requests for supplementary credits for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific based on a new turnover factor calculated on the basis of such improvement in the recruitment situation."

36. Mr. NKIELE-ATYPO (Congo) noted that the appropriation approved in first reading for ECE was designed to cover the high costs of inflation and to pay salaries to an increasing number of administrative personnel. As it had already been pointed out, the ECE budget was huge when compared to the budgets of the other regional commissions, which served the developing countries. In particular, ESCAP required funds in order to meet the pressing needs of the population in its region and to bring about economic recovery in the countries which had just emerged from a long war of national liberation—a war imposed upon them by colonialist and imperialist forces. The United Nations, which had failed to bring in line those of its Members responsible for the situation, should shoulder its responsibility and remedy the injustices suffered by the South-East Asian peoples; that could be done in part by providing sufficient funds for ESCAP.

37. His delegation could support the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, subject to the proposal made by the delegation of Australia.

38. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) and Mr. VANDERGERT (Sri Lanka) supported the compromise solution proposed by the representative of Australia.

39. The CHAIRMAN said that it appeared to be the wish of the Committee that a vote should be taken on the estimate recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 7 on the understanding that the Committee would be giving its approval within the context of the Australian proposal. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to his summing up of the situation.

It was so decided.

40. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation for section 7. He recalled that the Advisory Committee, in order to give effect to the recommendation it had made in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) with regard to representation allowances, had recommended an appropriation (1718th meeting, para. 51) that entailed an additional reduction of $400.

An appropriation in the amount of $15,744,600 under section 7 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 86 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

41. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) explained that his delegation had abstained in the vote on section 7 for the same reason that it had abstained at the 1718th meeting in the vote on section 9.

SECTION 8. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

42. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General, in his initial estimates for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), had proposed an amount of $18,586,000 under section 8, for the secretariat of ECLA. The Advisory Committee, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) had recommended a reduction of $573,000 in the initial estimates. The reductions proposed by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report with regard to representation allowances and in paragraph 61 with regard to reclassification would require additional reductions of $400 and $17,000, respectively. The total amount recommended by the Advisory Committee for section 8 was thus $17,995,600.

43. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General's initial estimates for section 8 amounted to $18,586,000, an increase of $4,517,000 or 32.1 per cent over the revised appropriations for the biennium 1974-1975. The estimates contained an amount of $611,000, at 1975 rates, for programme growth. The total resources required to implement ECLA programmes were estimated at $21,258,000.

44. The ECLA secretariat currently had 495 posts, 156 of which were in the Professional or higher category. The Secretary-General had requested 26 new posts—7 Professional and 19 local-level posts. The Professional staff would be complemented by the addition of 2 Professional posts due to the Secretary-General's proposal to convert 2 field service posts to P-1 and P-2 posts, respectively. In addition, 4 reclassifications were requested within the Professional category. The reclassification requests were dealt with by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 61 of its report. As for the new posts requested by the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee had recommended acceptance of 6 Professional and 14 local-level posts in the biennium 1976-1977. It had noted, however, that as of 1 May 1975 the vacancy situation in ECLA was more than three times the average rate used for the purpose of applying a 5 per cent turnover deduction to ECLA's existing posts, and had accordingly recommended the application of a 10 per cent turnover deduction with a corresponding reduction of $486,000 in the total estimates for section 8. That reduction, taken together with the $400 reduction in connexion with the representation allowances and the $17,000 reduction in connexion with reclassifications, meant that the Advisory Committee was recommending a reduction of $590,400 in the Secretary-General's estimates.

45. He drew attention to paragraphs 8.4 and 8.5 of the Advisory Committee's report which indicated that proportionately ECLA's expenditure on administrative and common services was higher than the expenditures of ECA, ECWA and ESCAP; the comparison could not be made with ECE, as its common services were covered elsewhere in the programme budget. Of the 26 new posts requested by the Secretary-General 22 were intended for administrative and common services. The Advisory Committee hoped that the review of ECLA's programme referred to in paragraph 8.2 of the Advisory Committee's report would take that factor into account. In paragraph 8.4 of its report, the Advisory Committee had recommended that future budgetary and programme submissions should contain information on the activities of ECLA's expanded subregional offices.

46. Miss VRECH (Argentina) said that her delegation supported the programme growth proposed by the Secretary-General for ECLA. All the regional commissions had an extremely important part to play in implementing the decisions taken by the General Assembly at its sixth and seventh special sessions on the establishment of a new international economic order. Member States had frequently recommended—for example, in Economic and Social Council resolution 1756 (LIV) of 16 May 1973—that the regional commissions should be strengthened. The commissions should be given additional resources to enable them to deal with all the matters which fell within their competence, such as technical assistance projects and promoting development. In that connexion, she deplored the slow progress being made in decentralization in respect of the regional commissions. It was not true that decentralization had been slowed down because of problems within the commissions. According to the Member States in the various regions, the commissions were functioning well. The main reason for the commissions' failure to participate adequately in the social and economic fields was lack of funds. Accordingly, she would support all measures to strengthen the regional commissions and enhance their ability to implement the decisions of the General Assembly.

47. The subregional structure of ECLA had been challenged from the financial viewpoint, but not from the point of view of achievements. The ECLA Office at Buenos Aires, established in 1974, had proved extremely useful. Referring to the United Nations Water Conference, in particular, she stressed the importance of ECLA programmes on economic development.

48. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) said that his delegation supported the Secretary-General's original estimates for ECLA for the biennium 1976-1977 in the amount of $18,586,000. The work of ECLA in helping countries in the region to formulate their economic and social plans and the work of the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) were of great importance to all countries in Latin America. The activities of ECLA were also of importance for the implementation of the decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth and seventh special sessions on international co-operation and for dealing with other questions relating to international trade, such as the generalized system of preferences.

49. He requested further information on the research programmes and specific studies mentioned in paragraph 8.2 of the Advisory Committee's report. In connexion with paragraph 8.4 of the report, he requested further information on the ECLA Office at Washington and on the assistance provided to the Buenos Aires subregional office by the Government of Argentina.

50. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that his delegation supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on section 8 but felt that further cuts could be made. During its consideration of the 1974-1975 programme budget, the Advisory Committee had noted that ECLA's subregional structure might have been valid for geographical reasons but was not economical. The Advisory Committee indicated in the report under consideration that there had been no response to its suggestion that the need for the subregional office in Washington be reviewed, and that no effort had been made to provide information on the activities of the subregional offices. He suggested that a cut in the administrative and common service costs might be possible in view of the Advisory Committee's comment that the ratio of expenditure for administrative and common services to direct costs in ECLA, 33.4 per cent, was between 5 and 9 per cent higher than in other regional commissions.

51. His delegation questioned ECLA's request for the transfer of 9 posts funded from temporary assistance to the regular budget as it did not favour that approach in general, and in the case under discussion it was particularly

questionable in view of the increased estimates for consultants. He asked why 2 new posts had been requested for the Electronic Data Processing Unit, when additional funds were requested to rent a computer. In the light of the comments he had made, and also in view of the large number of vacancies, his delegation believed that further economies could be made in the estimates for ECLA.

52. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), observing that 22 of the 26 new posts requested were for administrative and common services although ECLA already had the highest ratio of all the regional commissions for administrative to direct costs, said that the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee were minimal. The administrative and common services sector of ECLA seemed still to be overstaffed.

53. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) expressed concern over the rapid rise in administrative expenditure in ECLA–approximately 40 per cent more for the biennium 1976-1977 than for the previous biennium–and over the equally distressing real growth rate in administrative expenditures of about 9 per cent, compared to the much lower programme growth rate. Thought should be given to how the situation could be improved. In that connexion, he welcomed the reference to the review referred to in paragraph 8.2 of the Advisory Committee's report and hoped that it would lead to savings. He requested clarification of paragraph 8.36 of the proposed programme budget concerning the Editorial and Documents Section in Mexico City and the Documents and Conference Division of the ECLA Office at Santiago, Chile.

54. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to the representative of Venezuela, said that paragraph 8.2 of the Advisory Committee's report had been drafted on the basis of an exchange of information between the Advisory Committee and the Executive Secretary of ECLA.

55. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to the representative of the United States of America, said that, in the long run, it was cheaper and more beneficial for ECLA to purchase its own computer equipment and have its own staff in order to avoid having to rely on rented computer services.

56. The CHAIRMAN, acceding to a request from Mr. MATHESON (Canada), suggested that the Committee should defer consideration of section 8 until the following meeting.

It was so decided.

Honoraria payable to members of the International Law Commission, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal (A/10008/Add.3, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1)

57. The CHAIRMAN announced that he had received a copy of a communication addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, by which he was requested to circulate it as an official document of the Fifth Committee. He explained that the letter addressed to the Under-Secretary-General concerned the question of honoraria and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.3). The Office of Legal Affairs had advised him that no precedent had as yet been found to indicate that communications addressed to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee by subsidiary organs of the General Assembly had been circulated to the Committee as official documents of the Committee. However, such precedents existed with regard to other Main Committees of the Assembly. He sought the guidance of the Committee on the line of action that it might wish to follow with regard to the communication and added that his only concern at that stage was to avoid creating precedents whose consequences in the long run could not be foreseen and might impair the smooth working of the Committee.

58. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) opposed circulation of the letter as a document of the Fifth Committee because it had not been addressed directly to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee and also because there was no precedent for circulating such a letter. If the letter was placed at the disposal of members of the Committee at no cost to the United Nations, he would have no objection.

59. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) asked how long the letter was, and suggested that the Chairman might read it to the Committee.

60. The CHAIRMAN said that the letter was three pages long.

61. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) agreed with the representative of the Upper Volta that the letter should not be circulated as a document of the Committee. He could not accept the suggestion that the letter should be read out, because that would involve financial implications for the United Nations as both the summary record and the press release would contain résumés of it. The Chairman of the International Law Commission was, of course, free to provide information to delegations, but he could not expect the United Nations to incur expenditure to disseminate his views.

62. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) also opposed circulation of the letter as a document of the Fifth Committee because of the financial implications for the United Nations and also because it would set an undesirable precedent.

63. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) opposed circulation of the letter as a document of the Committee. He pointed out that when individuals wished to provide information to Permanent Missions to the United Nations they did so at their own expense.

64. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that the matter should be decided in conformity with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, as it was not simply a question of financial implications.

65. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) opposed circulation of the letter as a document of the Committee on the grounds of cost.

66. The CHAIRMAN said that there was no provision in the rules of procedure that prevented the circulation of the letter as a document of the Fifth Committee. It was a

question of precedent. There seemed to be a consensus in the Committee against circulating the letter as a document of the Committee. He invited members of the Committee to consider the possibility of the Committee secretariat reproducing it by photocopy, at minimal cost, so that it could be consulted at the desk of the Conference Officer by interested delegations.

67. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) opposed such a reproduction of the letter on the grounds that it would create an undesirable precedent for circulating informal documents.

68. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that, since he assumed the letter was written in English, he could not accept the reproduction at United Nations cost of a document which would not be accessible to all delegations.

69. The CHAIRMAN said that he took it that the Committee did not approve the circulation of the letter from the Chairman of the International Law Commission as an official document of the Fifth Committee, nor its reproduction by the Committee secretariat.

It was so decided.

70. The CHAIRMAN said that he would inform the Chairman of the International Law Commission of the Committee's decision.

71. Replying to a question from Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands), he said that the letter would be available for consultation in the office of the Secretary of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

1720th meeting

Thursday, 23 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1720

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1718th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 8. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA *(concluded)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

1. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) asked why there were so many vacancies at the Professional level, particularly in the regional commissions, representing 20 per cent of all Professional posts in ECLA, 12 per cent in ESCAP and 14 per cent in ECA. In ECLA the problem had existed for several years, and it could imply unavailability of qualified personnel, lack of adequate effort on the part of the Secretariat to fill the vacancies, lack of priority attached by the Secretariat to filling the positions, or lack of real need to fill them.

2. Mr. CARRESSE (Uruguay) said that he would have been very gratified if the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had approved the appropriations requested for ECLA by the Secretary-General in the proposed programme budget (A/10006). The Advisory Committee undoubtedly had valid reasons for recommending reductions, as it had done in the case of all the regional commissions. However, in saying, in paragraph 8.4 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), that ECLA's subregional structure was not the most economical, the Advisory Committee was giving an opinion that it was not competent to give. It was for the Fifth Committee to decide on a matter of that nature. In fact, the regional commissions decided on their structure in accordance with their needs. The ECLA office in Washington, about whose usefulness the Advisory Committee had expressed doubt, provided ECLA with indispensable information. ECLA's structure was certainly not perfect, but the Executive Secretary was trying to improve it, and it was, at any rate, meeting the needs of the region.

3. Mr. RIVAS (Colombia) supported the observations made by the representatives of Argentina and Venezuela at the previous meeting and those just made by the representative of Uruguay. The appropriations requested by the Secretary-General for ECLA were what the Commission needed in order to carry out the increasingly important role it would play in establishing a new international economic order. Moreover, it would be rash to try, for reasons of efficiency, to reduce the financial means of regional organs at a time when the United Nations was deliberately decentralizing its activities by delegating more and more powers to them and when the Economic and Social Council, UNCTAD and UNDP were all entrusting new responsibilities to the regional commissions.

4. He was surprised to hear so much criticism of the requests for additional staff. Criticism was easy when it was theoretical and when comparisons were being made between the manning tables of very disparate departments whose activities were carried out in conditions and contexts which were just as disparate. He could not endorse the Advisory Committee's recommendation for reductions, particularly since ECLA had stated that it was prepared to review carefully its staff requirements and programme of action in order to increase their effectiveness as much as possible.

5. Mr. PONCE (Peru) said that an analysis of section 8 of the proposed programme budget showed that the projected growth in ECLA's activities was modest compared with that provided for in other sections. In view of ECLA's objectives, its role in the development of Latin America and its important co-ordination functions in connexion with, for example, UNIDO or UNDP projects, the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General should definitely not be reduced. ECLA was in the process of establishing a new development model for Latin America, which was already being cited as an example throughout the world, even in the United States. It was therefore surprising that the United States representative should propose that ECLA's budget should be cut even more than the Advisory Committee had recommended.

6. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) assured the Latin American delegations that the Advisory Committee in its observations on the structure of ECLA had had no intention of questioning policy decisions which lay within the jurisdiction of ECLA itself and had been duly endorsed by the Economic and Social Council. Nevertheless, it was the Advisory Committee's duty to point out that steps had to be taken to ensure that a complex administrative structure did not jeopardize the ability of the organ concerned to execute its programmes. He was confident that the Latin American delegations shared that concern for efficiency.

7. He pointed out that, of the over-all reduction of $573,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8.13 of its report, $486,000 was to come from a higher turnover deduction. However, there was nothing to prevent ECLA from filling the Professional vacancies, if that could be done at a rate higher than that envisaged by the Advisory Committee. Moreover, the Advisory Committee had approved 6 of the 7 new Professional posts requested by the Secretary-General. That could not be regarded as excessive severity.

8. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) pointed out, as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had done, that over 80 per cent of the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee related to a purely technical item, the turnover deduction. The Committee might therefore apply to ECLA the same compromise formula it had applied to ESCAP, when considering section 7, by accepting the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, on condition that if the ECLA vanancies were filled it would consider, at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, approving supplementary appropriations.

9. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that ECLA, like the other regional commissions, should be given the means to carry out its obligations and to take part in the establishment of a new international economic order. However, the Fifth Committee needed to be better informed, as the Advisory Committee had pointed out, about ECLA's operations, and particularly about the activities of its subregional offices, such as those in Montevideo and Buenos Aires. Moreover, the Secretary-General had requested a total of 26 new posts, when 31 of the available Professional posts in ECLA still had remained vacant. It would be logical for ECLA, like any other organ of the United Nations, to try to fill existing vacancies before creating new posts.

10. In the circumstances, he willingly endorsed the proposal of the representative of Japan, which would give the Committee an opportunity to review ECLA's case at the thirty-first session and, if necessary, to approve supplementary appropriations for it.

11. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the questions raised on section 8, said, with regard to the question posed by the representative of Venezuela concerning Argentina's share in the operating expenses of ECLA's subregional office in Buenos Aires, that under an agreement signed on 12 December 1973, the Central Bank of Argentina provided the premises for that office (1,100 square metres) and the necessary furniture and equipment, and paid the salaries and wages of the 16 support personnel. The 5 Professional staff members of ECLA posted to Buenos Aires were, of course, paid by ECLA. All in all, Argentina's contribution for the current year amounted to $383,000.

12. Several delegations had asked whether the establishment of ECLA subregional offices was justifiable. It was ECLA itself which, in a number of resolutions, including one adopted at the eighth extraordinary session of its Committee of the Whole in 1974, had asked the Secretary-General to strengthen those offices. The Advisory Committee had, as early as 1973, questioned whether the Washington office corresponded to a continuing need–as it pointed out in paragraph 8.4 of its report–but that office, in addition to its liaison activities between ECLA and organizations such as IBRD that had their headquarters in Washington, was increasingly being entrusted by ECLA with substantive studies, as for instance, those on transnational corporations and the reform of the international monetary system.

13. The representatives of the United States of America, Belgium and the United Kingdom, in particular, had expressed concern at the fact that ECLA's administrative costs accounted for 33.4 per cent of its budget. Those costs were not all purely administrative, because a large proportion of the costs was attributable, to such things as data processing, library services and the Latin American Documentation and Research Centre. Of the 26 new posts requested, 12 were intended for services of that kind.

14. With regard to the representative of Canada's concern about the large number of vacancies in ECLA, he said that the situation was improving: there had been 31 vacancies as at 1 May 1975 but only 25 as at 1 September, and recruitment procedures were under way for 13 of the latter. Quite soon there should be only 12 vacancies remaining, which was roughly equal to normal turnover. The large number of vacancies in the regional commissions was due, in part, to the situation in the countries in which those commissions had their headquarters and was therefore circumstantial. The main reason, however, was the constraints imposed on recruitment by the principle of geographical distribution.

15. The CHAIRMAN summed up the discussion on section 8. Many delegations wished the Committee to

approve the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General, but just as many showed a preference for the lower figure recommended by the Advisory Committee. There were no formal proposals on either course. In the circumstances he proposed that the Committee should adopt the solution recommended by the representative of Japan and supported by the representative of the Dominican Republic, which was to approve the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee (1719th meeting, para. 42), on condition that, if there was progress in recruiting personnel to fill vacant posts and in executing the programme, the Secretary-General should submit at the thirty-first session a request for a supplementary appropriation.

It was so decided.

An appropriation in the amount of $17,995,600 under section 8 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 83 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

16. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had abstained in the voting on the appropriation under section 8 because the increase in expenditures due to inflation, monetary instability and new posts should be covered by savings, corresponding staff reductions in certain departments and the elimination of non-essential items from the ECLA programme.

SECTION 10. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

17. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General had requested, under section 10 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) an appropriation of $9,231,000 for ECWA. The Advisory Committee had recommended in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 10.7) that the appropriation should be reduced by $369,000. Moreover, the reduction in the total appropriation requested for representation allowances recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 63-65 of its report would lead to an additional reduction of $400 in the appropriation requested under the section. The total appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 10 was consequently $8,861,600.

18. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General under section 10 represented an increase of $5,097,000 or 123.3 per cent, over the revised appropriation for 1974-1975. The Secretary-General estimated the rate of real growth at 17.5 per cent. The total amount, including extra-budgetary funds and a sum for apportionment of common services, required for the execution of ECWA's activities, was estimated at $11,414,000.

19. It was only in 1974 that ECWA had begun its operations, and the steep increase in appropriations requested was due, on the one hand, to the additional cost of maintaining in 1976-1977 the posts approved for the current biennium, with the normal reduction for delayed recruitment, and, on the other hand, to new posts requested for ECWA, so that it could meet its growing requirements.

20. The current manning table of ECWA had 191 posts, including 71 Professional and above. The Secretary-General proposed creating 48 new posts, namely, 20 Professional and 28 local level posts. As of 1 May 1975, 24 posts were vacant at ECWA, but all, or nearly all, of them should be filled shortly.

21. The Advisory Committee had taken those considerations into account in reviewing the appropriations sought. The information furnished by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 10.4, 10.10, 10.18, 10.22 and 10.34 of the proposed programme budget had not convinced that Committee of the need to approve all posts requested. However, after considering the distribution of existing staff by programme, the Advisory Committee was recommending approval of the creation of 17 Professional and 22 local level posts in ECWA for 1976-1977.

22. He drew attention to paragraph 10.6 of the Advisory Committee's report, in which it had made some observations on the question of ECWA's headquarters and the cost of renting premises.

23. The Advisory Committee's recommendations, which were summarized in paragraph 10.7 of its report, and its recommendations on the appropriation requested for representation allowances would lead to a reduction of $369,400 in the appropriation requested, which would then amount to $8,861,600.

24. Mr. AL-SHARAFI (Yemen) paid a tribute to the efforts of ECWA, to which his country attached great importance. He hoped that the Commission would be able to extend its activities and make progress towards the realization of the great goals which the countries of the region had set for themselves.

25. The appropriations requested by the Secretary-General and the growth which they implied were consistent with the special needs of a region in which the organs of the United Nations had recently intensified their efforts and which was chronically afflicted by lack of modern technology and the dearth of specialists. It had long been deprived of United Nations development assistance, and the new regional commission should enable the needs of the people of the region to be identified.

26. Now that ECWA existed and had begun its operations, all United Nations bodies should lend it their assistance and encouragement. The Advisory Committee, although its report was very constructive, proposed reducing the number of posts requested by the Secretary-General at a time when ECWA was just beginning its operations. For that reason, his delegation could not fully endorse the Advisory Committee's recommendations and urged the Fifth Committee to approve instead the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General, in view of the special position of ECWA.

27. Mr. ALKAFF (Democratic Yemen) said that, for special political reasons, the ECWA region had for a long time had no regional commission and had therefore been unable to benefit from the assistance which such an organ could bring in the sphere of development.

28. The fact that ECWA had been established so recently justified making a special effort to help it in its initial activities. The growth in its activities was a normal phenomenon, and the cost of the posts requested was a fair proportion of the total estimated increase. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee had noted that most of the new posts requested were for conference services, administrative services and some programmes of activity, in anticipation of ECWA's future needs.

29. Referring to paragraph 10.6 of the Advisory Committee's report, he paid a tribute to the Lebanese Government, which had been and continued to be of considerable service to ECWA. The region of Western Asia had the characteristic of being made up of rich and poor countries and was, therefore, an area of wide economic disparities. The presence of rich countries did not mean that the region should not develop its resources, especially since some of the other countries were among the least developed. Those disparities made regional co-operation more necessary than elsewhere, especially in the context of the current world crisis.

30. The Commission was contemplating a wide range of activities, since it intended to analyse the economic data of the region, to intensify national development strategies and to co-ordinate national development plans. The most important goals which ECWA had set itself were undoubtedly the following: the analysis of recent developments in agriculture and of broad questions of agricultural policy, the exchange of information and the preparation of schemes for a regional agricultural policy and action programme, a regional programme for the constitution of food grain reserve stocks; the improvement of budgetary and financing systems; the study of manpower problems, the study of urban and rural settlements, encouraging the population to participate in balanced rural development; co-ordination of industrialization plans and programmes, stimulation of certain branches of industry and of training and intensification of related technical co-operation to that end; assistance to Governments formulating strategies for water resource management and intensification of regional co-operation, increased participation of women in economic life; modernization of transport so as to facilitate the mobilization of human and natural resources, and the development of tourism.

31. In view of the importance of those goals, ECWA deserved to receive all possible assistance, and his delegation could not approve the Advisory Committee's recommendations on reducing the resources to be allocated to the Commission.

32. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) stressed ECWA's inexperience and the fact that it was in its "take-off" stage, a stage at which all other regional commissions had had similar difficulties. It needed skills and experienced personnel. The current establishment of 191 posts was therefore insufficient, since the region had many economic problems, as the representatives of Yemen and Democratic Yemen had pointed out. His delegation viewed the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee with considerable disquiet. ECWA was experiencing the same problems as the other regional commissions with delayed recruitment, for example. It was not yet fully staffed and did not even have a permanent headquarters.

33. His delegation hoped that the Advisory Committee would reconsider its recommendations in view of the special difficulties which ECWA was undergoing.

34. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee; he believed that the appropriations requested under section 10 could be reduced further. It was certainly necessary to recognize the special problems which the Commission was facing because of having been established so recently, but as at 1 May 1975, the number of vacant posts in ECWA was four times the average number of vacancies used in calculating the standard turnover deduction of 5 per cent. An additional turnover deduction should therefore be applied to ECWA, as the Advisory Committee had recommended in similar cases.

35. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) said that he could not accept the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. He agreed with those delegations that had suggested that the Committee should approve the estimate proposed by the Secretary-General.

36. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) said he, too, hoped that the Committee would approve the estimate proposed by the Secretary-General.

37. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia) said that the recruitment situation appeared to be far worse at ECWA than at the other regional commissions. The Advisory Committee's decision regarding the deduction applied to the cost of existing posts was sound; however, the Secretary-General might be asked to make a special report on recruitment delays in the regional commissions. When taking a decision on section 10, the Committee might make the same reservation in approving the amount recommended as it had done for sections 7 and 8.

38. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled that, in the case of ECWA, the Advisory Committee had not seen fit to recommend that an additional turnover deduction be applied to existing posts, as it had done for ECA, ECLA and ESCAP in paragraph 48 of its report. The decision to be taken by the Committee would therefore have to be worded somewhat differently in the Fifth Committee's report. The representative of Indonesia was right to suggest that the Committee should approve the estimate recommended, subject to the possibility of approving supplementary estimates at the thirty-first session, if that proved necessary.

39. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should vote on the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee (see para. 17 above), on the understanding that the Secretary-General would report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the implementation of ECWA programmes. If, in the light of that report, additional resources would be required, the Fifth Committee would consider the approval of supplementary estimates for ECWA.

An appropriation of $8,861,600 under section 10 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 83 votes to 1, with 10 abstentions.

40. Mr. LADOR (Israel), explaining his vote, said that his delegation had been unable to approve the amount requested for ECWA because that Commission did not comprise all the countries of the region, Israel being unjustly excluded from its work.

Question of the separate preparation and submission of the programme and budget of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and of administrative autonomy for UNIDO (A/C.5/1678)

41. The CHAIRMAN said that the report of the Secretary-General concerning the question of the separate preparation and submission of the programme and budget of UNIDO and of administrative autonomy for UNIDO (A/C.5/1678), which was now before the Committee, had been submitted for information purposes only. Because of developments since the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, arrangements were now in progress to prepare for the conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency. The Committee would have an opportunity of discussing the question fully when it considered section 12 of the programme budget, relating to UNIDO, and the revised estimates resulting from the decisions of the Second General Conference of UNIDO, held at Lima in March 1975.

42. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that, in his opinion, the questions of a separate programme and budget for UNIDO and of administrative and budgetary autonomy for UNIDO were interrelated and might therefore be discussed together without any difficulties. However, since the report submitted by the Secretary-General was extremely brief, the Committee required some additional information before it could embark on a discussion. The deliberations in the Economic and Social Council or in other bodies concerning the status of UNIDO as an independent agency were of no value in determining the interim arrangements to be put into effect as long as UNIDO remained a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and its budget was included in the regular budget of the United Nations. As far as the transitional period was concerned, however, the Secretary-General's report gave little information and it would therefore be of great interest to ascertain whether the corresponding document submitted at the twenty-ninth session[1] remained valid. In order to determine what budgetary procedure would be followed for UNIDO in the transitional period, it would perhaps be expeditious to request the Advisory Committee to give its opinion on that document, which might be considered together with any revised estimates to be submitted for UNIDO.

43. Mr. NAUDY (France) agreed with the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany that the report submitted by the Secretary-General covered two questions: the conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency—a matter which the Fifth Committee was not required to deal with for the time being—and the question of the arrangements to be made for the transitional period prior to that conversion—a matter which was now before the Committee. As long as UNIDO remained an organ of the United Nations, its budget must be submitted to the General Assembly. As the report of the Secretary-General, and particularly paragraph 5, dealt with that point very summarily, his delegation insisted that the Committee should be provided with additional information and with the revised estimates referred to, since in the transitional period UNIDO would probably remain an organ of the United Nations and its budget would still constitute a section of the United Nations budget.

44. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that he was perplexed by document A/C.5/1678 and failed to understand its purpose. In paragraph 5, for example, the Secretary-General first referred to interim arrangements and then stated that the Executive Director of UNIDO would report thereon to the Industrial Development Board. He asked whether the Secretary-General intended to report to the Fifth Committee at some specific time. He would like to know, too, whether the document submitted at the twenty-ninth session[1] remained valid, whether any new procedures were being contemplated, and what the outcome was of the consultations which had taken place between the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UNIDO. There should be a frank discussion on the subject in the Committee. During the transitional period the budget estimates of UNIDO, like the other sections of the programme budget of the United Nations, should be discussed by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee. The provisional arrangements might be prejudicial to that procedure. It might be useful, as had been suggested by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, to refer the matter to the Advisory Committee, which would then give some guidance to the Fifth Committee. As was indicated in paragraph 12.4 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), the Advisory Committee had not yet reached a final decision on the section of the proposed programme budget relating to UNIDO—section 12; when the Advisory Committee did submit its recommendations, however, the Fifth Committee should discuss the budget of UNIDO together with the question of interim arrangements. He asked the representative of the Secretary-General to provide some explanations concerning the purpose of document A/C.5/1678 and to shed some more light on the subject as a whole.

45. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that, as a number of representatives had pointed out, there were two questions: the conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency and the transitional period preceding that conversion. The second question had been discussed at the seventh special session of the General Assembly and was included in the Assembly's agenda at its current session. It had originally been the intention to work out special arrangements for the transitional period; however, it had been concluded, as a result of consultations on the subject,that any arrangement aimed at granting greater budgetary autonomy to UNIDO would be prejudicial to the idea of a unified United Nations budget. It had therefore been agreed that the same objective should be pursued more flexibly, and the Secretary-General had undertaken to give special consideration to the proposals and requests of the Executive Director of UNIDO, who in turn would take into account the decisions taken at the General Conference at Lima in any suggestions he made. That being so, the Secretary-General would submit to the Fifth Committee revised budget estimates for UNIDO in the light of the

[1] Document A/C.5/1616 and Corr.1, of 11 October 1974.

suggestions made by the Executive Director, pursuant to the decisions taken at Lima.

46. In conclusion, he said that there were no special arrangements for the transitional period, although there was an understanding that the Secretary-General would do everything possible to take account of any special problems that might arise during that period. The various factors involved would become apparent when the Committee had before it the revised budget estimates for UNIDO.

47. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said he still had doubts as to the whether the interim arrangements regarding greater autonomy for UNIDO would be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration. That was an important matter because the Assembly retained financial and administrative responsibility for UNIDO and might not divest itself of that responsibility until it could be entrusted to another competent organ, such as the governing body of the future specialized agency. As long as the Assembly retained that responsibility, the interim arrangements provisionally worked out by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Director of UNIDO should be submitted to it for consideration. He would therefore like the representative of the Secretary-General to state definitely whether the interim arrangements would be submitted to the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly for consideration.

48. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) replied that they would.

49. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) endorsed the comments which had been made by other representatives concerning autonomy for UNIDO. He asked whether document A/C.5/1678 had been submitted to the Committee for information purposes only or whether the Committee was required to take a decision in the matter and whether the revised estimates for UNIDO would be submitted in a separate document or together with the revised estimates for other bodies.

50. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General's report had been submitted to allow the Committee to take note of it without considering the substance of the question, which would be discussed later.

51. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said he had understood that no budgetary and administrative arrangements had been made for UNIDO for the transitional period, and that it was simply understood that the Secretary-General would take into account the special problems of UNIDO during that period. The Controller, however, had told the United Kingdom representative that, if interim arrangements were made, they would be submitted to the Committee. Accordingly, he called for submission of those arrangements to the Committee along with the comments of the Advisory Committee on them.

52. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that the vagueness of the statement by the Controller was an indication of how uncertain the situation was. There seemed no point in continuing consideration of the item as the Committee could not take a decision on the document submitted to it. Accordingly, he proposed that the debate should be adjourned until the revised estimates for UNIDO were submitted to the Committee.

53. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), answering the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany in order to eliminate any misunderstanding, said that no arrangements had been approved as of the current stage; if interim arrangements were worked out, the relevant information would be submitted to the Industrial Development Board, as indicated in paragraph 5 of document A/C.5/1678, and also to the Fifth Committee.

54. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) supported the United States proposal, but requested further clarification from the Controller. Naturally, if interim arrangements were approved by the United Nations Secretary-General and the UNIDO Executive Director, the General Assembly would have to be informed; the point was whether the arrangements would be submitted in a provisional form to the General Assembly so that it could take a decision on them.

55. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked whether, in case of adjournment of the debate, the revised estimates for UNIDO would be submitted in the meanwhile to the Advisory Committee, as all estimates under the regular budget were.

56. Mr. SETHI (India) moved the adjournment of the debate on the item, in accordance with rule 116 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, as proposed by the United States representative and supported by the United Kingdom representative.

57. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, under rule 116 of the rules of procedure, he would adjourn the debate on the item on the separate preparation and submission of the programme and budget of UNIDO and administrative autonomy for UNIDO.

It was so decided.

Exchange of properties between the Etat de Genève and the United Nations (A/10008/Add.1, A/C.5/1674)

58. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled that the Secretary-General, in his report (A/C.5/1674) on the exchange of properties between the Etat de Genève and the United Nations, had outlined the terms under which the Etat de Genève would transfer to the United Nations one plot of land of 17,690 square metres valued at 4,670,160 Swiss francs in exchange for 4 plots of land whose total area was 21,167 square metres valued at 4,658,008 Swiss francs to be ceded by the United Nations. The value of the plots had been estimated by two experts, one appointed by each of the two parties.

59. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report (A/10008/Add.1), had commented that the exchange would be of mutual benefit to the two parties and would be on an "even exchange" basis, not involving payment of additional money by either party, even though the property to be transferred by the Etat de Genève was valued at 12,152 Swiss francs more than that to be ceded by the United Nations. The

difference in valuation of the various properties was based on the location, shape and construction possibilities of each plot. The Fifth Committee might note that some of the plots to be transferred by the United Nations were currently subject to a building prohibition. The value of those plots would be enhanced if that restriction was lifted. The Advisory Committee recognized that it was impossible to guard against all unknown eventualities in a contract of that nature, but was nevertheless satisfied with the assurances given as to the conditions of the exchange. Since the Secretary-General, for his part, was convinced that the exchange would be in the best interests of the Organization, the Committee had recommended that the General Assembly should approve the exchange under the terms set out in the exchange of letters between the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Etat de Genève (A/C.5/1674, annexes II, III and IV), subject to the stipulation that the transfer would not involve any expenditure by the United Nations other than a share of the conveyance charges and surveyors' fees, as described in paragraph 12 *(f)* of the report of the Secretary-General.

60. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) expressed surprise that the United Nations, which was so meticulous in many matters should take up the question of the exchange of properties in a manner that was not entirely logical. The United Nations, of course, had to maintain good relations with the Etat de Genève, but annex I of document A/C.5/1674 showed that the properties which the United Nations intended to exchange for the "Penthes" (ex-Birkigt) plot were geographically much larger; four plots in different areas were more valuable than one large plot. Moreover, the value of the land per square metre was given at 1975 prices (in passing, he drew attention to an error in the French text concerning the value per square metre of the "Campagne Rigot" plot, which should read 194,935 Swiss francs) while, as could be seen from paragraph 5, the idea of exchanging those properties for other land adjacent to the United Nations park, and therefore more useful to the Organization, had first taken shape in the later 1950s. He wondered what the price of the properties had been in the 1950s, as at that time apparently an effort had been made to exchange the four plots owned by the United Nations for a property owned by the Etat de Genève. It would be interesting to know whether the value of the four plots owned by the United Nations had risen since then, as the question of land was of major importance in Switzerland. His delegation was reluctant to see the United Nations exchange four properties for one, even if informed calculations indicated that the value of those four plots was equivalent to the value of the property ceded by the Etat de Genève.

61. Mr. COÏDAN (Assistant Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva) said that the question asked by the Algerian representative was somewhat difficult to answer as in 1950 the idea of an exchange had not been taken very far: the idea had been proposed in connexion with a competition organized by the Swiss authorities for the rebuilding of the Place des Nations, but the prices of the plots to be exchanged had never been discussed, particularly as the Swiss authorities had not made any offer in exchange. At the time, the cost of the land must have been about 60 or 70 Swiss francs per square metre, but those prices were not comparable with current prices for the Etat de Genève had not then established the body which had since been made responsible for relations with international organizations and for the management of the international zone subsequently established, which covered such organizations as WHO and the ILO and, which later became a development zone where private construction was prohibited. Since the current value of the land differed from the value at the time when construction had been permitted, it was more useful to consider the current relative value of the various plots. The two properties on either side of the Place des Nations were not very useful as they could not be developed, and the "Sous-Carlton" plot had been divided in 1950 by an access road to the WHO building. Moreover, he believed that the experts appointed by the Etat de Genève and the United Nations office had done good work and that their figures were accurate. The exchange of properties had been necessitated by the fact that the surroundings of the Palais des Nations were very busy, traffic was extremely slow at certain hours, and the system of access roads to the buildings had to be reviewed; the road leading to the WHO building was to be widened and another road bypassing the Place des Nations was to be built on the "Les Petits-Crépins" plot.

62. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), thanking the Assistant Director-General for the clarification he had given, drew attention to the fact that the property which the Etat de Genève was to cede was 17,690 square metres, while the plots to be ceded by the United Nations amounted to 21,167 square metres. He asked why the property offered by the Etat de Genève was more valuable than the properties owned by the United Nations, for they all were centrally located. He also asked whether, since the Etat de Genève intended to build roads on the plots ceded by the United Nations, the prohibition on construction would be lifted and the land made available to individuals.

63. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) suggested that the Committee might take a decision on the item under consideration without proceeding to such a detailed examination as the representative of Algeria deemed necessary. Three fundamental points should be borne in mind: first, the transfer of the plots which the United Nations would cede to the Etat de Genève would enable the latter to build roads which were necessary in the area–from which the United Nations Office would benefit; second, the value of the properties had been estimated by two independent experts whose figures should be accepted; third, concerning the question whether the construction prohibition on some of the properties ceded by the United Nations might be lifted, it should be noted that, as the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 7 of its report, the instrument of exchange would constitute a formal contract which could not be unilaterally amended by either party, and building would be prohibited on the part of the "Campagne Rigot" plot adjacent to the Place des Nations and, with the exception of the C.G.T.E. bus shelter, on the "Superficia" plot (A/C.5/1674, annex II, para. 4). On those grounds, the Committee should approve the proposed exchange, as recommended by the Advisory Committee.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

1721st meeting

Friday, 24 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1721

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1718th meeting)

Exchange of properties between the Etat de Genève and the United Nations* (concluded) *(A/10008/Add.1, A/C.5/1674)

1. Mr. COÏDAN (Assistant Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva) said that he understood the concerns expressed by the representative of Algeria at the previous meeting, particularly as it was extremely difficult to determine the value of lands to be exchanged. For that reason, the Etat de Genève and the United Nations Office had asked the opinion of independent experts and had accepted their conclusions, which they had judged to be reasonable. Of course, the valuation of the "Penthes" property was greater than that of the "Superficia" and "Campagne Rigot" properties, but those properties were subject to a building prohibition and only bus shelters and telephone boxes could be built on them. The valuation per square metre of the "Penthes" property was not greater than that of the "Sous-Carlton" property, although the latter was not in such a favourable location and was divided by Avenue Appia; finally, the valuation per square metre of the "Penthes" property was not very different from that of "Petits-Crépins", which was further away from the road and much less usable. In addition to those considerations, there was the fact that the lands to be ceded to the Etat de Genève would be used entirely for the improvement of the road network used by the United Nations, WHO and the ILO.

2. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that he would definitely vote in favour of the exchange of property in question but noted that the negotiations had lasted for 25 years. Although traffic problems around the Palais de Nations were an argument for the exchange in 1975, that had not been the case 25 years previously, and he therefore wondered what had led the two parties to envisage the exchange at that time. It should also be noted that the land which the United Nations would receive would be partly subject to a building prohibition. It would no doubt be made into a park which would embellish the town of Geneva, and which would be an amenity for which the Swiss authorities would undoubtedly be grateful to the United Nations. He did not wish to cast aspersions on the officials who had taken part in the negotiations, but he considered that it would have been preferable if, for example, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions or the representative of the Secretary-General had been included in the negotiations.

3. Mr. COÏDAN (Assistant Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva) explained that the idea of the exchange had originated 25 years previously in the decision of the Swiss authorities to organize an international competition for the development of the Place des Nations and its surroundings. It had been necessary to envisage the situation where one of the proposed developments would encroach on the property of the United Nations. Since the competition had not taken place, the project had not been pursued. It was only with the construction of the WHO building that the question had arisen again and that negotiations had resumed. The officials who had taken part in the negotiations with the Etat de Genève had been careful to reserve the position of the General Assembly, which would make the final decision.

4. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.1) and approve the exchange of properties between the Etat de Genève and the United Nations on the terms set out in the exchange of letters between the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Etat de Genève described in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1674). If he heard no objection he would take it that the Committee approved that proposal.

It was so decided.

Standards of accommodation for official travel of United Nations staff by air (A/C.5/1675)

5. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had taken note of the Secretary-General's report on the standards of accommodation for official travel of United Nations staff by air (A/C.5/1675) and urged the Secretary-General to continue to limit expenditure as much as possible when applying the existing rules in that respect.

6. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that in general he was satisfied with the way in which the Secretary-General was dealing with the question, and announced that his delegation nevertheless intended to submit a draft resolution on the subject to the Committee. The Organization could make some savings on travel expenditure: it was perhaps unnecessary for some officials to travel first class when the flight, between two European cities, for example, lasted only 2 or 3 hours, while other officials had to make journeys of 12 or 14 hours in the economy class.

7. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, pending the submission of the Algerian draft resolution, the Committee should take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the standards of accommodation for official travel of United Nations staff by air (A/C.5/1675).

It was so decided.

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)

SECTION 5. DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE ON TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Section 5B. Information and Research Centre on Transnational Corporations

8. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Secretary-General, in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), had submitted an estimate of $1,189,000 under section 5B for the Information Centre on Transnational Corporations. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), had not recommended any specific reduction in that amount, but the reduction in representation allowances which it had proposed in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report would require a reduction of $400 from the initial estimates. The total amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 5B for the biennium 1976-1977 was therefore $1,188,600.

9. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), referring to paragraphs 5.40 to 5.42 of the Advisory Committee's report, recalled that under section 5B, the Secretary-General had submitted a provisional estimate, pending further decisions by the Economic and Social Council on the work programme of the Centre in 1976-1977, and that the detailed programme of work would be formulated by the Commission on Transnational Corporations in early 1976 and would be submitted to the Council at its sixtieth session. The Advisory Committee had also been informed that, as of the time it examined section 5B, no appointments had been made to the secretariat of the Centre. The representative of the Secretary-General could perhaps clarify the current situation, but, during its consideration of section 5B, the Advisory Committee had decided that it would review the vacancy situation at its current session. Consequently, the Advisory Committee had recommended approval on a provisional basis of the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General under section 5B.

10. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation supported in principle the establishment of an Information and Research Centre on Transnational Corporations, in accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session. His delegation welcomed that new approach and hoped that the Centre would help to ensure the necessary control of the activities of transnational corporations so as to reduce to a minimum the damage they caused to the economies of developing countries and so as to confirm the sovereignty of those countries over their natural resources. His delegation approved the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee for the Centre, but considered that the amount had been over-estimated, particularly in respect of the sum designed to cover the effects of inflation; his delegation's position with regard to such expenses was well known. It was to be hoped that in choosing the staff of the Centre, the Secretariat and officials at the Centre would strictly respect the principle of geographical distribution and would take into account the interests of under-represented countries, including the Soviet Union.

11. Miss GARCÍA DONOSO (Ecuador) said that her country attached great importance to the work of the Commission on Transnational Corporations and supported every measure aimed at strengthening the Information and Research Centre on Transnational Corporations. Since the Committee was considering section 5B in first reading, her delegation supported the viewpoint of the Advisory Committee, but wished to receive additional information regarding the view of the Economic and Social Council on the report of the Commission on its first session,[1] since that report contained plans to assign a number of activities to the Centre which would entail appropriations. She joined the representative of the Soviet Union in urging that the Centre's staff should be recruited in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

12. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that his delegation had clearly demonstrated in the Economic and Social Council that it took a positive attitude towards the Information and Research Centre on Transnational Corporations. As pointed out by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 5.40 of its report, the figures provided by the Secretary-General were provisional. He wished to know therefore what the Centre's situation with regard to extra-budgetary resources was. His Government had pledged in the Economic and Social Council a contribution of $350,000 for 1975 and $150,000 for 1976 and would like to know whether other voluntary contributions had been pledged or paid.

13. The CHAIRMAN noted that there were no other names inscribed on the list of speakers on section 5B. He proposed therefore that the Committee should revert to that section at a later date.

Section 5A. Department of Economic and Social Affairs

14. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), the Secretary-General was submitting an initial estimate of $42,695,000 under section 5A to finance programmes in the economic and social fields carried out under the direction of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The programmes involved were enumerated in the table appearing in paragraph 5.2 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008 and Corr.2). Section 5A contained only part of the total estimates for programmes carried out by the United Nations in the economic and social fields. Other credits were requested under other sections of the proposed programme budget, for example, section 4, which dealt with policy-making organs for economic and social activities, and section 5B, which dealt with the Information and Research Centre on Transnational Corporations. As could be seen in the table appearing in paragraph 5.6 of the Advisory Committee's report, if both extra-budgetary resources and apportioned costs budgeted elsewhere in the programme

1 *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 12* and corrigendum.

budget were taken into account, the total resources requested under sections 4, 5A and 5B for the implementation of the related programmes amounted to more than $127,500,000. In addition, resources needed for operational activities under those sections were estimated to be approximately $154,600,000. Sections 4, 5A and 5B therefore represented one of the most important elements of expenditure both in terms of the programmes to be carried out and the magnitude of the resources involved.

15. The estimates under section 5A were $7,400,000 more than the adjusted revised appropriation for 1974-1975, or an increase of 20.8 per cent. Real growth was estimated by the Secretary-General at 2.4 per cent at 1975 rates. The increase in the proposed estimates varied from one programme to another, as indicated in the table in paragraph 5.2 of the Advisory Committee's report; the reasons for differences in the rates of increase were outlined in paragraph 5.3.

16. In its examination of the estimates under section 5A, the Advisory Committee had much more information than it had had for its consideration of the other sections of the budget. While progress had been made in producing information of a better quality than in 1973, the Committee believed that there was still room for further improvement, and chapter I of its report contained comments and observations which were of particular relevance to section 5A. The approach adopted by the Advisory Committee in its examination of that section was indicated in paragraph 5.7 of its report. In arriving at its conclusions regarding the estimates for each programme, the Committee had borne in mind resources and staff currently available and the justification given for creating new posts. Of the 37 new posts requested by the Secretary-General, 23 of which were for Professional staff and 14 for the General Service category, the Advisory Committee had recommended acceptance of a total of 20 new posts—14 Professional and 6 General Service—as indicated in paragraph 5.38 of its report. The impact of the Committee's recommendation varied in each of the programmes concerned and he was ready to provide additional clarification on that matter. Finally, the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 5.5 of its report that the request for general temporary assistance consultants, *ad hoc* expert groups, and over-time and night differential showed a marked degree of restraint. Nevertheless, the additional information supplied to the Committee indicated that there was room for improvement in the formulation of the tasks to be assigned to consultants and *ad hoc* expert groups.

17. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said that, although all States, including Brazil, found their assessed contributions to the United Nations budget to be a burden, the majority of delegations considered the expenses involved to be worth while since it helped in joint efforts to maintain peace and promote the well-being of mankind. He respected the opinion of the Advisory Committee regarding section 5A. The Advisory Committee was seeking cuts it considered desirable in the estimates of the Secretary-General. He wondered, however, whether it was really necessary to make relatively minor cuts in an economic and social budget of $42 million. As a result of decisions taken by the General Assembly at its seventh special session and by other organs, the tasks of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs would be assuming greater significance than in previous years and thus the increase in the Department's budget was perfectly justifiable. His delegation strongly recommended that the Fifth Committee should approve the entire amount proposed by the Secretary-General under section 5A as proof of its goodwill and sincerity.

18. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that, because it recognized the increasingly important role of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs both within the United Nations itself and the United Nations system as a whole, his delegation considered it essential that further improvements should be made in its management of programme activities, work methods and especially its utilization of human resources in order to be able to carry out more effectively its many and varied responsibilities in the future. In that connexion, attention should be given to the conclusions and recommendations made by the Administrative Management Service on that subject.[2] If a concerted effort was made in that direction, the Department should be able to carry out its essential programmes and give priority to the tasks entrusted to it with a lower level of resources and fewer personnel than those requested for 1976-1977. It should be remembered that the budget estimates for the Department had been prepared several months earlier and therefore did not include activities following from the seventh special session of the General Assembly. By improving management the Department should be better able to contribute to the attainment of the objectives set by the seventh special session.

19. The appropriation of some $42.7 million requested by the Secretary-General for the Department under the regular budget represented an increase of almost $7.4 million over the amount available in 1974-1975. Furthermore, those funds were significantly supplemented by more than $20 million from extra-budgetary resources and approximately $155 million for operational activities, or a total of nearly $218 million in direct resources. The regular budget increase included almost $1 million in programme growth, largely for the creation of new posts. His delegation wished to know what efforts had been made by the Secretary-General before requesting additional staff—a total of 37 posts—to reduce or eliminate marginal activities in order to redeploy existing resources to meet emerging priority activities.

20. The Advisory Committee had indicated several situations which indicated the need for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to review its ongoing activities and its current work methods. The Advisory Committee feared, for example, that there was a possibility of duplication between the work programmes of the Office of Science and Technology and UNESCO or between the Department and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator. The Advisory Committee did not find satisfactory the procedure followed by the Office of Science and Technology whereby it first requested additional resources and then drew up its work programme on the basis of its request. The Advisory Committee also believed that the Secretary-General failed to explain adequately the method used to calculate cost estimates for printing, which would have a substantial effect on the total

[2] Document A/C.5/1543 and Corr.1 and 2, of 13 November 1973.

appropriations for the Department. Finally, the Advisory Committee had difficulty in relating some of the requests for new posts to programmes for which they were requested. His delegation wished to receive clarifications with regard to all those questions.

21. He noted that, according to the table in paragraph 5.2 of the Advisory Committee's report, the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, including the Promotion of Equality of Men and Women Branch, would receive just over 12 per cent of the appropriation requested under section 5A. The Secretary-General's estimates for that Centre implied a slight decrease in real terms of its activities and the Advisory Committee had accepted the full appropriation requested. While his delegation recognized the need for belt-tightening for the Department as a whole, it agreed with the Advisory Committee that the requested appropriation should be approved. The decisions taken during International Women's Year would place increased responsibilities on the Centre, particularly on the Promotion of Equality of Men and Women Branch. His delegation regarded the work of the Centre—and especially that of the Branch—to be of high priority. It could already be foreseen that when the United Nations took steps to implement the World Plan of Action adopted in July 1975 at the World Conference of the International Women's Year held in Mexico City, the Branch would require additional resources. To the extent possible, those resources should be obtained through the redeployment of existing resources within the Department but, if such redeployment was found to be inadequate, his delegation would give favourable consideration to any reasonable requests for additional appropriations which might subsequently be put forward by the Secretary-General.

22. Reverting to the total appropriation for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, he said that present resources could and should be used more effectively and economically. While agreeing with the decrease of $647,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee, he believed that the Department could absorb an additional reduction of about $1,000,000, or roughly one third of the increase in its expenditure attributable to inflation. In other words, his delegation would favour a total reduction of $1,800,000 in the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General.

23. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that he had noted with concern that there was no provision for growth in the programme "Social development and humanitarian affairs", which even showed a slight decline, in real terms, as compared with 1974-1975. Among the many important goals to be achieved within the framework of that programme, he wished particularly to call attention to medium-term objectives 9 to 12 (A/10006, para. 5.34, items (i) to (l)) relating to activities aimed at promoting equality between men and women in law and in fact. The proposed programme budget and the Advisory Committee's report had of course been prepared before the World Conference of the International Women's Year had been held in Mexico. As the proposals and recommendations of that Conference were to be reviewed by the Third Committee under agenda item 75, it was still too early to anticipate what revised estimates would be submitted to the Fifth Committee in order to follow up the decisions of the Mexico Conference. At the current stage, in the first reading of section 5A, he would stress only the necessity of giving the Department of Economic and Social affairs sufficient resources to carry out new and important programmes initiated as a result of the recommendations of the Conference. His delegation would be prepared to approve additional appropriations for that purpose, if necessary.

24. Mr. NSUBUGA (Uganda) said he would find it difficult to express an opinion on the total appropriation under section 5A when it was not yet known what implications the decisions adopted at the seventh special session of the General Assembly would have on the amounts.

25. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said, with reference to the observations made by the United States representative, that it was not surprising if management of a department as large as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, whose activities were both numerous and varied, was not always perfect. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee had been kind enough to say that progress had been made in the drawing up and presentation of section 5A. In real terms, the Department's projected growth was fairly modest, since it was 2.4 per cent, which meant that it was less than the growth rate of the budget as a whole. The United States representative believed that the Department could do more with fewer staff. It was for the Committee to form a judgement on that issue.

26. The United States representative had said that the programme of the Office for Science and Technology might duplicate that of UNESCO. However, the former programme had been very closely studied by CPC and had subsequently been considerably recast. It was to be hoped that some, at least, of its defects had been remedied.

27. It was true that the Advisory Committee had said that it had experienced difficulties in linking some of the requests for new posts to the activities involved. The data given to CPC and the Advisory Committee had been the most detailed possible—in terms of man/months—but some points must inevitably remain unexplained because it was impossible to attain complete mathematical precision in that connexion. It was not always easy when drawing up a biennial budget to predict three years in advance the detailed subject-matter of a given study. It could merely be foreseen that movements of staff would be required in that connexion without being able to be more specific. The Department had nevertheless been very moderate in its requests for travel appropriations, to give an example.

28. He did not see how there was a risk of overlapping between the activities of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and those of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator. Note would, however, be taken of the fears expressed by the United States representative on that score.

29. That representative had expressed regret that social development activities, particularly programmes to promote the status of women, had not been sufficiently expanded. It must be borne in mind that some of the activities of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs

had been transferred to the Centre for Development Planning, Projections and Policies. There had been no diminution of the former's activities.

30. The new Under-Secretary-General who now headed the Department of Economic and Social Affairs would perhaps have different views with regard to the allocation of resources within the Department from those which had been adopted when the programme budget had been drawn up.

31. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) regarded the increase in appropriations requested by the Secretary-General under section 5A as quite stupendous in relation to the 1974-1975 budget. The increase of 20.8 per cent, which was to cover the effects of inflation and the cost of 23 new Professional and 14 new General Service posts, was all the more striking because the Committee should undoubtedly be prepared for the submission of revised estimates. All items must therefore be very carefully examined in an attempt to reach more reasonable results.

32. In paragraph 5.5 of its report, the Advisory Committee had accurately stated that the only objects of expenditure which showed incremental growth were salaries for established posts and the related common staff costs. Very often such increases were attributable to unfortunate duplication: the Advisory Committee itself had said, in paragraph 5.28 of its report, that there were dangers of duplication between the programme of work of the Office for Science and Technology and that of UNESCO. The Advisory Committee was therefore justified in drawing attention to the need periodically to review the work of the Department so as to determine whether some activities were still relevant. His delegation had already pointed out, as had CPC itself, that many elements of the population programme had completely ceased to be topical and should be simply deleted. However, the Secretary-General was requesting large appropriations for those redundant elements.

33. The requests for new posts were also inexplicable since, during the 1976-1977 financial year, 54 Professional posts should become available to the Department, a fact which was not mentioned anywhere in the proposed programme budget. Some delegations had therefore been right to say that the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee was inadequate, and one delegation had already realistically proposed an additional reduction of about $1 million, which his delegation would be prepared to support. In any case, in view of the need for the Department to make better use of the resources available to it and those which would be freed when certain programmes were terminated and useless projects deleted, his delegation would vote against the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General under section 5A. Some brake must be put on the costs of running the Department, which was becoming overlarge; attempts must also be made to cover increased expenditure attributable to inflation and monetary instability by economies, rethinking of priorities and reallocation of resources.

34. Mrs. DERRÉ (France) expressed the hope that in view of the importance of section 5A by reason both of its content and of the size of the appropriation requested, the Committee would do as it had done when it had considered section 22, namely that representatives would first make general observations on the section as a whole and would then proceed to examine it programme by programme.

35. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) supported the suggestion by the French representative. He inquired whether the report of CPC, which would be helpful for the discussion of section 5A, had been issued.

36. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should follow the procedure adopted for the consideration of section 22 and first discuss section 5A as a whole and then consider the various programmes.

It was so decided.

37. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) pointed out to the representative of the Philippines that it was at its fifteenth session in March 1975 that CPC had reported on the proposed programme budget as it related to activities in the economic and social fields; the report in question had been issued as document E/5632.[3]

38. Replying to the representative of the Soviet Union, he explained that the revised estimate for section 5A showed an increase of $136,500 (see A/C.5/1682).

39. The representative of the Soviet Union had said that the programme "Population" provided for many irrelevant activities. However, after the World Population Conference which had been held at Bucharest in August 1974, the Population Commission had considered all the various projects, and had given its endorsement to the programme. CPC had also considered it thoroughly and had expressed a favourable opinion of it.

AGENDA ITEM 103

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly *(continued)*:* *(c)* Board of Auditors (A/10153, A/C.5/1695)

40. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to proceed with the election necessary to fill the vacancy which would arise on the Board of Auditors upon the expiration, on 30 June 1976, of the term of office of the Auditor-General of Pakistan, as indicated in the note by the Secretary-General (A/10153). The Governments of Bangladesh, Ghana and Sri Lanka had each nominated their Auditors-General for the vacant post (see A/C.5/1695) and had indicated their willingness, if the need arose, to make the necessary staff available to the candidate elected. The candidates therefore met the necessary requirements.

41. The election would be held by secret ballot and in accordance with rule 93 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. In the case of the Board of Auditors, the Committee would be electing a Member State, not an individual.

* Resumed from the 1716th meeting.

3 *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 7.*

At the request of the Chairman, Mr. Barragán Mata (Mexico) and Mrs. Abele-Emich (Austria) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	102
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	102
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	100
Required majority:	51

Number of votes obtained:

Ghana	55
Bangladesh	31
Sri Lanka	14

The Auditor-General of Ghana 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 1976.

42. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Rapporteur should be requested to report directly to the General Assembly on the matter.

It was so decided.

43. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) and Mr. VANDERGERT (Sri Lanka) congratulated Ghana and assured it that its Auditor-General could count on the co-operation of their Governments. They thanked the delegations which had voted for their respective candidates.

44. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey), Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) and Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) also congratulated Ghana and paid a tribute to the manner in which the Auditor-General of Pakistan had discharged his important responsibilities.

45. Mr. AGYEMAN (Ghana) thanked all the delegations that had participated in the vote and, in particular, those that had supported his country's candidature.

46. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that he deeply appreciated the kind remarks made by a number of delegations concerning the Auditor-General of Pakistan.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (A/C.5/L.1225/Rev.1)

47. The CHAIRMAN noted that the Committee was making good progress in its work and said that he relied on the co-operation of representatives to ensure that the Committee did not lose the momentum it had gained. He was, however, disappointed that the meetings were starting late and that there was not always a quorum when the meeting began. Moreover, although members of the Committee were notified well ahead of time which sections of the proposed programme budget were to be taken up, there were never enough speakers on the list for each meeting, with the result that consideration of certain sections had to be postponed.

48. The Committee was also encountering some difficulties with regard to documentation. For example, it would have been preferable to take up sections 5A and 5B of the proposed programme budget at the same time as the estimates revised as a result of decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council (A/C.5/1682). However, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had received the final explanations concerning those estimates only the previous day, and could not issue its report until the week beginning on 27 October.

49. He proposed that during that week the Committee should consider the question of the honoraria payable to members of the International Law Commission, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal and the question of the use of experts and consultants in the United Nations; that it should conclude its consideration of sections 5A, 5B and 22 of the proposed programme budget and begin consideration of section 21, and take up agenda items 99 (Joint Inspection Unit) and 101 (Publications and documentation of the United Nations) as well as sections 23 to 26 of the proposed programme budget. The elections for the Committee on Contributions could be held towards the end of the week. Lastly, the Committee could consider item 107 (Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force).

50. It would have been desirable to take up items 100 (Pattern of conferences) and 101 and section 23 (Conference and Library Services) of the proposed programme budget together, but the Advisory Committee had not yet completed its report on item 101.

51. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) noted that the Secretary-General's authority to enter into commitments for UNEF and UNDOF expired on 31 October 1975. It was therefore a matter of certainty, and not hypothesis, as the Chairman had implied, that the Committee would have to take a decision before 31 October on the question of the financing of both Forces. In that connexion, the fact that the Secretary-General's estimates had not yet been published and that the Advisory Committee had therefore not yet been able to consider them gave cause for concern.

52. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Secretary-General's report on the question would be ready at the beginning of the week beginning on 27 October.

53. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that he was deeply concerned about the question of punctuality. Every effort should be made to avoid a situation in which the Committee would be required to hold night, Saturday or Sunday meetings. Since most members of the Committee were frequently detained in the morning at the offices of their missions, he suggested that the Committee should hold afternoon and morning meetings on alternate days.

54. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) considered the programme of work proposed by the Chairman to be highly ambitious, but was confident that the Committee would do its best to carry it out.

55. He shared the apprehensions expressed by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany and wondered whether it might be possible to make the documentation relating to the various questions to be considered by the Committee available earlier.

56. The CHAIRMAN observed that all the documents relating to the questions which he had proposed for consideration during the following week had been issued or would be issued by the beginning of the week. He drew attention, in that connexion, to the note concerning the work of the Committee circulated as document A/C.5/L.1225/Rev.1.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

1722nd meeting

Monday, 27 October 1975, at 3.15 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1722

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

1. The CHAIRMAN outlined the programme of work for the week, including the first reading of sections 5, 21, 22, 24 and 26, and item 107, relating to the financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force.

2. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) asked when the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on item 107 would be available.

3. The CHAIRMAN replied that the documentation on item 107 would not be available in time for full consideration by the Fifth Committee; consequently, the Committee might have to take an interim decision extending the authority of the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for one month for UNEF and UNDOF expenditure pending completion and consideration of the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee.

4. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the documents on UNEF and UNDOF were being finalized. The only pending question was an amount of about $10 million to cover the rental of ships and aircraft.

5. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta), recalling the protracted debate held the previous year in connexion with the financing of UNEF and UNDOF, suggested that a draft text should be provided to the Committee on the extension for one month of the Secretary-General's authority to enter into commitments. The Committee would thus be able to restrict itself to consideration of that draft proposal.

6. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), supported by Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany), suggested that the Chairman should prepare a draft resolution extending the Secretary-General's authority to enter into commitments for UNEF and UNDOF expenditure.

7. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee requested him to prepare, in consultation with the representatives of the Secretary-General, a draft resolution providing for the interim extension of the Secretary-General's authority to enter into commitments for UNEF and UNDOF expenditure.

It was so decided.

8. Replying to a question put by Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), the CHAIRMAN said that the draft decisions submitted by members of the Committee under agenda item 96 which did not require immediate action would be taken up after the first reading of individual sections of the programme budget.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10279, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1236)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 5. DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE ON TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

9. The CHAIRMAN invited members of the Committee to comment on section 5 as a whole before proceeding to consider each subsection individually.

10. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) observed that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs would play a major role in following up the decisions taken by the General Assembly at its sixth and seventh special sessions. His delegation considered the work on development planning, projections and policies indispensable to the Department's role in economic development. He welcomed the clarity of the medium-term objectives in the programme budget, which had been redrafted to conform with the recommendation made by CPC in paragraph 31 of its report on its

fifteenth session.[1] He requested clarification of the medium-term objective concerning the impact of environmental policies on the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. That question had been discussed during the consideration of the incorporation of environmental elements in the criteria for the review and appraisal of the Strategy at the third session of the UNEP Governing Countil, held in April and May 1975. The relationship between environment and development was to be discussed separately at the forthcoming fourth session of the Governing Council. He requested information from the Secretariat on what studies on environment and development were being considered, including those made with assistance from the United Nations Trust Fund for Development Planning and Projections. A separate study on the interrelationship between environment and development could facilitate the incorporation of environmental elements in the International Development Strategy.

11. Referring to paragraph 38 of the CPC report on its fifteenth session, he asked what particular assistance had been extended to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, under General Assembly resolution 3177 (XXVIII) regarding economic co-operation among developing countries. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs should give special attention to assistance in expediting technical co-operation among the developing countries. One of the main problems in that connexion was the lack of procedures–such as existed for experts from developed countries and for the normal recruitment requirements of UNDP and the specialized agencies–for the provision of experts from one developing country to another. Developing countries wanted to obtain the service of experts from other developing countries before turning to developed countries. Another problem relating to the use of experts from developing countries was the lack of adequate funds; unless the problem of financing was solved, activities in the field of development would be restricted. UNDP was already beginning to establish a framework within which projects involving technical co-operation among developing countries could be developed. He expressed the hope that the United Nations would facilitate technical co-operation among the developing countries by establishing guidelines and procedures in consultation with UNDP.

12. His delegation attached great importance to assistance for developing countries' programmes on human settlements, planning and development. The Director of the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning had informed CPC that the Centre would limit its work to the physical aspects of planning and construction in human settlements with respect to tourism and the impact of tourism on human settlements. He suggested that the Centre might expand its work to other aspects of human settlements while the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation was not yet fully operational. He expressed the hope that the United Nations would do its utmost to ensure that Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements to be held in Vancouver in 1976 would be successful and that there would be wide participation by all countries, agencies and organizations.

13. The programmes for natural resources, energy and transport were welcome, and he hoped that the regional commissions, with the financial resources made available to them under the budget, would be able to perform their responsibilities, taking account of the special problems and needs of each region. He requested information as to the priorities assigned to activities under that sector.

14. Science and technology activities were particularly relevant in the context of the decisions of the General Assembly at its sixth and seventh special sessions, and the International Development Strategy. The work of the Office for Science and Technology would thus probably increase during the next two years, and he asked what steps were being taken by the Secretariat to avoid duplication in the programmes of work of the Office and UNESCO. He endorsed the objective of a unified science and technology policy and the use of *ad hoc* experts, if experts could not be made available by the specialized agencies, in preparing a report for the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development.

15. In the field of social development and humanitarian affairs, programme strategies should be pursued in keeping with the Declaration on Social Progress and Development and the decisions taken by other legislative bodies. He awaited with interest the implementation of projects, particularly guidelines and measures on the social consequences of the "green revolution". He understood that the programme budget had been prepared before the World Conference of International Women's Year, and that additional estimates might be submitted after consideration of the item by the Third Committee. While the programme activities under social development had been presented satisfactorily, he hoped that a more substantive and better-prepared presentation of objectives in that sector would be provided in future.

16. He commended the services provided by the Statistical Office to member States. Since two reports on environment statistics were to be submitted to the Statistical Commission at its nineteenth session in New Delhi in November 1976, he suggested that a preliminary report might be submitted to the Governing Council of UNEP in April 1976. He supported the expansion proposed in the Demographic and Social Statistics Branch of the Statistical Office.

17. In conclusion, he said that his delegation accepted the estimates recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, subject to revisions submitted in connexion with decisions by other legislative bodies.

18. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that the medium-term plan for 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1) showed that economic and social activities were very prominent in United Nations work. The growth rate of such activities between 1956 and 1973 had been about 300 per cent, the growth rate having slowed down somewhat in the 1960s. His delegation fully endorsed the emphasis placed on economic and social activities by the United Nations. More information was provided on those activities in the programme budget than on other activities, and he welcomed the excellent presentation and breakdown of expenditures for each programme.

1 *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 7.*

The estimates for section 5 A came closest to a real programme budget.

19. The report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on its fifteenth session[1] was a very valuable document which provided a solid basis for the Fifth Committee's review of economic and social programmes. As the Advisory Committee had noted in paragraph 5.4 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), however, there was still room for improvement. For example, new posts had been requested for "continuing" activities for which the legislative authority quoted was several years old. That referred particularly to the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport and the Statistical Office, as was noted in paragraphs 5.15 and 5.34 of the Advisory Committee's report. It was extremely important to redeploy resources to the most important areas and to ensure close evaluation of the relevance of programmes.

20. The highest growth rate in the section was for science and technology. Both CPC and the Advisory Committee had expressed some concern about the Office for Science and Technology. It was important to co-ordinate the activities of that Office with UNESCO and other bodies involved in the same kind of activity such as WIPO, UNCTAD and the United Nations University. He hoped that those short-comings would be remedied.

21. Mr. SEALY (Trinidad and Tobago) said that his delegation was somewhat dismayed that the programme of work for the Information and Research Centre on Transnational corporations had not yet been finalized and, indeed, was unlikely to be finalized until after the sixtieth session of the Economic and Social Council. Given the usual delay in recruitment of staff, it was clear that an institution of vital importance to the third world would not be operative for some time. His delegation was pleased to note, however, that the Director of the Centre had now been appointed and trusted that the work programme would be established as soon as possible. It also welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General in seconding some staff from another department to carry out the necessary preparatory work for the Centre.

22. With regard to section 5A, his delegation had noted the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee over the probable high cost of overlapping and duplication within the United Nations system. It trusted that the bodies concerned would remedy the situation at the earliest opportunity.

23. His delegation had noted the Advisory Committee's comments in the last sentence of paragraph 5.4 of its report and, while it felt that certain areas were still of relevance even though the legislative authority might be old, it welcomed the Advisory Committee's recognition of the need for internal periodic reviews of work programmes.

24. His delegation agreed with the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 5A. In addition, all United Nations bodies should try to avoid overlapping and duplication in their work. The Secretary-General should continuously review programmes of work in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, complete long-standing programmes so that the necessary manpower might be released for tasks in other priority areas, and examine the possibility of assigning additional responsibilities to existing staff members rather than employing new staff.

25. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was fully aware of the importance of the substantive programmes undertaken and supported by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which it regarded as one of the most vital parts of the United Nations. The results of the seventh special session of the General Assembly underlined that importance and, no doubt, the current session would assign to the Department additional vital responsibilities. It had been suggested that the reductions in section 5A proposed by the Advisory Committee should be restored as a means of strengthening the Department in view of the new tasks decided upon at the seventh special session. In his delegation's view, such a course would be illogical. The Secretary-General's budget proposals for section 5A had been prepared before the seventh special session and related to programmes and activities for which legislative authority had already existed at the time of preparation. The Advisory Committee's concern had been to match resources to given tasks, not to deny the Secretary-General adequate resources for authorized programmes. Consequently, the economies proposed by the Advisory Committee represented the elimination of redundant requests for appropriations of no relevance to the new activities arising from the seventh special session. The financial implications of those new activities would be submitted to the Fifth Committee in due course, and his delegation was confident that the Committee, guided by the Advisory Committee, would vote adequate resources for such activities.

26. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his comments were of a general nature and applied to the programme budget as a whole; he was relating them to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs because of the importance of that Department's tasks.

27. In the general discussion a number of delegations had voiced doubts about the soundness of the incremental approach. His delegation shared those doubts and considered that the Advisory Committee, instead of confining its attention to the Secretary-General's requests for additional established posts, as it had stated in paragraph 5.7 of its report, should have carefully considered whether existing programmes could be carried out with fewer personnel and should have presented observations and recommendations accordingly. The Advisory Committee itself had pointed out how dated the legislative authority for some programmes was and had urged the Secretary-General to terminate certain programmes more speedily. It therefore seemed altogether possible that a probing examination would have uncovered units and divisions where some reductions were advisable, even though no additional posts had been requested. In his view, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs warranted the closest scrutiny for outdated programmes.

28. His delegation would like to know what percentage of the resources devoted to established posts was used for directly servicing conferences and meetings and what percentage was used to finance support services, research and the preparation of general studies.

29. In conclusion, he underlined the increasing importance which his delegation attached to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and his concern that the Department should be streamlined so that its effectiveness would be enhanced.

30. Mr. DASHKEVICH (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) drew attention to the fact that the estimates for section 5A for the biennium 1976-77 were 20.8 per cent higher than the revised appropriations for the previous biennium. His delegation considered that increase unnecessary and also unjustified in spite of references made by the Director of the Budget Division to special difficulties in drawing up the proposed programme budget relating to the forecasting of meetings, experts and travel required. As had been said in the Committee, the estimates could be reduced, not just by the $647,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee, but by $1 million.

31. His delegation endorsed the view of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 5.5 of its report that the objects of expenditure which showed incremental growth were salaries for established posts and the related common staff costs. He questioned the reasons for the Secretary-General's request for 23 new Professional posts and 14 General Service posts, when the programme budget indicated that 54 Professional posts would be released in the biennium 1976-1977. His delegation could not endorse any further expansion of the Secretariat involving increased expenditure.

32. He shared the concern expressed by other members of the Committee over duplication in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the implementation of marginally useful programmes and other short-comings which involved additional expenditure. More rational and economical use of resources would obviate the need for increased expenditure. His delegation could not accept the amount of more than $4.2 million included under section 5A to cover the effects of inflation and currency instability, which should be offset by savings and redeployment of resources within the budget.

33. In conclusion, he said that his delegation would vote against the estimates under section 5A of the budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

34. Mr. NKIELE-ATYPO (Congo) noted that the large sums called for under section 5A would not be used for the implementation of an integrated programme designed to bring about the establishment of a new international economic order but instead would be largely used to pay the salaries of a constantly growing body of administrative personnel and to cover the extra costs due to inflation.

35. In the light of the comments by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 5.28 of its report, it was clear that a regrettable conflict of competence within the United Nations system was jeopardizing efficiency. It seemed that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was financing projects which fell within the competence of the specialized agencies. He very much hoped, therefore, that the Secretary-General would achieve savings by urging each organization and department to develop programmes within its own sphere of competence. Through sounder management of its finances, the United Nations could absorb the extra costs caused by inflation without calling for additional funds.

36. His delegation firmly endorsed the comments made by the Advisory Committee but felt that the reductions it had recommended were not adequate. It therefore hoped that the Fifth Committee would scrutinize very carefully the amounts requested for each of the units and divisions, as had already been suggested by a number of delegations.

37. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to questions on section 5B, said that the financial implications of decisions taken on the Information and Research Centre on Transnational Corporations by the Economic and Social Council in 1975 would, if approved by the committee, amount to a total of $82,000-$27,000 for summary records and $55,000 for a meeting of experts to study the possibility of establishing standard forms showing financial relationships between transnational corporations and their associated enterprises. Regarding the recruitment of staff for the Centre, he said that 5 of the 12 Professional posts authorized and 4 of the 12 General Service posts authorized had been filled and that the personnel would be ready to begin work by the beginning of November. It was clear, therefore, that the greater part of the appropriation for 1975 would not be spent.

38. With regard to section 5A, he said that the services provided to the regional commissions and the developing countries individually by the United Nations Development Advisory Teams were being reviewed by the Secretariat in co-operation with the UNDP secretariat in order to establish closer relations between the Teams and the commissions and to facilitate exchanges of experts between developing countries. The Committee would shortly be reviewing a decision of the Economic and Social Council relating to meetings arranged by the commissions in order to promote such exchanges.

39. The Centre for Development Planning, Projections and Policies was preparing, in conjunction with Harvard University, a large-scale study for UNEP based on analyses of input-output systems. The project would be financed from extra-budgetary sources in 1975-1976.

40. He could assure the representative of the Philippines that the regional preparatory meetings indicated that the Vancouver conference on human settlements would be attended by a very large number of Member States.

41. The concern expressed in CPC and the Economic and Social Council regarding duplication of activities between the Office for Science and Technology of the United Nations and UNESCO had led to the reformulation of the United Nations programme. The Secretary-General would, in the light of the Advisory Committee's concern as expressed in its report, pay special attention to the programmes of work submitted by the Office in the future.

42. With regard to the percentage of regular budget resources assigned to the support of extra-budgetary projects, he said that, in addition to the 14 per cent of the cost of projects reimbursed by UNDP to the agencies in respect of overhead costs, the United Nations estimated

that 7 per cent of the budgetary resources expended in 1974-1975 had been used for project supervision.

43. It was difficult for the Secretariat either to quantify the percentage of budgetary resources under section 5A that went directly for the preparation of conferences and meetings or to establish a precise relationship between studies conducted as permanent or continuous activities and those destined for a particular conference. A great deal of the work in, for example, statistics was routine and at the same time served in the preparation of studies for specific meetings. He would ascertain whether a more precise reply could be given to the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany on that point.

44. With regard to the Soviet Union representative's comments concerning consultants and staff travel, he wished to correct any misunderstanding that might have been created by his statement at the preceding meeting. The Secretary-General was kept informed of any study or travel for which funds were requested; however, the precise scope of a study or the exact itinerary of travel was not always known far in advance. There were limits to the precision that could be achieved in programming covering a span of four years.

45. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), referring to the relationship between the Office for Science and Technology of the United Nations and UNESCO, said that the Secretariat was fully aware of the need for further studies in order to ascertain how to avoid overlapping of activities in the field of science. UNESCO, of course, bore principal responsibility for science programmes; however, some functions in that field were still discharged by the United Nations.

46. In reply to the comments made by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, he said that it would be wrong to conclude from the budget proposals that there had been no redeployment of resources within the individual programmes under section 5A. The only way for the Secretariat fully to assure the Committee on that point would be to provide a detailed comparison, division-by-division and unit-by-unit, showing what had been done in the past biennium and what was planned for 1976-1977. If the Committee would like to see a detailed comparison of that kind, it could be provided.

47. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should suspend its consideration of section 5.

It was so decided.

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)

SECTION 21. PUBLIC INFORMATION (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

United Nations public information policies and activities (A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679)

48. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 21.14) was recommending a reduction of $300,000 from the $31,019,000 requested by the Secretary-General in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006). The reduction in representation allowances proposed in paragraphs 63 to 65 of the Advisory Committee's report would require an additional reduction of $1,600 and the Secretary-General estimated that, of the total reduction for reclassification recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 61 of its report an amount of $11,000 corresponded to section 21. Accordingly, the total amount recommended for section 21 by the Advisory Committee was $30,706,400.

49. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the estimate of $31,019,000 submitted by the Secretary-General represented a 20 per cent increase over the revised appropriations for 1974-1975. The total amount expected to be used for information activities was considerably higher, since the initial estimates of the Secretary-General indicated that another $2.6 million would be available from extra-budgetary resources, and that the regional commissions, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNIDO, and UNHCR, each had its own allocation for information services, the combined cost of which was estimated at almost $1.7 million under the regular budget and $659,000 from extra-budgetary funds. Since the apportioned costs budgeted elsewhere were estimated at some $10.7 million, the total cost of information activities might well reach $46 million or $47 million.

50. The Secretary-General's request included a 5.2 per cent increase for programme growth, attributable largely to the 35 new posts requested. After considering the requests and related programme areas, the Advisory Committee had decided that 3 Professional posts and 9 posts at other levels could be deleted. The Committee saw no justification for the P-2 post requested in paragraph 21.14, or for the P-4 post requested in paragraph 21.16 of the proposed programme budget. It had not endorsed the request in paragraph 21.30 that 2 posts (1 D-1 and 1 G-5), previously financed from the trust funds for the Centre for Economic and Social Information (CESI), be transferred to the regular budget. However, it had endorsed all the posts requested for Geneva and the requests for information assistants for information centres, except for the four centres which already had such posts. In short, of the 35 posts requested, the Advisory Committee had endorsed 23. The Advisory Committee's proposal under section 21, together with those it had made on representation allowances and reclassification of posts in paragraphs 63-65 and 61, respectively, of its report, would lead to a reduction of $312,600 in the initial estimates submitted by the Secretary-General.

51. The Advisory Committee had inquired whether paragraphs 13 and 22 of the Secretary-General's report on United Nations public information policies and activities (A/C.5/1679) foreshadowed requests for additional resources in 1976. It had been assured that no new requests were envisaged for 1976. Accordingly, in paragraph 4 of the corresponding report (A/10008/Add.2) the Advisory Committee had observed that, unless the General Assembly expressly decided otherwise, the co-operative arrangements between the Office of Public Information and other members of the United Nations system mentioned by the

Secretary-General could not be invoked automatically at a later date to justify additional charges on the United Nations regular budget.

52. Mr. AKATANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information) observed that the Office of Public Information (OPI) was not merely a servicing department: it also had substantive responsibilities and was in need of the Fifth Committee's guidance with regard to the entire spectrum of public information. Thus, the Committee was being asked to consider the Secretary-General's report on United Nations public information policies and activities (A/C.5/1679) in addition to the proposals under section 21 of the proposed programme budget.

53. In order to respond to increased interest by the public and the mass media in the current work of the United Nations, OPI was intensifying its efforts to produce information material about the major issues before the United Nations in sufficient quantities and in as many languages as possible. In the light of the increased demands on OPI resources, the proposed budget for 1976-1977 was reasonable and provided for no more than a modest measure of programme growth. He assured the Committee that OPI was constantly guided by an awareness of the need to streamline its operations and increase its effectiveness through ever-closer co-operation with other departments and organizations within the United Nations system.

54. It had found the thematic approach instituted three years earlier to be of great and growing value. During the past year the subjects dealt with had included international peace and security, disarmament, development and international economic co-operation, decolonization and eradication of racial discrimination and *apartheid,* International Women's Year, and human rights. Adoption of the thematic approach had led to closer and smoother co-operation between OPI and other departments of the Secretariat and between OPI and various United Nations bodies. The media-oriented divisions of OPI were themselves being increasingly affected by the thematic approach, in that their staff were working together in an integrated way with their colleagues in other divisions.

55. Efforts to intensify co-operation between OPI and the regional commissions had been pursued. It was probable that additional demands would be placed on OPI by ECE as a result of the signature, in Helsinki on 1 August 1975, of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

56. Regional meetings of the Directors of United Nations information centres had been resumed in 1974 and 1975 for the Directors of centres in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and the Americas, respectively. An important innovation had been participation by various members of the United Nations family. That significant new development was bound to result in increased co-operation at the field level, which in turn was a necessary counterpart to intensified co-operation at the policy-making level.

57. Another useful innovation was the holding of a regional conference of non-governmental organizations in the same location and at approximately the same time as the regional meeting of Directors of information centres. In May 1975, OPI had brought together in Bangkok 140 representatives of non-governmental organizations from 18 countries in Asia and the Pacific. In that way, substantial savings had been effected in the travel expenses of senior OPI officials from Headquarters who had been involved in both meetings. A further spin-off benefit had been the visits en route by senior OPI officials, at very little additional cost, to a number of United Nations information centres.

58. It was clear that the regional meetings of the Directors had greatly improved the performance and morale of the Directors concerned and were contributing significantly to the more effective functioning of the information centre system as a whole. In that connexion, he wished to express particular appreciation for the wisdom and foresight shown by the Fifth Committee two years earlier when it had authorized the resumption of those meetings.

59. Thanks to the very thorough first-hand knowledge of all the centres and their staff now being gained through personal visits to centres, the thorough review of the total field establishment of OPI, which, in 1972, the Secretary-General had undertaken to have carried out, had now been completed. A comprehensive report on the review was being drafted and would be submitted by the Secretary-General to the next session of the Consultative Panel on Public Information early in 1976, and subsequently to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

60. The framework for the intensified co-operation between OPI and the information services of other members of the United Nations system to which he had referred earlier was the Joint United Nations Information Committee—a subsidiary body of ACC—which brought together the directors of the different information services and had produced noticeable improvements in system-wide co-operation on information matters.

61. Fruitful as those instances of co-operation were, they represented only a beginning. OPI was actively working on an extension of the system, which, it was hoped, would eventually result in something approaching joint programming of information activities in major endeavours of interest to the United Nations family. To that end, OPI had initiated periodic meetings of a small group of information directors of the United Nations system under the chairmanship of the Director of CESI for the purpose of mapping out common courses of action. The first of those meetings had been held in September 1975 and had resulted in a remarkably detailed blueprint for co-operative action in the future. The group believed that the Information Committee should have in operation two sets of guidelines: one identifying a major theme which would describe the broad common objective of the system as a whole over a period of one year—for example, the world-wide struggle to overcome inequality, injustice and poverty—and the other, a sub-theme, which in 1976 might be a major effort to increase public knowledge of the seventh special session of the General Assembly and of the new international economic order, and which in 1977 might perhaps revolve around the restructuring of the United Nations system.

62. There had been progress, too, in the way programmes were being carried out. Under its new Director, CESI had

made some important innovations. It had begun the process of preparing the public for the seventh special session several months in advance. It had established a selective mailing list of important executives, editors and writers in the economic and financial media and had kept them informed of the issues as they had emerged at the various stages of the preparatory work for the special session. Later, they had dispatched to them background material that would be of assistance in assessing the importance of any international action taken. The monthly publication *Development Forum* had carried a special supplement on the special session, presenting some of the more important issues in a popular way and defining the more difficult economic terms in use by the Assembly. For correspondents covering the special session, CESI had prepared a briefing kit in several languages. During that session, CESI had assisted non-governmental organizations with an extensive programme of early-morning briefings, which had also been attended by members of the press. OPI had distributed a booklet and a short film on the work of the special session to all its information centres in time for the observance of World Development Information Day on 23 October.

63. A similar major programme was being prepared for the fourth session of UNCTAD to be held in 1976 and would incorporate improvements that had been devised as a result of an evaluation of the special session programme.

64. On behalf of the Secretary-General, he expressed sincere gratitude to the Governments of the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Japan, whose financial contributions had made possible the CESI programme, and to the Government of Canada which had again pledged a contribution to the information programme on the special session.

65. Noting that the Advisory Committee had not found it possible to concur in the Secretary-General's request that 1 D-1 post and 1 G-5 post in CESI should be transferred to the regular budget and instead had called for a redeployment of existing resources, he observed that his own examination of the resources available to OPI and of the mandates given to the Secretary-General in the field of public information had led him to the conclusion that any redeployment of existing resources towards economic and social information activities inevitably would jeopardize OPI's obligations in other areas. OPI was therefore in a difficult position, and he could only appeal for a continuation at the same or a higher level of voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Economic and Social Information. He further hoped that the Committee, when considering the financial implications of new United Nations initiatives, such as future world conferences on economic or social matters, would make provision for an adequate information component.

66. He assured the Committee that OPI bore in mind at all times the need constantly to re-examine existing work programmes in order to eliminate or complete projects which were no longer necessary or had fulfilled their original purpose. For that reason, OPI continuously followed public reactions to its efforts to the extent possible in the absence of a systematic feedback arrangement. It regularly examined whether a given publication was still required and, if so, whether it could be made more effective. As a result of that examination, certain changes had been effected in the OPI publications programme, including the adoption of less expensive printing methods. The same process of evaluation and appraisal was applied to audio-visual techniques and practices. Greater emphasis was now being placed on radio services to Africa and Asia, and an institutional reorganization was in hand that would enable the officers concerned to exercise more precise control over the resources available to them. The recently created distribution office in the Radio and Visual Services Division had opened up new markets for OPI films. More resources were being earmarked for language adaptations of films, and it was hoped to be able to undertake some free distribution of prints for the developing world. The Directors of the United Nations information centres who had participated in the most recent regional meeting had expressed an almost unanimous demand for more films, particularly films in the local languages of the countries served by their centres. Greater emphasis was being placed on the search for outside funds for film production and on involving outside film producers in co-production to a larger degree than in the past, while improved co-ordination had resulted in some constructive new internal ventures in joint production. Furthermore, OPI was keenly aware of the dramatic way in which the influence of the broadcasting media was expanding in the current decade and was anxious to take advantage of that trend. By 1980, approximately two thirds of the people in the world would be reachable by radio and nearly one half of the world's population would have access to a television screen.

Honoraria payable to members of the International Law Commission, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal* (continued)* *(A/10008/Add.3, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1236)

67. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.3) contained the Committee's observations and conclusions on the proposal submitted by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1) to adjust the honoraria payable to members of the International Law Commission, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal. The amount of the increase in each case was indicated in paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's report. In the Secretary-General's opinion, some adjustment in the honoraria for the members of the three bodies would appear appropriate because the amounts paid had remained unchanged for some time and inflation had substantially reduced their purchasing power.

68. Paragraph 2 of the report of the Advisory Committee recalled the basic principle governing payments to members of organs of the United Nations. That principle, which dated back to the early years of the Organization and which stipulated that neither a fee nor any other remuneration should normally be paid to members of organs and

* Resumed from the 1719th meeting.

subsidiary organs of the United Nations, had been reaffirmed over a number of years by the General Assembly. The resolutions in which that reaffirmation had been made were quoted in that paragraph. As was indicated in paragraph 3, the Assembly had made an exception to that principle by authorizing the payment of honoraria to members of the three bodies referred to in the Secretary-General's report, to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission. Paragraphs 5 and 7 of the report referred to the relevant resolutions and documents giving detailed explanations for the decisions of the General Assembly on the matter.

69. The amounts paid in each case varied in accordance with specific decisions taken by the General Assembly. However, in respect of the International Law Commission, the International Narcotics Control Board and the Administrative Tribunal, the Advisory Committee saw nothing in the record to suggest that the token amounts which the Assembly had authorized on an exceptional basis would be subject to adjustment to compensate in whole or in part for loss of purchasing power. In paragraph 4 the Advisory Committee indicated the periods for which the honoraria of the three bodies had remained unchanged. In the absence of a policy guideline from the General Assembly on methods to govern adjustments in the honoraria for the three bodies, however, the Committee, as stated in paragraph 8 of its report, was unable to recommend approval of the Secretary-General's proposal in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1).

70. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) expressed surprise at the argument that inflation affected the honoraria, particularly since they were intended as token acknowledgement of services. Accordingly, the reference to a reduction in purchasing power of the honoraria in paragraph 2 of the Secretary-General's report was intriguing. His delegation would also like to know what was meant by "other economic factors" in that same paragraph. Moreover, participation in the organs concerned was an honour which could be declined. Accordingly, his delegation could not accept the Secretary-General's recommendation to increase the honoraria.

71. Tracing the reasons why an exception had been made to the basic principle adopted by the General Assembly, he recalled that the first exception had been made at the fourth session of the General Assembly in respect of the International Law Commission for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and five Special Rapporteurs who were entrusted with drafting reports between sessions. Such reports were authorized under a provision of the International Law Commission's statute. At the fifth session, the Assembly had decided to give a special allowance to the other members because of the importance of the Commission's work, the eminence of its members and the time that they devoted to their work. A decision had finally been reached, at the twelfth session, to change the special allowance into an annual honorarium fixed at $1,000 for members and $2,500 for the Chairman and Special Rapporteurs.

72. In the case of the International Narcotics Control Board, payment of honoraria to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and members had been authorized by General Assembly resolution 2368 (XXII) of 19 December 1967. The justification in that case was article 10, paragraph 6, of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, which stated that the members of the Board would receive an adequate remuneration as determined by the General Assembly, and article 9, which stated that members of the Board should not engage in any activity that would be liable to impair their impartiality.

73. In the case of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal, the General Assembly had not decided to pay the members an honorarium until the fifteenth session, in 1960. The reasons adduced had been that members spent considerable time prior to sessions studying the matters which would be considered, thus making possible savings in the actual cost of the session. In that connexion, it would be interesting to know whether the savings achieved corresponded to the total amount of honoraria paid.

74. The three justifications for payment of honoraria—the importance of the organ, the eminence of its members and the time they devoted to their duties—could be applied equally well to many other subsidiary bodies. It seemed therefore that the time had come to expand the debate and it was unfortunate that the Secretary-General had posed the problem in such narrow terms.

75. Accordingly, on behalf of the delegations of Algeria, Argentina, Japan and the Upper Volta, he introduced a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1236) whose main purpose was to defer for the time being any increase in honoraria and to request the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive study of the subject at the thirty-first session. It was essential to have clear criteria on which to base exceptions to the basic rule, otherwise there might soon not be any basic rule. The phrase "subsidiary organs concerned or likely to be concerned" in operative paragraph 3 *(b)* of the draft resolution was designed to include the International Civil Service Commission. The Commission had already raised the problem of payment for members who, pursuant to the statute of the Commission, might carry out studies between sessions.

76. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation was somewhat concerned that a full hearing might not be given to the proposal to increase the honoraria of the members of the International Law Commission. There was some justification for an increase, since the honoraria had not been increased since 1957 and the sessions had been extended by two weeks in 1975 in order to meet the additional workload. Although it was true, as the Advisory Committee had pointed out, that the General Assembly had never said that honoraria should be subject to compensation for loss of purchasing power, it had never ruled out such compensation either. Times had changed and it was possible that the basic assumptions concerning honoraria were no longer valid and that the Committee should be thinking instead in terms of emoluments. There was much validity in what the representative of the Upper Volta had said; accordingly, his delegation supported the proposal that the matter should be examined in depth. His delegation was not quite sure that it would be equitable to turn down the International Law Commission's request and would like to know the approximate workload of the

Special Rapporteurs, and what per diem payments Commission members received in Geneva.

77. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the Secretary-General's proposal was out of place and his report incomplete. Paragraph 4 gave the amounts of the honoraria . but made no mention of the per diem allowance, which he felt sure had not remained unchanged since 1957. The proposal made by the representative of the Upper Volta was therefore reasonable.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

1723rd meeting

Tuesday, 28 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1723

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10279, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1236)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 5. DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE ON TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Section 5A. Department of Economic and Social Affairs (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN, after noting that no delegation wished to make general comments on section 5A of the proposed programme budget (A/10006) as a whole, invited the Committee to consider the section programme by programme, in accordance with the decision it had taken at its 1721st meeting.

Executive direction and management (paras. 5.1 and 5.2; tables 5A-8 and 5A-9)

There were no comments.

Development planning, projections and policies (paras. 5.3-5.5; tables 5A-10 and 5A-11)

2. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that the Fifth Committee should ask CPC to scrutinize that programme very carefully. The programme covered a number of "continuing" projects, which had originated in resolutions adopted several years previously. It would no doubt be advisable to update them and to ascertain whether they were still relevant.

3. She was also concerned to note that the proposed programme budget said very little about co-ordination with other United Nations bodies dealing with development planning, projections and policies. To give only one example, UNDP played a very important role in development planning and she wondered whether its activities were suitably co-ordinated with those of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Human settlements (paras. 5.6-5.11; tables 5A-12 and 5A-13)

4. Mrs. DERRE (France) noted that the pamphlets published by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on questions relating to human settlements were of very uneven quality. For example, about two years previously the Department had published a pamphlet which should never have seen the light of day, in which a model construction plan for hot countries had included a marble patio and the plan for the dining-room, purportedly destined for low-income families, made provision for the inclusion of a safe. Such publications did not do credit to the United Nations and should not be published.

5. In addition, the activities of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs concerning tourism appeared questionable; the new World Tourism Organization had concluded an agreement with the United Nations, whose activities in that area should therefore take second place.

6. Technical co-operation activities in disaster-prone regions were given high priority, but appeared to be the subject of arguments between various Secretariat units. She therefore shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraph 5.11 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) about the possibility of a lack of co-ordination between the various units and organs concerned. The work of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator should be made the subject of a broader study, in liaison with UNDP and the World Bank.

7. Her delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding the human settlements programme.

Natural resources, energy and transport (paras. 5.12-5.15; tables 5A-14 and 5A-15)

There were no comments.

Ocean economics and technology (paras. 5.16-5.19; tables 5A-16 and 5A-17)

8. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked whether it would not be possible to incorporate in the Office for Science and Technology certain units within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs which dealt with questions of science and technology. The Secretariat should consider that possibility and study its financial implications.

Population (paras. 5.20-5.24; tables 5A-18 and 5A-19)

There were no comments.

Public administration and finance (paras. 5.25-5.28; tables 5A-20 and 5A-21)

There were no comments.

Science and technology (paras. 5.29-5.32; tables 5A-22 and 5A-23)

9. Mrs. DERRE (France) recalled that the programme "Science and technology" had been given special consideration in CPC and the Economic and Social Council and expressed surprise that, although the contents of the programme had been changed, the estimates had not been altered. Ignoring the recommendations of the Council, the Secretariat had already proposed a very broad programme which would be submitted to the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development at its next session, but it was not known whether the programme would in fact be accepted. It was therefore impossible to take into account proposals which were not yet substantiated. Moreover, science and technology were very vast subjects and it should not be forgotten that other organizations also had responsibilities in that area. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs seemed to be unaware of what was being done by IAEA, UNIDO and WIPO. In paragraph 5.28 of its report the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions noted the risk of duplication between the activities of the Office for Science and Technology of the United Nations and the work of UNESCO. Her delegation endorsed the strict recommendations of the Advisory Committee concerning the science and technology programme.

Social development and humanitarian affairs (paras. 5.33-5.35; tables 5A-24 and 5A-25)

There were no comments.

Social development and humanitarian affairs, Social Affairs, Geneva (paras. 5.36-5.38; table 5A-26)

There were no comments.

Statistics (paras. 5.39-5.50; tables 5A-27 and 5A-28)

10. Mrs. DERRE (France) regretted that the budget presentation did not make it possible to highlight income-producing units. The sale of Statistical Office publications had netted $1,000,000 in 1974, which after deduction of the commission paid to sales agents had produced income of $700,000 for the United Nations, to which should be added $150,000 from the sale of statistics on magnetic tape. The studies of the Statistical Office were therefore much in demand, which was eloquent proof of their high quality. The Office should therefore be encouraged to launch a sales campaign in order not only to increase its earnings but also to publicize the value of certain work done by the United Nations.

Management of technical co-operation activities (paras. 5.51 and 5.52; tables 5A-29 and 5A-30)

There were no comments.

Administration and common services (paras. 5.53-5.58; tables 5A-31 and 5A-32)

There were no comments.

* * *

11. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that he wished to clarify certain points raised during the consideration of the programmes. In connexion with the programme "Human settlements", the French delegation had in fact reiterated the reservations which it had expressed in CPC regarding the maintenance of funds for activities relating to tourism, in view of the existence of the new World Tourism Organization. Those funds amounted to only $145,000, whereas the total estimate for the human settlements programme was $2,998,600. The activities concerned were therefore marginal ones, which should be considered as complementary to those of the World Tourism Organization.

12. Directing his remarks more particularly to the representative of the Philippines, he said that there were very few fields which science and technology did not touch. That representative was no doubt thinking of activities relating to physics or geography since he had spoken in connexion with the programme "Ocean economics and technology". That programme, however, covered a very specialized discipline and was designed mainly to co-ordinate research and activities undertaken in that field. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs would, however, study the possibility of merging its Ocean Economics and Technology Office with the Office for Science and Technology.

13. In connexion with the programme "Science and Technology", he explained that no change had been made in the estimates because, after the sections of the programme budget concerning economic and social activities had been introduced in CPC, it had not been usual, from the budgetary point of view, to revise part of the budget estimates of the Secretary-General; it had been better to leave it to the various competent organs to consider them. The Office for Science and Technology would be happy with the resources made available to it and, after one year's experience, perhaps new proposals would be submitted.

14. He thanked the French delegation for the words of praise it had addressed to the Statistical Office, and assured it that the idea of a sales campaign would be welcomed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs with the greatest interest.

15. Mrs. DERRE (France) wondered what purpose the Economic and Social Council could serve if its suggestions

were not taken into account and if it was unable to make any changes in a given programme; it was a well known fact that when the proposed programme budget arrived before the Fifth Committee, it was too late to do so. Her delegation hoped that what had occurred in the case of the "Science and technology" programme would not happen again and that in furure the observations of the Economic and Social Council would be taken into account.

Mr. Matseiko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

16. Mr. SETHI (India) said he wished to associate himself most formally with the observations of the French delegation. He reserved the right to make a statement on the question at a later stage.

17. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that it had never been the intention of the Secretary-General not to take account of the observations of the Economic and Social Council, since he had reformulated programmes in accordance with its views and those of CPC. But, at the time programmes had been adjusted, it would have been inadvisable to submit additional estimates. It had been difficult to evaluate the real needs of the department concerned since its programme still had to be adjusted. Any request for additional appropriations would therefore have appeared premature, and it had been in order to avoid incurring such a reproach that the Secretariat had not seen fit to change the amount of the initial estimates.

Honoraria payable to members of the International Law Commission, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal* (continued) *(A/10008/Add.3, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1236)

18. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta), speaking as the representative of one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1236, said that some delegations had proposed amendments thereto. In the first place, the first two preambular paragraphs would be combined into one, which would then read:

"*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.3),".

Secondly, operative paragraph 3 would be deleted and paragraph 2 would be amended to read:

"2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly for consideration at its thirty-first session a comprehensive study of the question of honoraria payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, taking account, *inter alia*, of the following factors:

"*(a)* The practice that may be applied by other organizations within the United Nations system",

subparagraphs *(a)*, *(b)* and *(c)* of paragraph 3 becoming subparagraphs *(b)*, *(c)* and *(d)* of the new paragraph 2.

19. Some delegations had wondered whether it was necessary to make the question of honoraria payable to members of certain organs a separate item on the agenda for the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, as proposed in paragraph 4. In his view, such a decision would make it possible to study the matter in greater depth. Moreover, it was probable that the agenda for the following session would not include an item relating to the programme budget. If the Secretariat indicated to the Committee another item of the agenda under which the question of honoraria could be included, there would in fact be no reason to include paragraph 4.

20. He wished to consult with the other sponsors of the draft resolution to ascertain their views on the amendments he had just indicated.

21. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that, in addition to the information provided by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1677, and Corr.1), he would like to have data concerning the subsistence allowance payable to members of the organs in question in order to be able to decide, in full knowledge of the facts, whether he would support the request of the Secretary-General or draft resolution A/C.5/L.1236.

22. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) thought that the question of honoraria was a controversial one, agreed with the sponsors of the draft resolution that it should be given in-depth study, and considered, as did the Advisory Committee, that the honoraria of members of the organs in question should not be increased that year. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1236, as modified by the amendments submitted orally by the representative of the Upper Volta, was therefore entirely satisfactory. It was important, however, not to prejudge the conclusions of the proposed study, which should be carried out in an objective and unbiased manner. His delegation therefore reserved its position on the substance of the question until the thirty-first session when all the necessary information would be available.

23. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said he fully shared the views of the representative of the Upper Volta. He did not wish to minimize the importance of the work done by the organs in question, but there were other organs whose members, in their personal capacity, were in a disadvantaged position. It was in order to correct that inequality that the sponsors of the draft resolution wanted uniform criteria to be established for the members of any organ who were acting in their personal capacity. Consultations on the proposed amendments to the draft resolution were continuing and the Committee would be informed of their outcome at the appropriate time.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) resumed the Chair.

24. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said he was not opposed to the idea of the General Assembly requesting the Secretary-General to submit to it a comprehensive study on the question of honoraria payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, as proposed in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1236. In that connexion, the most important factors were the need to secure the services of competent and independent experts and to study very carefully the possible implications of discontinuing hon-

oraria for part-time members. There were, of course, experts in many United Nations organs who did not receive honoraria and it was impossible to classify them according to order of importance. But in the case of the three organs in question, their members were not only highly qualified experts in the field of law or medicine, but for the most part lawyers or professors and not officials on the pay-roll of their Governments. As the Secretary-General pointed out in paragraph 2 of his report, the honoraria payable to them were designed not so much to compensate the persons in question adequately for their services as to acknowledge in a token manner a substantial sacrifice of time or of financial interest on their part. It appeared from the report of the Secretary-General that the amount of those honoraria had remained unchanged for many years, since 1957 in the case of the International Law Commission. For that reason, there should be a reasonable adjustment of those honoraria and, if the Secretary-General's proposal was put to the vote, he would have no difficulty in accepting the modest increase requested in paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's report.

25. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that the thrust of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1236, of which his country was a sponsor, was to establish agreed procedures for a comprehensive, dispassionate review of the question of honoraria to be paid to experts who served organs of the United Nations. Under the draft resolution, the Secretary-General was to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session a study giving information on the practice of other organizations and other relevant considerations described in operative paragraph 3, such information being needed for an in-depth study of the matter in the Fifth Committee at that session. The draft resolution did not take sides on the issue of an increase in the honoraria for the members of the three bodies concerned. Instead, it suggested that the existing situation should be preserved, so that the Committee would be able to consider the matter without any prejudice or faits accomplis. There would then be three possibilities open to the Committee: to increase the honoraria, to maintain them at the current level, or to abolish them. As the representative of the Upper Volta had explained, those proposals did not affect the subsistence allowance which the experts received, together with their travel expenses, and which was adjusted periodically to take account of inflation; a one-year freeze should not, therefore, cause any hardship to the people concerned. His delegation's only preoccupation was the absence of general criteria for granting or increasing honoraria, and it feared that in making three exceptions to the principle that neither a fee nor any other remuneration should normally be paid to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, aside from subsistence allowance and travel expenses, the General Assembly would be opening the door for more exceptions to be made to the general rule, thus inviting the creation of a chaotic situation which did not correspond to the real needs and requirements of equity. What was needed was a clear, logical and uniform system of honoraria instead of the existing piecemeal approach, and the draft resolution before the Committee provided for an appropriate response to the problem at hand. However, it would be useful to have some information on changes during the past five years in the amount of subsistence allowance payable at the main duty stations.

26. Mr. FRANCIS (Jamaica) said that the Fifth Committee had an obligation, when considering budget estimates, to do justice to every case—to refrain from approving expenditures which were not justified by circumstances but not to refuse to authorize grants that were justly due. The Committee must realize that the inadequacy of the honoraria payable to members of the International Law Commission not only created hardships for the members of the Commission—13 out of 25—who were from third world countries but might also deprive the Commission of the qualified experts it needed. The basic problem involved not only the general question of honoraria but also the terms of article 13 of the Statute of the International Law Commission, which provided: "Members of the Commission shall be paid travel expenses, and shall also receive a special allowance, the amount of which shall be determined by the General Assembly" (General Assembly resolution 485 (v)). The Assembly had set the amount payable to members of the Commission on the basis of two factors: first, the travel expenses and subsistence allowance for experts on official business, and, second, the special allowance for experts on official business, and, second, the special allowance referred to in the Statute; instead of simply establishing an allowance covering all expenses, the General Assembly had decided to introduce honoraria. It was true that the International Law Commission was a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, but it differed from other organs in that it had a Statute of its own which had been approved by the General Assembly. Both the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee had taken the wrong approach in stating in their reports on the honoraria payable to members of the bodies in question that they were an exception to the general principle adopted on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee at the sixteenth session;[1] in actual fact, the Assembly's decision to pay honoraria had not been an act of generosity, since in the case of the International Law Commission that decision was in accordance with article 13 of the Statute, which expressly provided that members of the Commission should receive a special allowance.

27. In that connexion, he requested the representative of the Secretary-General to inform the Committee of the amount of the honoraria payable to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, which were mentioned in paragraph 5 of the Advisory Committee's report.

28. Although the amount of the honoraria—$1,000—payable to members of the International Law Commission, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal was the same, the result was very different when it was spread over the number of weeks for which each of those bodies might meet, and the question was whether members of the International Law Commission were being unjustly discriminated against, especially as the level of technical expertise required for the Commission was much higher than for the other two bodies. Treating them all the same had been unfair from the beginning, and the Fifth Committee must rectify the

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 54, document A/5005, para. 10.

situation. It was surprising that in paragraph 7 of its report the Advisory Committee should state that there was nothing in the record since the basic principles in question had been reaffirmed to suggest that the Assembly had intended at the time that the token amounts which it had authorized on an exceptional basis would be subject to adjustment to compensate for loss of purchasing power. Actually, the reason why the General Assembly had set "token amounts" was that it had not meant to give members of the International Law Commission the same allowances as full-time experts. As the value of the dollar had declined by one half in relation to the Swiss franc between 1973 and 1975, the Advisory Committee's statement was totally unacceptable. The Fifth Committee had an obligation to ensure that proposed economies did not affect the competence of other bodies. His delegation was horrified at the continuance of an inequitable situation in which Governments whose experts were members of the International Law Commission had to bear the expense because the subsistence allowance was never adequate. His delegation's only concern was that members of the Commission should receive an adequate allowance, so that the Commission might have the services of competent experts and so that members from developing countries would not suffer hardship.

29. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) informed the representative of Jamaica that the honorarium payable to the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission was $50,000 a year (a basic amount of $45,000 plus a special working allowance), while the Vice-Chairman's was $45,000 a year. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee received an honorarium of $25,000 a year. Those were honoraria paid to full-time members for activities spread over the entire year.

30. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said he would be surprised if an increase in honoraria amounting to only $500 per person (A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, para. 5) would mean much to the members of the International Law Commission; he would like to know whether the experts in question were civil servants, jurists or professors, since that information might be helpful to the Committee in considering the question. He noted that the total appropriation involved would be $60,000; at a rate of $6,000 per meeting-hour, the Fifth Committee, if it continued to discuss the question for two weeks more, would have expended $300,000.

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)

SECTION 21. PUBLIC INFORMATION *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

United Nations public information policies and activities (continued) *(A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679)*

31. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said, as the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information had pointed out at the preceding meeting, that with regard to public information the Fifth Committee had the role not only of appropriating money and seeing that it was properly spent, but also of setting the policies for public information activities. When dealing with the subject, the Committee should therefore go beyond its usual role and take a broad system-wide approach.

32. Member States knew that criticism of the United Nations and lack of support for it very often resulted from an insufficient knowledge of the problems which the United Nations was trying to solve. Both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had recognized in many resolutions, dating back to 1946, the importance of public information activities, as the existence of the Office of Public Information, the Centre for Economic and Social Information (CESI) and the Consultative Panel on Public Information demonstrated. During the first half of the Organization's existence information activities had been directed mainly to political problems. Since the proclamation of the first United Nations Development Decade the Organization had gradually turned its attention to problems of economic and social development, as was only right in view of the fact that 75 per cent of Member States were developing countries and that the solution of problems in that sphere was one of the Organization's main tasks. Further progress, however, was largely dependent on political will, which could not be imposed from outside and which had to rely on active support from well-informed public opinion.

33. His delegation had the impression that the support given to public information activities on social and economic problems was not commensurate with the magnitude of the issues. Member States were willing to pay lip-service to those activities but were manifestly unwilling to pay for them, as CESI, which was the focal point in the United Nations system for programmes in the field of economic and social information, was financed mainly from an extra-budgetary fund to which only a very few countries contributed. By funding the major part of those activities from extra-budgetary sources, the membership as a whole degraded them to political irrelevance and the trust fund to an international philanthropic institution.

34. His delegation had long maintained that the permanent staff member posts in CESI should be incorporated in the regular budget of the United Nations, because the functions of the Centre, as determined by the competent legislative organs, properly fell within the scope of the regular budget. Extra-budgetary funds should be used for extraordinary activities. His delegation could therefore not agree with the reasoning or conclusions of the Advisory Committee (A/10008 and Corr.2, paras. 21.8 and 21.9) and regretted that the Committee had not endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to transfer two CESI posts which were financed by extra-budgetary funds to the regular budget. It was his hope that the Advisory Committee would change its position when it considered, on the basis of a well-defined plan for information activities, new proposals by the Secretary-General to transfer regular posts in the Centre to the regular budget. In the meantime, it was to be hoped that the Secretary-General could redeploy existing resources within the Office of Public Information so as to give due attention to economic and social information. He pointed out, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, that the question was in no way linked, for his delegation, to increasing or decreasing the amount of its contribution to the Trust Fund for Economic and Social Information. In 1976, as in previous years, his Government

would, subject to Parliamentary approval, contribute $300,000 to the Trust Fund.

35. The Fifth Committee, if it was to give the required policy guidelines to the Office of Public Information (OPI), could not be satisfied with the very short report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1679) and such information of a non-budgetary nature as was contained in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) and the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1). In particular, the information provided on consultations and co-operation between OPI at Headquarters and the regional information centres, and between OPI and the information services of the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and competent non-governmental organizations, should be further elaborated. His delegation accordingly hoped that the report which the Secretary-General was to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session and the comments on it of the Consultative Panel on Public Information would enable the Committee to evaluate non-Headquarters information activities and to set the guidelines necessary for an over-all view at the base.

36. Equally important was the need for an over-all view at the top. He had noted with interest that, according to paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's report, the Joint United Nations Information Committee, a subsidiary body of ACC, was preparing a joint United Nations information plan for 1977 and subsequent years, together with an intermediate plan for 1976. Moreover, the periodic meetings of directors of the information centres of the United Nations system had resulted, according to the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, in a very promising blueprint for co-operative action. His delegation would like to have more information on those joint United Nations information plans and blueprints—on their content, whether they were to be discussed and approved by legislative organs and, if so, when, and which organs were concerned. The Committee should also be told what the outcome of the recent discussions with ACC was.

37. Experience showed that in years when the budget estimates were considered the agenda of the Fifth Committee was too crowded to allow for a fully-fledged debate on information policies. His delegation suggested that the debate on that subject should be held early in the session in off-budget years. In the intervening year the Committee would have before it only a short progress report and, of course, budget estimates for OPI.

38. In conclusion, he reaffirmed his delegation's support for the work of the Office of Public Information.

39. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that he welcomed the opportunity to discuss not only the budget of OPI for the biennium 1976-1977 but also United Nations information policies and programmes. In recent years OPI had wisely adopted a thematic approach and had sought to concentrate its programmes on topical themes, so that it had been able to highlight, for example, the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and the World Conference of the International Women's Year. His delegation also welcomed the adoption by OPI of an increasingly selective approach tailored to establishing closer contact with specific audiences, rather than aiming at the amorphous public at large. In that connexion, greater interaction with media representatives at various levels, particularly at the editorial level, should be promoted. The OPI-sponsored "encounters" on United Nations issues between journalists and experts and the regional editors' round tables were useful in that respect. Moreover, the information material produced by OPI should be as varied as possible. The effectiveness of its activities depended largely on what might be called the "multiplier effect" of its information programmes. The Office should therefore make maximum use of national information media, and he had been particularly interested to note that, according to paragraph 19 of the Secretary-General's report, OPI was making special arrangements with national film and television organizations, and preparing special features for newspapers and magazines which could not send their own correspondents to attend United Nations events. In short, a well-conceived information strategy should, by giving a more balanced and judicious picture of the United Nations, counter the tendentious anti-United Nations propaganda to which certain media were prone.

40. His delegation also welcomed the greater emphasis on an inter-agency approach to information activities. It was most encouraging to hear from the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information about the new co-operation being developed between his Office and the specialized agencies and UNDP. Even closer co-operation should be established between OPI and its counterparts elsewhere in the United Nations system through the Joint United Nations Information Committee, with a view to economy, joint information activity and finding new sources of funding.

41. His delegation was also in favour of the revival of the periodic regional meetings of directors of the United Nations Information centres: the recent meeting of directors from Europe and the Americas had, according to the participants, been an unqualified success. Such meetings served to diminish the sense of isolation from which the Centre directors frequently suffered and improved their effectiveness.

42. With regard to the appropriations requested for OPI for 1976-1977, he realized that the Office found it difficult to cope with its numerous tasks and its expanded activities. He was heartened by the Assistant Secretary-General's assurance that he would continue to make maximum use of the Office's existing resources and strive to redeploy them. He hoped that the Committee would receive at the thirty-first session the thorough review of the total field establishment of the OPI which in 1972 the Secretary-General had promised to carry out.

43. There was a need to explore further the possibility of greater cost-effectiveness in the field activities. In that connexion, the administrative integration of information centres with the UNDP field offices should be systematically pursued in developing countries which had such offices. That would produce savings, but integration would, of course, have to be carried out in such a way as not to submerge information activity in the main functions of UNDP, thus adversely affecting its integrity and effectiveness.

44. There was great diversity in the composition of the information centres: some had only 1 Professional officer with no supporting staff at all, while others had 1 or 2 Professional officers aided by 7 or 8 General Service staff. There should be a clear and consistent policy in that regard. A greater effort should also be made to have the host Government share in the expenses of the new centres and offices. In addition, an effort should be made to promote the regional and subregional approach to a greater extent, especially in the processing and production of information material, since experience showed that significant savings resulted from such co-ordination.

45. The Centre for Economic and Social Information was making an invaluable contribution to the task of making United Nations economic and social activities, on which more than half of the Organization's total budget was spent, better known and better understood. Japan was proud to have made a voluntary contribution of $200,000 in 1975 to the Trust Fund for Economic and Social Information. It was rather anomalous, however, that economic and social information activities, which should be at the very core of OPI activities, were still financed not from the regular budget but on the basis of voluntary contributions. It was imperative to review that question within the framework of a comprehensive review of United Nations information policy.

46. His delegation fully endorsed the new directions and approaches adopted by OPI and hoped that the latter would find it possible to function within the level of resources recommended by the Advisory Committee.

47. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) said that OPI could and should play an important role in publicizing the ideals of the United Nations and fostering better understanding throughout the world of the United Nations activities and decisions. Unfortunately, the decisions of the United Nations were often misinterpreted, its activities criticized and its prestige undermined, and it was clear that the responsibility resting with OPI was a very heavy one.

48. He therefore wished to pay a tribute to the ceaseless efforts of OPI, evidence of which was provided not only by the activities of OPI itself but also by those of the regional centres and by the co-ordination which was maintained between United Nations Headquarters and the specialized agencies.

49. The Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information had mentioned, at the previous meeting, the limitations to which OPI was subject in terms of staff and resources. He had announced that a comprehensive study of OPI would be submitted in 1976 to the General Assembly and the Consultative Panel on Public Information. Tunisia, which was a member of the Panel, had always been in favour of such a study, since it felt that the mandate of OPI, as established in resolutions dating from 1946 and 1952, should be strengthened and that its guidelines and orientation should reflect the new realities in the world, which were very different from those of 1946 or 1952. The current structure of OPI was not in keeping with the principle of equitable geographical distribution of posts, particularly at the highest levels, and it operated in a rather routine fashion. Consideration of the proposed study should make it possible to restructure the Office and introduce innovations in the way it operated.

50. He also wished to state that his delegation did not feel that it was properly the task of the Fifth Committee to discuss the policies, orientation and programmes of OPI. The Committee should recommend that the General Assembly include a separate item on public information in its agenda for the discussion of the report which the Secretary-General was to submit to the Assembly.

51. The Consultative Panel on Public Information could be restructured and become a General Assembly committee with responsibility for establishing the necessary priorities in the field of public information and making the necessary recommendations each year to the Assembly. It would then be in a much better position to assist the Secretary-General and OPI in making the United Nations better known, explaining its activities more effectively and promoting better understanding of its aims. He emphasized that it was in a constructive spirit that he suggested strengthening the mandate of OPI and undertaking a comprehensive study of the problem at a higher level than the Fifth Committee.

52. Mr. MURG (Romania) recalled that, beginning at its fifty-fifth session, in 1973, the Economic and Social Council had undertaken an in-depth debate on United Nations public information activities and had concluded that the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade had failed to arouse sufficient public interest. There was also insufficient interest in such problems as the energy and raw materials crisis, disarmament, the abolition of colonialism and *apartheid*, and the need to strengthen the role of the United Nations in international affairs. All those problems required better knowledge and understanding throughout the world. The task was one for all the public information services of United Nations bodies and for all other governmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in information activities. It was essential, in pursuance of the decisions adopted at the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly, to take steps to increase the ability of the United Nations to improve its activities in the light of the new realities in the world and to deal with the main tasks of the international community, starting with those relating to disarmament. New means must therefore be found to inform public opinion, which had a major role to play in achieving the aims of the United Nations. The viability, efficiency and prestige of the Organization depended very largely on the extent to which its aims and activities were understood by the entire international community.

53. The Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information and his colleagues had unquestionably been successful in mobilizing public opinion more effectively, improving the activities of OPI and implementing the recommendations of the information services at the national level with the support of Governments. Nevertheless, there was still much to be done in that regard.

54. In particular, United Nations information services had not established sufficiently close relations with the mass media, and the press in some countries presented a distorted image of United Nations activities. It was true

that those activities often fell short of perfection, but OPI must depict them accurately, whether or not they were fully satisfactory. The more truthfully United Nations activities were presented, the more interest the public would take in them.

55. The Office of Public Information did not seem to have taken the fullest possible advantage of the technical means offered it in the twentieth century by television, radio, films and the press itself. Greater use should, in particular, be made of the co-production of television broadcasts. A beginning had been made in connexion with World Population Year, which had resulted in the production by the United Nations of some 23 sequences on the themes of population and development, many of which were being used by the television networks of 45 countries, including Romania. It was also essential to make use of modern techniques to spread information more rapidly, for the more quickly information was provided, the greater was the public's interest. His delegation would therefore be pleased if OPI could inform Member States in 1977 of the mid-term results of its five-year programme for the modernization and acquisition of radio and visual equipment, which had begun in 1974.

56. With regard to relations between the information services of the United Nations system and Member States, it would be helpful to provide better information to the public in various countries through specific activities under United Nations auspices, such as symposia, exhibits and conferences, with broad participation by senior Secretariat officials. That was one example of the ways in which Governments could make their contribution to ensuring wider publicity for United Nations activities. Every Member State should inform the Secretary-General of the means it was using to publicize United Nations activities, the results it was achieving and the types of assistance it would like to receive from United Nations information services. Close co-operation between the information services of the United Nations system and national Governments and between those services and non-governmental organizations were the indispensable basis of all United Nations information work.

57. Since 1970, the United Nations Information Centre in Bucharest had done a great deal to inform Romanian public opinion about the United Nations, and, with the increasing number of international meetings of United Nations bodies at Bucharest, it had been able to contribute to the general information activities of OPI. He wished to thank OPI for the helpful assistance it was providing to the Bucharest Information Centre. Since international public opinion was playing an increasingly active role in furthering the establishment of a new international economic order and OPI would therefore have even more important tasks to perform in keeping the international community properly informed, his delegation wished to assure OPI that it would support all efforts made in that direction.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

1724th meeting

Wednesday, 29 October 1975, at 3.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1724

AGENDA ITEM 94

Financial reports and accounts for the year 1974 and reports of the Board of Auditors *(concluded)*:*

(a)* United Nations Development Programme *(concluded)*;

(b)* United Nations Children's Fund *(concluded)*;

(c)* United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East *(concluded)*;

(d)* United Nations Institute for Training and Research *(concluded)*;

(e)* Voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees *(concluded)*;

(f)* Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme *(concluded)*;

(g)* United Nations Fund for Population Activities *(concluded)*

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1234)

1. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introducing the Committee's draft report (A/C.5/L.1234), recalled that the Committee had decided that its report on agenda item 94 should be made in summary form.

2. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would assume that the Committee approved the draft report.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 102

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions *(concluded)***

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1235)

3. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report (A/C.5/L.1235), recalled that the Committee had agreed that a summary of the views expressed

* Resumed from the 1717th meeting.

** Resumed from the 1714th meeting.

by delegations during the debate on agenda item 102 would be reflected in its report on the question.

4. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee approved the draft report.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10279, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1236/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1238)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 5. DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE ON TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS *(concluded)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Section 5A. Department of Economic and Social Affairs (concluded)

5. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation had noted with interest the statement made at the 1678th meeting of the Second Committee, on 24 October, by the Under-Secretary-General and Commissioner for Technical Co-operation. Belgium was convinced of the need to strengthen assistance programmes and would shortly announce a considerable increase in its contribution to UNDP. However, it was important to ensure that the maximum amount of the money was used for the projects themselves –the effective part of assistance–and that only a minimum was spent on administrative and management expenses. In that connexion, he wished to know what was the total number of permanent staff assigned, directly or indirectly, to technical assistance programmes, particularly within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. He also wished to know the size of the permanent staff of UNDP and the number of staff members in the United Nations and related agencies who were engaged, in various capacities, in the support, management and administration of technical assistance programmes.

6. Mr. SETHI (India) said that his delegation was satisfied on the whole with the improvement in the presentation of the programme in section 5A. However, it had noted that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) had experienced difficulties in relating some of the requests for new posts to the activities involved and that some of the new posts were requested for continuing activities. The link between appropriations and real programmes therefore seemed rather tenuous. In the programme defined in section 5A, the medium-term objective seemed to have been given prime importance. While his delegation recognized that the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1) was elaborated according to branches of activity, whereas the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) was elaborated according to organizational units, it wondered whether the abstract objectives had been sufficiently adapted to the programme budget. The improved presentation of the economic, social and humanitarian programme could be further improved by ascertaining whether the medium-term objectives could logically be divided into subcategories and by establishing some sort of schedule for implementation thus making it possible, on the one hand, to define specific objectives and, on the other, to set deadlines for attaining them. That would also provide a clearer picture of the workload and the number of staff required to perform it. The programme budget would then become a better instrument for the implementation of the medium-term objectives. Such improvements in presentation would require the assistance of an intergovernmental organ, such as CPC. His delegation accordingly supported the recommendations concerning CPC made by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery.[1] That Committee had the potential to remedy some of the deficiencies of the United Nations machinery. In the first place, there was no mechanism at the legislative level to follow up political decisions to the implementation phase. In addition, there was a lack of connexion between the purely political, decision-making bodies and the budgetary authority, justifying doubt about the Organization's ability to combine the programme and budgetary aspects into a true programme budget. In attempting to relate the two aspects, the Advisory Committee had concentrated on the budgetary aspect thus implicitly endorsing the idea that the two could be separated, an idea which was not compatible with the very concept of a programme budget and which made the need for effective action by CPC all the more evident.

7. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that he would need a little time to collect the data in order to be able to give a complete answer to the question asked by the representative of Belgium.

8. With regard to the comments made by the representative of India, he said that the United Nations administration agreed about the desirability of including in the budget a schedule for the implementation of specific goals. However, that was not always possible. While it was desirable to show the relationship between a given goal and the number of staff or volume of funds required to implement it, he did not think it would be possible to state such a relationship in arithmetical terms. There was no scientific method that could automatically be applied to all cases for there was always necessarily an element of judgement in such calculations.

9. Mr. VARCHAVER (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), responding to the request by certain representatives for UNESCO to comment on possible overlapping between its activities and those of the United Nations in the field of science and technology, recalled that, although the revised science and technology programme[2] submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-eighth session had been prepared in a very short time, there had been prior consultations among all organiza-

1 Document A/10117 and Corr.1, of 17 June 1975, para. 77, recommendation 2.

2 Document E/5661 and Corr.1 and 2, of 17 April 1975.

tions concerned. At that session, in response to an oft-repeated invitation from the Council and CPC, the representative of UNESCO had mentioned specific cases of overlapping, having first had discussions with and obtained the agreement of the Director of the United Nations Office for Science and Technology. The process of co-ordination within the system therefore did function and had, in fact, improved in recent years, and efforts were under way to improve it further, particularly in the field of science and technology. The General Assembly, at its seventh special session, had designated science and technology precisely as one of the major fields requiring considerable joint action on the part of the United Nations system, and the Executive Board of UNESCO and its Director-General were actively engaged in responding to that call, as were sister agencies, both jointly and individually.

10. Science and technology covered a multitude of programmes and activities, carried out by a large number of agencies in the United Nations system. A comprehensive description of those activities could be found in the report of the Secretary-General on institutional arrangements for science and technology in the United Nations system,[3] to which direction was given by their respective governing organs and notably by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

11. He noted that UNESCO, which was the only agency in the system constitutionally entrusted with across-the-board responsibility for science, had a total budget for the science sector of some $54.5 million. Of that total, approximately $34 million was for scientific and technological development, which roughly corresponded to the field dealt with by the United Nations Office for Science and Technology.

12. The responsibility of UNESCO covered not only policy-making, planning and programming but also research and operational activities in education, training and scientific services. UNESCO recognized that several agencies in the United Nations system had responsibilities for research and related scientific activities, in their respective fields of competence, and it was precisely because of that decentralization of responsibilities that UNESCO had participated in and supported the efforts of the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development, the Committee on Science and Technology for Development under the Economic and Social Council and the Sub-Committee on Science and Technology under ACC. In the view of his Organization, one of the prime functions of the United Nations Office for Science and Technology was to serve as secretariat for those three bodies. Recalling the statement made by the representative of UNESCO to the Economic and Social Council, he said that two principles should govern the activities of the United Nations Office for Science and Technology. The first was that those who executed the United Nations science and technology policy should help in formulating it and the second was that the United Nations Secretariat unit which prepared the work of and serviced the organs dealing with policy-making and co-ordination in the field of science and technology should not also have responsibility for executing the programmes. It should therefore limit itself to preparing the studies and reports called for by the policy-making organs, for example in preparing the implementation of such resolutions as Economic and Social Council resolution 1826 (LV) which stated that the planning of activities in the field of science and technology in the various organizations of the United Nations system should be gradually integrated into the United Nations science and technology policy. The UNESCO Executive Board had warmly supported that view and, at its ninety-eighth session held between 15 September and 10 October 1975, had requested that UNESCO should be fully associated in the preparatory work for the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology. In that connexion, UNESCO believed that the secretariat of that conference should be a joint one of the United Nations system; the subject was too important not to benefit from all the experience and support available in the United Nations system.

13. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) thanked the representative of UNESCO for his clarification. Since not all delegations were represented on CPC and the Economic and Social Council, the practice whereby the specialized agencies replied to questions raised by delegations in the Committee should be encouraged.

14. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should vote in first reading on the appropriation requested under section 5A for the biennium 1976-1977 in the amount of $42,042,800.

An appropriation in the amount of $42,042,800 under section 5A for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 72 votes to 7, with 1 abstention.

Section 5B. Information and Research Centre on Transnational Corporations (concluded)

15. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should vote in first reading on the appropriation under section 5B for the biennium 1976-1977 in the amount of $1,188,600 recommended by the Advisory Committee (see 1721st meeting, para. 8).

An appropriation in the amount of $1,188,600 under section 5B for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 88 votes to none.

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 21. PUBLIC INFORMATION *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 and CORR.2)

United Nations public information policies and activities* (continued) *(A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679)

16. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) welcomed the assurances given by the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information at the 1722nd meeting about the intensified efforts of his Office to perform its tasks relating to the new international economic order. He hoped that account would be taken of the desire of the developing countries to shift world concern to global development in view of the material inequalities between the developed and developing countries. The Office could play a major role in projecting

[3] Document E/C.8/29, of 23 September 1975.

to the world community the new international economic order in its proper historical perspective, with its far-reaching and long-term consequences.

17. The Office of Public Information (OPI) should also intensify its efforts to mobilize public opinion in developing and developed countries in support of the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, particularly in connexion with the second phase of review and appraisal. OPI should project the new ideas conceived in the economic and social forums of the United Nations for incorporation in the Strategy to make it more realistic and give it more impetus for the second half of the Second Development Decade.

18. If the General Assembly approved the suggestion by the Preparatory Committee for Habitat: Conference on Human Settlements that 29 February 1976 would be a day for concentrating publicity on human settlements issues and the Conference, OPI should do its share by disseminating information on human settlements and stimulating wider interest in the developing countries. All countries that could not send delegations to the Conference should be encouraged to obtain proper information about the subject-matter, possibly through regional meetings. Publicity should also be given to the aims and purposes of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation established to help Governments plan national programmes for human settlements; such publicity would also promote support for the Foundation's revolving fund.

19. His delegation welcomed the steps taken by OPI to intensify co-operation with the regional commissions and hoped that the Office would give the necessary information support to the programme of work of ESCAP particularly the priority areas decided upon at its thirtieth and thirty-first sessions. The use of audio-visual techniques in the rural areas would be very effective, and he asked what portion of the OPI budget was allocated for films, television and radio, and how much of the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions would affect audio-visual programmes. He suggested that in future the report on United Nations public information policies and activities should deal separately with the regional meetings of the directors of information centres, in which the participation of information units of the specialized agencies and of non-governmental organizations was welcome. He asked how many information centres there were, and how many were to be opened during the next biennium. While progress had been made in CESI—he commended in particular the pamphlet on the seventh special session of the General Assembly—he would welcome a wider variety of publications on economic matters, such as national wealth, possibly with assistance from the Statistical Office. He expressed appreciation to countries which had provided financial support to CESI and he hoped that more developed countries would join the ranks of contributors.

20. Public information activities were extremely important in focusing attention on activities of the United Nations. OPI should bridge the gap between the terminology of resolutions and the language understood by the public. The Office of Public Information had served the interests of Member States in an efficient and productive manner and should receive adequate financial support to continue its services. His delegation supported the estimates recommended by the Advisory Committee for section 21.

21. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) commended OPI on its excellent work, which was of paramount importance, particularly at the current stage, to fight the indifference of public opinion and the lack of understanding in certain quarters of United Nations activities. The $300,000 reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee in its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 21.14) was reasonable. OPI had to be able to readjust priorities and reallocate resources whenever necessary. For example, the P-2 post requested by the Secretary-General for the Radio and Visual Services Division, disallowed by the Advisory Committee (*ibid.*, para. 21.7), should if possible be filled by redeployment of personnel, as visual services were extremely important.

22. The information centres performed a very important task and should be provided promptly with material which could be absorbed by the local population and would be accessible to the local media. The centres should be directed, not by bureaucrats, but by people who were familiar with the mentality of the country and knew the language and had the necessary dynamism, vitality and gift for communication. He suggested that Member States might provide more assistance to OPI by providing premises for the information centres rent free, or at reduced rent. That practice was already followed in some countries, including Italy, and he hoped that it would become widespread. The Secretary-General might make an appeal to countries to help in that way.

23. It could be seen from income section 3 that the number of visitors to Headquarters had been declining steadily. The trend was expected to continue. The same fall-off in the number of visitors had been noted concerning the United Nations Office at Geneva. He wondered whether sufficient efforts had been made to gain the interest of the public and improve the situation.

24. He supported the Netherlands proposal that thorough consideration should be given to OPI activities the following session.

25. He urged the Joint United Nations Information Committee, a subsidiary organ of ACC, to continue its work with a view to avoiding duplication. Some Secretariat units considered it a matter of status to have their own information service and great care should be taken to avoid fragmentation or duplication of public information activities.

26. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that the high degree of efficiency shown by OPI and its efforts to modernize and rationalize wherever possible were very noteworthy. His delegation appreciated in particular the wide range of new initiatives taken in the field of public information.

27. His delegation was grateful to the Advisory Committee for its acceptance of most of the Secretary-General's proposals, including the approval of 23 new posts and of 4 reclassifications. If accepted, the recommendations would certainly give long-needed resources for strengthening the

network of United Nations information centres and devoting still closer attention to the principal information themes. At the same time, it was regrettable that the Secretary-General's very modest request to transfer 2 of the posts for CESI to the regular budget had not been approved by the Advisory Committee. In that connexion, it would be recalled that only half the CESI posts requested by the Secretary-General for the past biennium 1974-1975 had been approved. Yet CESI was expected to promote or execute a number of important information projects and activities in support of the International Development Strategy. Furthermore, CESI was in the process of implementing a comprehensive information programme on the seventh special session of the General Assembly; it would be regrettable if its urgent work were to be curtailed owing to the Advisory Committee's inability to accept the transfer of two posts. Since the Assistant Secretary-General for Information had already made it clear at the 1722nd meeting that there was no possibility of redeploying posts from other parts of OPI, as the Advisory Committee had suggested in paragraph 21.9 of its first report, it was to be hoped that his appeal for increased voluntary contributions would be heeded. If it was not, his delegation hoped that the Secretary-General would give CESI highest priority whenever an occasion arose to reallocate resources. From paragraph 21.8 of the Advisory Committee's first report, it was apparent that that Committee's position derived from a concern over the increasing demands being made on the regular budget by an activity which had been primarily financed from extra-budgetary funds. Sweden, which was the second largest contributor to voluntary funds in the United Nations system, did not share that concern. Many urgent activities approved by a majority of Member States could not be effectively carried out within the narrow margin of the United Nations regular budget and, furthermore, some very useful activities had been initiated in the form of pilot projects financed from voluntary contributions. In his delegation's opinion, it was entirely reasonable for the Organization to review from time to time the sources of financing for such activities with a view to transferring them to the regular budget.

28. Mr. RELLIE (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was gratified by the continuing efforts of the Assistant Secretary-General for Information to improve the cost-effectiveness of OPI by a re-evaluation of existing programmes and reallocation of resources according to current priorities.

29. There could be little argument over the continuing emphasis placed on the subjects listed in paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's report on United Nations public information policies and activities (A/C.5/1679). His delegation hoped, however, that OPI would also continue to focus attention on such other fundamental aspects of human rights as freedom of expression, the interchange of ideas and the entire range of civil and political liberties. It would welcome a specific reference to those subjects in the list of priorities.

30. Turning to the work done by CESI in the context of the seventh special session of the General Assembly, he expressed appreciation to the Assistant Secretary-General for Information and the Director of CESI, both for their work in clarifying the issues involved and for promoting the cause of compromise rather than confrontation. The task of explaining the aims and achievements of large and complex assemblies to the media and also to the general public was becoming increasingly important with the growing complexity of United Nations debates. The work of CESI during the seventh special session was a good example of OPI's essential role of outlining the issues without imposing an opinion. There had been isolated instances in the past 12 months when, in the view of his delegation, OPI had stepped over the line of neutral reporting. That OPI had retained its credibility was strong evidence that its lapses from objectivity were rare. In the emotional and partisan atmosphere surrounding United Nations deliberations, however, it was essential for OPI staff members to realize the need for unbiased reporting.

31. His delegation welcomed the continuing moves under the auspices of the Joint United Nations Information Committee to co-ordinate the activities of OPI and those of the information services of other members of the United Nations system. That increasing co-operation would have an important effect on the efficiency of the United Nations information effort in both financial and educational terms. The moves to strengthen contacts with media representatives were also welcome, and his delegation hoped that similar efforts were being made in respect of national information services, development agencies and non-governmental organizations. In the United Kingdom, the close links between the United Nations information centre, on the one hand, and the Ministry of Overseas Development and the Central Office of Information, on the other, had led to mutual benefits, particularly in the field of information on development assistance.

32. There was still scope for improvement in the effectiveness of some United Nations information centres and a particular effort should be made by directors to build up local links with senior media and representatives of non-governmental organizations and also with national information services. As a member of the Consultative Panel on Public Information, the United Kingdom looked forward to considering the report on the centres' activities at the Panel's next meeting. Noting that the Panel had met only three times in the past two years, he said that a closer relationship between the Panel and OPI, based on more frequent formal contacts and a regular exchange of ideas, would improve the assistance which the Panel was able to provide.

33. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in its third report (A/10008/Add.2). Regarding the estimates under section 21, his delegation was in full agreement with the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. In particular, it agreed that the regular budget should not have to bear a continually increasing share of the cost of CESI, which had primarily been financed from extra-budgetary sources; no further CESI posts should be transferred to the regular budget at the current stage. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's view concerning such transfers, as expressed in the first sentence of paragraph 53 of its first report, and felt that it should be applied to the Secretary-General's estimates under section 21. In conclusion, he expressed concern about the general problem of the transfer to the regular budget of posts previously financed from extra-

budgetary funds, when the General Assembly had not been initially informed of that likelihood.

34. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) said that the work of the United Nations would not be known to the public were it not for OPI, which was one of the most efficient departments of the United Nations. The problem lay not in the quality of its work but in the selectivity of the mass media themselves. Only too frequently, the so-called free press almost totally neglected the work of the United Nations because it displeased certain pressure groups.

35. As he had suggested in the past, the ideal solution to the problem would be for the United Nations to have its own satellite communications system so that it could broadcast to the world at large. Since that idea could not be translated into practice because it would be too expensive, he appealed to the Committee to consider the possibility of strengthening United Nations information offices abroad and of ensuring the widest possible dissemination of information to young people in colleges and universities.

36. Another suggestion that he urged the Committee to consider was the drawing up of an international code of ethics as a model for all the mass media associations to follow. Such a code should set standards on quality of information, monitoring of the truth and selection between candid opinion and propaganda. Any correspondent that violated the code of the association to which he belonged would be brought to task, in the same way as lawyers and doctors were by their associations.

37. Mr. SCHÜTZE (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation shared the Secretary-General's view that OPI could make an important contribution towards gaining broader public understanding of and support for the aims and activities of the United Nations. The Office should not make political judgements or take sides in political issues. It was to the credit of the Assistant Secretary-General for Information and his staff that they showed a very proper concern about giving an impartial and balanced presentation of United Nations activities.

38. Co-operation with and assistance to established governmental and non-governmental information services and agencies and contact with all the media representatives remained of paramount importance. The public's image of the United Nations was essentially determined by press reports on the work and decisions of the main bodies of the Organization. Where the United Nations achievements were widely publicized, the public responded favourably; the work of the seventh special session of the General Assembly, which had had wide press coverage, served to illustrate that point.

39. Commenting on the statement made by the representative of Saudi Arabia, he said that the Federal Republic of Germany was proud of its free and independent press and considered it one of the main achievements of its society.

40. In countries where the mass media were highly developed, the principal concern of OPI should be to assist the film and television networks and organizations to implement their own programmes. In countries where the information media were still being built up, OPI should itself prepare newspaper articles and film and television programmes. His delegation fully supported OPI policy in that respect.

41. Improved co-ordination between OPI and the information services of the other organizations in the United Nations system was an important way of achieving better cost-effectiveness of operations. In that connexion, he endorsed the comments concerning a rationalization of information activities in paragraph 535 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the regional structures of the United Nations system.[4] As far as the day-to-day activities of the Press Section were concerned, the daily summaries of meetings remained an important source of information for press representatives and for many delegations.

42. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning the Secretary-General's budget proposals; the proposed reductions were modest and should allow for a reasonable increase in the growth of information activities.

43. In the coming year his Government intended to make a voluntary contribution to CESI, which, under its new Director, was undertaking valuable projects, in particular with regard to the International Development Strategy. His delegation welcomed Japan's decision to join the ranks of donor countries and hoped that member countries of other regional groups would do likewise.

44. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) noted that recently the Secretary-General had stressed the need for the United Nations to obtain public understanding of and support for its efforts. It was true that the dynamism and expansion of the United Nations should be accompanied by the support of the public and its faith in the Organization's work. Clearly the mass media, particularly the press, had a basic role to play in that regard and relied on OPI for information on United Nations activities.

45. His delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's comments on the Secretary-General's budget proposals. When taken together with the extra-budgetary and other funds under various sections of the budget, the amount of $30,719,000 under section 21 was a substantial one. Provided that policies were well defined and the will to carry them out existed, his delegation was confident that OPI would achieve successful results and would overcome the problems identified in paragraph 754 of the medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1). He had noted the specific examples given by the Assistant Secretary-General for Information in his statement at the 1722nd meeting of the efforts being undertaken to attain the objectives outlined in the medium-term plan.

46. His delegation did not agree with the suggestion by the Assistant Secretary-General that the Committee should provide for an adequate information component when it considered the financial implications of such new United Nations initiatives as world conferences on social and economic matters. If that suggestion was taken literally, the Fifth Committee would be expected both to plan and to budget for information activities–something which it was unable to do.

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4 See document E/5727, of 4 August 1975.

47. Having been informed that OPI resources were sufficient to give only basic information on the United Nations Water Conference, to be held in 1977 at Mar del Plata, and that an extensive information programme must therefore be based on voluntary contributions, his delegation would like to know whether it would be possible to pay for the dissemination of information on the Conference by a reallocation of funds under section 21.

48. He commended the excellent work being done by the United Nations Information Centre in Buenos Aires. To cite but one example of its activities, on the occasion of the visit by a mission of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* in June 1975, the Centre had arranged a meeting of representatives from more than 400 non-governmental organizations.

49. Mr. NAUDY (France) paid a tribute to the noteworthy efforts and achievements of OPI. The OPI press releases played a useful role because they not only summarized the statements made in meetings but also gave the background of the topics discussed.

50. The Office of Public Information continued to be managed competently and dynamically, as was clear from the comprehensive and lucid statement made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Information, and there was valuable co-operation between OPI and the Consultative Panel on Public Information, of which France was a member.

51. The vast range of subjects on which information must be disseminated made the selection of priorities especially important. The thematic approach seemed to his delegation an appropriate framework for defining priorities, allocating limited resources, and, where necessary, redeploying resources.

52. His delegation endorsed the comments and recommendations in the Advisory Committee's first report (A/10008 and Corr.2) and attached particular importance to the views expressed in paragraphs 21.8 and 21.9, in which the Advisory Committee opposed the transfer to the regular budget of two CESI posts financed from extrabudgetary funds. The Advisory Committee's thinking, which was confirmed in its third report (A/10008/Add.2), seemed to be based on sound reasons.

53. In the light of the comments in paragraph 21.13 of the Advisory Committee's first report, his delegation welcomed the assurance from the Assistant Secretary-General that a report giving the conclusions of the study of the OPI field establishment was nearing completion and would be submitted to the Consultative Panel on Public Information at the beginning of 1976. His delegation was satisfied with the achievements of the United Nations information centres; the Centre in France maintained the necessary relations with the mass media and the universities and, in general, accomplished a great deal with limited means.

54. The conclusions in the third report of the Advisory Committee were sensible and well balanced.

55. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that closer co-operation between OPI and the other information services in the United Nations system would release resources for strengthening the information centres system. Furthermore, the Joint United Nations Information Committee might effectively assist in promoting co-ordination and achieving economies in the field of economic and social information, thereby eliminating duplication and dissipation of efforts. His delegation was somewhat concerned by the multiplicity of information activities within the United Nations system and felt that better use could be made of the total resources devoted to economic and social information.

56. His delegation had not been convinced by the arguments put forward by the delegation of Tunisia at the previous meeting in favour of establishing a committee of the General Assembly to deal exclusively with information policies and activities. It very much doubted whether information questions could be discussed more competently or objectively than they already were in the Fifth Committee.

Use of experts and consultants in the United Nations (A/C.5/1681)

57. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had considered the report of the Secretary-General on the use of experts and consultants in the United Nations (A/C.5/1681). The Committee noted the contents of paragraphs 4 and 5, where the Secretary-General indicated that, taking the inflation factor into account, the 1976-1977 estimates implied substantial reduction in the reliance on the use of outside expertise and consultant services. While the Advisory Committee considered that the estimates had been prepared with some restraint, there was room for further reductions. In particular, there was a need for improvement in respect of clear and precise formulation of the tasks assigned to experts and consultants. He urged continuation of the policy whereby consultants were employed only when the expertise required was not available within the Secretariat.

58. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that he regarded the report of the Secretary-General as a follow-up report on the implementation of the decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session. He felt that implementation by the Secretariat of that decision, which had been outlined in paragraph 2 of the report, should have been prompter and more efficient.

59. While he welcomed the fiscal restraint in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, mentioned by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 66 of its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2), he regretted the surprisingly slow implementation by the Secretariat of the General Assembly's decision in respect of the promulgation of a comprehensive administrative instruction governing the use of experts and consultants. He could not accept that rate of implementation and questioned the goodwill of the Secretariat. In particular, he asked what specific difficulties had been encountered by the Secretariat. He drew attention to the fact that the report of the Secretary-General did not provide any information concerning improved application of the established principle of regional representation in the appointment of experts and consultants, a matter of key interest to Member States. The short-comings in the report were due either to lack of sufficient information or else to failure on the part of the Secretariat to carry out the

General Assembly's instructions. His delegation felt that it was a question of insufficient information, and was consequently unable to take a decision on the report of the Secretary-General.

60. He suggested that the Advisory Committee might consider the question and submit an *ad hoc* report on implementation by the Secretariat of the General Assembly decision. He realized that a full-scale debate on the item could present difficulties and simply wished to expedite the work of the Committee.

61. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) commended the Secretariat for reducing reliance on outside expertise and hoped that in future restraint would continue to be shown in estimates for experts and consultants. He hoped the Secretariat would comply with the decision by the General Assembly the previous year that no supplementary estimates were to be submitted for consultant services. He also hoped that the administrative instruction referred to in paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's report, which had been under preparation for two years, would be promulgated by the target date of 1 January 1976. Some follow-up action would still be required, as indicated in paragraph 5 of the report, and he suggested that the Secretary-General should submit a further report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

62. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that he was somewhat disappointed by the Secretary-General's report, which he had expected to be more precise. In particular, he had expected the text of the administrative instruction to be reproduced, and he regretted that it was not yet available. He expressed the hope that the Secretariat would comply fully with the decision taken the previous year and that it would promulgate the administrative instruction without any further delay.

63. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), responding to the comments made by the representative of Poland, said that the Advisory Committee had not found the brief report of the Secretary-General of very great value for an evaluation of the progress made by the Secretary-General in implementing the decision taken the previous year. The main point emerging from the report was that restraint had been exercised in preparing the estimates for experts and consultants for the biennium 1976-1977. The administrative instruction referred to in paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's report was still being drafted and the Advisory Committee had not seen it. The representatives of the Secretary-General would be in a better position than the Advisory Committee to comment on implementation of the guidelines approved by the Fifth Committee the previous year. Accordingly, he would have difficulty in acceding to the Polish request for an *ad hoc* report by the Advisory Committee, as that would necessitate a report from the Secretary-General and, in his opinion, it was somewhat late in the session to prepare such a document in time for the Fifth Committee to make an in-depth analysis of the question.

64. Although under the terms of the Fifth Committee's decision the previous year, as quoted in paragraph 2 *(f)* of the report of the Secretary-General, the Secretary-General was to report only at the thirtieth session, there was merit for the Fifth Committee to suggest that the Secretary-General should be requested to submit a follow-up report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. If that course of action was taken, the Secretary-General would be able to report after the administrative instruction had been finalized and promulgated and he had had an opportunity to see how the system worked in practice.

65. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), taking note of the fact that the report of the Secretary-General was apparently more concise than the Fifth Committee had expected, said that the drafting of the administrative instruction had proved a difficult task. There had been lengthy negotiations among the various Secretariat units which used consultants and a draft of the instruction had been completed and was now being considered by them.

66. If the Committee so wished, a conference room paper could be issued listing the nationality of the experts and consultants hired during the biennium 1974-1975 and also their assignments to give some idea of how the funds had been used.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.

1725th meeting

Thursday, 30 October 1975, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1725

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that, at the request of the Committee and after appropriate consultations, he was submitting a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1); by the terms of that draft the General Assembly would authorize the Secretary-General to continue to enter into financial commitments for UNEF and UNDOF for a period of one month after 31 October 1975. That would be an interim decision, and as soon as the Committee had before it the relevant reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, it

could discuss the substance of the question. In view of the urgent nature of the proposed interim decision, the General Assembly would take up the question later in the day. He therefore hoped that delegations would refrain for the moment from entering into a substantive discussion, reserving their right to do so in due course, in November.

2. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) supported the draft resolution submitted by the Chairman but proposed, in view of the General Assembly resolution 3211 A (XXIX) on the same subject, adopted at the previous session, that a second operative paragraph should be added to the text, to read as follows:

> "2. *Also decides* to apportion the above-mentioned expenses among Member States in accordance with the scheme set forth in General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII)".

That provision had been deemed necessary at the twenty-ninth session so as to make it quite clear, for legal reasons, that expenses relating to UNEF and UNDOF should be duly apportioned among Member States.

The Argentine proposal was adopted.

3. Mr. WANG Lien-sheng (China) reminded the Committee of his delegation's consistent position in the Security Council: China held that UNEF and UNDOF should not be maintained by the United Nations, and it would make no financial commitment for them. His delegation would not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1.

4. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that his delegation had repeatedly taken the position that any extension of the mandate of UNEF and UNDOF could only promote Zionist expansion and consolidate, as a fait accompli, Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. His delegation wished to express in the most explicit terms its reservations of principle concerning the very presence of the Emergency Force, and his Government would make no financial contribution towards its maintenance. His delegation would not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1.

5. Mr. BENKHAYAL (Libyan Arab Republic) said that, in his delegation's view, there was no justification for the existence of UNEF and UNDOF. His Government, as it had done for two years, would again refuse to contribute financially towards the maintenance of the Emergency Force. If draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1 was put to the vote, he would vote against it.

6. Mr. ALKAFF (Democratic Yemen) observed that although his country had contributed in the past to the maintenance of the Emergency Force, that did not necessarily mean that it endorsed Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). By definition, the Emergency Force should be only a temporary one. Israel, however, had taken advantage of the presence of UNEF to consolidate its occupation of Arab lands, in flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter, and to undermine the sovereignty of a number of States Members of the Organization. As his delegation could no longer support the maintenance of the Emergency Force, it would not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1.

7. Mr. MOJA (Albania) said that the question under discussion was not simply a financial matter: from the beginning, Albania had been opposed on principle to the creation and financing of the Emergency Force, because the use of such a Force constituted interference in the internal affairs of other countries and was incompatible with the principles of the Charter. The Emergency Force had been created at the instigation of the two imperialist super-Powers, the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, at a time when the Arab peoples were scoring victories on the battlefield, in order to save Israel from the difficult position it was in and to preserve the *status quo* of "no war, no peace", which was favourable to the expansionist desires of the two super-Powers. The creation of the Emergency Force had been a blow to the Arab peoples, who were struggling to liberate the occupied territories, and to the Palestinian people who were struggling to regain their legitimate rights. The Emergency Force could not bring about and had not brought about peace in the region; it had in fact done the opposite.

8. There was no doubt that a one-year extension of the mandate of the Emergency Force would primarily serve the interests of the United States and the Soviet Union, enabling them to preserve the *status quo* and their role of arbiter, and lending fresh encouragement to the imperialist-Zionist aggressor. Only the just struggle of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples, their unity, and the international solidarity which they enjoyed would lead to the just and final solution of the Middle East crisis. That solution would not come from General Assembly or Security Council resolutions, which failed even to denounce the imperialist-Zionist aggression against the Arab peoples. Still less could it be expected to come from the secret deals, bargaining or suggestions of the two super-Powers.

9. Albania opposed, once again, the financing by Member States of expenses for the Emergency Force. It would not participate in any manner in the financing of the Force, and would vote against draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1.

10. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) expressed his strong support for the provision added by the representative of Argentina to the text of the draft resolution. In order further to improve the text, he proposed that at the end of the third preambular paragraph the words "continues until" should be amended to read "continues only until".

The Iranian proposal was adopted.

11. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had no objection to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1 or to the Argentine and Iranian amendments thereto.

12. Referring to the statement made by the Soviet representative at the 1851st meeting of the Security Council on 23 October 1975 concerning the extension of the mandate of the Emergency Force, he wished to remind the Committee that the Soviet Union had always demanded and continued to demand the immediate cessation of Israeli aggression, the withdrawal of all Israeli troops from all

occupied Arab territories, and a final settlement of the Middle East conflict on the basis of Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). That settlement should take due account of the legitimate rights and interests of the Arab people of Palestine, particularly their right to establish their own State.

13. The only competent forum for arriving at a complete settlement of the question was the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, in which all interested parties, including the Arab people of Palestine, should be represented.

14. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) said that the Emergency Force played an effective role in maintaining peace and security in the Middle East. It was understood that the Force was a purely temporary one and that as soon as there was no further need to stand up to the Israeli aggressor, the need to extend its mandate would disappear. Until that time, however, all Arab peoples, whatever the resulting sacrifices, should remain united in their struggle for the defence of the Palestinian cause, as long as the Palestinian people were unable to exercise their right to self-determination in their own territory. That was why his delegation would never fail to support the efforts of Arab States to restore the occupied territories to their rightful owners and to bring back security to the region.

15. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1 was similar to several previous decisions of the Fifth Committee and it echoed General Assembly resolution 3211 A (XXIX), which the Fifth Committee had fully supported. Paragraph 2 of that resolution was its essential element, since it gave the Secretary-General the necessary guidelines for the apportionment of the expenses of UNEF among Member States. He was therefore gratified that the Argentine representative had proposed the addition of an analogous provision to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1, and that the Committee had accepted the proposal.

16. The CHAIRMAN invited delegations which wished to do so to explain their vote on the draft resolution before it was put to the vote.

17. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the General Assembly had laid down some general principles and rules for the sharing of the costs of peace-keeping operations among Member States. In resolution 1874 (S-IV) of 27 June 1963 it had affirmed that the financing of such operations was the collective responsibility of all Member States, that the economically developed countries were in a position to make relatively larger contributions, and that the permanent members of the Security Council had special responsibilities. In that same resolution, the General Assembly also made it a principle to give special consideration to the situation of any Member States which were victims of the events or actions leading to a peace-keeping operation. Consequently, all decisions concerning the sharing of the costs of peace-keeping operations which did not conform with those principles did not truly serve their purposes. Furthermore, international law and custom required the aggressor to make good the material and moral damage caused to his victim. Since 5 June 1967 Syria had been the victim of Israeli aggression, which was continuing despite United Nations resolutions calling on Israel to withdraw all its troops from the occupied Syrian and Arab territories. Syria was also obliged to provide materially for the daily subsistence of all Syrian citizens who had been driven from their lands.

18. Syria was therefore opposed in principle to the idea of making a financial contribution to the costs of the Emergency Force, even if the amount of such a contribution was minimal. His delegation, relying on the rules of international law and the decisions of the United Nations itself, would vote against any draft resolution placing the aggressor and the victim of aggression on an equal footing.

19. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) paid a tribute to UNEF and UNDOF, which were carrying out complex functions in very difficult conditions; they should be maintained in the Middle East. Their presence would be unnecessary if Israeli aggression was brought to an end. The only solution was for the United Nations to take the necessary measures to secure the withdrawal of Israeli troops and the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

20. He associated himself with the statements made by the representatives of Argentina, Iran and Kuwait, and he would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1.

21. He asked how the additional appropriation of $6,666,667 was to be shared among Member States.

22. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) replied that the amendment proposed by the Argentine delegation referred specifically to the method to be applied in apportioning the appropriation in question in the proportions determined by the scale of assessments. That amendment used the same wording as paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 3211 A (XXIX), which itself cited the special arrangement which was the subject of paragraph 2 of resolution 3101 (XXVIII) and had not been modified.

23. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) proposed that, in paragraph 2, which the Committee had decided to add to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1, the date on which the General Assembly had adopted resolution 3101 (XXVIII), namely, 11 December 1973 should be mentioned.

The proposal made by the Philippines was adopted.

The draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1237/Rev.1) as amended, was adopted by 93 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions.

24. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Rapporteur should be asked to report directly to the General Assembly on the matter.

It was so decided.

25. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that his delegation had decided not to respond to the accusations levelled against his country. The question under consideration was a purely technical one, and his delegation reserved the right to explain its position when the Committee considered the substance of the item on the financing of UNEF and UNDOF.

26. Mrs. BASTOS SANDIFER (Portugal) said that her delegation was resolutely in favour of peace in the Middle East and approved of the activities of UNEF and UNDOF. She reserved the right, however, to explain her Government's position when a substantive debate was held on the financing of the two Forces.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10279, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1236/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1238, A/C.5/L.1239)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 22. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL SERVICES *(concluded)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

27. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) replying to a request from the representative of Belgium (1717th meeting) for details of the language courses provided at United Nations Headquarters, said that the adoption of resolution 2480 B (XXIII) had contributed greatly to improving linguistic balance in the Secretariat. The language training programme, which consisted of a series of courses at all levels in the six official languages and made use of the latest teaching methods, had continued to grow in spite of considerable difficulties, in particular lack of space. The programme was organized on the basis of three terms per year. The courses covered between five and eight levels in each language, and there were also accelerated courses and conversation classes. About 1,870 staff and members of delegations were registered for the current term, and 121 classes had been organized. More than 60 hours of classes were given each day.

28. In assessing the cost of the programme in New York, it should be borne in mind that the teaching hours referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006, para. 22.169), namely, 13,200 hours for 1976 and 13,900 hours for 1977, related only to Headquarters and that, consequently, the $75,000 provided for courses given in the regional commissions should be deducted from the total appropriation of $1,280,000 requested for the programme. The direct cost per teaching hour was therefore $44.50, which meant that for a class of 15.4 persons the hourly cost per student was approximately $2.90. In addition to salaries, there were indirect costs for the preparation and reproduction of curricula and teaching materials, the purchase and maintenance of audio-visual equipment, the preparation and holding of language proficiency examinations three times a year on a world-wide scale, the electronic processing of data on the management of the programmes, and continuous assistance to the regional commissions for the organization of their programmes.

29. Three Professional staff members were responsible for the programme. The chief of the unit was directly responsible for the planning, organization, staffing and day-to-day running of the language courses. Normally he had available 6 or 7 full-time teachers and about 45 part-time teachers, for a total annual registration of over 6,000 for the six official languages. A second staff member was responsible for the preparation and evaluation of all language proficiency examinations, and a third for organizing the examinations, held three times a year in offices away from Headquarters, and for the preparation and practical organization of first- and second-level English- and French -language drafting seminars.

30. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) thanked the Director of the Budget Division for the completely satisfactory explanations which he had given the Committee.

31. Introducing a draft decision submitted by his delegation (A/C.5/L.1239), he said that the document was the result of much consultation; it was designed to improve the efficiency of the Secretariat. In adopting it, the General Assembly would decide to assess, at its thirty-first session, the action taken on the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service over the previous five years. In the draft decision, the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions were asked to make careful preparations for that assessment and to submit comments and recommendations. A 20-page report by the Secretary-General could suffice if it dealt with the essence of the question and was not just a compilation of the half-dozen reports already issued, five of which had already been submitted to the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee had already devoted a number of reports to the work of the Administrative Management Service which clearly showed that it would be in the interests of the General Assembly to undertake a conscientious examination of the question. Confirmation of that was provided by the comments of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 71 of its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2). The explanations given by the Secretary-General on the action taken on the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service also showed some signs of uneasiness.

32. Despite commendable efforts, the Administrative Management Service had encountered many difficulties. Many recommendations which were made as a result of its manpower utilization survey had been only partially implemented. The Service was now oriented towards a series of studies more limited in scope. Certain steps were necessary to make the work of the Secretariat more efficient and economical, but the problem of choice of methods remained: either by strengthening the Administrative Management Service, by a combination of various formulas—including, for instance, the intervention of the Joint Inspection Unit—or by other means, such as those suggested by the representative of Japan. In that connexion, the Belgian delegation, in its draft decision, preferred a cautious, positive and modest approach.

33. At its thirty-first session, the General Assembly would, in accordance with resolution 2924 B (XXVII), review the machinery of the United Nations and of its system for administrative and budgetary control, investigation and co-ordination as well as the work of the Joint Inspection Unit. At the same time, it would be able to evaluate th

* Resumed from the 1717th meeting.

results of the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service, as proposed in draft decision A/C.5/L.1239.

34. The intention of the Belgian delegation in paragraph 3 of the draft decision was to express the unanimous desire of Member States to see the redeployment in priority sectors of the Secretariat of personnel made available as a result of the completion or reduction of programmes, thereby avoiding the creation of new posts and permitting staff economies.

35. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should defer consideration of the Belgian draft decision until it had examined other proposals regarding section 22.

36. Mr. SETHI (India) said he approved the draft decision submitted by the Belgian delegation because it made specific mention of the very difficult question of the action taken so far on the studies of the Administrative Management Service, which had been of a very high quality.

37. With regard to the form of the decision, he noted that the Belgian text contained a preambular paragraph. However, there would undoubtedly be a whole series of decisions and resolutions to adopt with regard to the proposed programme budget and he asked whether it was in keeping with the practice of the Organization to include a preamble in a draft decision. It was quite evident that the Committee sought to make the work of the Secretariat "more efficient and economical". In the light of such considerations, perhaps the Belgian delegation would agree to omitting the preambular paragraph from its draft decision.

38. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) agreed with what the Indian representative had just said but pointed out that his delegation had, at that stage of the discussion, wished to indicate the general purpose of the draft decision which it had submitted. There would be no objection to omitting the subparagraph concerned if that would help to incorporate the decision into other texts which would be adopted on the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977.

39. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) wondered if the adoption of the draft decision would involve a change of the procedure currently followed for forwarding the report of the Administrative Management Service.

40. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) felt that the adoption of draft decision A/C.5/L.1239 would in no way change current procedures. The Secretary-General's annual report on the work of the Administrative Management Service would continue to be submitted to the Advisory Committee, which would refer questions of general interest to the Fifth Committee when necessary. In fact the purpose of the Belgian draft decision was to have a special five-year report placed before the General Assembly precisely when it was reviewing the work of the Joint Inspection Unit. It would refer the two relevant reports to the Fifth Committee, which would then take a decision regarding the work of the Administrative Management Service and the Joint Inspection Unit and possibly the relations between them, and also regarding a certain number of new solutions of the kind that had been proposed by the Japanese delegation at the 1716th meeting.

41. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he was prepared to vote on section 22, but first sought clarification on two questions. He had approved the decision taken by the Fifth Committee at its 1722nd meeting to examine the draft decisions submitted by delegations with regard to the proposed programme budget after the first reading of the individual sections of the budget. However, he would like the draft decision submitted by the Soviet Union (A/C.5/L.1230) to be examined at the same time as section 22 because it related essentially to that section. Moreover, although the Belgian draft decision (A/C.5/L.1239) should be examined subsequently and although it might still be completed or amended, after consultations between delegations, the Soviet representative was surprised that the Indian representative had now taken a position against the preamble to the Belgian draft decision. That draft was a precise statement of the general policy of the Fifth Committee, and throughout the general discussion at both the current and previous sessions an absolute majority of delegations had indicated concern for making the work of the Organization more efficient and economical. He urged the Indian representative not to insist upon the omission of the preamble to the Belgian draft decision.

42. The CHAIRMAN said he understood that the Indian representative was not opposed to the contents of the preamble to the Belgian draft decision but only wished to make a formal change in the text. Furthermore, the Belgian representative had agreed that during the Committee's simultaneous examination of his draft and other proposals, a change in the preamble could be contemplated.

43. With regard to draft decision submitted by the Soviet Union (A/C.5/L.1230), the Chairman proposed that the part of that text which directly concerned section 22 should be included in the decision the Fifth Committee would take after approving the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 22. The Committee could approve at the same time the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 22.54, 22.82 and 22.91 in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) and, as the Belgian representative had proposed at the 1716th meeting, the recommendation made by that Committee in paragraph 22.38 of its report, so that in the future the estimates for the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems and Related Activities would be examined not only by ACC but also by the General Assembly. The Committee could also, in accordance with the proposals made by the Belgian representative at the same meeting, approve the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 22.34 and 22.61 of its report with regard to the New York Computing Centre and the International Computing Centre.

44. The CHAIRMAN asked the Soviet representative if he wished his draft decision (A/C.5/L.1230) to be considered separately.

45. Mr. SETHI (India) said that, far from being opposed to the terms of the preambular paragraph of the Belgian

draft decision, he himself had stated that the Fifth Committee was always concerned with making the work of the Secretariat more efficient and economical. He was therefore not opposed to having that concern mentioned, but he understood that it was not customary to include a preamble in the draft decision on a question which was the subject of several draft decisions. In that case, it would be simpler to omit the preamble so that the draft decision confirmed to practice. The Soviet draft decision itself had no preamble, although it might have stated the same considerations as the Belgian draft.

46. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the representative of India for his clarification but drew attention to the fact that the Soviet draft decision (A/C.5/L.1230), which had no preamble, was a decision of the Fifth Committee, whereas the Belgian draft decision (A/C.5/L.1239) was a draft decision of the General Assembly comprising a preamble and an operative paragraph.

47. The CHAIRMAN noted that the Soviet draft decision covered several aspects, that the first clause direclty concerned section 22 and it was that clause which the Chairman had proposed to include in the decision of the Fifth Committee on section 22. The other aspects of the Soviet draft decision related to the budget as a whole.

48. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought that the Committee should take a decision on the draft decisions, including the Soviet one, submitted by delegations on a specific section of the proposed programme budget during the consideration of that section, and that the decision should be included in the draft report placed before the Committee at the end of its consideration of each item, which in the case under discussion would be at the end of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

49. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) supported the Chairman's suggestion concerning the Soviet draft decision, since, in addition to the passage concerning specific paragraphs of the report of the Advisory Committee, it included other elements of a wider scope which should be considered at a later stage. The relationship between extra-budgetary funds and the regular budget was intricate, and the Committee could not take any decision on it without having additional information; it should not therefore take any decision on the other aspects of the Soviet text until it had completed its consideration in first reading of the individual sections of the programme budget.

50. The CHAIRMAN, replying to a request for clarification from the representative of Algeria, recalled that the Committee had decided at its 1717th meeting to defer its decision on section 22 because the representative of Belgium had indicated that he intended to submit a proposal on it. The proposal which had resulted from the consultations (A/C.5/L.1239) did not concern only section 22 but the whole of the proposed programme budget. Accordingly, when the representative of Belgium had submitted his draft, the Chairman had suggested that the Committee should take its decision on section 22 since there had no longer been any reason for postponing it. Furthermore, the representative of the Soviet Union had pointed out that the Soviet draft decision (A/C.5/L.1230) concerned section 22 and should therefore be considered at the same time as that section. Since the Soviet draft decision had three aspects, he (the Chairman) had proposed that the first aspect, which directly concerned section 22, should be included in the decision taken by the Fifth Committee on that section, and that the Committee should later examine the other aspects concurrently with the other proposals concerning the proposed programme budget as a whole. The representatives of the Netherlands and the Soviet Union seemed to have accepted that procedure. Therefore, the Committee must consider whether it wished to vote on section 22 of the proposed programme budget at once.

51. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) thanked the Chairman for the explanation he had given. He stressed that section 22 was very important and constituted the backbone of the Organization. Of the two draft decisions submitted on section 22, that submitted by Belgium (A/C.5/L.1239) was somewhat confused in that, while it stated that the work of the Secretariat must be more efficient and economical, the operative part requested the Secretariat to carry out a study covering five years. He shared the viewpoint of the representative of Belgium, but pointed out that the Belgian proposal required the Administrative Management Service, which was already overloaded with work, to utilize even more financial and human resources, thus entailing a dispersal of effort.

52. The Soviet draft decision (A/C.5/L.1230), for its part, could easily have been integrated in the Committee's work if the Soviet delegation had proposed in it that the Committee should support the recommendations set out in the Advisory Committee's report and, *inter alia*, the paragraphs mentioned in the draft decision, without separating those paragraphs from the rest of the recommendations.

53. He thought that the Committee should proceed to vote forthwith on the total appropriation recommended under section 22.

54. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), replying to the comments of the representative of Algeria, said that when introducing his draft decision, he had stressed that it was not requesting the Secretary-General to carry out a lengthy study and he had even suggested that the study should be limited to approximately 20 pages. The aim of the draft decision was to make available to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session an assessment of the work of the Administrative Management Service, together with an assessment of the work of the Joint Inspection Unit.

55. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation recommended under section 22 by the Advisory Committee (see 1709th meeting, para. 6).

An appropriation in the amount of $124,014,000 under section 22 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 83 votes to 9, with 2 abstentions.

56. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee supported the

recommendation made in paragraph 22.38 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008 and Corr.2) to the effect that future estimates of the budget of the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems and Related Activities should be reviewed by the General Assembly, and not only by ACC.

It was so decided.

57. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee supported the recommendations made in paragraphs 22.54, 22.82 and 22.91 of the Advisory Committee's report and referred to in the USSR draft decision (A/C.5/L.1230).

It was so decided.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee supported the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 22.34 and 22.61 of its report.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

1726th meeting

Friday, 31 October 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1726

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10279, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1236/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1238, A/C.5/L.1239)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that he wished to clarify the procedure to be followed with regard to the draft decisions submitted by delegations concerning the proposed programme budget. He pointed out that the Committee had decided at its 1722nd meeting that such proposals should be considered after the first reading of the individual sections of the programme budget. However, that did not mean that proposals could not be submitted in advance; some had already been.

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)

SECTION 21. PUBLIC INFORMATION *(continued)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR. 2)

United Nations public information policies and activities (continued)* *(A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679)*

2. Mr. ROMANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted with satisfaction that the Office of Public Information (OPI) was endeavouring to persuade world opinion of the importance of the political role played by the United Nations as the keeper of the peace and the custodian of the future, as was stated in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1679). His delegation endorsed the efforts made by OPI as explained by the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information at the 1722nd meeting: OPI was rightly focusing its attention on the principal information themes set out in paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's report. It was to be hoped that those themes would assume increasing importance in the activities of OPI and would not be thrust into the background by the vast number of other topical concerns occupying the various organs of the United Nations, which were fully reflected in the daily output of OPI, in particular in its press releases. OPI should concentrate on the key problems which were central to the concerns of the United Nations and of the international community and should present information in as balanced and objective a manner as possible.

3. It would be wise to undertake long-term planning of the public information programmes of the divisions of OPI with regard to integrated activities, such as those undertaken for the "Decades" proclaimed by the General Assembly, so as to ensure more efficient and rational utilization of OPI resources. His delegation supported the efforts being made by OPI to eliminate duplication and to co-ordinate its activities with those of the public information services of the specialized agencies, thus making it possible to save money; the establishment of the Joint United Nations Information Committee was an example of such efforts. In that connexion, it would be useful for that Committee to communicate the results of its work and its recommendations not only to participants but also to States Members of the United Nations or to the Consultative Panel on Public Information. Moreover, the Committee should also include the information officers from the major departments of the Secretariat, since at the current stage its composition and activities had a marked social and economic bias. It was not yet certain to what extent the activities of the Committee would contribute to greater economy and the elimination of duplication.

4. As in previous years, the report of the Secretary-General emphasized the strengthening of the network of information centres. Such strengthening should aim not only at increasing the manning-table of the centres but also at upgrading the quality of their work in the various countries by greater utilization of the possibilities of

* Resumed from the 1724th meeting.

national public information organizations, including non-governmental organizations.

5. With regard to the expenditure estimates of OPI, he recalled that several members of the Fifth Committee had expressed the wish that the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget should provide a breakdown of expenditure by principal information themes, so that the Committee would have a clearer idea of the activities of OPI and could recommend whatever remedial action was needed. It was to be hoped that that information would be provided to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and to the Fifth Committee for the consideration of the next proposed programme budget.

6. As to the estimates for OPI in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), he recalled the position of his delegation with regard to the rational and economic utilization of the financial resources of the United Nations: they should be devoted first and foremost to achieving the basic goals of the Organization. The expenditure estimates for OPI reflected the completely unwarranted rate of growth which had characterized the entire United Nations budget for some years. While the Advisory Committee, in its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2), had recommended certain reductions in the estimate for OPI, those reductions should be much more sweeping. Of course, it was to be expected that the workload of OPI would grow in proportion to the activities of the United Nations as a whole, but it was unthinkable that the expenditure estimates of any unit in the Secretariat should be automatically increased merely because the programme budget was considered every other year. That practice was all the more inacceptable since the majority of States Members of the United Nations had supported the adoption of a biennial budget cycle only on condition that the Secretary-General would provide information on ways of effecting economies, in particular through the establishment of sounder priorities, notably with regard to OPI, through the definition of principal information themes, reductions in the cost of expert services and overtime in the divisions of OPI which were not, properly speaking, performing operational activities and, lastly, through increased productivity of existing staff.

7. His delegation would like some clarification with regard to paragraph 21.3 of the first report of the Advisory Committee, which indicated that in addition to the amount provided for direct costs under the regular budget, the sum of $2,553,000 in extra-budgetary funds had been requested for direct costs and $10,701,000 for apportioned indirect costs budgeted under other sections.

8. As to the 35 new posts requested for OPI, his delegation shared the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 21.6 of its report that the justifications for that request were not convincing. Automatically increasing the size of the United Nations Secretariat was an unsound method and led to irrational and unwarranted increases in expenditure. It was regrettable that OPI had not refrained from requesting additional staff, and it was to be hoped that in future it would draw up its budget with a view to economizing resources and rationally utilizing the rather large number of staff it already had available.

9. His delegation noted with concern that the expenditure estimates for OPI reflected a tendency to include in the regular budget, without special autorization by the General Assembly, posts previously financed from extra-budgetary funds; in the instance under discussion, the posts were for CESI, despite the fact that the General Assembly had recently approved the establishment of 5 permanent posts for the Centre. It would appear that CESI had pretensions to a special role within OPI and was performing functions which in fact should be the province of the Press and Publications Division: CESI issued its own press releases on activities and debates which had already been covered by press releases issued by that Division. He saw no reason why CESI should compete with the Division, thus giving rise to expenditure for night differential. That was an abnormal situation which should be corrected in order to achieve savings. The primary function of CESI was to inform the international community of the basic social and economic problems dealt with in the United Nations, by making extensive use of national information media. The Centre should concentrate not on the quantitative aspect of publications, which involved heavy expenditure, but on their qualitative aspect; instead of dealing with events or particular measures, the Centre's publications would gain by becoming more analytical and serving long-term objectives. All the organizations concerned would then be able to rely on CESI to inform public opinion about the basic economic and social activities of the United Nations. Moreover, that would make it possible to reduce expenses, since the small staff of CESI would have their daily burdens lightened and it would no longer be necessary to use temporary personnel.

10. The "encounters" between eminent journalists and experts on issues of United Nations concern could be more productive if the representatives of CESI participating in them would communicate to the journalists information which could in turn be used by the journalists in their national periodicals, so that the public would better understand and more fully support the goals and activities of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, as the Secretary-General would like, without any supplementary expenses being incurred.

11. In conclusion, his delegation hoped that OPI and the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information would redouble their efforts to give world public opinion broad and objective information concerning the work of the United Nations and to increase the efficiency and productivity of OPI.

12. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that his delegation supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the budget estimates for OPI. With regard to the information policies and activities of the United Nations, his delegation was satisfied with the implementation of the thematic approach and the emphasis it placed on the principal information themes; it also endorsed the establishment of thematic task forces. However, more importance should be given to development and international economic co-operation, and information activities in that field should be increased, especially in the light of the decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth and seventh special sessions. In that connexion, his delegation wished to express its appreciation of the efforts of the Consultative

Panel on Public Information and CESI in that process. It also paid a tribute to those Member States that had made financial contributions to the activities of CESI and that had provided facilities for it, as referred to in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1679).

13. His delegation was glad to observe that, according to paragraph 9 of the Secretary-General's report, OPI was devoting particular attention to certain priority undertakings.

14. First, in connexion with the strengthening of the network of United Nations information centres, his delegation had welcomed the establishment of new centres at Ankara and Brussels and had found the performance of the Ankara centre satisfactory. It also welcomed the policy of administrative integration of information centres with UNDP field offices, and hoped that similar arrangements would be made in the future, bearing in mind not only budgetary savings but also the efficiency of information operations.

15. Secondly, with regard to the diversification and improvement of the effectiveness of the information material produced by OPI, his delegation supported the activities described in paragraphs 18 and 19 of the Secretary-General's report, but drew attention to the need to maintain a proper ratio among the various media systems and techniques, taking into consideration the communication networks and existing information systems of the developing countries. For instance, his delegation had been happy to learn that greater emphasis was being placed on radio services to Africa and Asia. It welcomed OPI's evaluation and re-examination of its activities, both in the area of the printed word and in the audio-visual field. The United Nations should certainly benefit from modern techniques for the rapid dissemination of information, but one of the ultimate goals was to reach the greatest possible number of people by manipulating all the information systems available in order to mobilize public support for the United Nations. A proper balance should also be maintained between the developed and the developing countries; as the Assistant Secretary-General had indicated at the 1722nd meeting, so far most of the films had gone to the industrialized countries, but the new budgetary arrangements would enable OPI to serve viewers in the third world. It was therefore to be hoped that the ratio between the developed and the developing countries would be better balanced.

16. Thirdly, in connexion with the establishment of closer contacts with media representatives at the editorial level, his delegation, referring to paragraph 14 of the report, found the "encounters" between prominent journalists and experts on issues of United Nations concern, as well as regional editors' roundtables useful.

17. Fourthly, with regard to the intensification of co-operation and co-ordination between OPI and the information services of other members of the United Nations system, his delegation was glad to learn that the Joint United Nations Information Committee was ready to play an important role and it was awaiting the intermediate plan for 1976 and the joint United Nations information plan for 1977 before stating its position on that subject. The interagency public information working groups were also very useful, as were the periodic regional meetings of information centre directors and the informational conferences for non-governmental organizations. The Assistant Secretary-General and his staff should be congratulated on having resumed the regional meetings of the information centre directors after a lapse of over 13 years, and on the innovations referred to by the Assistant Secretary-General in his introductory statement at the 1722nd meeting.

18. Referring to the budget estimates for OPI, he noted that section 21 of the proposed programme budget covered the programmes of OPI and their budgetary implications for the biennium 1976-1977, but the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1679), which also dealt with the programmes and activities of OPI, contained several suggestions which, if adopted, would have financial implications in addition to the budget figures shown in section 21 of the proposed programme budget and would require supplementary appropriations at the end of 1976. Since the Committee approved the procedure of examining the medium-term plan in the year when there was no budget proposals and the proposed programme budget in the following year, and in so far as the report of the Secretary-General contributed to the setting of targets and priorities and the selection of information programmes, projects and activities, his delegation formally proposed that the report of the Secretary-General on United Nations public information policies and activities should be reviewed in "off-budget" years and that the budget estimates of OPI arising out of it should be examined the following year, in other words, the budget year.

19. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan) said that OPI's responsibilities were important because, without the support of public opinion, the United Nations could not measure up to the heightened expectations of peoples all over the world. A bad public image or a credibility gap could, over a period of time, lead to a loss of confidence and would be reflected in poor performance. In the long run, image and reality tended to become one. On the other hand, a good image would be conducive to a better performance.

20. By and large, his delegation was prepared to accept the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General, as revised by the Advisory Committee.

21. On the question raised in paragraph 21.8 of the Advisory Committee's first report, his delegation agreed with the representative of the Netherlands (1723rd meeting) that the posts requested for CESI should be financed from the regular budget. However, it had noted the comment of the Advisory Committee that, before rearranging priorities on the dissemination of information, there was need for assessment and re-examination, which had not yet taken place.

22. He would focus his attention on one element of the programme of the Press and Publications Division: the Secretary-General, in paragraph 2121 of the proposed programme budget, had recommended that $26,000 should be provided for temporary staff to speed up the publication of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* and the Advisory Committee had not opposed that request, which he was happy to note, because that publication was invaluable in

researching questions discussed at sessions of the General Assembly. In fact, no delegation, no foreign ministry could afford to be without that remarkable reference work if it was to avoid floundering in the torrent of United Nations documents. It was therefore a pity that, in recent years, the *Yearbook* had not been produced on a more timely basis. Of course, there had been a considerable increase in the conference activities of the United Nations; commissions, committees and working groups had proliferated and, since the relevant documentation had thus become more voluminous, it was understandable that the editing and printing processes should have been delayed. That situation must be remedied, and the remedies existed. The many contributors to the *Yearbook* must be impressed with the urgency of submitting their contributions in time and in a form which corresponded to the objective and balanced pattern of previous editions. Publication of the *Yearbook* must be speeded up without impairing its quality. He felt sure that temporary staff requested by the Secretary-General for the biennium 1976-1977 would not be enough and that the appropriation of $26,000 requested for the provision of the extra staff agreed to by the General Assembly in 1970 must be increased on a permanent basis. He asked the Assistant Secretary-General what could be done, especially to persuade the various departments to submit their reports in time. The Administrative Management Service, the Joint Inspection Unit or the Advisory Committee should study, preferably in 1976, what additional staff was needed to ensure more expeditions publication of the *Yearbook*. OPI itself should, in the first instance, examine ways and means of ensuring more expeditious production of the *Yearbook* by rationalizing the printing process. In the United States, for example, publishing firms and newspapers were able to produce detailed reports of major events almost instantly. OPI should therefore explore time saving techniques in order to reduce the delays in publishing the *Yearbook*.

23. Mrs. BASTOS SANDIFER (Portugal) said that the Portuguese Government fully supported the activities of OPI, whose resources should be strengthened as much as possible if the work of the United Nations in the economic, social and political fields was to be fruitful. The role of OPI was not an easy one because it had, on the one hand, to disseminate information on an independent basis and, on the other, to act as an adjunct to local news media. It also had to correct misunderstandings prevailing among the general public about the work of the United Nations. Just as it had to mobilize the man in the street to make him an active supporter of the United Nations, so also it had to mobilize the Member States and the institutional sectors within those States that could be of assistance to it.

24. The thematic approach to the dissemination of information which had been in use for the past three years was highly satisfactory. The public had been better informed, particularly with regard to activities concerning International Women's Year, human rights, decolonization and the eradication of *apartheid*. However, OPI still had a huge task before it in the dissemination of information concerning the establishment of a new international economic order. There, perhaps as nowhere else, public opinion would have to be mobilized, and also changed, so that the people of the world would actively contribute to the establishment of that new economic order.

25. On the regional level, information centres played a crucial role because they were perhaps the most effective link between the United Nations and the world at large. As many centres as possible should therefore be established and it was gratifying to note that two had been established in 1975, in Ankara and in Brussels. The directors of such centres should also continue to meet periodically because such exchanges of views were extremely useful.

26. Portugal welcomed the generous contributions made to CESI by the Governments of the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Japan, but, as some delegations had already pointed out, CESI's resources were barely adequate, given its important task, and it was unfortunate that information activities on social and economic problems had to be financed on the basis of voluntary contributions. Her delegation, too, would support a review of that question. It wished to commend CESI for its work in publicizing the sixth special session of the General Assembly and particularly its publication, *Development Forum*, for carrying an excellent supplement on the session. It was to be hoped that CESI, and OPI in general, would find the resources to utilize, as fully as possible, all available media techniques, including those in the audio-visual field which were extremely important for reaching the public of the third world.

27. Mr. NATWAR SINGH (India) said that India had always strongly supported OPI, which always sought to maintain a very high standard of efficiency and a creative momentum.

28. The Secretary-General had pointed out in paragraph 21.1 of the proposed programme budget, that the fundamental objective of OPI had not changed and it must always promote an understanding of the work and purposes of the Organization among the peoples of the world. If the audience to be reached was defined as "the peoples of the world", then reaching it meant assigning a very vigorous role to the information centres, because it was only through them that OPI could undertake activities on a world-wide scale. To reach that audience, OPI, and particularly the information centres, should progressively reorient themselves to educative ends because it was clear that the functions of OPI could not be limited to the diffusion of information to the media. The Secretary-General had noted that a new effort had been inaugurated "to reach the younger audiences of the world, including specifically schools and universities" (A/C.5/1679, para. 19). That effort should be supported and he hoped that more substantial information on the activities of OPI aimed at youth would be received. In fact, apart from a reference in paragraph 21.37 to the activities of the information centres in that field, the proposed programme budget made no significant mention of OPI's work in the educational field. The education of youth must be a major preoccupation of OPI, a greater one than work with the press, to which it attached disproportionate importance. Roundtables and "encounters" of journalists and experts were undoubtedly an essential part of OPI activities, but the information centres should in future direct a considerable part of their activities to encouraging the Governments of Member States to increase teaching on the United Nations in educational institutions at all levels, and OPI should provide

information on the United Nations directly to educational institutions. That kind of action would necessarily have far more lasting effects than action directed at the press. At intervals of five years the Secretariat prepared a report entitled "Teaching of the purposes and principles, the structure and activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in schools and other educational institutions of Member States". The latest one had appeared in January 1975 as document E/5610. Perhaps the scope of that inquiry could be expanded so as to make available more detailed information on teaching on the United Nations at different levels, primary, secondary and university. In addition, that document might perhaps be issued more frequently, it could then provide a valuable means of monitoring the effectiveness of OPI's operations. Without itself organizing courses on the United Nations in its external offices, OPI could promote that effort and persuade Governments to take special measures.

29. In paragraph 21.13 of its first report, the Advisory Committee pointed out that a study was in progress of the staffing of the OPI field establishments. As the Advisory Committee observed, the conclusions of the study should be received as early as possible to permit examination of the possibility of improving the performance of the field offices.

30. With regard to information in the economic and social sectors, his delegation found the statement of the Assistant Secretary-General for Information at the 1722nd meeting more reassuring than the report of the Secretary-General issued as document A/C.5/1679. That kind of information should be a principal preoccupation of all units of OPI and should not be relegated to financing only through extra-budgetary funds. The Advisory Committee was rightly concerned when the Secretary-General requested a transfer of posts from extra-budgetary funds to the regular budget. However, his delegation believed that OPI should be seen in a context wider than the purely budgetary one and it would have accepted the incorporation in the regular budget of 2 posts for CESI which were currently financed through extra-budgetary funds. The fact remained that all units of OPI should make greater effort to cover economic and social affairs adequately, and the comments of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 21.8 and 21.9 of its first report were pertinent. A reordering of priorities in favour of economic and social information should be carried out throughout OPI. He wished, however, to congratulate CESI on the work it had done, especially during the seventh special session of the General Assembly.

31. Finally, there should be some understanding as to how OPI was to meet its obligations with respect to neutrality and objectivity. In the view of his delegation, OPI's role was to project and to make clearly understood the will of the international community as expressed in resolutions and decisions of legislative bodies. In a world dominated by public relations and propaganda, a world in which it was impossible to re-establish truth once it had been falsified, OPI had a difficult role to play and deserved understanding.

32. Mr. MILLS (Jamaica) observed that to anyone whose experience at the national level made him aware of how difficult it was to keep the public informed and to make it understand such problems as the Government's intentions in economic and social matters, the complexity of OPI's task was obvious. Nothing was simpler than to create misunderstandings or to simplify to excess.

33. The task was all the more difficult when the United Nations sought to encourage adoption by the international community of radically new political, economic and social concepts relating to such matters as the environment, the uses of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the establishment of a new international economic order. The interest of the international community also had to be aroused in order to ensure the very future of the Organization.

34. It was becoming increasingly clear, however, that until recently, large areas of international relations had been based on outmoded values and hypotheses left over from a period in which it had been difficult to create international understanding and tolerance. It was now necessary to reshape that whole system of values as an indispensable first step, especially for the establishment of a new international economic order.

35. Under existing circumstances, the difficulty for the world press or for OPI arose from the need to strike a balance between all the divergent interests involved. The difficulty was further increased when the major burden fell to OPI. Such efforts as had been made in the past would have to be further strengthened in order to attain the required degree of international understanding.

36. With regard to the implementation of the information programme, he approved the recently adopted multimedia approach and the growing use of all the media. He was happy that CESI was the recipient of generous contributions.

37. He hoped that no effort would be spared to provide the resources required for those absolutely essential tasks.

38. Miss GARCÍA DONOSO (Ecuador) expressed satisfaction with the report of the Secretary-General on public information policies and activities (A/C.5/1679), and with the statement made at the Committee's 1722nd meeting by the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, who had emphasized the Secretariat's wish to increase the operational capacity of OPI so as to enable it to achieve its main objective.

39. In his previous report[1] the Secretary-General had noted a lessening of public confidence in the United Nations, and it might be added that the disenchantement of world public opinion was beginning to make itself felt. Hence the need to strengthen the machinery for keeping the public better informed of the activities of the Organization with regard both to peace and international security and to the balanced and equitable development of all countries.

40. It was clear that the general public was very inadequately informed about the work of the United Nations, especially in countries where there was no information centre, and she asked the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to ensure that the regional information

1 Document A/C.5/1605, of 10 September 1974.

centres extended their activities to all the countries in the regions they covered. Similarly, action should be taken to ensure that the information activities of the offices of UNDP resident representatives were also strengthened in countries where there was no information centre.

41. Information activities should be of a continuing nature, like the activities of the Organization itself, and should operate on two levels. One level of activity should be the direct dissemination of information by OPI through the news agencies, and the preparation of such information; the other should be the dissemination of information by Governments with the help of OPI. Every year, in connexion with United Nations Day (24 October), Member States were invited to organize various events. In Ecuador on that day lectures were given in educational establishments, the press publicized the work of the Organization, and there were special television broadcasts.

42. In view of the purposes it served, the importance of OPI deserved recognition. It was trying to carry out the task entrusted to it to the best of its ability, but its activities were insufficiently developed, no doubt for want of the necessary support.

43. For those reasons her delegation approved of the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, subject to the reduction initially recommended by the Advisory Committee, which had proposed an appropriation of $30,719,000. It trusted that the increase in resources would result in a real growth in information programmes.

44. In conclusion, her delegation paid a tribute to the commendable work done by CESI at the seventh special session of the General Assembly and it hoped that the Centre would be able to continue its work of informing the public about what the Organization was doing for the good of all.

45. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that although his Government recognized the utility of the activities of OPI, it believed that the public's image of the United Nations depended primarily on what the Organization itself did. The proper function of OPI was to purvey basic facts to the news media and to avoid activities which might be characterized as propagandizing. It was for that reason that his delegation questioned the frequent use, in recent Secretariat documents, of the term "mobilization of public opinion". It was deeds and not words which were important for the United Nations in carrying out its urgent tasks, especially those emanating from the seventh special session of the General Assembly.

46. He recognized the validity of some of the arguments in favour of the thematic approach referred to by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1679) and by the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information in his introductory statement at the 1722nd meeting, but he hoped that it would not encourage OPI to over-emphasize certain selected themes to the detriment of other objectives of the United Nations.

47. Several delegations had called attention to the statement of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that the total amount of funds attributable to the activities of OPI exceeded $46 million. The share of those costs borne by the taxpayers of the United States was well in excess of $10 million. In view of the serious existing problems of controlling the quantity of United Nations documentation and improving its quality, the concern of all Member States about the growth in programmes and budgets of international organizations, as well as the world economic situation and the need to concentrate on programmes of vital interest, particularly to the developing world, his delegation thought that it was not the time for a significant increase in the programme budget of OPI.

48. He was glad to note that OPI had taken steps during the past year to improve co-ordination with the public information units within the specialized agencies. But his delegation, which had already expressed its views on the transfer of personnel financed from extra-budgetary funds to the regular budget, joined other delegations in opposing the transfer of posts financed from CESI trust funds to the regular bueget.

49. There was no justification for creating new posts in OPI in New York, nor was his delegation convinced of the need for staffing four information centres with extra information assistants. Pending publication of the study of the OPI field establishment, which the Assistant Secretary-General had indicated would appear in time for the next meeting of the Consultative Panel on Public Information, his delegation could not favour any expansion of the activities of the information centres or upgrading of the salaries of their personnel, especially when the United Nations, as a whole, was faced with increasingly serious financial difficulties.

50. In conclusion, he recognized the need for increased appropriations to maintain the OPI programme at its existing level, but was not convinced of the necessity for increases in the programme. He could therefore not support the request of the Secretary-General.

51. Mr. HENČIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that the success of the Organization's work depended to quite a large extent on the support which it received from world public opinion. That point was made by the Secretary-General in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization when he stated: "As long as there is a public tendency to regard the business of international co-operation with detachment . . . we shall lack the support and strength to deal effectively with the many problems of future survival now on our agenda."[2] There must therefore be an intensification of efforts to seek sufficiently wide understanding and support to influence the course of national policies. Such activities should on no account be in the nature of propaganda, but instead should be organized and directed, as they had been up to the current stage, in such a way as to promote understanding of the work and aims of the United Nations. That would simultaneously facilitate the achievement of another goal which was particularly important to Member States which lacked economic, financial or military power: namely, the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the establishment of a new international order, both political and economic.

2 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 1A*, sect. VI.

52. The attainment of that goal required planned activities, based on clearly defined priorities, which should be given adequate attention in the medium-term plan and the proposed programme budget. The medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 (A/10006/Add.1), however, did not fully reflect that need. It was true that it had been prepared and drafted before the seventh special session of the General Assembly and it therefore viewed the economic activities of the United Nations as a means of strengthening co-operation between the Organization and the specialized agencies, with a view to mobilizing public opinion in favour of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. But the United Nations and the specialized agencies had aspirations which extended beyond the goals laid down in the Strategy and it would be quite natural for them to be given an appropriate place in the medium-term plan. The report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1679) and the statement by the Asistant Secretary-General for Public Information at the 1722nd meeting were reassuring in that respect, since during the period covered by the medium-term plan OPI was to pay particular attention to the questions considered at the seventh special session of the General Assembly, and CESI had already incorporated them in its programme of work.

53. There was a certain discrepancy between the activities of the Organization as envisaged in the medium-term plan and the activities which OPI had already partially undertaken. Since all the Organization's activities must be based on the medium-term plan and the programme budget, it was essential that the plan should cover the principal themes listed in paragraph 3 of the report of the Secretary-General and those referred to by the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information in his statement.

54. Referring to the need to upgrade the information centres by ensuring that outstandingly competent persons were appointed as directors, he also stressed the need for strict observance of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, especially since United Nations activities were sometimes the target of severe and even hostile criticism in certain countries and certain regions.

55. The Office of Public Information should react against the lack of objectivity in some such reports, but should also take care to ensure that its activities could not be construed as propaganda, which would be a flagrant violation of the terms of reference and be contrary to the very spirit of the activities of OPI.

56. His delegation was not sure that sufficient account had been taken of those considerations in the budget estimates for OPI, but it would support the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on the understanding that, if necessary, the General Assembly, at its thirty-first session, would authorize supplementary appropriations to finance OPI activities designed to provide better information about the issues considered at the seventh special session.

57. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said that a well-balanced and efficient programme of public information could assist in creating a better understanding on the part of both Governments and the general public of the importance of United Nations programmes and the progress achieved in advancing the objectives of the Charter. He hoped that OPI, under its competent and devoted management, would continue to improve its effectiveness through imaginative application of admittedly scarce resources and through arrangements with national and international information services.

58. Canada was an active participant in the discussions of the Consultative Panel on Public Information, and the meetings held in March 1975 had been fruitful. Members of the Panel had had the opportunity to consider important new developments and had encouraged OPI to discuss broad issues of policy. Once again, the principles and guidelines for OPI laid down by the General Assembly in 1946 and 1957, and reaffirmed in 1971, had been found to be both flexible and adequate for the current time.

59. His delegation was pleased with the range of initiatives undertaken by OPI during the 1974-1975 biennium, including conferences with non-governmental organizations, regional meetings of information centre directors, rapid dissemination of a wide range of information material in more languages for films, television, newspapers and magazines, and new outlets for United Nations films. Canada was also gratified by evidence of effective co-operation with national media services and with international organizations through such mechanisms as the Joint United Nations Information Committee. It trusted that the thematic approach would prove successful in rationalizing the implementation of broad objectives shared by several organizations. Lastly, he noted that OPI had been active in publicizing major United Nations conferences designed to focus world attention on major issues such as those dealt with by the seventh special session and the World Conference of the International Women's Year held in Mexico. Therefore, application of some resources to stimulate and supplement national and international information activity appeared to be well worth while.

60. With regard to the need to augment OPI resources to meet heavier demands for its services, he thought there was little point in having an information service and information centres if they were not endowed with sufficient resources. He was pleased to note that the Advisory Committee had concluded that OPI programme growth was justifiable and had recommended acceptance of 23 new posts and 4 reclassifications. His delegation was prepared to support the Secretary-General's proposals, subject to the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

61. Regarding the transfer to the regular budget of posts financed from extra-budgetary funds, the concerns expressed by the Advisory Committee were justified in the light of the principle of sound management and the current difficult financial situation of the United Nations. Nor did his delegation consider it desirable that OPI should enter into any arrangements with other organizations without having first submitted to the General Assembly any long-term resource implications that might arise.

Financial problems of the United Nations

62. The CHAIRMAN announced that he had received a note, dated 30 October 1975, from the delegations of the following countries: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, Haiti,

Iceland, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Uruguay and Zambia.

63. The signatories were concerned about the critical financial situation of the Organization and requested the Secretary-General to provide clear and concise information on the origin of the current financial problems, with special reference to the following points: the deficit; cash flow; assessed contributions withheld as a matter of principle or announced policy; type of payment of assessed contributions; attempts to resolve the deteriorating United Nations financial situation and to restore its financial solvency, and progress made. The signatories had requested that the note should be distributed as an official document of the Fifth Committee.

64. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand), speaking on behalf of all the signatories, requested that the note should be issued as a document in the A/C.5/L.– series.

It was so decided.[3]

AGENDA ITEM 103

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly *(continued)*:* (c) Committee on Contributions (A/10152, A/C.5/1698)

65. The CHAIRMAN referring to the note by the Secretary-General (A/10152), pointed out that the term of office of five members of the Committee on Contributions would expire on 31 December 1975. As the Secretary-General had pointed out (see A/C.5/1698), the Governments of Pakistan and France had nominated Mr. Amjad Ali and Mr. Michel Rougé, respectively, for reappointment to that Committee. The Governments of Mexico, the Soviet Union and China had nominated, respectively, Mr. Miguel A. Dávila Mendoza, Mr. Anatoly Semënovich Chistyakov and Mr. Tien Yi-nung. He invited the Fifth Committee to take a vote by secret ballot in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. In the case of the Committee on Contributions, the Committee would be voting for a person and not for a Member State. Furthermore, members of the Committee could vote for a person who had not been officially nominated.

At the request of the Chairman, Mr. Sealy (Trinidad and Tobago) and Mr. Murg (Romania) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	97
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	97
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	96
Required majority:	49
Number of votes obtained:	
Mr. Miguel A. Dávila Mendoza	89
Mr. Michel Rougé	88
Mr. Amjad Ali	87
Mr. Anatoly Semënovich Chistyakov	86
Mr. Tien Yi-nung	86
Mr. Santiago Meyer Picón (Mexico)	4
Mr. Vasily S. Safronchuk (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)	2
Five other persons	5

Mr. Ali (Pakistan), Mr. Chistyakov (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. Dávila Mendoza (Mexico), Mr. Rougé (France) and Mr. Tien Yi-nung (China) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended their appointment as members of the Committee on Contributions for a three-year term beginning on 31 December 1975.

66. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should ask the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly on the matter.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

[3] The text was subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1240.

* Resumed from the 1721st meeting.

1727th meeting

Friday, 31 October 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1727

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10279, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1236/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1238, A/C.5/L.1239)

Use of experts and consultants in the United Nations* (concluded)* *(A/C.5/1681)

1. Mr. EKONG (Nigeria) regretted that the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1681) was not sufficiently de-

* Resumed from the 1724th meeting.

tailed and failed to supply the facts necessary for evaluating the progress made by the Secretary-General in complying with the decision taken by the General Assembly at the preceding session, as referred to in paragraph 2 of the report. Furthermore, if the matter had received the urgent treatment it deserved, the codified administrative instructions would have been prepared in time for consideration at the current session. It was particularly surprising to learn that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had not seen the preliminary draft of those instructions. His delegation endorsed the suggestion made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee at the 1724th meeting that the Secretary-General should be requested to submit a follow-up report to the Assembly at its thirty-first session and felt that the Fifth Committee should request prompt and full implementation of the Assembly's 1974 decision.

2. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that he, too, was prepared to support the suggestion made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

3. After holding consultations with a number of delegations, his delegation had prepared the following draft decision, which, he believed, reflected the general mood of the Committee:

"The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it should:

"1. *Take note* of the Secretary-General's report on the use of experts and consultants in the United Nations (A/C.5/1681);

"2. *Reaffirm* the conviction that the decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session, as expressed in paragraph 30 of the report of the Fifth Committee,[1] on the use of experts and consultants should be implemented promptly, fully and effectively;

"3. *Request* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, a report on the implementation of that decision."

4. He trusted that the proposal he had read out would receive the support of every member of the Committee.

5. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation shared the general feeling of dissatisfaction with the Secretary-General's report. Nothing tangible had come out of the Assembly's endorsement of the very important recommendations on consultants of the Joint Inspection Unit. A reduction of $129,000 in the amount for the coming biennium, compared to the amount for the current financial period, was no achievement since large additional sums were being requested in revised estimates in connexion with decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council. It was clear that the decision taken by the Assembly at its twenty-ninth session had not been implemented. He trusted that the Secretary-General would inquire of the staff members concerned the reasons for their passive attitude, which amounted to a lack of respect for the Joint Inspection Unit recommendations.

6. In conclusion, his delegation endorsed the proposal made by the delegation of Poland.

7. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) observed that there appeared to be a growing number of cases in which the Secretariat was taking arbitrary action in regard to the decisions adopted by the principal organs of the United Nations; the failure to complete the preparation of instructions on consultants was an example of that trend. The report submitted by the Secretary-General failed to deal with the substance of the problem. Moreover, there was a discrepancy between the wording of paragraph 2 *(f)* of that report and the wording of the decision taken at the twenty-ninth session, which appeared in paragraph 30 of the Committee's report.[1]

8. He recalled that, during the discussion at the twenty-ninth session on the use of experts and consultants, the report of the Joint Inspection Unit[2] had been described as a very valuable document and a manual which every member of the Secretariat should keep on his desk. He reminded members that the preparation of the administrative instructions had started many months earlier and that the completion date had originally been set for the end of 1974.

9. He endorsed the comments made by the representative of the Soviet Union concerning the paltry saving of $129,000 compared with the total amount of $6,655,000 being requested for consultants.

10. In conclusion, he endorsed the Polish proposal and expressed the hope that a final decision could be taken at the thirty-first session.

11. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) expressed regret at the delay over the issuing of the instructions, which was due to technical reasons, and assured members that the instructions and a full report by the Secretary-General would be submitted to the Fifth Committee at the following session.

12. With regard to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council and by the Second General Conference of UNIDO calling for sizable amounts to be spent on consultants, he said that the Secretary-General was not able to act as an arbiter in cases where decisions taken by other intergovernmental bodies conflicted with decisions taken ny the General Assembly.

13. The various departments of the Secretariat had abided by the recommendations in the Joint Inspection Unit report on consultants and, except in one or two cases where there had been language difficulties, had resorted to outside consultants only when the expertise required was not available in the Secretariat.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that the draft decision submitted by the delegation of Poland was both more

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 73, document A/9960.

2 See document A/9112 and Corr.1, of 31 July 1973.

comprehensive and specific than the wording he had prepared, which read:

"The Fifth Committee takes note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1681) and requests him to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, in accordance with the provisions contained in paragraph 30 of the report submitted by the Fifth Committee at the twenty-ninth session,[1] a follow-up report on the implementation of the new system with regard to the use of experts and consultants."

15. In his opinion, the Polish proposal was similar in substance to his own but reflected more faithfully the mood in the Committee. Consequently, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft decision read out by the representative of Poland.

It was so decided.

16. Mr. SETHI (India) explained that his delegation's views on the question of consultants were to be found in the summary records of the meetings of the twenty-ninth session (1638th and 1642nd meetings) and that he had therefore refrained from speaking in the current discussion.

17. He commended the Chairman's prompt action leading to the adoption of the Polish draft decision at the current meeting, it being understood that it was in accordance with the spirit of rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

18. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) asked whether the decision just taken would prevent the Secretary-General from submitting supplementary estimates in connexion with new activities as well as in the case of existing activities. He recalled that the Committee had had the same difficulty in construing the meaning of its decision on consultants at the twenth-ninth session.

19. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) explained that the Secretariat would bring the Fifth Committee's decision to the attention of other Committees but could do no more than that. It would be recalled that he had drawn attention, both orally and in writing, to the ambiguities of the decision on consultants taken at the twenty-ninth session. At the same session, the Fifth Committee had spent some time debating the implications of a Second Committee resolution entailing supplementary estimates before finally deciding to approve the estimates.

20. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that it was his understanding that the Secretary-General could request funds for consultants in connexion with new activities.

Honoraria payable to members of the International Law Commission, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal* (concluded)* *(A/10008/Add.3, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1236/Rev.1)

21. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) recalled that he had asked at the 1723rd meeting whether the members of the International Law Commission had other employment or whether the honoraria they received constituted their main source of income.

22. Mr. RUEDAS (Budget Division) replied that it appeared that the members did have activities besides those connected with the International Law Commission.

23. With regard to the request of the representative of Australia for details of the activities of the special rapporteurs, he recalled that one of the Commission's responsibilities was to prepare draft texts of conventions, which were elaborated on the basis of certain documents. When the topic was a complex one, preparation of those documents was entrusted to special rapporteurs. With respect to the subsistance allowances payable to members of the Commission, he noted that General Assembly resolution 2491 (XXIII) had fixed the rates for members of such bodies at the rate for Secretariat officials plus 40 per cent, which worked out at $42 a day at Headquarters and $40 at Geneva.

24. Replying to the question of the representative of Japan, he said that the subsistence allowance at Headquarters had increased from $29 as at 1 January 1971 to $42 as at 1 October 1975, an increase of 45 per cent. At Geneva the increase over the same period had been from $19 to $40, an increase of 105 per cent; however, the Swiss franc equivalents were 82 and 110 Swiss francs, respectively, which represented an increase of only 34 per cent.

25. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta), referring to a statement made at the 1723rd meeting by the representative of Jamaica that the payment of honoraria to members of the International Law Commission was based on the statute of the Commission, said that according to article 13 of the statute (General Assembly resolution 174 (II)), members of the Commission should receive a *per diem* allowance at the same rate as that paid to members of commissions of experts of the Economic and Social Council. It was clear, therfore, that the Assembly had not initially intended to make a distinction between the Commission and the other bodies then existing. Since some delegations had asked him whether the approach in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1236/Rev.1 should not be changed, he wished to point out that the information provided by the representative of Jamaica did not seem to conform to the statute of the Commission. In his report to the General Assembly at the thirty-first session, the Secretary-General should cite the basic texts concerning such payments and the General Assembly resolutions by which they had been modified, so that members of the Committee would be able to see all sides of the problem. It sometimes seemed as though attempts were being made to take advantage of the fact that delegations had not had time to look closely into the matter to push through decisions that were not consistent with the General Assembly's original intention.

26. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that his country had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution before the Committee because it was felt that the exception which had been made in the past was becoming the rule. Most of the members of the International Law Commission were ambassadors or professors of law and in many countries the drawing of salaries from several sources was not permitted;

* Resumed from the 1723rd meeting.

what in fact happened was that the honoraria paid by the United Nations went into the treasury of such countries. The draft resolution, if adopted, would not preclude the possibility of increasing the honoraria; the sponsors merely wished to be sure that the matter had been studied thoroughly.

27. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1236/Rev.1.

28. Mr. EKONG (Nigeria) noted that the principle behind the payment of honoraria was not to pay compensation but to express appreciation. His delegation wished to correct the erroneous impression that honoraria were paid in lieu of subsistence and travel allowances; changes had been made in those allowances from time to time. In seeking to justify higher honoraria, the Secretary-General should simply say that the amounts had remained unchanged for a certain number of years. Adoption of the draft resolution would not preclude changes in the amounts of the honoraria payable, and his delegation therefore supported it. However, its support did not prejudge the position it might wish to take after more substantive discussion of the matter.

29. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) expressed regret at the emotional undertones which had crept into the debate. That was perhaps partly due to the manner in which the Committee had decided to handle communications on the matter. In some quarters there seemed to be a feeling that the intention of the draft resolution was to reduce honoraria or abolish them. In fact, the draft resolution was designed to set in motion a procedure for considering in detail at the thirty-first session the whole question of honoraria for experts of important United Nations bodies. Japan had the highest regard for the three bodies involved and attached great importance to the participation of its experts in two of the three. The draft resolution recognized the need to maintain their high calibre. He appealed to delegations to adopt the draft resolution unanimously.

30. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that his delegation would support the draft resolution not because it doubted the competence or integrity of the members of the bodies involved but because the reasons adduced by the Secretary-General in support of an increase in the honoraria were rather contradictory and because there should be uniform criteria for payment of honoraria.

31. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation could accept the adoption of the draft resolution since it was convinced that the over-all study of the question would be conducted with particular objectivity. In that respect it welcomed the choice of criteria enumerated in operative paragraph 2. However, his delegation's support did not prejudge its position on the substance when the Secretary-General's report on the matter was considered at the thirty-first session. Finally, he said that France held the members of the bodies involved in great esteem.

32. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) moved the closure of the debate on the question under rule 117 of the rules of procedure. The Committee was spending more money on its discussion of the matter than would be involved in the proposed increase.

33. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) pointed out that the Committee had not yet decided how to ensure that the views expressed in the communication from the Chairman of the International Law Commission (see 1719th meeting) were taken into account. If his delegation was satisfied on that point it would not oppose the motion.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that the Chairman of the Sixth Committee had approached him informally and had asked that, if the draft resolution was adopted, the views of the Chairman of the International Law Commission be taken into consideration in the proposed study. Since the study would be prepared by the Secretary-General and the letter of the Chairman of the International Law Commission had been addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Managament, and since the Chairman of the Commission had made a statement on the matter in the Sixth Committee which had been reflected in the summary record of that Committee's 1550th meeting, held on 28 October 1975, he was sure that the Secretary-General would take into consideration the views of the Commission and any other views he deemed relevant.

35. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the motion to close the debate was adopted.

It was so decided.

36. Mr. VANDERGERT (Sri Lanka) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution on the understanding that its support would not prejudge its position on the substance when the issue was discussed at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/L.1236/Rev.1 unanimously.

It was so decided.

38. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said that his delegation had supported the draft resolution because it approved of the general idea contained therein. His delegation was perplexed by some of the points; however, since it had wished to ensure that the Committee would reach a consensus, it had decided that it could wait before asking for clarification.

39. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation did not appreciate the "guillotine procedure" which had prevented some delegations from expressing their views on the substance although other delegations had spoken more than once. Closing the debate was not the best way of achieving results satisfactory to all. However, his delegation had not opposed closure, because it sympathized with the draft resolution as a whole. Operative paragraph 2 listed some of the factors which should be taken into account in the requested study, the Secretary-General was free, however, to take other factors into consideration also. If the draft resolution had been put to the vote, his delegation would have voted in favour of it.

40. Mr. RUEDAS (Budget Division) said that it was the Secretary-General's understanding that in preparing the study he would take into consideration *inter alia* the

communications which he had received and the summary records of the discussions on the matter in both the Fifth and the Sixth Committees.

AGENDA ITEM 101

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10299, A/C.5/1670)

41. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1670) had been submitted in accordance with the General Assembly decision quoted in paragraph 1 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10299). The report of the Secretary-General dealt with authority for the provision of meeting records, technical procedures used for the production of such records and costs involved; it listed the bodies provided with meeting records; and it suggested 10 criteria for the provision of meeting records.

42. The Advisory Committee had commented on each of the criteria proposed by the Secretary-General. Criterion 1 did not involve any departure from current practice, although it did refer to the need for technological innovations. As the Secretary-General, at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly,[3] had raised the question of pursuing studies on technological innovations, the Advisory Committee had been somewhat disappointed to note that progress had been rather limited, and in paragraph 8 of its report urged the Secretary-General to pursue such studies with greater vigour. Such studies might be useful in determining the extent to which existing methods could be improved, particularly in relation to the current inordinate delays in producing final meeting records. The pursuit of technological innovations, however, should not rule out an examination by the Secretary-General of other conventional methods of dealing with the problem.

43. The implementation of criteria 2 and 3 would, as the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraphs 10 and 11 of its report, require a process of selection among a number of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly and other related bodies listed in annex IV, section A, of the report of the Secretary-General, and a review of those bodies. The Advisory Committee agreed with criteria 2 and 3 and suggested that the Committee on Conferences should be entrusted with the task of working out appropriate methods for implementation.

44. The Advisory Committee had commented, in paragraphs 13 to 15 of its report, on criterion 5, which constituted an important suggestion. The Advisory Committee had inquired into the possible savings if the criterion were applied to the Main Committees of the General Assembly and the sessional committees of the Economic and Social Council. On the basis of the information provided, the Advisory Committee recommended that the criterion be put into practice and extended to all those bodies. It had also suggested, in paragraph 20 of its report, that the criterion should be applied to the meeting records provided to the bodies listed under criterion 8.

45. In paragraphs 12, 16, 17, 21 and 22 of its report, the Advisory Committee had indicated that it agreed with the Secretary-General's proposals under criteria 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10 respectively. It had also endorsed the Secretary-General's suggestion in paragraph 12 of his report that the question of providing meeting records for closed meetings whose records were restricted in both provisional and final form to participants only should be reconsidered.

46. The Advisory Committee had, on the whole, agreed with the 10 criteria proposed by the Secretary-General not only because savings might accrue to the Organization, but also because the Secretary-General's proposals were intended to reduce meeting records in ways that would not impair the work of the bodies concerned. While an exact forecast of possible savings was not possible, implementation of the proposals could lead, as the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 23 of its report, to a minimum saving, based upon 1975 rates, of some $1.9 million in one year. The success of the measures would, however, depend to a large extent upon the willingness of Member States to co-operate in the implementation. The Secretary-General's report was perhaps optimistic about the acceptability of some of the proposals, and members of the Fifth Committee might feel that it would be better to implement them cautiously. To that end, the Advisory Committee had recommended, in paragraph 27 of its report, that all the proposals be tried out on an experimental basis in the biennium 1976-1977. That would enable the General Assembly to review the matter in the context of a performance report to be submitted to the Assembly at its thirty-second session. The Advisory Committee had also suggested, in paragraph 26 of its report, that the Committee on Conferences should be entrusted with monitoring the implementation of the proposal.

47. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments), before speaking on the subject of meeting records, reported on the operation of the quota system for documentation whose volume was, completely or to some extent, under the control of the Secretariat. The quota system had been introduced in 1972 following a decision of the Fifth Committee based on a recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit. The Secretariat's misgivings about the JIU recommendation had not proved well founded. The base year for the system was 1970, when the total number of pages submitted in the category to be covered by quotas had been 333,000 for all offices at Headquarters, Geneva, UNIDO and the regional commissions. The target for 1972 had been set by the Fifth Committee at a 15 per cent reduction. Reporting to the Committee in 1972, he had undertaken to set the target for 1973 at a further 10 per cent reduction from the 1970 base. In 1973 the total number of pages submitted for documentation controlled by or originating from the Secretariat had been 241,500, a 27 per cent reduction from the 1970 figure.

48. In 1973 and 1974, however, it had not been felt that any further reductions in the target could be realistically proposed because of the further expansion of United Nations activities, including many special conferences. The total submissions for 1974 had been 260,000 pages of text, 22 per cent below the total for the base year of 1970. For 1975 the figures available showed some reduction at

[3] See document A/9731, of 11 September 1974, paras. 7 to 10.

Headquarters, where there had been less special conference documentation than for 1974, and little change at Geneva and UNIDO. There was some reduction in the documentation of ESCAP, probably because of the application of a quota system to meetings, but there were increases at the other regional commissions because of expanded activities. It could be predicted that the 1975 figures would show a 20 per cent reduction from the base year.

49. In 1976 substantial documentation would be required for the fourth session of UNCTAD and for Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, and possibly in connexion with the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, established by the General Assembly at its seventh special session; the activities of the regional commissions were increasing; and work on transnational corporations might produce much documentation. Thus, while every effort would be made and the system would be monitored in the same spirit as in the past, it might not be realistic to expect no increase in the total documentation under the quota system. He drew attention to the fact that, while the system was monitored by the Department of Conference Services, the results achieved would have been impossible without the full co-operation of the offices submitting the documents.

50. Similar or perhaps even greater reductions in meeting records might be possible. Yet there were other, more important, reasons for concentrating on that question at the current session. The United Nations mirrored many changes in the world, and as its membership grew it was becoming increasingly difficult for the Secretariat to cope with the heavy programme of meetings and for delegations to discuss the issues and reach agreement expeditiously, particularly since every Member had a sovereign right to speak on any issue at any time. There was growing awareness that balanced solutions could be reached only through negotiation. The general improvement in the world atmosphere, the trend towards détente and co-operation also affected the scope of the Organization's work. The question thus arose of how to improve working methods to maximize the chances of agreement and action without incurring the threat of longer and longer meetings with longer and longer records.

51. The seventh special session of the General Assembly had clearly shown the dual function of delegations in the United Nations: on the one hand, they stated the policies of their Governments for the record; and on the other hand, they worked out agreements through negotiation. The first function had been performed at the 25 plenary meetings, while the second function had been exercised at 67 informal, unofficial meetings without records. It was at those unofficial meetings that the actual work of negotiating and putting together the official documents had been done. He suggested that, had the negotiations been recorded in any form of meeting records, final agreements would have taken much longer to reach or would perhaps never have been reached. The Secretary-General's proposals to curtail to a modest extent the growing flood of meeting records were intended, not to limit the right of delegations to have their views reflected in a durable form, but to make the United Nations a more effective tool in the hands of its Members.

52. Tape recordings and microforms might well be used more widely in future instead of printed records, as equipment was availeble for storage, retrieval and distribution. The Secretariat was not pressing the issue of a change-over at the current time, but wished to keep delegations aware of the possibilities and to encourage gradually, with their consent, a transition from the printed word to the spoken word or to words flashed on a screen which would be necessary within the coming decade if the record-keeping system in the United Nations was to be compatible with similar systems outside.

53. Meeting records cost the United Nations $10 million a year in direct costs at 1975 prices and accounted for approximately 25 per cent of the total cost of documentation, without including the additional $2.5 million in overhead costs. Savings could be expected if the criteria proposed by the Secretary-General and supported by the Advisory Committee were applied. Three criteria were particularly relevant in that connexion. Criterion 2 was that records for subsidiary bodies entitled to them should be restricted to meetings at which matters of substantive importance were discussed. That approach had already been adopted by the Economic and Social Council, which gave careful attention to meetings and documentation arrangements. It had been estimated that full implementation of criterion 2 could lead to savings of at least $500,000. Implementation would, of course, require the co-operation of the bodies concerned.

54. Criterion 5 proposed that the practice of issuing final meeting records for subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly should be discontinued. That procedure had already worked well for the verbatim records of the Trusteeship Council, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The Advisory Committee had gone further than the Secretary-General in proposing that the criterion should also be applied to the Main Committees of the General Assembly and certain other bodies. The procedure was worth testing for all records, except for records of plenary meetings of main organs, for which it might be considered later, mainly because final records could not command priority over documentation urgently required for meetings. Like the Advisory Committee, he questioned the utility of a system which deprived delegations and the Secretariat of access to corrected meeting records during the period of the greatest usefulness of such records and then involved large expenditure for the production of material for largely historical and archival purposes. The delay, though regrettable, had not given rise to serious complaint, except on the part of those concerned over storage space, which meant that neither the Secretariat nor delegations really needed the official printed meeting records of the United Nations in their existing, very costly, form. Mimeographed verbatim records of meetings of the General Assembly and the Security Council, which, although provisional, should not by their nature be subject to substantial errors, had already been put on sale. For the time being the current procedures for printing those records and the summary records of the Economic and Social Council would be followed. If, however, Member States would prefer, for reasons of convenience of storage and

retrieval, a system of microforms of official records for the main organs, such a system would be much more economical.

55. Other criteria which, if applied, would lead to substantial savings, related to the selection of bodies which would not be entitled to receive meeting records. One criterion was that subsidiary bodies of subsidiary bodies should no longer be provided with meeting records. Another questioned the utility of providing meeting records for bodies that met in closed session and kept the records restricted. It had also been suggested that the list of existing subsidiary bodies entitled to meeting records should be reviewed. He agreed with the Advisory Committee that that review, together with the monitoring of future procedures for the provision of meeting records, could be entrusted to the Committee on Conferences. That suggestion might dispel the doubts of some members of the Fifth Committee about the need for the Committee on Conferences.

56. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) asked if the demonstration of the microfiche system which had been provided at the twenty-ninth session would be repeated at the current session, as it would be useful for delegations.

57. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) replied that the intention had been to concentrate on the question of meeting records and specific recommendations at the current session. Any delegation could make arrangements with the Library for a demonstration of the latest microfiche techniques. If delegations wished, however, a demonstration could be arranged.

58. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), referring to paragraph 23 of the report of the Advisory Committee, suggested that the savings of almost $2 million in one year—and presumably almost $4 million over the biennium—to be derived from implementation of the criteria proposed by the Secretary-General might be eliminated from the budget estimates for the biennium 1976-1977.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

59. The CHAIRMAN read out a provisional programme of work for the following week, including the first reading of various sections of the proposed programme budget, particularly section 23, and items 101, 99, 95, 96 and 103 *(e)*.

60. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) suggested that consideration of the item on publications and documentation should be deferred until the middle of the following week to allow delegations to study the statement just made by the Under-Secretary-General.

61. Dr. DIPP GÓMEZ (Dominican Republic) suggested that, if possible and in view of the progress made in the work of the Committee, the meeting scheduled for Friday afternoon should be cancelled or moved forward to earlier in the week.

62. The CHAIRMAN said that he would try to accommodate the suggestions made by the representatives of the Dominican Republic and Iran.

63. Mr. SETHI (India) asked when agenda item 100 would be taken up.

64. The CHAIRMAN said that the report of the Committee on Conferences under item 100 would be available on 10 November.

65. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation would have difficulty in considering section 23 before the report of the Committee on Conferences was available; the two questions should be considered together.

66. The CHAIRMAN said that he had difficulty in scheduling the first reading of section 23 at the same time as item 100 because of documentation availability. He proposed to schedule the first reading of section 23 for the end of the following week and consideration of item 100 for the beginning of the week of 10 November.

67. The Committee would be considering sections 21, 26, 17, 15, 24 and 23 of the proposed programme budget and items 101, 99, 95, 96 and 103 *(e)* in the week commencing 3 November. The schedule was flexible, however, and subject to change.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.

1728th meeting

Monday, 3 November 1975, at 3.15 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1728

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10008/Add.4, A/10279, A/10280, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1238-1242)

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)

SECTION 21. PUBLIC INFORMATION *(continued)** (A/10006, A/10008 and Corr.2)

United Nations public information policies and activities* (continued) *(A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/L.1241, A/C.5/L.1242)*

1. Mr. MINCHEV (Bulgaria) said that the work of the Office of Public Information was especially important because the reputation of the Organization depended upon the quality of information the public received. There had been some progress in the matter of co-ordination, but co-operation between OPI and its counterparts in other agencies could be strengthened still further. The solution was not to increase its staff, as the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had rightly inferred, but to increase the efficiency of existing personnel.

2. With respect to OPI financing, his delegation endorsed the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee and agreed with certain other delegations that the Secretary-General's estimates could be still further reduced without impairing OPI's efficiency.

3. He wished all the officials concerned every success in performing OPI's role in the maintenance of international peace and security and détente.

4. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation attached great importance to the work of OPI, especially to the "thematic approach", which was completely consistent with modern information techniques. It was also aware of the need to establish closer contacts with information media representatives and editors and, above all, to increase public understanding of the aims and activities of the United Nations.

5. When the United Nations made highly visible but unpopular decisions, criticism did not necessarily fall on those who had made the decisions but on the forum in which they had been made. If there was one area of the United Nations with which the public of one or more countries took issue, its antipathy would quite wrongly be directed at the Organization and generally without a fair hearing. It was therefore necessary to put such decisions in perspective.

6. Public opinion was not always discerning or fair. The public in some countries saw the United Nations purely in terms of a political forum where politically unpalatable decisions were made. It was OPI's duty to correct that impression by making the public understand that the Organization also sought to promote social and economic development and respect for human rights and to extend the rule of international law. The United Nations was, after all, the parent of a family of organizations and it should therefore be possible to point to the incredible benefits for mankind achieved by the more socially and economically oriented world organizations–benefits such as the WHO campaign against malaria or the efforts of FAO to diminish the spectre of world famine. The public should see the efforts of the United Nations as a whole and not just in terms of isolated and highly publicized political actions. That was why his delegation strongly supported the increased contacts and co-operation between OPI and its counterparts in the specialized agencies.

7. Some areas of the United Nations were not readily understood and it was easy to be critical of the veneer. For example, the press in some quarters had stressed that the recently concluded World Conference of the International Women's Year had suffered severely from the activities of private groups. What had been lost sight of was that for the first time a major conference had been held to debate women's issues, that ideas had been formulated and the contact had been established. Similarly, in the case of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea attention had been focused on the failure to reach agreement, although 10 years earlier only academic circles had been interested in those problems. If the United Nations activities were being misrepresented to the public, OPI and its counterpart organizations in the specialized agencies should tell the public what was going on.

8. It was easy to criticize a world organization which was highly visible and, like any man-made entity, not without faults, but the public must realize that it was only a composite of the views and ideas of its Members. Disagreement, like agreement, was part of the fabric of international dialogue and without the United Nations that dialogue would certainly take place less rapidly.

9. Mr. SEALY (Trinidad and Tobago) complimented OPI and its branch offices on the valuable work they had been doing in promoting the aims, purposes and activities of the United Nations. He also noted the efforts which were being made at all levels to streamline, co-ordinate and thereby make more effective the work of all units within the United Nations system which were concerned with public information.

* Resumed from the 1726th meeting.

10. The information centres could, however, play an even more useful role by reporting the tangible achievements of the Organization to all the peoples in the region in which they served. In that regard he wished to know to what extent the public was being informed of the work of experts from the United Nations and its specialized agencies in developing countries, where such work contributed to improving the social and economic conditions of the peoples, and of the tangible benefits which Member States had derived from the implementation of many of the Organization's programmes of action. That kind of information would be far more beneficial in winning the support of peoples in developing countries for the United Nations than glamorous international conferences or discussions of issues confronting the major Powers. If that was not OPI's approach, particularly in the developing countries, he would like to know what criteria were used in the selection of information for the purposes of dissemination.

11. Constant efforts were being made by information centre directors, it would seem, to establish a working relationship with local mass media, but the question was whether those contacts resulted in the regular transmission of information on the work of the United Nations through the local press, radio and television, and whether United Nations publications were now more easily available in bookstores in developing countries. OPI must constantly try to reach the public at large rather than just the technocrats, as still seemed to be the case in the developing countries.

12. His delegation would have liked more information regarding progress and results in the dissemination of information in schools.

13. It was necessary for OPI to evaluate its work continually in terms of its effectiveness as well as in terms of the means it utilized to communicate, so that the more effective ways could be promoted and the less effective ways discarded.

14. He congratulated the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information on the efforts he had been making to co-ordinate the various information units and hoped to see in future reports some indication of the success of his efforts in that area.

15. His delegation would support the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 21 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

16. Mr. AKATANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information) expressed the deep appreciation of OPI to those Member States which had announced their intention to contribute to the Trust Fund for Economic and Social Information in 1976.

17. The representative of the Netherlands had requested more information on the joint United Nations public information plan that was being developed within the framework of the Joint United Nations Information Committee by a group of information services of the United Nations system. The group had met in October 1975 and produced a draft which was being circulated for comments among the members of the group. He was certainly willing to make the document available, in its final form, to the delegation of the Netherlands and to other interested delegations, after it had been accepted by all those Member States which were represented in the Joint Information Committee. The joint plan would provide a general theme on which the system would concentrate while allowing individual organizations sufficient freedom of action to relate their ongoing activities to that theme. He could also say, in reply to another question put by the representative of the Netherlands, that the efforts of OPI in that direction had been noted with appreciation by ACC.

18. Replying to a question put by the representative of the Philippines, he stated that 56 United Nations information centres or offices were in operation at the current time. That number included the information services of ESCAP, ECA, ECLA, ECWA and UNIDO and of the United Nations Office at Geneva, all of which also functioned as United Nations information centres for one or more countries in their respective areas. Two further centres were being established in Maseru (Lesotho) and in Ouagadougou (Upper Volta), in response to recent General Assembly resolutions.

19. The Advisory Committee had recommended approval of the P-4 post and 2 of the 4 local posts requested by the Secretary-General for a new centre. OPI could therefore begin establishing the centre during the next biennium.

20. The numerous recent offers by Member States to become host countries to new information centres indicated a resurgence of interest in the establishment of additional information centres. In view of its budgetary limitations, OPI's standard reply to those requests had had to be that the prospective host Government would have to assume the responsibility for most, if not all, of the personnel and operational costs of such new centres.

21. On the question of assistance being provided to United Nations information centres by the Governments of the countries which they served, he recalled that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1405 (XIV), it had been the practice since January 1960, in the establishment of new United Nations information centres, for OPI to request the assistance of the host Governments either in the form of rent-free premises or in cash contributions in lieu thereof. In 1962 the Advisory Committee had again drawn attention to the question of assistance from host country Governments and the need to obtain their co-operation in cases where expenditure for rental of premises was borne by the United Nations. The Secretary-General had subsequently taken up the matter with the Member States concerned in May 1963 and again in April 1967, at which time he had reported that 32 of the 45 host Governments concerned had complied fully with his earlier request and were providing rent-free premises or cash contributions towards the operating costs of the United Nations information centres, while 3 host Governments provided annual cash contributions which covered a portion of the rental costs. There had remained, however, 10 host Governments which had not replied affirmatively to the Secretary-General's request, and 3 host Governments from which additional assistance would have been appreciated.

22. At the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Fifth Committee had asked the Secretary-General to renew his request to host country Governments, in view of the financial difficulties facing the Organization and the valuable functions performed by the centres. Consequently, in January 1973 the Secretary-General had sent out a third series of notes verbales to the Governments concerned; on that occasion, he had reported that 38 of the 47 host Governments had complied fully with his request. There had still remained, however, 8 host Governments which had not replied affirmatively, and 1 host Government from which additional assistance would have been appreciated.

23. At the current time, there remained only 7 countries in which the Organization was obliged to continue paying rent for the premises of the information centres, and he hoped that suitable arrangements could be made in the near future with the Governments concerned.

24. With reference to the suggestion of the representative of the Philippines that CESI should publish up-to-date factual and statistical material concerning current economic issues, he was happy to say that the Centre was planning to publish such material in 1976 in connexion with the preparation and follow-up of the fourth session of UNCTAD.

25. Replying to a final question put by the representative of the Philippines, he said that, out of the total estimated regular budget for OPI of $30,706,400 for the 1976-1977 biennium, an amount of $10,492,600, or 34.17 per cent, had been earmarked for the Radio and Visual Services Division.

26. The representative of Italy had referred to the declining number of visitors to United Nations Headquarters and asked whether sufficient efforts had been made to redress that situation. The decline was mainly due to the general economic situation and did not represent a decline in public interest in the United Nations. Nevertheless, every effort was being made to reverse the declining trend. His Office organized a "Visit the United Nations Week" every January in co-operation with the travel industry, and was in constant contact with universities and high schools on that matter. OPI had prepared a new promotional brochure about the United Nations as a tourist attraction, was seeking to place articles in hotel publications in New York City, and was working closely with the New York Convention and Visitors Bureau as well as with the sightseeing companies and with non-governmental organizations.

27. Replying to a question put by the representative of Argentina about the financial implications of the United Nations Water Conference at Mar del Plata in 1977, he stated that preliminary estimates for the Conference were in preparation and that CESI was working with the Conference secretariat in drafting a proposed information programme for the preparatory phase.

28. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had suggested that other Departments of the Secretariat which had information units should be represented on the Joint United Nations Information Committee. To a considerable extent that was already the case, since the Thematic Task Force Co-ordinator of OPI, who was in continuous contact with those other departments, took part in the meetings and in the work of that Committee. He also wished to assure the Committee that OPI had every intention of keeping the Consultative Panel on Public Information duly informed about the work of the Joint Information Committee.

29. He thanked the representative of Pakistan for his remarks concerning the *Yearbook of the United Nations* and agreed with him that the growth both of the subject-matter dealt with by the United Nations and of the organizational structure itself had inevitably resulted in a larger *Yearbook,* additional editing and rewriting which contributed to its delay. As for delays in submissions by contributing departments and agencies, a joint memorandum had been addressed to all contributors calling attention to the importance of the *Yearbook* and stressing that its utility would be enhanced if it could be produced more promptly. However, the contributors were also officials concerned with the affairs of their own departments, where they had their own documents and reports to prepare against rigid deadlines. He assured the Committee that he would again draw the attention of all contributors to the importance of the more prompt appearance of each volume, and would also follow up the question of speedier methods for the production of the *Yearbook.*

30. The 1976-1977 biennium would provide an opportunity to judge whether the temporary assistance for the *Yearbook* currently requested would meet the staff requirements necessary to close the present gap. If that was not the case, those requirements would have to be re-examined for succeeding years. On that question, he would welcome the expert advice of the Administrative Management Service.

31. With regard to the comments made by the representative of India, he reported that the education sector was receiving increased attention from OPI. In 1975 the annual Triangular Fellowship Programme, which brought specialists to Headquarters for a month of briefings and study, was given over entirely to increasing the content devoted to the United Nations and its specialized agencies in the secondary school curriculum. Curriculum developers from 15 countries were currently meeting at Headquarters to study a wide variety of issues, including United Nations activities in relation to peace-keeping, disarmament, development and human rights, and their place in the secondary school curriculum.

32. He declared that OPI would listen carefully to recommendations by those specialists on how the educational services of the information centres, as well as those of OPI itself, could be improved. That programme was the first of a series which OPI planned to devote to the United Nations in curricula at different levels. OPI was also issuing model teaching guides on such subjects as population, the status of women and the environment, which had been widely circulated to interested educators and schools. For United Nations Day, OPI circulated a school leaflet which enjoyed the widest dissemination of any publication put out by the Office.

33. Replying to the question by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago concerning the extent to which information was provided on the work of United Nations experts in developing countries, he said that frequently those experts were interviewed and the interviews were published in the local press. With regard to the other question put by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, on the possibility of promoting a greater awareness by the student population world-wide of the activities of the United Nations, he referred to his reply to a similar question put by the representative of India.

34. The Office of Public Information would carefully study the statements which had been made in the Fifth Committee and would plan its future activities in such a way that they would closely reflect the wishes of Member States.

35. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said that he understood from the statement by the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information and the information provided by his colleagues that CESI's structure was flexible enough to enable it to disseminate information on the United Nations Water Conference. It also appeared that the necessary steps were being taken to ensure the success of that Conference; its budget should be adequate, whether the resources to be allocated were included in the regular budget under consideration or whether supplementary estimates were submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

36. Mr. RIVAS (Colombia) said that the Minister for External Relations of Colombia had stated before the General Assembly on 6 October 1975 (2376th plenary meeting) that his Government did not share the pessimism of some of the founder Members of the United Nations, which saw in its activities an obstacle to their foreign policy. The Organization should do something to counter the disparagement directed against it by adapting its methods to the universal and instantaneous character of modern communications, in order to promote peace and understanding between peoples. Colombia was concerned at the deterioration in the Organization's reputation, which might deprive it of essential public support and confidence. The countries of the third world could not remain passive in the face of that phenomenon because the United Nations was one of their means of expression.

37. That was why his delegation proposed that the Committee should adopt a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1241), which would constitute a first step and should lead to a better knowledge of the work of the United Nations. The text was only provisional and he wished to submit two revisions to it: the beginning of operative paragraph 1 should read:

"1. *Recommends* that the Secretary-General, through the United Nations Office of Public Information, should make additional efforts and initiate a co-ordinated campaign to convey to the general public accurate information...".

Operative paragraph 2 should begin:

"2. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General", instead of "*Calls upon* the Office of Public Information".

38. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) paid a tribute to OPI, whose activities had been extremely important to the United Nations since its establishment in 1946. With pragmatism and imagination, it endeavoured to attain its fundamental objective, namely, to promote understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among all peoples of the world. He also wished to congratulate all the countries which had contributed to CESI.

39. He declared that OPI had done very important work during the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and at the conference of UNIDO and FAO recently held at Lima and Rome. It was to be hoped that it would continue to disseminate useful information on the important problems which would be considered at the conference on human settlements and the conference on science and technology.

40. It was more necessary than ever to develop and reinforce the United Nations information services and to strengthen their links with Member States and all peoples of the world. For budgetary reasons, it was impossible for them to do everything expected of them, but they themselves should see to it that Member States attached to information matters the attention which they deserved in the modern world.

41. The strengthening of information activities was indispensable for several reasons. First, the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies was not appreciated simply because not enough publicity was given to it. Secondly, it would be very useful, from the political, economic, cultural and educational points of view, to establish permanent networks of information on all the achievements of the United Nations. A number of countries which could benefit from the Organization's work had a false idea of its nature. The Secretary-General might perhaps take certain steps to show clearly what Member States lost by not paying the necessary attention to the activities of the United Nations in the economic, political, scientific and cultural spheres. It was unjustifiable for the Organization to be isolated, spontaneously or not, from the information point of view, and that isolation was of great concern to his delegation.

42. Mr. SADOU (United Republic of Cameroon) said that the question of United Nations public information policies and activities was a sensitive and delicate issue, from the point of view of both substance and results achieved. Many Members of the Organization had benefited from the work of OPI and appreciated its action in other parts of the world, and it was their duty to tell those in charge of OPI what they expected of them at a time when earlier assumptions were being questioned: the seventh special session of the General Assembly and the Lima conference showed that the public information programme should be strengthened, because the fundamental objective assigned to OPI by General Assembly resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946 was by no means attained. Instead of dwelling on questions of administration and management, OPI needed truly operational programmes.

43. It was urgent to interest the peoples of the world, and particularly those of the third world, in the United Nations which, after 30 years of existence, was still unappreciated

and misunderstood, especially among young people. The establishment of information centres throughout the world would not produce the desired results unless there was a coherent programme designed to make everyone aware of the realities of the world in which they lived, and especially of the United Nations; as his country's representative had said in the Third Committee at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the masses must be informed in order to interest them in the activities of the United Nations and to enable them to judge it in full knowledge of the facts.

44. Information could not be understood and used to good effect unless it was geared to those for whom it was intended; otherwise, it would be a waste of time and money. In many third world countries, it was difficult for the inhabitants to follow regularly the radio broadcast to Africa, because of the shortage of radios and the bad reception. Thanks to better co-operation with OPI, his country's national radio station could now receive United Nations programmes, but that was still not enough because very few African listeners could receive programmes transmitted from New York and Washington. Co-operation between the United Nations and national or regional radio services could therefore also consist in sending broadcasting material (recordings, documentary films) under contract with the countries concerned. Such co-operation would enable information media to follow United Nations programmes more easily and cheaply and would provide work for the United Nations information centres, whose staff, instead of only having to prepare weekly or monthly information bulletins, would have to submit the programmes and report to Headquarters on the results obtained. In view of the illiteracy in many third world countries, the national radio services might summarize the United Nations programmes in the vernacular language for the local inhabitants. Care must of course be taken to ensure that the co-operation with national or regional radio services did not become a new form of propaganda in the pay of the big and medium-sized Powers.

45. His delegation had followed carefully the statement by the Assistant Secretary-General for Information but would have liked him to give an idea of the programmes for the years 1976 and 1977. With regard to the first report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008 and Corr.2) concerning section 21 of the proposed programme budget, although his delegation was not in favour of overstaffing, it thought that the P-2 post requested for the Radio and Visual Services Division and the P-4 post requested for the External Relations Division should be approved; the maximum use should be made of existing staff and the savings thus made should be used to intensify operational programmes.

46. In conclusion, he congratulated those in charge of OPI on their constructive activities with regard to the third world.

47. Mr. OH (Singapore) said that after carefully examining the report of the Secretary-General on United Nations public information policies and activities (A/C.5/1679) and hearing the statement of the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, his delegation wished to make some remarks concerning the substantive policies and programmes of OPI in addition to a discussion of its budget.

48. He congratulated OPI on the excellent job it was doing within its given mandate; its daily press releases and weekly summaries alone were of invaluable service to delegations, particularly to those of small countries.

49. His delegation welcomed the many new initiatives taken in the information field. In the beginning of his report, the Secretary-General recalled that the United Nations, in order to succeed in its formidable task, required a large measure of public support and understanding, which would in turn have an influence on national policies, and that new efforts were needed to gain broader public understanding of the effort to tackle a huge range of human problems which was tirelessly carried on in the United Nations. His delegation, too, was convinced that it was essential to convey to the public at large a sense of the political validity of the United Nations as the keeper of the peace and the custodian of the future and that that principle must continue to be the guiding concept for the work of OPI.

50. His delegation had noted the thematic approach emphasized by OPI, and it endorsed the establishment of special task forces for principal information themes. It also welcomed the initiative of OPI to engage in positive information activities to supplement the services of existing information agencies with respect to the production of topical information materials (publications, films, television and radio programmes) and noted with satisfaction the efforts being undertaken to improve the effectiveness of such materials and to increase their usefulness to their intended audience.

51. He also endorsed the various priority undertakings of OPI during the past year, in particular the strengthening of the network of United Nations information centres. In that connexion, he noted with satisfaction the resumption of periodic regional meetings of information centre directors, which provided for better co-ordination and useful exchanges of ideas in the matter of field establishment. A clear and consistent policy regarding the information centres should make it possible to alleviate the problem of the great diversity in their composition. In that connexion, his delegation looked forward to receiving the results of the review on information centres, which were to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

52. A second priority undertaking, aimed at establishing closer contacts with the representatives of information media, also met with the approval of his delegation, which endorsed in particular the "encounters" between prominent journalists and experts on issues of importance to the United Nations, as well as the regional editors' round tables organized by OPI, since they provided for greater interaction and understanding and served as a means of neutralizing the misinformation being disseminated concerning the United Nations. The Organization should not seek to avoid criticism, but at the same time it should have pride in its achievements. For that reason, his delegation welcomed the basic thrust of the Colombian draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1241).

53. The best way to give the public an accurate and well-balanced picture of the United Nations and its activities was to give them maximum exposure, especially among

the younger audiences in schools and universities everywhere, for the future of the Organization depended on them. OPI had made a new effort in that direction, and that effort should be further intensified, in particular by placing more educational materials on the United Nations within the reach of young people throughout the world. A guide on the functioning of the United Nations system should be made available to all teachers, if that had not already been done, and children should be encouraged to participate in debates aimed at giving a better understanding of the role of the United Nations.

54. With regard to the third priority undertaking of OPI, that of closer co-operation and co-ordination between OPI and the information services of other members of the United Nations system, he expressed satisfaction at the establishment of the Joint United Nations Information Committee, a subsidiary organ of ACC, a year earlier. He noted in that connexion that the Joint Committee was beginning to justify the expectations which had accompanied its creation and that during its 1975 session it had decided to elaborate a joint United Nations information plan for 1977 and subsequent years, with an intermediate plan for 1976. His delegation was convinced that intensified co-operation and co-ordination in that field were essential, and it welcomed the fact that CESI had been entrusted with selecting and convening a group of Joint Committee members willing to plan, co-ordinate and integrate the various themes of activities for a general work programme to be submitted to that Committee for approval.

55. His delegation also noted the creation of interagency public information working groups for the World Food Conference, International Women's Year, special sessions of the General Assembly and Habitat: the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. It noted with satisfaction that within those working groups the information services of the United Nations system not only had prepared their programmes jointly but sometimes had also financed them jointly. Such pooling of available resources should produce both greater information impact and greater budgetary economy.

56. His delegation believed that on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations, it would be appropriate for the Fifth Committee, OPI and the Joint Information Committee to assess the activities of OPI, evaluate its successes and weaknesses and seek new ways for better co-ordinating and integrating all United Nations activities in the information field. Such an over-all review of the plans and directions of United Nations information activities should be in addition to the report of the results of the review on the field establishment of OPI which it was to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. It should entail the elimination of outmoded programmes, greater co-ordination and integration of United Nations information activities, maximum utilization of existing resources and redeployment of resources to priority undertakings. In that connexion, his delegation supported the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 21.4 of its first report than an impact analysis of United Nations information activities would help the General Assembly determine the over-all volume and direction of the Organization's information activities, and it looked forward to a more comprehensive discussion of the subject at the thirty-first session.

57. With respect to the OPI budget for the 1976-1977 biennium, his delegation fully supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. It believed that the $300,000 reduction recommended by that Committee should not impair the activities of OPI since the proposed budget still provided for an increase of $4,888,000 over the revised appropriation for 1974-1975. He noted with satisfaction that the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information had given assurances that he would strive for a proper deployment of resources and that the Advisory Committee had been assured (A/10008/Add.2, para. 3) that paragraphs 13 and 22 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1679) did not envisage the submission of a new appropriation request in 1976. While aware of the financial constraints imposed on OPI, his delegation hoped that OPI would continue to function effectively, through better co-ordination and integration and a redeployment of personnel.

58. Mr. AKASHI (Japan), introducing a draft decision on behalf of five sponsors (A/C.5/L.1242), observed that the Fifth Committee performed a dual function as regards the public information policies and activities of the United Nations. On the one hand it was required to consider and approve United Nations policies in that field and on the other hand it was responsible for dealing with the administrative and budgetary aspects of those activities. The draft decision was designed to help the Committee better to discharge that dual responsibility by considering United Nations information policies in off-budget years and considering the budgetary aspects of those activities in budget years. The number of delegations that had actively participated in the discussion on the question showed that there was a clear need for in-depth consideration of information policies in the General Assembly. At the thirty-first session the Committee would have important studies on those policies, as the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information had indicated, and it would also have the report of the Secretary-General on a very important aspect of information activities, namely OPI field offices. If the Fifth Committee considered the question of information policies in off-budget years it would be in a better position to give them proper attention, being less pressed for time. The representative of Tunisia had proposed at the 1723rd meeting that the question should be considered by another United Nations body, but the sponsors of draft decision A/C.5/L.1242 had felt that before taking such a decision the Fifth Committee should make an effort to perform its dual tasks in the field of information activities more effectively. He hoped that the procedure outlined in the short draft decision he had introduced would receive wide support among the members of the Committee.

59. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan) thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information for the explanations he had given the delegation of Pakistan concerning the more regular publication of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* and said he was glad to know that a memorandum had been sent to all departments calling for earlier submission of material for inclusion in the *Yearbook*. The Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, the

Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and the Administrative Management Service were planning to consider ways and means of ensuring more regular publication of the *Yearbook*, and the delegation of Pakistan was submitting a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1243) with a view to supporting their efforts. Its sole concern was to serve the interests of the United Nations and it hoped that the text proposed would receive general support from the members of the Committee.

60. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy), referring to draft decision A/C.5/L.1242, pointed out that if the Fifth Committee concentrated on the budgetary aspects of the United Nations information activities in budget years it would have more time in off-budget years to consider United Nations policies in that field. Even if debates on information policy took place only every two years, OPI would not be out of touch with Committee members because the Consultative Panel on Public Information was a large and representative body which served as a standing committee, giving advice and making suggestions to OPI and considering proposals by OPI with a view to securing the best possible results. That sensible initiative was an example that might usefully be followed in the consideration of other questions by the Fifth Committee or other committees, and could help to rationalize the work of the Organization and make discussions more effective.

61. Mr. ROMANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed two amendments[1] to draft decision A/C.5/L.1242. For the sake of clarity and conciseness, he proposed the insertion of the words "at greater length" after the words "should be considered", since that was the whole point of the draft decision. He also proposed the deletion of the words "by the Fifth Committee", which were redundant since the beginning of the draft decision already referred to it.

62. Referring to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241, he thanked the Colombian delegation for its initiative which might serve to encourage OPI to some extent, and which drew particular attention to criticism of the United Nations by some information media. He nevertheless proposed the deletion of the word "invaluable" from the second preambular paragraph since the word "achievements" was sufficiently clear and there was no need to overestimate the achievements of the United Nations. He also proposed the deletion of the words "especially in the economic and social fields" from the same paragraph since it might be misleading to mention those two particular fields and not the political field. The second preambular paragraph would thus read:

> "*Recognizing* the achievements of the United Nations Organization."

In operative paragraph 1, which mentioned the various types of achievements of the Organization—social, economic, humanitarian and political—the order was wrong because, in the interests of logic and of consistency with the actual wording of the Charter, political questions should be mentioned before economic questions. He accordingly proposed that the adjective "political" should appear first, before "social". Lastly, with regard to operative paragraph 2, he proposed the insertion of the words "national mass media" before the words "the United Nations Associations", because all delegations had emphasized that OPI needed the support of national mass media.

63. Mr. KISEKA (Uganda) said that in his opinion the draft resolution submitted by Colombia (A/C.5/L.1241) was a truism that sought to preserve the *status quo* at a time when the United Nations needed to become more forward-looking. Rather than seeking to preserve its image, the United Nations should be making an effort to help the needy peoples of the world, for that was the only way in which it could acquire a good public image. Furthermore, since the sixth special session of the General Assembly arrangements had been made to review and, if necessary, revise the purposes and objectives of the United Nations Charter. The international community would thus have to be re-educated for a restructuring of the United Nations system. His delegation accordingly found the existing wording of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241 unacceptable and suggested that the third preambular paragraph should be replaced by the wording:

> "*Determined* to promote and enhance a favourable public image of the United Nations system".

Furthermore, it supported the comments made by the representative of the USSR on that draft.

64. With regard to draft decision A/C.5/L.1242, his delegation was prepared to accept it, in the light of the amendment proposed by the Soviet delegation.

65. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia), speaking on a point of order, stated that the text of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241 contained numerous errors and that her delegation would have to submit a revised version on the following day. She asked that the discussion of the existing text should be suspended.

66. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), speaking on a point of order, supported the representative of Colombia; the Committee could not continue discussing draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241 until it had a final text.

67. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that the Committee would have to wait 24 hours after the submission of the revised version of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241 before taking a vote on it. Furthermore, if the final version still included operative paragraph 1, the Committee would also have to be informed of the financial implications, if any, of that provision before voting.

68. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that he had a reservation on operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241, if that provision was not to be changed in the revised version. Since the Secretary-General could convey to the general public only "accurate" information on the achievements of the Organization, he suggested replacing the adjective "accurate" by "comprehensive".

69. He asked whether the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information could state in due course what measures he planned to take to implement the operative part of the

[1] Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1245.

draft resolution, and whether he would have to ask for supplementing appropriations or whether he could undertake the work in question within the limits of the appropriations already requested.

70. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee, in view of the point of order raised by the representative of Colombia, supported by the representative of the Philippines, should suspend consideration of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241 until it had received the revised text, and turn its attention to draft decision A/C.5/L.1242, which had been introduced on behalf of its five sponsors by the representative of Japan, and draft decision A/C.5/L.1243, submitted by Pakistan.

It was so decided.

71. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that he had objections to the amendments to draft decision A/C.5/L.1242 proposed by the representative of the Soviet Union.

72. To say that United Nations public information policies and activities would be considered "at greater length" in off-budget years would mean that consideration of those policies and activities would normally take place also in the year when the proposed programme budget was considered. That, however, was exactly what the sponsors of the draft decision, in an effort to rationalize the work of the General Assembly, wished to avoid.

73. The representative of the Soviet Union also wished to delete the words "by the Fifth Committee" after the word "considered". However, it was only in the case of public information policies and activities that the Committee's consideration was not concerned entirely with financial aspects. Indeed, it was sometimes said that other organs of the General Assembly should undertake the substantive consideration of public information policies and activities. Since the great majority of delegations seemed tacitly to be of the opinion that the Committee should continue to have a periodic substantive discussion of information policies, the words "by the Fifth Committee" added an element of precision which served some purpose.

74. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) stated, for the benefit of those delegations which had some misgivings on the subject, that the General Assembly would in any case receive, in those years in which it considered the proposed programme budget, an interim report on United Nations public information policies and activities. It would therefore have to study those policies and activities only every two years.

75. With regard to the amendments proposed by the Soviet Union, he would, the Philippines being one of the sponsors of draft decision A/C.5/L.1242, have to consult the other sponsors before giving his opinion.

76. He fully supported the substance of draft decision A/C.5/L.1243, submitted by Pakistan, but asked whether the Secretariat could implement it within the limits of the funds being requested for OPI.

77. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that nothing in the existing wording of draft decision A/C.5/L.1243 led him to suppose that the appropriations already requested for OPI would be insufficient to implement the decision. The Committee could expect that at the thirty-first session when it was to receive a report on means of ensuring the more timely publication of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, additional resources would be requested, if necessary, to continue the operation. The same applied to the implementation of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241, as it stood.

78. Mr. NAUDY (France) said, speaking of draft decision A/C.5/L.1242 and without prejudice to any further comments he might make on all of the draft decisions and resolutions before the Committee, that if the General Assembly was in future to consider the substantive aspects of public information policies and activities only every two years, it was probably futile to prejudge which organ would consider them. Every year the General Committee made recommendations on the allocation of agenda items to the various organs of the General Assembly. Draft decision A/C.5/L.1242 might need to be modified accordingly.

AGENDA ITEMS 95 AND 96

Programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975: report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1690, A/C.5/1694)

Programme of major maintenance of and improvements to the Palais des Nations, Geneva (A/C.5/1690)

Extension of the Palais des Nations, Geneva (A/C.5/1694)

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the previous heading)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 26. CONSTRUCTION, ALTERATION, IMPROVEMENT AND MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF PREMISES (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

79. The CHAIRMAN invited the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to submit the observations of the Advisory Committee concerning section 26 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. At the same time, the Committee would consider the reports of the Secretary-General on the programme of major maintenance of and improvements to the Palais des Nations, Geneva (A/C.5/1690) and on the extension of the Palais des Nations (A/C.5/1694). The Chairman of the Advisory Committee would also report on those questions. Since that Committee hat not yet considered the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations accommodation in Addis Ababa, Bangkok and Santiago, Chile (A/C.5/1673), it would report on that subject later, before the Committee completed its consideration of section 26.

80. The Secretary-General had requested an appropriation of $13,306,000 under section 26 of the proposed programme budget (A/10006). The Advisory Committee, in its related report (A/10008 and Corr.2), was recommending a reduction of $818,000 and, consequently, proposed an appropriation of $12,488,000 under that section.

81. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) submitted the Advisory Committee's observations on the programme of major maintenance of and improvements to the Palais des Nations, at Geneva and on the question of the extension of the Palais des Nations, as part of its consideration of the execution of the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975.

82. As to the former programme, the Advisory Committee took note of the appropriation; it also noted that, according to the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1690, para. 2) the exact final cost of the programme would depend on the rate of exchange at which the obligations were liquidated in 1975 and 1976, and that that final cost would be reported in the Secretary-General's forthcoming progress report on the execution of the 1976-1977 programme budget.

83. The Advisory Committee noted that the Secretary-General was requesting supplementary appropriations amounting to $643,200 for the extension of the Palais des Nations at Geneva (A/C.5/1694, para. 9) and that he would include that amount in his performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975. Those supplementary estimates included $383,000 for construction work, and $383,300 for loan repayment, to reflect exchange fluctuations; however, $226,000 would have to be deducted from the latter amount because, again by reason of exchange fluctuations, the dollar value of the total loan was greater than the amount initially estimated. Finally, the supplementary appropriations sought included $102,900 for the biennium, because of the need to reflect the higher interest to be paid each on the loan, the increase being attributable entirely to variations in the rate of exchange. The Advisory Committee would study those figures when it considered the performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975 which the Secretary-General was to submit to the General Assembly.

84. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on a point of order, said that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, instead of submitting that Committee's observations on section 26 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (agenda item 96), was making observations on the performance of the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975, which related to a different agenda item (item 95). He asked whether the Committee could deal simultaneously with two separate agenda items, one involving the current biennium and the other forthcoming one. Regardless of any links between the two subjects, he believed that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee should report separately on them.

85. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) agreed. He pointed out that the Committee was opening its discussion of those items in the absence of the Controller and the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management. The presence of those two high officials was indispensable for the purposes of that discussion.

86. The CHAIRMAN said that for the moment the Committee would hear only the Advisory Committee's observations on section 26 of the proposed programme budget, and would be making no decision of a financial nature. The presence of the Controller and the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management was therefore not indispensable. In reply to the representative of the Soviet Union, he observed that by scheduling simultaneous consideration of section 26 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and of certain questions relating to the performance of the programme budget for 1974-1975, he had not intended to give the impression that all those questions were identical in substance or focus. They were, however, similar, and the Committee had agreed, when organizing its work, to consider them together. The decision on the appropriation under section 26 of the programme budget for 1976-1977 would, of course, be taken independently.

87. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) suggested that, in order to make it quite clear that all the questions under consideration maintained their separate identity even though they were grouped together for consideration by the Fifth Committee, the presentation of the Advisory Committee's observations on section 26 of the programme budget for 1976-1977 should be postponed until the following meeting. He had no further observations to make on the question of the extension of the Palais des Nations or on the programme of major maintenance of and improvements to the Palais des Nations.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

1729th meeting

Tuesday, 4 November 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1729

AGENDA ITEMS 95 AND 96

Programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/C.5/1690, A/C.5/1694)

Programme of major maintenance of and improvements to the Palais des Nations, Geneva* (continued) *(A/C.5/1690)

Extension of the Palais des Nations, Geneva* (continued) *(A/C.5/1694)

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; (A/10008/Add.4, A/10279, A/10280, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1242)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 26. CONSTRUCTION, ALTERATION, IMPROVEMENT AND MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF PREMISES *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that under section 26 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) the Secretary-General had submitted estimates in the amount of $13,306,000 for construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance of premises owned by the United Nations. As the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 26.2 of its related report (A/10008 and Corr.2), those estimates were less than the revised appropriation for the biennium 1974-1975. Nevertheless, on the basis of the information and justification given, the Advisory Committee had recommended (*ibid.*, para. 26.21) a total reduction of $818,000 in the estimate under section 26.

2. The Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of $200,000 from the estimate of $350,000 submitted for an architectural and engineering survey of delegates' and related facilities and a feasibility study for the expansion of public area facilities in the General Assembly concourse for reasons given in paragraphs 26.8 and 26.9 of its report. In the case of the feasibility study, requested in paragraph 26.18 of the proposed programme budget, the Advisory Committee had been somewhat concerned over the multiplicity of studies involved.

3. For reasons stated in paragraphs 26.11, 26.12 and 26.13 of its report, the Advisory Committee had made recommendations involving a reduction of $116,000 from the Secretary-General's estimates. Of that amount, $46,000 was consequential on recommendations made by the Advisory Committee for the expansion in the biennium 1974-1975 of the seating capacity in the General Assembly Hall and related areas.

4. After the Advisory Committee had sought additional information from the Secretary-General, it had concluded that the estimates for alterations and improvements to the Palais des Nations at Geneva should be reduced by $154,000; a number of the items involved were of low priority and could be postponed.

5. For major maintenance, the Advisory Committee had accepted the $721,000 requested for Headquarters, but had recommended that the $1,174,000 requested for Geneva be reduced by $263,000. That reduction involved the costs related to the repair of the Armillary Sphere. The Advisory Committee felt there was a need to develop policy guidelines for such cases and in paragraph 26.18 of its report suggested a course of action for the Secretary-General. For reasons stated in paragraph 26.19 of its report, the Advisory Committee had recommended reductions of $60,000 in the estimates for ECA and $25,000 in those for ESCAP.

6. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), commending the Advisory Committee on its report on section 26, drew attention to the question of the Armillary Sphere. He asked what follow-up action would be taken on the suggestion by the Advisory Committee that the General Assembly should establish guidelines for such cases.

7. Referring to paragraph 26.18 of the proposed programme budget, he asked what advantage the Secretary-General foresaw from further studies on the facilities in the public area in the General Assembly concourse, and whether the Secretary-General accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendation that his request for $100,000 for such studies be rejected.

8. He requested more information on the amount of $30,000 requested in paragraph 26.23 of the proposed programme budget for facilities for the Medical Service and the Staff Café in the UNDC building; he asked, specifically, if rent was included in that amount and if the need for another staff café had been given careful study.

9. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he understood that the Committee would take separate decisions on the estimates under section 26 for the biennium 1976-1977 and on related questions for the biennium 1974-1975.

10. His delegation attached importance to the rational and economical use of premises. Although the estimates of

$13.3 million for the biennium 1976-1977 were less than the revised appropriations for the biennium 1974-1975, his delegation felt that the estimates under section 26 should be no more than $9 million. The estimates under section 26 included unjustifiable amounts of $600,000 to offset higher construction costs in Addis Ababa because of changes in the exchange rate, and $500,000 for various studies, an architectural and engineering survey and technical installations. Moreover, approximately $1 million per year had been requested for alterations and major maintenance at the United Nations Office at Geneva although a long-term maintenance programme at the Palais des Nations had just been completed. An unacceptable amount of $721,000 had been requested for alterations at other United Nations premises.

11. He agreed with some of the comments made by the Advisory Committee in its report, for example the comment that clear and full information had not been provided on all questions, including in particular the studies for which funds had been requested. His delegation could not support the estimates under section 26 to cover increased costs due to inflation and currency instability, estimates for various studies on alterations and major maintenance, or other additional expenditures under the section on construction, alterations and major maintenance of premises. Accordingly, his delegation would vote against the estimates under section 26 for the biennium 1976-1977.

12. Mr. SADOU (United Republic of Cameroon) suggested that consideration might be given to further decentralization of United Nations activities to locations other than New York, Geneva and Vienna. UNEP had already established its headquarters in Kenya. Such decentralization would promote the development of telecommunications and transport in countries where United Nations organs established their headquarters.

13. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that his delegation was in a position to support the estimates of the Secretary-General in table 26-7 of the proposed programme budget, as revised by the Advisory Committee. While the Advisory Committee had recommended only a small reduction, it had succeeded in deferring low-priority items and recommending certain savings.

14. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the representative of Belgium, said that the Secretariat intended to implement the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 26.18 of its report and study the cost of the care and upkeep of major gifts to the United Nations. On the basis of that study, specific proposals might be submitted or proposals might simply be incorporated in the next programme budget. As for the question of the feasibility study referred to in paragraph 26.18 of the proposed programme budget, he said that consultants had carried out a study and made recommendations, that the Advisory Committee considered the matter was of low priority, and that the Secretary-General had no objection to postponement of further studies recommended by the consultants; meanwhile, the Secretariat would do its best to carry out the recommendations in the first study with a view to increasing revenue. The $30,000 requested for facilities for a Medical Service and Staff Café in the UNDC building were intended primarily for equipment and facilities for the Medical Service; the Staff Café would be a small one, similar to the one in the UNDP building, with seating for approximately 100 or 125 persons. The amount did not include rent.

15. Responding to the comment by the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon as to whether the Secretary-General intended to pursue the decentralization of the United Nations, he said that the matter was still under consideration and the Secretary-General would welcome suggestions. More specific proposals would be made during the session in connexion with the construction of new buildings at Vienna.

16. Mr. ZIEHL (Deputy Controller) observed that the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 26.8 and 26.9 of its report had not been disputed by the Secretary-General; they simply meant that little progress would be made in resolving the problems to which attention had been drawn in paragraphs 26.16 and 26.18 of the proposed programme budget. He recalled that the architectural and engineering survey conducted in 1968 and 1969 had been on a much larger scale than the survey currently envisaged by the Secretary-General and the project it covered had had to be scrapped. It was difficult to see how it could be used to solve problems which it had not set out to tackle, namely, how the existing building could be modernized and how the delegates' facilities could be improved. Similarly, the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the feasibility study in regard to the public area in the General Assembly concourse meant that most of the work envisaged would have to be deferred.

17. Mr. WINSPEARE-GUICCIARDI (Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva) thanked the Committee for the constructive interest it had shown in the problems encountered by the Geneva Office.

18. Replying to the comments of the representative of Belgium, he said that the Armillary Sphere had originally been presented to the League of Nations and its full repair would require considerable funds. However, it was a low-priority item and was mentioned simply to remind the General Assembly of the need to make provision for the repair of gifts from Governments.

19. Document A/C.5/1694 dealt with building work and improvements that had largely been completed. As far as the Palais des Nations was concerned, the main preoccupation in the future would be to ensure that the value of the capital invested in the Geneva buildings was not diminished by lack of maintenance.

20. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), drawing attention to paragraph 26.4 of the proposed programme budget, asked whether the Secretary-General did not consider it a somewhat dangerous practice to borrow funds in a currency other than the one in which the budget was drawn up. It would have been preferable to have taken the loan out in dollars and subsequently to have converted it into Swiss francs to pay for the construction work. He hoped that consideration would be given to his comments when future loans were contemplated.

21. Mr. ZIEHL (Deputy Controller) explained that it might be difficult to secure a loan which was to be

expended largely in Swiss francs in a currency other than the Swiss franc. The current loan had been provided on generous terms by the Swiss Government, and, at the time it had been taken out, few people had anticipated the fluctuations in the exchange rate which had occurred recently. However, the point made by the representative of Belgium was very sound and would be given full consideration when future loans were arranged.

22. The CHAIRMAN proposed that further consideration of the question should be deferred until a later meeting.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 99

Joint Inspection Unit: reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/C.5/1676, A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1223)

23. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on its activities during the period from 1 July to 30 June 1975 (see A/C.5/1676) and the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1) on the stages of implementation of various reports issued by the Unit prior to 31 December 1973.

24. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that paragraph 7 of the Joint Inspection Unit report listed the titles, origin and distribution of the 9 reports issued by the Unit during the year under consideration. Summaries of those reports were given in paragraphs 18 to 101. Of the 4 reports dealing with accommodation problems, the one most relevant to the United Nations related to the utilization of office accommodation at United Nations Headquarters (JIU/REP/74/6),[1] which had been issued late in 1974. Two other accommodation reports, issued subsequently, also related to the United Nations: the report on the utilization of office accommodation in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/75/7),[2] and the report on office accommodation provided for extra-budgetary staff in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/75/6).[3] Those reports had been prepared in accordance with the request made by the General Assembly at its 2206th plenary meeting, on 18 December 1973. Since the Fifth Committee would have the opportunity at a later stage of discussing in detail those accommodation reports that were relevant to the United Nations, together with the related comments of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee, he would refrain for the time being from addressing himself to their substance.

25. In paragraphs 11 to 17 of the report before the Committee, the Unit made a number of observations concerning the release of its reports to Member States and the timing and scope of the distribution of those reports. The Advisory Committee had had a useful exchange of views on that question with the Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit at its spring session. It had concluded that, since there would be a detailed review of the future of the Unit at the thirty-first session, it would be more appropriate to consider the problem at that time, when the General Assembly could make a detailed assessment of the functioning and effectiveness of the existing arrangements for handling the inspectors' reports.

26. For its part, the Advisory Committee had always ensured that Joint Inspection Unit reports on which it was required to comment were released to Member States as soon as possible. There were indeed cases when comments by the Advisory Committee had been delayed for a number of reasons, including the need to await Secretariat views which required interagency consultations. The Advisory Committee had not, for example, issued it comments on two of the Unit's reports—the report on the decentralization of United Nations economic, social and related activities and the strengthening of the regional economic commissions (JIU/REP/74/5)[4] and the report on the regional structures of the United Nations system (JIU/REP/75/2).[5] Those two reports were closely related and the Advisory Committee had informed the Secretary-General in the spring of 1975 that it would like to have a document containing the consolidated views of the United Nations and the specialized agencies on those reports so that the matter could be handled in a more orderly manner. The reports had nevertheless been released to Member States.

27. The Advisory Committee had found the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1) to be of limited value. The report was supposed to deal with those recommendations of the Unit affecting the United Nations which had not been implemented and to explain the reasons for the lack of action. It was doubtful whether the Fifth Committee would find the report of much utility in its effort to monitor Secretariat action, or lack of action, on Joint Inspection Unit recommendations. The Advisory Committee therefore felt that the form and contents of the report should be reviewed in 1976 in the context of the over-all review of the Joint Inspection Unit by the General Assembly. The Fifth Committee might wish to include in any decision that it took on the current report a suggestion to the Secretary-General that he should ensure that the report issued in 1976 would be made available to the Fifth Committee, together with any documentation which the Assembly submitted to the Joint Inspection Unit for review.

28. Mr. MURG (Romania) said that the Joint Inpsection Unit had made and continued to make a most valuable contribution to increasing the efficiency of various services within the Organization and to the improved use of funds.

29. With regard to the handling of reports, his delegation fully shared the Unit's view concerning the need for timely distribution of its reports to all Member States. A revealing example of the delay between the issue of a report and its consideration by an intergovernmental body was cited in paragraph 15 of the Unit's report. That delay was particularly regrettable in view of the interest of Member States in the strengthening, at every level, of the activities of the regional commissions.

1 See document A/9854, of 14 November 1974.

2 See document A/10280, of 7 October 1975.

3 See document A/10279, of 7 October 1975.

4 See document E/5607 and Corr.1, of 15 January 1975.

5 See document E/5727, of 4 August 1975.

30. His delegation could see no justification for the Economic and Social Council's decision to abandon its previous practice of devoting a separate agenda item to Joint Inspection Unit reports. It endorsed the Unit's comments in paragraph 16 of its report and considered that existing practices should be changed in order to strengthen the position of the Unit.

31. It would be recalled that the General Assembly had invested the Joint Inspection Unit with the broadest powers of investigation in all matters having a bearing on the proper use of funds and had authorized it to propose any reforms it might deem necessary. In his delegation's opinion, special emphasis should be placed on investigations undertaken on the Unit's own initiative or arising from requests of the General Assembly and of other international organs and bodies.

32. With regard to the Unit's future work, his delegation hoped that priority attention would be given to 4 of the reports listed in the annex to document A/C.5/1676: the report on co-ordination and co-operation at country level; the report on technical assistance provided by the United Nations and some specialized agencies to the regional integration movement; the report on projects involving an integrated approach to development; and the report on training programmes and fellowships in the United Nations system. All those subjects were of great topical interest and were closely linked to the important decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventh special session.

33. Turning to the summaries of inspection reports issued in the year ended 30 June 1975, which appeared in section F of the report on the Unit's activities, he expressed especial interest in that of the report on the decentralization of the United Nations economic, social and related activities and the strengthening of the regional economic commissions (JIU/REP/74/5).[6] Romania had consistently supported the view that the decentralization of United Nations activities and the increased authority of the regional commissions and regional social and economic bodies in general would greatly assist the accelerated development of the developing countries. Nothing should be allowed to hamper the long-overdue transfer of resources and responsibilities from Headquarters to the regions. All regional and subregional activities, whatever their source of financing, should be entrusted to the regional commissions, which should be given an expanded role. At the same time, in order to overcome co-ordination difficulties concerning programming, UNDP representatives and the regional offices of the specialized agencies should be given greater decision-making powers.

34. Endorsing the recommendations concerning staff made by the Unit in document JIU/REP/74/5, he stressed that priority attention should be given to a more effective utilization of existing manpower in the regional commissions and in other international organizations by such devices as staff redeployment, secondment and rotation, accompanied by an improved organization of internal structures.

35. His delegation also supported the Unit's comments concerning the improved utilization of premises belonging to the United Nations and other international organizations.

36. Misinterpretations of Joint Inspection Unit reports by secretariats should not give rise to concern. His delegation was confident that the Unit, thanks to closer co-operation with the Advisory Committee, ACC and ICSC—which it hoped would play a more active role—would continue to carry out its special tasks.

37. Mr. ZDROJOWY (Poland) said that the annual report of the Joint Inspection Unit before the Committee provided clear evidence of the valuable work performed by the Unit. It was gratifying to note that the Unit, which was entitled to investigate all matters having a bearing on the efficiency of the United Nations system and on the proper use of funds, was continuing its consultations with the Advisory Committee and had established contact with ICSC.

38. His delegation was convinced that the Joint Inspection Unit was performing a valuable service and congratulated the inspectors on their excellent work. At the same time, his delegation believed that the Unit should give more time to inspection activities at the expense of in-depth studies for two main reasons: first, there was a growing need for such activities within the United Nations system; secondly, too many in-depth studies would require a larger budget, which, in the current financial circumstances, the United Nations could not afford.

39. The results of the Unit's activities during the period under review, particularly its recommendations concerning the critical professional manpower situation in the regional commissions and those regarding whether the cost of providing office accommodation for extra-budgetary staff at United Nations Headquarters should be paid from the United Nations regular budget, deserved the closest attention. Expeditious action on the Unit's reports would enable the General Assembly to rationalize and improve administrative and management procedures. At a time when the United Nations was faced with acute financial difficulties, it was particularly important to give full attention to the Unit's findings and to take action on them. However, while it was important that the Unit's accomplishments should receive recognition in the Committee, his delegation agreed with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that a detailed evaluation of Joint Inspection Unit activities should await the thirty-first session, when the question of prolonging the Unit's mandate would be considered.

40. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the last sentence of paragraph 3 (b), subparagraph (i), of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1) did not mean that all of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit concerning personnel problems other than those cited in subparagraphs (ii) through (viii) had been implemented. During its twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly had authorized the Secretary-General to proceed with the implementation of the proposals contained in document A/C.5/1601, subject to the observations of the Advisory Committee, and had asked him to report to it at its thirty-first session on the progress made in the imple-

6 See foot-note 4.

mentation of the proposals.[7] The report before the Committee therefore dealt only with the recommendations which the Secretary-General had rejected on the ground that they could not be implemented. In most instances, the Advisory Committee had concurred with that opinion. Other recommendations such as the introduction of the concept of occupational groups within the Secretariat, the restructuring of the General Service category, the revision of the performance reporting system, and the introduction of career planning and of an integrated personnel information system were all being studied or implemented.

41. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) drew attention to paragraphs 41 and 42 of the report on the activities of the Joint Inspection Unit concerning the report on cost measurement systems in the organizations of the United Nations family (JIU/REP/74/7)[8] which, it was stated in those paragraphs, had led to some conclusions that were intended not only for the UNDP Governing Council but also for the governing bodies of the various organizations concerned. Stating that he wished to relate his remarks to the question he had raised at the 1724th meeting, during the consideration of the budget of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in general and the Office of Technical Co-operation in particular, he noted that according to paragraph 20 of the report on cost measurement systems, the various organizations which execute field projects with extra-budgetary funds from UNDP spend on the preparation, implementation and supervision of such projects sums varying between approximately 20 and 32 per cent of the cost of the projects themselves. When added to UNDP's own administrative costs, representing some 13 per cent of total project costs, that gave a total varying between 33 and 45 per cent of total direct expenditure. Paragraph 21 of that report added that the States members of the various governing bodies concerned considered those expenses too high and wanted to reduce them in order to increase the proportion of "effective assistance". Since the initial results of the cost measurement experiment created a new situation inasmuch as they showed that it was possible to attempt a real reduction in overhead costs and since the report contained suggestions for action that might be taken, he wished to know whether any further action other than that which had already been taken—which was described in paragraph 50 of the Joint Inspection Unit's annual report was envisaged. The report on the cost measurement system dealt with a very important matter and merited serious consideration. He had made inquiries into the amount of the overhead costs for the United Nations. He had found that the technical assistance programmes with which the Organization was concerned required the involvement of 600 people, of whom 260 worked in the Office of Technical Co-operation, 201 elsewhere in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 100 in the Technical Assistance Recruitment Service and others in the Purchase and Transportation Service. And those programmes represented only an expense on the order of $50 million per year, covered by extra-budgetary funds, and $20 million covered by the regular budget. His delegation's intention was not to criticize but simply to ensure that United Nations efforts were improved and, since the report contained specific suggestions to that end it was anxious to know what follow-up action was planned.

42. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) noted that the representative of Belgium had raised a very pertinent question. Since the recommendations contained in the Joint Inspection Unit's report affected all the agencies in the United Nations system, including the Organization itself, it must be the subject of joint and separate study and action by all the organizations concerned. Accordingly, paragraph 50 of the report on the activities of the Unit outlined the consideration given so far by individual agencies. The main recommendations had been considered by ACC at its April session and that body had agreed on the value of the cost measurement studies carried out so far and the importance of having the Task Force on Cost Measurement of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions continue its work, as recommended by JIU, with a view to evolving ways and means of implementing the additional recommendations in the report that were susceptible of effective implementation within reasonable economic limits. A number of the recommendations would require elaborate study necessitating recourse to expertise outside the United Nations, thus involving the expenditure of considerable time and money. In that connexion, he drew attention to paragraph 84 of document CO-ORDINATION/R.1101[9] which contained a summary of the results of ACC's sixty-fourth session. ACC was now examining the implications of the recommendations in question through the Consultative Committee. The immediate effect of the work done had been to reveal that full overhead costs, taken on a proper cost accounting basis, amounted to roughly 22 to 23 per cent of project costs. The Governing Council of UNDP, in examining the cost measurement study, had felt that, while it might be a statistically correct appraisal of overhead costs on average, UNDP should not have to bear the full amount of those costs since many of the technical support services formed part of the ongoing professional services rendered by the agencies as part of their normal programme. The Council had therefore agreed to revise its share of overhead costs upwards from 13 to 14 per cent and to make allowance for projects of particular size and complexity.

43. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for his reply. His delegation wished to see the overhead costs reduced and the proportion of effective aid increased; it intended to announce the following day that it was increasing its contribution to UNDP by 33 per cent.

44. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked whether all executing agencies made provision for overhead costs in their regular budgets.

45. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that he believed that it was the policy in the smaller agencies not to devote any part of their regular budget to their role as executing agencies. Accordingly, they limited their participation to projects in which their overhead costs would not exceed 14 per cent of the total cost of a project. The proportion of overhead

7 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 31* and corrigenda, p. 139, agenda item 81, subparagraph *(c)*.

8 See document DP/77/Add.3, of 18 December 1974.

9 Dated 28 April 1975.

costs varied according to the nature of a project. For instance, they were rather high in the case of short-term projects which involved sending an expert for a few months to a country, because of the selection, briefing and debriefing procedures required. Since most of the projects in which UNIDO participated were short-term, that agency had one of the highest percentages of overhead costs of any executing agency used by UNDP.

46. The larger agencies, however, were required to carry in their regular budgets, directly or indirectly, a significant percentage of overhead costs as measured in the cost measurement study. Those supplemental costs were not reflected as a separate line in the budget but were included in the ongoing services, since they constituted part of the services normally provided by the agency.

47. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), referring to his earlier question, said that he would like to know what proportion of the United Nations regular budget was devoted to meeting overhead costs.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

1730th meeting

Wednesday, 5 November 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1730

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10008/Add.4, A/10279, A/10280, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1242, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1246)

United Nations public information policies and activities* (continued)* *(A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1242, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1246)

1. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) introduced a second revised text (A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2) of the draft resolution before the Committee. Her delegation did not wish to attack any part of the Secretariat; indeed, it had always supported the Secretariat and its work. In view of the attacks which had been made latterly upon the United Nations, there should be some sort of a defence system against attacks by certain international press agencies. The text which her delegation had presented in all innocence had become political. Yet the proposals in the draft resolution were just an initial step, for the problem of the United Nations public image could not be solved without a comprehensive review of the public information system.

2. In the Spanish text of the draft resolution, in the sixth preambular paragraph, the word *"medidas"* should be replaced by *"esfuerzos"*; the passage in question was a quotation from the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1679).

3. A number of suggestions made by various delegations had been incorporated in the new revised text. Operative paragraph 2, for instance, took account of the concern expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union and by some African countries. She did not know whether the draft resolution would have any financial implications, but felt that the aims outlined therein could be achieved by a rearrangement of priorities. It was certainly not her delegation's intention to increase the budget of the United Nations and it had not wished to castigate or embarrass any party.

4. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the 1728th meeting the Secretariat had indicated that the draft resolution would have no financial implications at the current time.

5. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) said that the question of public information was of prime importance. His delegation had long felt that OPI should play a greater role in disseminating the ideals of the United Nations and explaining the Organization's action to people throughout the world. His delegation supported the draft resolution but would like to see it strengthened by incorporating the new paragraph 3 proposed in document A/C.5/L.1246, by which the Secretary-General would be requested by the General Assembly to submit a report on the activities of OPI at the thirty-first session and make the question a new and separate item of the agenda. The amendment would not prejudge the body to which the item would be allocated, since that would be decided by the General Committee. The purpose of the amendment was to ensure that more time was devoted to consideration of public information activities, which so far had been considered in passing within the context of the budget as a whole. If the amendment was accepted, Tunisia would join the sponsors of the draft resolution.

6. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) wondered whether the Tunisian amendment would have any financial implications. He proposed a minor amendment to operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution; in order to bring the text into line with Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Charter, the adjectives should appear in the following order: "political, economic, social, cultural and humanitarian".

7. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that the draft resolution had been considerably improved and he would have no diffi-

* Resumed from the 1728th meeting.

culty in voting for it. He was pleased to hear that the Colombian delegation's intention had not been to criticize, and that it felt that the objectives in the draft resolution should be attained through a redistribution of priorities.

8. The Tunisian amendment (A/C.5/L.1246) was in line with the preliminary statement made by the French delegation on the amendments submitted by the Soviet Union (A/C.5/L.1245) to the five-Power draft decision (A/C.5/L.1242). The Tunisian delegation was quite correct in stating that the Committee could not prejudge which organ of the General Assembly would be entrusted with considering the report that was being requested. Accordingly, his delegation supported that amendment.

9. With regard to the five-Power draft decision, his delegation had no difficulty in accepting the Soviet amendments, since the Fifth Committee could not prejudge which body should deal with the substantive matter of public information policies and activities. Accordingly, his delegation could accept the draft decision as amended by the representative of the Soviet Union.

10. Finally, his delegation had no difficulty in accepting the draft decision of Pakistan (A/C.5/L.1243).

11. Mr. SCHÜTZE (Federal Republic of Germany) said that he still had reservations concerning the fifth preambular paragraph of the revised Colombian draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2). A clear distinction should be made between criticism of the United Nations system and criticism of the work of the United Nations, in other words, the decisions of some bodies. It was therefore not a correct assessment of public opinion to say that the prevailing attitude was against the United Nations system. Moreover, it was not appropriate to mention "the media and the public opinion" since there might be various opinions; in many countries some of the United Nations achievements were viewed positively. He therefore suggested that the fifth preambular paragraph should be replaced by the following text:

> "*Concerned* to ensure that the information media and the general public receive a full and balanced account of the functioning of the United Nations and in order to increase public support for and confidence in the activities of the Organization".

12. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said that the revised Colombian draft resolution was a substantial improvement over the original text and a positive contribution to the debate. One of the General Assembly's functions was to set priorities for the Secretariat. The draft resolution did just that, since it set priorities for OPI concerning the need to inform the general public of the achievements of the United Nations system in various fields. His delegation would therefore support the draft resolution.

13. Mr. BARRAGAN MATA (Mexico) said that his delegation agreed, in general, with the draft resolution. However, he proposed that the end of operative paragraph 1 should be amended to read: "related to the establishment of a new international economic order and to the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States".

14. Mr. AGYEMAN (Ghana) said that he had no problems with the draft resolution but suggested that the word "further" should be added to the fourth preambular paragraph, the beginning of which would thus read "*Determined* to improve further . . .". That would take account of the statement in the Secretary-General's report on the question at the twenty-ninth session that the Organization's public image was improving.[1]

15. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that it was the understanding of his delegation that the draft resolution was asking OPI not to influence the press to change its reporting on the United Nations but to ensure that the United Nations was projected in such a way that the public was given a comprehensive and undistorted view of the Organization.

16. His delegation therefore agreed to the draft resolution on the understanding that the activities of OPI would be considered in the Fifth Committee at the thirty-first session.

17. Mr. AKASHI (Japan), referring to operative paragraph 2 of the Colombian draft resolution, proposed that the phrase "the United Nations associations and non-governmental organizations" should be modified to read "the United Nations associations and other non-governmental organizations". The World Federation of United Nations Associations was a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

18. Mr. SETHI (India) congratulated the delegation of Colombia on its initiative which was designed to strengthen OPI and to ensure that it provided detailed information about the United Nations throughout the world. He suggested that the representative of Colombia should consult the other delegations concerned and submit a revised text incorporating as many amendments as possible. In view of the multiplicity of amendments, many of which consisted of only a few words, he invoked rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, according to which no proposal should be discussed unless copies of it had been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting.

19. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said that she would like the Committee to hear other delegations' proposals before the procedure suggested by the representative of India was adopted.

20. Mr. VARGAS SABORIO (Costa Rica) congratulated the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information on the efficient work of OPI in the past year. It would help the Office in its work if the Secretary-General reported on its activities. That should in no way be considered as interference but as part of an over-all effort to assist OPI in its future activities. His delegation supported the Tunisian amendment (A/C.5/L.1246), the effect of which would be that in future United Nations information activities would be considered as a separate item.

21. Miss GARCIA DONOSO (Ecuador) supported the draft resolution, which reflected the views expressed by

[1] Document A/C.5/1605, of 10 September 1974, para. 1.

most delegations during the general discussion. Adoption of the text would show that the Committee attached much importance to OPI activities.

22. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) noted that most members of the Committee seemed to be in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2, but that action on it was being delayed by the submission of numerous minor drafting amendments. He supported the suggestion by the representative of India that the amendments should be submitted in writing so that the Committee could reach agreement as soon as possible. He also supported the Tunisian amendment (A/C.5/L.1246).

23. Mr. AL-MURTAJI (Kuwait) expressed his delegation's support for draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2 and the Tunisian amendment. He also supported the oral amendment by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany. He endorsed the Indian suggestion that a revised final text of the draft resolution should be submitted in writing.

24. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) proposed that in operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2 the words "national" and "mass" referring to the media were tautological, and that one of those two words should be deleted.

25. He proposed that the amendment of the Federal Republic of Germany should be modified to read: "*Determined* to ensure that the information media and the general public continue to receive . . .".

26. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) observed that the objective of the Tunisian amendment (A/C.5/L.1246) was similar to that of the draft decision of which Italy was one of the sponsors (A/C.5/L.1242), namely, that in budget years the Fifth Committee should focus attention on the budget, while in off-budget years general questions of policy should be discussed. Accordingly, he suggested that consultations on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2, aimed at achieving an integrated revised text, should be held between the sponsor of the draft resolution, the sponsors of amendments thereto and the sponsors of draft decision A/C.5/L.1242.

27. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands), commenting on draft decision A/C.5/L.1242, whereby an item on public information policies would be given in-depth consideration in off-budget years, pointed out that the General Committee might allocate the item to a Committee which was running out of items, such as the Special Political Committee, which was not the proper forum for considering public information activities in the economic and social fields.

28. He suggested certain drafting amendments to the English text of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2: the word "Organization" should be deleted from the second preambular paragraph; in the fourth preambular paragraph, the word "for" following the words "improve the public image" should be replaced by the word "of".

29. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a conflict between the Tunisian amendment (A/C.5/L.1246), calling for a new separate item entitled "United Nations information activities" which would be allocated by the General Committee, and the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1242), which recommended that United Nations public information policies and activities should be considered by the Fifth Committee. He pointed out that the Tunisian amendment would have priority in the voting. The sponsors of the various drafts before the Committee should take account of that factor in their consultations.

30. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) moved the adjournment of the debate on the subitem. He appealed to all concerned to hold consultations with a view to the submission of a single comprehensive document which the Committee could adopt, preferably by consensus.

31. The CHAIRMAN, acting in accordance with rule 116 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, invited two representatives to speak in favour of, and two against, the motion for adjournment of the debate.

32. Mr. VARGAS SABORIO (Costa Rica) supported the motion for adjournment of the debate in the hope that the following day a document would be submitted which the Committee would be able to adopt by consensus.

33. Mr. ROMANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) also spoke in favour of the motion. He appealed to all those concerned to hold consultations with a view to eliminating contradictions, in particular the contradiction between the Tunisian amendment (A/C.5/L.1246) and draft decision A/C.5/L.1242. He also appealed to other members of the Committee who might wish to submit amendments to consult with the sponsor of the draft resolution before the following meeting.

34. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) spoke against adjournment of the debate on the ground that the Committee would have to hear delegations' views on the amendments–if not at the current meeting, then at the following meeting–before taking a decision.

35. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) opposed ajournment of the debate, and suggested that an open-ended drafting group should be established to consider the texts.

The motion for adjournment of the debate was adopted by 45 votes to 7, with 33 abstentions.

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)

SECTION 21. PUBLIC INFORMATION *(concluded)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

36. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the amount of $30,706,400 recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 21 for the biennium 1976-1977 (see 1722nd meeting, para. 48).

An appropriation in the amount of $30,706,400 under section 21 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 75 votes to 1, with 8 abstentions.

* Resumed from the 1728th meeting.

37. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) explained that he had voted in favour of the appropriation under section 21 because of the importance which his delegation attached to public information activities, in spite of its reservations about the transfer of 2 posts for the Centre for Economic and Social Information to the regular budget. The reasons for those reservations had been stated earlier during the general debate on the item (1723rd meeting).

SECTION 26. CONSTRUCTION, ALTERATION, IMPROVEMENT AND MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF PREMISES *(concluded)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

38. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) asked how much interest the United Nations had paid to date on the $65 million loan for Headquarters, referred to in paragraph 26.2 of the proposed programme budget (A/10006), and why larger amortization payments were not being made in order to diminish the interest charged.

39. With regard to the Secretary-General's request in paragraph 26.14 for $405,000 to pay for feasibility studies for expansion and improvements, he asked why the background data in the survey completed in 1969 did not suffice and why new studies were being called for.

40. The request in paragraph 26.23 for $30,000 to provide special facilities for the Medical Service and the Staff Café in the United Nations Development Corporation building seemed anomalous since normally all facilities were automatically provided in a new building. Noting that an amount of $100,000 was requested in the same paragraph for the installation of underground cables, he agreed with the Advisory Committee that a more economical means of achieving a connexion between the two buildings should be explored.

41. Referring to paragraph 26.24, he said that his delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the Secretary-General's request for $25,000 to complete the installation of a petrol pump at the Headquarters garage; furthermore, it took exception to the initiation of projects before they had been approved by the General Assembly. He thought it was questionable, too, whether the alterations contemplated to the thirty-ninth floor of the Secretariat building at Headquarters and the proposed replacement of carpeting and drapes mentioned in paragraph 26.28 were really necessary.

42. Mr. BARRAGAN MATA (Mexico) asked why the Secretary-General considered it necessary to expand the seating capacity of the meeting areas to 150 delegations in 1976 when he was also requesting an engineering study on the possible increase of the seating capacity to 160 (*ibid.*, paras. 26.20 and 26.21).

43. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the questions put by the representative of Algeria, said that the loan of $65 million from the United States Government had been provided free of interest. The $30,000 requested in connexion with the Medical Service and Staff Café in the UNDC building was to buy equipment. The Secretary-General's budget proposals under the heading "Major maintenance" were not high-priority items; they were, however, necessary if the building was to be kept in good repair.

44. With regard to the comments of the representative of Mexico, he said that an expansion of the seating capacity of the meeting areas to 150 delegations could be effected without structural changes, whereas expansion of the capacity to 160 would require extensive structural changes to the General Assembly Hall, the Trusteeship Council and the main conference rooms.

45. In 1972, when the original plans had been prepared, a seating capacity of 150 delegations had seemed generous; it was now evident that the membership of the Organization was likely to exceed that figure. It should be borne in mind, too, that the more far-sighted of the Secretary-General's proposals were frequently turned down by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee on the ground that they were premature.

46. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) felt that the Committee should not be asked to approve estimates for such items as the replacement of carpeting and drapes without being given more details; how much of the money, for example, was to be spent on the Secretary-General's offices?

47. It was extremely unfortunate that an architectural and engineering survey which had cost $250,000 had proved unusable. Furthermore, it was strange that the survey currently being proposed, which was on a much smaller scale than the one conducted in 1968 and 1969, should be just as expensive.

48. Mr. ZIEHL (Deputy Controller) explained that the total cost of the survey completed in 1969 had been more than $2 million and that the United Nations contribution of $250,000 had been a token amount which had been given to indicate that the Organization was interested in the project. The bulk of the funds had been provided from private sources. While the 1968-1969 survey had envisaged, together with the construction of an additional office building, an expansion of the existing building, including a 30-foot expansion of the walls both southwards and northwards, the enlargement of the main conference building and sizable underground extensions, the survey currently proposed was intended to reveal whether the delegates' and related facilities could be improved without any additional construction work. The Secretariat would make the 1968-1969 survey available to any delegations that were interested in ascertaining for themselves the applicability of the background data to the present situation.

49. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the details of the programme for the replacement of such items as carpeting and drapes could be made available to the representative of Algeria. The bulk of the funds expended for the replacement programme went for the renewal of items in the Assembly building and in the public area in the General Assembly concourse. In the current biennium, a sum of $18,000 had been earmarked for the replacement of carpeting and drapes in the offices of the Secretary-General on the 38th floor of the Secretariat building.

50. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee for section 26 (see 1728th meeting, para. 80).

An appropriation in the amount of $12,488,000 under section 26 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 73 votes to 9, with 1 abstention.

United Nations accommodation in Addis Ababa, Bangkok and Santiago, Chile (A/C.5/1673)

51. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled that, in paragraph 3 of his report (A/C.5/1673) the Secretary-General had indicated that a request for $600,000 was included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) under section 26 to compensate for a currency exchange loss in connexion with construction at Addis Ababa. Furthermore, paragraph 6 of the same document stated that the full extent of the impact of inflationary pressures on the construction project at Bangkok was under review. He had been informed by the representative of the Secretary-General that a supplementary estimate of $105,000 in connexion with the work at Bangkok would probably be included in the Secretary-General's report on budget performance for the biennium 1974-1975, which would be considered by the Fifth Committee at a later stage.

AGENDA ITEM 95

Programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/C.5/1690, A/C.5/1694)

Programme of major maintenance of and improvements to the Palais des Nations, Geneva* (concluded) *(A/C.5/1690)

Extension of the Palais des Nations, Geneva* (concluded) *(A/C.5/1694)

52. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the programme of major maintenance of and improvements to the Palais des Nations, Geneva (A/C.5/1690).

It was so decided.

53. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, as he understood it, the Committee would be required to vote on the amount of $643,200 referred to in paragraph 9 of document A/C.5/1694.

54. The CHAIRMAN explained that the additional requirement of $643,200 would be included in the Secretary-General's report on budget performance for the biennium 1974-1975 and would be voted on at a later stage. He suggested that the Committee, without any prejudice to the decision that it might take with regard to those supplementary estimates, should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the extension of the Palais des Nations, Geneva (A/C.5/1694).

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

1731st meeting

Wednesday, 5 November 1975, at 3.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1731

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10008/Add.4, A/10279, A/10280, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1246)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 24. UNITED NATIONS BOND ISSUE (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Secretary-General had submitted estimates of $17,297,000 under section 24 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) and that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its related report (A/10008 and Corr.2) had recommended no reduction in that amount.

2. Mr. WANG Lien-sheng (China) said that the expenditures, relating to the amortization of the United Nations bond issue, had been a result of interference in the Middle East and in the Congo. His delegation, which had already made its position on that matter known in the past, requested that the corresponding estimates be deleted from the budget; it would therefore vote against the estimates under section 24.

3. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that Italy was among the countries which had purchased United Nations bonds under

conditions very favourable to the Organization, since repayment of the principal was spread out over a period of 25 years and the interest rate was only 2 per cent. If the Organization did not honour its obligations, its credibility would be questioned; that would be unfortunate because there was always a possibility that the United Nations might find it necessary some day to issue other bonds. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of the estimates submitted under section 24.

4. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation, true to its position of principle and in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, had always opposed the inclusion of expenditures relating to the amortization of United Nations bonds in the regular budget of the United Nations. Those bonds had in fact been issued in order to finance illegal expenditures resulting from operations in the Congo and the Middle East in violation of the Charter. Out of a concern to comply strictly with the provisions of the Charter, the Soviet Union had firmly opposed the decisions on which those operations were based; it was not responsible for them and had no intention of contributing to the financing of the costs arising from them, which should be borne entirely by the countries which had assumed responsibility for the operations in question. In view of those considerations, the Soviet Union would vote against the estimates submitted under section 24.

5. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the estimates submitted for section 24. However, as his delegation had already observed in the past, the adoption of that position did not alter its reservations of principle with respect to the various decisions upon which the costs in question were based.

6. Mr. MURG (Romania) said that, in accordance with its well-established position of principle, his delegation was opposed to the inclusion in the regular budget of expenditures relating to activities which were contrary to the provisions and the spirit of the Charter. It would therefore vote against the estimates submitted under section 24.

7. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that his delegation held firmly to its position of principle, which was that the expenditures relating to the amortization of United Nations bonds were a legal obligation binding on Member States. That obligation had to be honoured if the integrity of the United Nations was to be maintained. His Government had supported General Assembly resolution 1739 (XVI) of 20 December 1961 and had purchased a large number of bonds. In paragraph 3 of that resolution, the General Assembly had decided to include annually in the regular budget of the United Nations, beginning with the budget of the United Nations, beginning with the budget for the financial year 1963, an amount sufficient to pay the interest charges on such bonds and the instalments of principal due on the bonds. Any failure by the United Nations to meet the solemn obligations it had thus assumed could lead to very serious consequences. The estimates submitted by the Secretary-General under section 24 should therefore be approved in their entirety, without reservation.

8. Mr. MINCHEV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation was opposed to the inclusion in the regular budget of expenditures relating to United Nations bonds issued in connexion with illegal operations in the Congo and the Middle East in violation of the Charter. It would therefore vote against the estimates submitted under section 24.

9. Mr. BARRAGAN MATA (Mexico) said that, in accordance with its traditional position, his Government would continue to contribute to the financing of the expenditures relating to the amortization of United Nations bonds but it would abstain in the vote since those expenditures were the result of controversial operations.

10. Mr. GHAFOURZAI (Afghanistan) said that during the general discussion (1711th meeting) his delegation had made known its position of principle with regard to the question of expenditures relating to the amortization of United Nations bonds. Despite certain reservations regarding the matter, his delegation would merely abstain in the vote.

11. Mr. PLÁŠEK (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation, which on a number of occasions had made known its position regarding expenditures relating to bonds issued by the United Nations, would vote against the estimates submitted under section 24.

12. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on an appropriation in the amount of $17,297,000 under section 24.

An appropriation in the amount of $17,297,000 under section 24 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 62 votes to 12, with 7 abstentions.

13. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that, in accordance with the position of principle of the Polish Government, which was opposed to the inclusion in the regular budget of appropriations for the repayment of bonds issued by the United Nations to finance the illegal operations in the Middle East and the Congo, his delegation had voted against the estimates under section 24. The Polish Government would not contribute to the financing of expenditures under that section.

[Before continuing its consideration of agenda item 96, the Committee considered agenda item 101 (see paras. 52 to 82, below).]

Financial problems of the United Nations (continued)* *(A/C.5/L.1240)*

14. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, at its 1726th meeting, the Committee had decided that a note addressed to the Chairman by the delegations of 27 Member States concerning the financial problems of the United Nations should be distributed as an official document, and he invited members to comment on that note, which had been issued as document A/C.5/L.1240, in order to enable the Committee to decide on the procedure to be followed with regard to that communication.

15. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) recalled that, in his introduction[1] to the report on the work of the Organization, the

* Resumed from the 1727th meeting.

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 1A*, sect. XX.

Secretary-General had indicated that the General Assembly should make a serious attempt to find innovative solutions to the Organization's financial problems to enable it, once its financial situation had been stabilized, to discharge more effectively the tasks required of it. Moreover, in the Fifth Committee, at its 1700th meeting, the Secretary-General had stated (A/C.5/1685) that Governments must pay their contributions promptly and that efforts to eliminate the accumulated deficit were continuing. For over 10 years, the United Nations had been trying to stabilize its financial situation, but an agreement had not yet been reached. Accordingly, the appeal by the Secretary-General must be followed by positive measures to reach a definitive and satisfactory solution. The question was all the more urgent since the financial problems of the Organization were serious and the deficit must be eliminated as a matter of urgency. The initiative by the authors of the note before the Committee would enable Member States to begin to seek, through a realistic approach, positive solutions to the problems of the Organization. His delegation had always supported the principle of the collective responsibility of all Members of the Organization for the obligations assumed by it, but felt that it was not the time to analyse the considerations of principle which had motivated the attitude of certain Members. In the past, it had been agreed that a global solution would have to be found for the Organization's financial problems and that a definitive solution had to be approved by all Member States, but when the time had come to elaborate solutions, it had not proved possible to achieve a consensus. The General Assembly must therefore be given new information or new criteria; the questions put to the Secretary-General in the note in question would be an effective way of solving the Organization's financial difficulties; that was why his delegation proposed that the Fifth Committee should invite the Secretary-General to provide the information requested therein.

16. Mr. SUNDRAM (Malaysia) recalled that at several consecutive sessions the General Assembly had unsuccessfully tackled the apparently insurmountable problems posed by the financial situation of the United Nations. In the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization and in his statement to the Fifth Committee at the 1700th meeting, the Secretary-General had stressed the need to find a solution. That was why the authors of the note under consideration, anxious to respond constructively to the appeal and suggestions of the Secretary-General, as the first paragraphs of the note indicated, had submitted that document and raised the questions listed therein, in order to ascertain the main causes of the Organization's financial crisis. That initiative was intended to provide the Committee with a complete picture of the possible causes of the continuing financial difficulties of the United Nations. It was essential to have a clear and concise picture of the current situation if an attempt was to be made to alleviate, if not eliminate, the financial problems of the United Nations. The replies to the questions in the note would be a first step towards a thorough study of those problems and the search for a solution, which was an absolute necessity if the United Nations was to continue to function effectively and meet the aspirations of its Members. The questions in the document under consideration, which dealt mainly with the long- and short-term deficit of the United Nations and the critical cash flow situation, were designed to bring out the root causes of the problems and they were not intended as criticism of any Member or group of Members, because the financial problems of the United Nations affected all Members of the United Nations without exception. It was confidence in the ability of the United Nations to serve the cause of mankind that led its Members to support the Charter, contribute to its budget and participate in its programmes and activities. Obviously, therefore, it was hardly becoming for an organization as important as the United Nations to survive on a hand to mouth basis, under the shadow of bankruptcy. It was incumbent on all the Members of the Organization to look into the causes of the precarious financial situation of the Organization and provide constructive remedies for the existing short-comings. With that end in view his delegation invited the members of the Committee to consider the questions posed in document A/C.5/L.1240 and the information requested of the Secretary-General.

17. Miss GARCIA DONOSO (Ecuador) said that her delegation, which was one of those which had submitted the note under consideration, fully endorsed the remarks made by the representative of Malaysia and said that the purpose of the note was clear from its introductory paragraphs. As a developing country, Ecuador wished the Organization to be in a position to discharge its responsibilities with regard to the administration of its programmes, the institution of a new international economic order and the strengthening of economic co-operation with the least advanced countries. The sponsors of the note sought to obtain full information in order to identify the causes of the financial problems of the United Nations which jeopardized the programmes, and even the very functioning of the Organization. The Fifth Committee, whose task it was to find the means of solving the financial problems of the United Nations, should be able to base its decisions on clear and concise information.

18. Mr. FERNANDEZ MAROTO (Spain) said that his delegation whole-heartedly supported the requests addressed to the Secretary-General in the note, since the clarifications requested would greatly assist efforts to find an effective solution to the financial problems of the Organization.

19. Mr. DJELOU (Togo) recalled that, in his statement to the Committee at the 1700th meeting and in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization the Secretary-General had expressed concern over the precarious financial and cash flow situation of the Organization. All delegations were aware of the need to find a solution to those problems as soon as possible because the United Nations should have the means of carrying out the increasingly complex tasks assigned to it by the international community. The precarious financial situation was dangerous because the preservation of world peace, an area in which the Organization played a leading role, sometimes required immediate action, which involved considerable expense. The Committee must make a joint effort with the Secretary-General to find ways and means of overcoming the financial difficulties of the United Nations. The Secretary-General had mentioned some of the causes of the current financial crisis affecting the Organization; they included inflation and fluctuating exchange rates, a shortage of working capital and delays in the payment of con-

tributions by Member States. However, he should provide the Committee with some clarifications concerning those various factors, and the Togolese delegation had therefore felt that it should join the delegations which had submitted the note under consideration in an effort to contribute to the search for a satisfactory solution to the financial problems of the Organization.

20. Mr. CARRESSE (Uruguay) said that his delegation, which was one of the sponsors of the note, was becoming increasingly alarmed about the financial difficulties of the Organization. He recalled the concern expressed by the Secretary-General in his statement at an earlier stage in the Committee's proceedings, and in section XX of the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization. A global solution to those problems must be sought as a matter of urgency, so that the Secretariat could effectively accomplish the tasks confronting it. His delegation had joined the delegations which had taken a step towards finding a solution by asking the Secretary-General to provide the information requested in paragraph 6 of the note. It was convinced that a clear and concise answer would help to place the problems of the Organization in their proper perspective and facilitate the search for the desired global solution.

21. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) welcomed the initiative taken by the 27 signatories of the note on the financial problems of the Organization. For a long time the problem of the United Nations deficit had been considered each year by the General Assembly, and the Secretary-General had repeatedly appealed for efforts to seek remedial measures for the financial crisis. He hoped that the Committee would decide to invite the Secretary-General to supply the information requested in paragraph 6 of the note so that members would have a complete picture of the current situation.

22. He stressed the principle of the collective responsibility of all Members for the expenses of the United Nations, deriving from Article 17 of the Charter. According to a decision by the International Court of Justice[2] on the deficit due to peace-keeping operations, Article 17 implied that Member States which had signed the Charter should collectively assume responsibility for United Nations expenditures approved by the General Assembly. It was to be hoped that all parties concerned which were able to alleviate the financial problems of the Organization would be in a position to make contributions to that end.

23. Mrs. DERRE (France) thought that the initiative taken by some delegations in asking the Secretary-General for information on the financial situation in the form of replies to 21 questions was somewhat unusual, in that the sponsors of that initiative wished it to be endorsed by the Fifth Committee. It would suffice to consult the financial report and accounts of the Organization for 1973,[3] and the related report of the Board of Auditors[4] to find all the answers to those questions, and even the names of the countries that had not participated in the financing of certain emergency United Nations operations, including France, which, as a matter of principle, had not contributed to the financing of the Emergency Force sent to the Congo. On the other hand, France had been one of the countries that had made voluntary contributions to help the Organization out of its critical financial situation. That showed that matters of principle and concern for the Organization were two different things. It would also suffice to consult the relevant reports to ascertain the conclusions of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies[5] and the Special Committee on the Financial Situation of the United Nations.[6] She wondered, therefore, why the Secretariat was asked to perform such a useless task, for she was unwilling to believe that the initiative was aimed solely at stigmatizing the delegations of countries which had not contributed to the financing of certain emergency operations. It would be neither timely nor constructive to engage in such a debate, which was certainly not the only solution to the problems of the Organization, since a political issue was involved which could not be settled in the Fifth Committee. Her delegation was therefore unable to support the initiative of the 27 delegations which had submitted the note.

24. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said he agreed that the proposal before the Committee was somewhat unusual. The delegations which had submitted it were aware of the conclusions reached by the two bodies referred to in the note, but they were primarily seeking to encourage States to reassess their national interests in the light of the national interests of other States. In fact, since the operations which had brought about the deficit of the United Nations, the interests of certain Member States had changed and their former preoccupations had been replaced by a new set of values. By means of a discussion, which would not be polemical, but pragmatic, and which would certainly be aimed not at stigmatizing any particular State but at ascertaining root causes of the deficit, it might be possible to make a modest contribution to putting the United Nations on the road to solvency. In the hope that the members of the Committee would make a concerted effort to understand the causes of the problem and make some progress towards a solution, his delegation supported the proposal in paragraph 6 of the note that the Committee should request the Secretary-General to provide some clear and concise information.

25. Mr. PONCE (Peru) said that he shared the concern of the signatories to the note and thought it was incumbent upon the Secretary-General to dispel doubts about the Organization's financial situation.

26. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said he agreed with the French delegation that the information requested in the note was already available in other documents, and particularly in the reports of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies and of the Special Committee on the Financial Situation of the United Nations as well as in

2 *Certain expenses of the United Nations (Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter), Advisory Opinion of 20 July 1962: I.C.J. Reports 1962, p. 151.*

3 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum, chaps. I-III.

4 *Ibid.*, chap. IV.

5 *Ibid., Twenty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 80, documents A/6289 and Add.1 and 2.

6 *Ibid., Twenty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 29.*

volume VII of the proposed programme budget (A/10006). However, he thought that it was too widely scattered, and embedded in a mass of other data. By sending the note, the Committee would be able to obtain recent and compact information which would give it a clear idea of the situation.

27. He also observed that, up to the current time, the subject of the United Nations financial situation had been kept taboo in the Fifth Committee, in the hope that diplomatic approaches to certain countries would encourage them to make voluntary contributions. That unfortunately had not been the case, with the exception of France, Japan and the United Arab Emirates.

28. Although it shared the concern expressed in paragraph 2 of the note, his delegation had not seen fit to join the signatories.

29. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the problem of the United Nations financial situation was not new, since a special session of the General Assembly–the fourth–had been devoted to it in 1963.

30. Nevertheless, the information requested in the note under consideration was of interest in that it might be useful to the many countries which had become Members of the Organization since the early 1960s.

31. Like the French delegation, he feared that the replies to the questions in the note might set up a barrier between the countries that paid their contributions punctually and those that did not. In that connexion, he thought that reference might be made–as had been done in questions III *(c)* and *(d)*–to delays in the payment of contributions but not to withholdings, since in point of fact all countries eventually paid their contributions.

32. He also felt that the questionnaire would have been more complete if the inflation factor, with which the United Nations had had to contend for a long time, had been mentioned indirectly, and if an attempt had been made to find out, for example, how that factor was recorded and in which host countries it was most keenly felt.

33. In conclusion, his delegation wished to know if the replies to the list of questions would have financial implications. In spite of those reservations, it would vote for the submission of the note.

34. Mr. TALIEH (Iran), speaking on a point of order, moved the adjournment of the debate under rule 116 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

35. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), speaking on a point of order, proposed that the Committee should take an immediate decision on the note and that the five remaining speakers on the list should speak at the next meeting to explain their votes.

36. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) supported the Iranian motion to adjourn the debate.

37. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) and Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) supported the Algerian proposal.

38. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the Iranian motion to adjourn the debate.

The motion was rejected by 50 votes to 23, with 10 abstentions.

39. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany), supported by Mr. MATHESON (Canada), speaking on a point of order, moved the closure of the debate so that the Committee could vote on the note immediately.

40. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria), speaking on a point of order, moved the adjournment of the meeting.

41. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on a point of order, supported the Bulgarian proposal and said that it should be put to the vote immediately, in accordance with rule 118 of the rules of procedure.

42. The CHAIRMAN asked the representative of Bulgaria whether, in view of the decision taken by the Committee on the Iranian motion to adjourn the debate, he wished to withdraw his motion to adjourn the meeting.

43. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) said that, as he was anxious to avoid premature closure of the debate he did not wish to withdraw his motion to adjourn the meeting.

44. The CHAIRMAN, in pursuance of rule 119 of the rules of procedure, concerning the order of precedence of motions submitted, put to the vote the motion of the representative of Bulgaria to adjourn the meeting.

The motion was rejected by 42 votes to 21, with 13 abstentions.

45. The CHAIRMAN asked the Committee, in pursuance of rule 117 of the rules of procedure, to take a decision on the closure of the debate moved by the Federal Republic of Germany. Two speakers could speak against the motion.

46. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) said that he was not really opposed to the closure of the debate but he wished to have a chance to clarify a point which had been overlooked in the note addressed to the Chairman.

47. Mr. SETHI (India) said that he was against the closure of the debate because the financial implications of the proposal in paragraph 6 of the note must be known before a decision was taken. Furthermore, if the note was to become an official document of the Fifth Committee as a whole, its members would need more time to study the questions to be submitted to the Secretary-General and, if necessary, have an opportunity to raise further points.

48. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the motion of the Federal Republic of Germany to close the debate.

The motion was adopted by 46 votes to 16, with 14 abstentions.

49. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take a decision on the Argentine proposal concerning the note.

50. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) said he wished to raise a point which was not covered by the questions put to the Secretary-General in the note. The Secretary-General should be asked to provide the Committee with up-to-date information concerning the action taken on the suggestion in paragraph 7 of the report he had submitted at the twenty-eighth session on the financial situation of the United Nations,[7] which the General Assembly had endorsed on 18 December 1973, to the effect that Member States whose contribution in terms of their own national currencies had been reduced as a result of the revaluation of their national currency in relation to the United States dollar might consider making a contribution of the amount of their saving towards the elimination of the Organization's continuing deficit.

51. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the Argentine proposal (see para. 15 above) regarding the note (A/C.5/L.1240).

The proposal was adopted by 64 votes to none, with 18 abstentions.

AGENDA ITEM 101

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General *(continued) (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10299, A/C.5/1670)**

[See note following paragraph 13 above.]

52. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had noted with interest the report of the Secretary-General on the publications and documentation of the United Nations (A/C.5/1670) and the relevant report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10299), and wished to state his position on the matter; it was an important question which had direct repercussions on the budget of the United Nations.

53. The question of the publications and documentation of the United Nations was directly linked to that of the establishment of the pattern of conferences, and the measures designed to control and limit the volume of documentation were closely related to decisions regarding the pattern of conferences. The Committee should therefore consider consecutively the question of the publications and documentation of the United Nations, the pattern of conferences for 1976-1977, and the section of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 relating to conference services.

54. Considerable attention had already been given in the past to the question of documentation, as was shown by the very important report[8] by the Joint Inspection Unit on the question which had already received detailed consideration in the Fifth Committee during the twenty-sixth session. That same question had also been the subject of two reports by the Secretary-General, which had stressed the need to reduce the volume of documentation and, thereby, the related budgetary expenditures. While there was no doubt that the various measures taken by the Secretariat, in particular the adoption of the quota system for documentation, had made it possible to reduce the volume of documentation somewhat, the current volume continued to impose a heavy burden on the United Nations budget and on the Secretariat staff. As was known, the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee currently before the Committee had resulted from the decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session[9] to request the Secretary-General to propose criteria which would be helpful to Member States in evaluating the usefulness of records and the kind of record most appropriate for each body. Unfortunately, the Secretary-General's report was confined to consideration of the question of verbatim or summary records of meetings. That question was, of course, very important. As was indicated in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1670, para. 4), the expenditures directly imputable to the preparation of meeting records had reached almost $10 million in 1974. Given the fact that that figure must be increased by about 25 per cent to take account of additional indirect expenditures, the final amount was an impressive $12.5 million.

55. In accordance with the mandate given to him by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General proposed, in paragraph 14 of his report, a number of criteria for determining those United Nations bodies which should be provided with meeting records and the type of record to be provided. After detailed consideration of the proposed criteria, the Advisory Committee recommended that they should be adopted, and noted (A/10299, para. 23) that the magnitude of potential savings to be derived in one year would reach a minimum of $1,963,000. His delegation was prepared to adopt the suggestion of the Advisory Committee that all the proposals made by the Secretary-General should be tried out on an experimental basis in the biennium 1976-1977.

56. His delegation agreed that an effort should be made to reduce the number of bodies for which meeting records were provided. Consideration could be given, for example, to discontinuing records for subsidiary bodies concerned essentially with social or legal questions. On the other hand, it was essential to continue to provide records for subsidiary bodies concerned with political questions, questions relating to the maintenance of peace and security, and disarmament problems.

57. His delegation reserved the right to revert to the matter at a later stage.

58. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) thanked the Secretary-General for his report, which had been submitted pursuant to a decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session requesting the Secretary-General to propose criteria which would be helpful to Member States in evaluating the usefulness of records and the kind of record most appropriate for each body. He congratulated

7 Document A/9444, of 11 December 1973.

* Resumed from the 1726th meeting.

8 See document A/8319 and Corr.1, of 2 June 1971.

9 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 31* and corrigenda, item 78, p. 139.

the Secretariat on its efforts to reduce the cost of the publications and documentation of the United Nations. In that connexion, he would like to put two questions to the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services. He would like to know, first, whether or not the Secretariat continued to publish documents when, because of a failure to observe the six weeks' rule, the relevant item had been automatically dropped from the agenda, in accordance with the decision of the Economic and Social Council at its 1837th meeting on 28 July 1972 concerning the rationalization of the work of the Council and its subsidiary organs.[10] He would also like to know if Council resolution 1623 (LI) of 30 July 1971 was strictly observed and to what extent the reports submitted to the Council were action-oriented.

59. According to criterion 2, the Secretary-General proposed that meeting records should continue to be provided for a limited number of selected subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly discussing matters of substantive importance, but only for meetings at which such items were dealt with. He would like to know which subsidiary bodies the Secretary-General had in mind.

60. In paragraph 27 of its report, the Advisory Committee suggested that all proposals of the Secretary-General should be tried out on an experimental basis in the biennium 1976-1977, and requested the Secretary-General to submit a performance report to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session. His delegation supported that proposal of the Advisory Committee. It was to be hoped, in that connexion, that the Committee on Conferences would play an important role in monitoring the implementation of recommendations adopted with a view to reducing the length of meeting records without impeding the deliberations of the bodies concerned.

61. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy), noting that the volume of documentation and publications was reaching disturbing proportions, expressed the earnest hope that the debate would lead to the adoption without delay of effective measures to check the flood.

62. The 10 criteria for the provision of meeting records which had been proposed by the Secretary-General and endorsed by the Advisory Committee were a step in the right direction and should be adopted immediately, particularly if their implementation could, according to the calculations of the Advisory Committee, achieve savings of almost $2 million in one year. That would mean savings of $4 million for the biennium, at 1975 prices.

63. Yet the Secretary-General's report was concerned only with the problem of meeting records, the cost of which represented but a quarter of the total cost of publications and documentation of the United Nations, which had amounted to $40 million in 1974. In any case, the cost of meeting records was measured not only in dollars, but also in the very heavy burden that the records represented for the Secretariat and delegations themselves, which hardly had the time to read them or the space to file them. In that respect, he agreed with the view expressed by the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services at the 1727th meeting, who felt that the most productive way of settling disputes and adopting constructive decisions was that of informal consultations and negotiations. As stated in paragraph 7 of his report, the Secretary-General himself believed that that was a salutary practice. The fact was that discussions of which no summary records were kept often led to agreement more quickly than formal debates, which were more rigid. It would then merely be a question of placing the consensus on record when it was finally achieved. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that delegations could read a summary of the debate in press releases issued a few hours later, and could also find the substance of the same debate in the Committee's final report to the General Assembly. In those circumstances, was it not a luxury for delegations also to have summary records of the same debate? The Fifth Committee might broaden the scope of criterion 2 suggested by the Secretary-General for the provision of meeting records, whereby such records were envisaged only for subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly; it might itself set an example by limiting the number of items for which it requested summary records. The same idea had been put forward by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania at the twenty-ninth session (1650th meeting), when he had suggested the elimination of summary records for certain agenda items.

64. Turning to other aspects of the problem, he said that the number and length of reports produced by the Secretariat should also be reduced. In that connexion, the fault lay partly with Member States: when they encountered difficulty in solving a problem, they often postponed a decision by requesting the Secretary-General to produce a new report. Sometimes, however, such reports could be written in a much more concise form which concentrated on the substance of the issue. It was absolutely necessary that the strictest control be exercised in future on the length of documents, because of the cumulative effect that even a few more paragraphs or pages could have on the total volume of documentation. The increase in documentation could, of course, be attributed to the increased number of Member States and to the general growth of United Nations activities, but the volume of documentation had reached such proportions that it seriously hampered day-to-day work. Since delegations no longer had the time to read the documents, even less to study them, the adoption of a microfiche system must be approved without delay, since only then would it be possible to store and retrieve documents that might serve in the future as reference material.

65. That technological innovation apart, the Advisory Committee had recommended at the twenty-ninth session—as it recalled in paragraph 6 of its report—that more conventional means of improving the presentation of documents should be explored. Some initiative and imagination in that field were necessary, provided certain standards were maintained. His delegation, for its part, had at the twenty-ninth session (1648th meeting) put forward a few suggestions, such as replacement of the cover page of summary records by two lines containing the number of the Assembly session, the name of the body and the date and number of the meeting; in order to indicate more clearly the subject of the discussion, the key word should appear in

10 See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 1*, p. 24.

bold characters; and, from the thirty-first session, a new way of numbering meetings should be introduced. He wondered why no such measure of simplification had been adopted. The staff of the Department of Conference Services had no doubt an increasingly heavy workload, but perhaps they would help themselves by introducing on their own initiative some streamlining of documentation. In so doing, they would be sure of the support of many delegations.

66. Mr. CARRASCO (Chile) noted that, in his report, the Secretary-General confined himself to the question of meeting records, but that he suggested certain criteria which would make it possible to assess the value of such documents and the type of record most suited to each body. In any case, any action which the Committee might take to limit the volume of documentation was inseparable from the decisions it would take on agenda item 100, relating to the pattern of conferences, after studying the relevant reports. He already noticed, however, that the Secretary-General had taken due account, in his suggestions of the Committee's discussions at the twenty-ninth session as well as of those of the Economic and Social Council which, at its organizational session for 1975, had decided, *inter alia*, (decision 65 (ORG-75), para. *(f)*) to leave its subsidiary bodies greater freedom of choice in their requests for summary records, but at the same time to request them to limit the provision of such records to those items in relation to which records were deemed essential. That decision deserved the Committee's full support.

67. Among the 10 criteria suggested by the Secretary-General in paragraph 14 of his report, criterion 1 was probably the most important. The Secretary-General stated in that connexion that he would pursue "studies of a technical character" concerning the possibility of introducing certain innovations with regard to the issuance of final records to which he had already referred at the twenty-ninth session[11], when he had asked Member States whether they wished a feasibility study to be undertaken on the modernization of the United Nations documentation system. Like the representative of Italy, he felt that a microfiche system should be adopted. In general, any measure should be adopted which made it possible not only to achieve savings but also to rationalize a system which was seriously hampering the United Nations and its Member States.

68. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's suggestions, on condition that the adoption of the criteria for the provision of meeting records did not impair the efficiency of the bodies concerned. Since those suggestions called for a study of the needs of such bodies, a classification of their activities, a choice among subsidiary bodies and an assessment of the cost of preparing meeting records in relation to their importance and the frequency with which they were used, he supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Committee on Conferences should be entrusted with that task. He also supported the Advisory Committee's suggestion that all the Secretary-General's proposals, and not just criterion 5, should be tried out on an experimental basis in the biennium 1976-1977.

11 Document A/9731, of 11 September 1974, para. 10.

69. Mr. NAUDY (France) considered that the question of publications and documentation of the United Nations was by no means exhausted but remained important, and that it was evolving and was capable of being solved, at least partially.

70. First of all, it should be noted that the proliferation of documentation apparently ran counter to the objective of providing information, since it became impossible to study the excessive volume of documents. In addition, such a flood was placing an unnecessary burden upon United Nations finances. Finally, the paradoxical situation obtained whereby documentation was hampering the efficiency of the Organization.

71. Nevertheless, the United Nations had had the courage to tackle the problem and, at its twenty-sixth session, the General Assembly, principally on the basis of an excellent report by the Joint Inspection Unit[12] and the Advisory Committee's recommendations[13], had adopted in its resolution 2836 (XXVI) a course of action which it was still following and which largely consisted in imposing a flat reduction of 15 per cent in the volume of documentation in 1972 as compared with 1970 and in establishing a system of departmental quotas. The results of those decisions, amounting almost immediately to a total saving of $1,250,000, attested to the fact that perseverance and goodwill had not proved in vain. Such action should be continued.

72. Indeed, that was the view taken by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee in their reports, since the application of the proposed remedial measures to reduce the volume of meeting records would result in a saving of about $2 million in 1976. He regretted, however, that the Secretary-General had studied only the question of meeting records, whereas he had been requested to consider the various ways in which all United Nations bodies reported or recorded their proceedings. That should not prevent the adoption forthwith of those proposals, particularly the proposals of the Advisory Committee, which were more far-reaching than those of the Secretary-General, since it was essential to ensure that the savings achieved since 1970 were not offset by the greater volume of meeting records. In 1973, the volume of documentation had been reduced by 27 per cent as compared with 1970; in 1974, the reduction had been only 22 per cent and in 1975 it was likely to be only 20 per cent: that trend must be checked.

73. The Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services, explaining the operation of the quota system at the 1727th meeting, had mentioned two new developments which were of considerable importance. First, there was an increasing tendency, at major conferences, to use more or less informal negotiations in order to find agreed solutions. That was much easier than the old procedure of official debate for which a record was prepared. The Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System itself advocated recourse to that kind of negotiation.[14]

12 See foot-note 8.

13 Document A/8532 and Corr.1 and 2, of 23 November 1971.

14 *A New United Nations Structure for Global Economic Co-operation* (document E/AC.62/9, United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.7), para. 49.

Second, the adoption of modern techniques for the preparation of meeting records would be worth considering. He agreed with the Advisory Committee that the studies in progress should be pursued in order to determine the cost effectiveness of those new techniques.

74. Generally speaking, great perseverance would be needed to avoid jeopardizing the results already achieved. Member States should not themselves encourage spending, and they should understand that the limitation and control of documentation were ultimately undertaken for their benefit and would enable them to discharge their duties more effectively.

75. In conclusion, he asked the Secretariat what its reaction would be if the Committee decided to recommend a reduction in the budget estimates for the provision of meeting records equal to the savings expected from the reforms envisaged. The General Assembly had resorted to that arrangement in resolution 2836 (XXVI).

76. Mr. MURG (Romania) felt that although the Secretary-General confined himself in his report to dealing with the question of the provision of meeting records, he nevertheless showed a concern to liberate resources in a rational manner, to save time and to adopt new techniques, which reflected a comprehensive approach that was not only timely but was calculated to restore the prestige of the United Nations.

77. He supported the criteria suggested by the Secretary-General for the provision of meeting records, but requested that all United Nations bodies and related agencies should, on their side, make a genuine effort to limit systematically the number of pages published, to improve the presentation of documents, to propose reports which provided a synthesis rather than an excess of detail, to end all duplication, and to cease publishing documents of lesser interest.

78. It should be understood that the reduction in the volume of documentation must not impair the provision of documents dealing with substantive activities. In addition, before the criteria recommended by the Secretary-General were applied, the subsidiary organs of the General Assembly should be classified in order to determine the extent to which the importance of the records justified the expenditure involved in their preparation. Like the Advisory Committee he felt that the Committee on Conferences should be entrusted with those tasks, which would not be easy ones.

79. The General Assembly should reaffirm the guidelines which must be followed in order to reduce the volume of documentation and publications, and systematically request all United Nations organs and agencies to give it stronger support in that regard. Moreover, like the Advisory Committee he would like all the proposals of the Secretary-General to be tried out on an experimental basis in the biennium 1976-1977.

80. Mr. MATSEIKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) also regretted that, in his report, the Secretary-General dealt only with the question of meeting records, the provision of which accounted for only a quarter of the total volume of expenses for all United Nations documentation and publications. The Secretary-General did not explain the reason for such a procedure, and he would have preferred the Secretary-General to examine the entire question. He hoped that the Committee would be given a much more detailed study at its thirty-first session.

81. He was in full agreement that the number of meeting records should be limited–provided, however, that such a reduction did not harm the work of the bodies dealing with questions relating to peace-keeping and security, disarmament, decolonization and the elimination of *apartheid*, as well as the solution of the most important economic, social and humanitarian problems. At the twenty-ninth session, some delegations had proposed, *inter alia*, that the General Assembly should draw up a short list of bodies for which meeting records would continue to be provided. His country had endorsed that idea, as well as that of making greater use of technical innovations, and welcomed the fact that in his proposals the Secretary-General had obviously taken account of those debates and also of the decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its spring session in 1975. Among the criteria proposed, he attached particular importance to criteria 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9. The Advisory Committee indicated which criteria would enable the most savings to be made but, apart from that aspect of the question, it was certain that the criteria would all help to reduce the volume of documentation and introduce greater order in that sector. For those reasons, he unreservedly endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation that all the criteria should be tried out on an experimental basis in the biennium 1976-1977.

82. By and large, he approved the Secretary-General's efforts to reduce the volume of documentation, but stressed the need to pursue with still greater vigour the technological studies which had been undertaken.

[See note following paragraph 13 above.]

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.

1732nd meeting

Thursday, 6 November 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1732

AGENDA ITEM 101

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10299, A/C.5/1670)

1. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan) expressed appreciation for the constructive and reasonable proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1670) and for the useful comments made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its related report (A/10299).

2. With regard to the suggested criteria for the provision of meeting records, his delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that, under criterion 1, the Secretary-General should pursue his studies on technological innovations with greater vigour. His delegation endorsed criteria 2 and 3 and, in addition, supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the review and selection exercise should be entrusted to the Committee on Conferences. While the Advisory Committee's suggestion that the proposal in criterion 5 should be applied also to the Main Committees of the General Assembly and the sessional committees of the Economic and Social Council might achieve substantial savings, the experiment might not succeed unless special efforts were made by delegations and précis-writing staff alike. On the whole, however, the benefits of criterion 5 and its further elaboration by the Advisory Committee outweighed the possible drawbacks. His delegation endorsed the suggestions in criteria 6 and 7 and agreed that the question of providing records for the committees of UNCTAD should be reviewed, as suggested in criterion 8. It also endorsed criteria 9 and 10, provided that the suggestion in criterion 9 was not used as a pretext to avoid the holding of conferences and meetings in developing countries. It supported criterion 9 not only because of the savings that would be achieved but also because of the disruption to the other work of an organization that the preparation of meeting records inevitably caused.

3. His delegation was confident that the application of the 10 criteria would bring substantial savings, although it regarded the estimate of some $2 million as rather optimistic. Determined efforts to reduce the flow of documentation would undoubtedly benefit all Member States, particularly those which were unable to maintain large Missions. At the same time the quality of documentation should be improved by the greatest possible attention to brevity, conciseness, relevance and simplicity.

4. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that one very effective way of reducing the volume of meeting records and of increasing efficiency would be to talk less.

5. The meeting records were only part of the documentation problem and the Secretary-General's proposals, although commendable, represented tbe bare minimum as far as reforms were concerned. His delegation fully supported the conclusions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee and suggested that the next step should be to examine more closely the actual needs of the various bodies and subsidiary bodies and to establish more stringent criteria for the provision of verbatim and summary records. The Committee on Conferences had a vital role to play in that regard. His delegation supported in particular the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Secretary-General should be requested to submit a performance report to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session, describing the progress made in the implementation of his 10 criteria and stating the savings which had thereby been achieved.

6. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was in general sympathy with the proposals and recommendations in the well-conceived reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee. While meeting records were convenient for delegations, they were extremely expensive to produce, and his delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that there must be a cheaper way of enabling delegations, particularly the smaller ones, to keep track of the actions of bodies that they were unable to attend. In any case, summary records, even in provisional form, were by no means always issued in time for delegations to keep abreast of proceedings in, for example, the Main Committees of the General Assembly.

7. Turning to the Advisory Committee's suggestions in its report, he noted that the principal recommendation was that criterion 5 should also be applied to the Main Committees of the General Assembly, the sessional committees of the Economic and Social Council, the Trade and Development Board, the Industrial Development Board, the Executive Board of UNICEF, the Governing Council of UNDP and, possibly, the committees of UNCTAD. The savings from issuing the meeting records of those bodies in initial general distribution, subject to the issuance of corrigenda, were estimated at $948,000 altogether. As the Secretary-General pointed out, the main use of meeting records was at or shortly after the session at which they were issued; as the Advisory Committee aptly stated in paragraph 8 of its report, the utility of a system which deprived delegations and the Secretariat of access to corrected meeting records during the period of greatest usefulness of such records was questionable.

8. The Advisory Committee had also suggested that the Committee on Conferences should be entrusted with the task of reviewing the list of subsidiary bodies entitled to meeting records and monitoring the application of the various proposals, which should be implemented on an

experimental basis in 1976-1977. His delegation fully supported those suggestions. It was logical that the Committee on Conferences, which ensured that adequate resources were available for conferences and meetings, should also deal with the provision of meeting records.

9. Another interesting suggestion to reduce the volume of documentation had been made by the representative of Italy (1731st meeting) to the effect that the Main Committees of the General Assembly, led by the Fifth Committee, should consider dispensing with summary records for part of their work, particularly for procedural and organizational business.

10. His delegation agreed with the representative of France who had said *(ibid.)* that any savings likely to be achieved if the Assembly agreed to the Secretary-General's proposals should be reflected in the estimates for 1976-1977; it would like assurances on that point from the Secretariat and would welcome updated estimates.

11. His delegation had reservations about two points in the Secretary-General's proposals. Although the general idea of criterion 6 was pleasing, implementation should await a careful consideration of the full implications. Certain subsidiary bodies of subsidiary bodies, such as the Legal Sub-Committee and Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, did some highly valuable work; moreover, the former performed legal preparatory work which was frequently important to the understanding of the final legal instrument subsequently produced. It might be preferable, therefore, simply to have one general category of subsidiary bodies and to refer the list of all such bodies to the Committee on Conferences; in that way, the needs of each could be considered on their own merits.

12. While his delegation would not object to a review of the question of providing meeting records for closed meetings, it strongly endorsed the Advisory Committee's suggestion in paragraph 24 of its report that the question should be examined in the light of the requirements of the three bodies concerned. For at least one of those bodies, meeting records had proved their worth, since both the participants and the Secretariat staff constantly referred to them.

13. On the wider issue of United Nations documentation in general, he endorsed the remarks of the representative of Italy, namely, that United Nations reports and action documents should be as short as possible, well written and to the point.

14. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that, like many others, his delegation had serious doubts regarding the value and digestibility of the documentation issued. It was undoubtedly necessary to work out methods and criteria for measuring the usefulness of individual publications. Such an analysis would no doubt reveal that many publications were outdated, unnecessary or of marginal interest and could be discontinued or merged with other publications. A constant review of United Nations documentation was all the more necessary when one considered the continuous expansion of the Organization and the frequent establishment of new subsidiary bodies.

15. The tendency towards a proliferation of documentation was exemplified by the seven volumes of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. While the need for comprehensive information could not be disputed, more regard should be paid to the limits of the human mind's ability to read and digest material. Greater selectivity should be shown in, for example, the choice of material for annexes to reports and, wherever possible, the repetition of facts and opinions already stated in existing documentation should be avoided. When asking the Secretariat to prepare reports, committees should give clear guidance as to the character of the report and the range of information expected.

16. The proposals of the Secretary-General concerning meeting records, as modified by the Advisory Committee, were very commendable and should be implemented on an experimental basis in 1976-1977. It was alarming to learn that the savings achieved by the Secretariat thanks to the otherwise successful quota system had been eroded as a result of the increase in meeting records. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the Committee on Conferences should be asked to monitor the application of the Secretary-General's proposals and looked forward to considering the Secretary-General's performance report at the thirty-second session.

17. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) agreed with the representative of the United States of America that the volume of meeting records would be substantially reduced if there was less talk.

18. His delegation hoped that attention could be given to a suggestion that it had originally made at the twenty-ninth session (1650th meeting), namely, that the regular recipients of United Nations documentation should be asked periodically to state their requirements, especially with regard to numbers of copies and languages. The Greek Mission to the United Nations continued to receive, together with indispensable material, some documents that were of no interest to it. Moreover, the number of copies supplied was frequently greater than was necessary.

19. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) requested the Committee to endorse the suggestions made by the Advisory Committee and, in particular, to recommend the adoption of the 10 criteria.

20. The Committee on Conferences should be entrusted in the first instance with the task of achieving a reduction in the volume of meeting records. Subsequently, it might profitably turn its attention to other meeting documentation. In that regard, the Fifth Committee should take into account the interesting comments made by, among others, the representatives of Italy and the Soviet Union.

21. His delegation would like the Secretariat to verify the minimum savings estimated by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 23 of its report, totalling approximately $2 million in direct costs, and to inform the Fifth Committee during its consideration of section 23 of the proposed programme budget, relating to conference and library services, whether the Advisory Committee's calculations were correct. If they were, the estimates for section 23 should be reduced correspondingly.

22. Mr. MINCHEV (Bulgaria) said that the measures recommended by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee were very reasonable and should lead to considerable savings and improved control over the volume of meeting records. The criteria should be tried out and carefully evaluated in order to ensure that the smaller delegations were not hampered in their work by any of the innovations. Subject to that proviso, his delegation was in favour of implementing the Secretary-General's proposals on an experimental basis in the forthcoming biennium.

23. Mr. HART (Australia) noted that the Secretary-General had concentrated on only one aspect of documentation, namely the preparation of meeting records. The Secretary-General should be encouraged to pursue his studies of the possible use of technical innovations in the preparation of meeting records. The use of computerized editing coupled with printing from computer tape was a real possibility for the preparation of the more significant meeting records. His delegation looked forward to considering a report by the Secretary-General on the progress made in implementing that and other innovations.

24. While his delegation believed that the Advisory Committee's recommendations in respect of criteria 2 to 9 should be adopted unless there were compelling reasons to the contrary, it had certain reservations about criterion 6. Where a subsidiary body of a subsidiary body was concerned with the formulation of a convention or other international agreement with legal force, the records of its debates were of permanent value as part of the preparatory work and, as such, would frequently be used to interpret the text of the agreement. Reference to such material was permitted by article 32 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, of 22 May 1969. If records were to be discontinued for such discussions, either reference to the preparatory work would be incomplete or some other approach would have to be developed. Of the nine committees that would be affected under criterion 6 at least three were likely to be concerned with the formulation of an agreement with legal force: the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the *Ad Hoc* Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights. He asked whether the Office of Legal Affairs had been consulted about the impact of depriving legal committees of their records and, if so, what opinion it had expressed. Would the sound recording, which was not necessarily an adequate substitute for a written record, be provided in the various languages or only in the language in which the statement had been made? While not making a formal proposal, his delegation would see value in merging criterion 6 with criterion 2. For the same reasons, his delegation had some difficulty with criterion 9 and suggested that special consideration should be given to subsidiary bodies whose work had legal implications.

25. Despite the foregoing comments, his delegation agreed with both the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on the need to reduce the volume of meeting records. To that end, he suggested that the Committee on Conferences should explore a broader application of the practice of replacing summary records by minutes, already adopted by a number of subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council. His delegation concurred in the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Committee on Conferences was well placed to consider the question of meeting records. Furthermore, subject to solutions being found to the problems he had raised, it agreed that the proposals should be tried out on an experimental basis in the biennium 1976-1977 and that the Secretary-General should be requested to report on their implementation to the Assembly at its thirty-second session.

AGENDA ITEM 99

Joint Inspection Unit: reports of the Joint Inspection Unit *(continued)** (A/C.5/1676, A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1223)

26. Mr. Natwar SINGH (India) said that the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit were of outstanding value. He noted that of the 9 reports listed in paragraph 7 of the Unit's annual report (see A/C.5/1676) only 2 had been initiated by the Unit itself, while all but 1 of the rest had been prepared at the request of the principal organs of the United Nations.

27. Over the years the functions of the Joint Inspection Unit had, of course, broadened; in its previous annual report[1], it had mentioned the difficulties it was encountering because of the increasing demands made upon it by the legislative bodies. His delegation still felt that the Unit should be resorted to only when appropriate, either to study cases of real or suspected deficiencies or where the expected results warranted it and that the Unit's activities should be based as far as possible on a convergence of its views and those of the legislative organs. Naturally the implications of the broadening functions of the Joint Inspection Unit in terms of budget and staff requirements would have to be studied in the context of the general review of the future of the Unit at the thirty-first session.

28. However, there was no need to delay consideration of how best to ensure that full use was made of the Joint Inspection Unit reports. His delegation had noted the comments made in section E of the annual report of the Unit now before the Committee concerning the handling of reports. Indeed, that had been a subject of concern almost since the Unit's establishment, and supplementary arrangements for the handling of the Unit's reports had been considered by various bodies. It was pointed out in paragraph 12 of the report that, while most participating organizations distributed the Unit's reports to all Member States, together with the comments of executive heads and governing bodies, in other organizations the reports went no further than the governing bodies. Yet Member States should see the reports at the earliest possible time and there was no reason why procedures should differ from one organization to another. The procedures approved by the General Assembly in 1970 for the handling of Joint Inspection Unit's reports to make them available to Member States as soon as practicable after issue[2] should be implemented by all organizations in the system. His

* Resumed from the 1729th meeting.

1 See document A/C.5/1598, of 6 September 1974, para. 21.

2 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 28* and corrigendum, p. 120, item 80.

delegation fully endorsed the views on the procedure for examination of the reports within the United Nations expressed by CPC in paragraph 52 of its report on the second part of its third session.[3]

29. Economic and Social Council resolution 1457 (XLVII) of 8 August 1969 provided clear guidelines for the handling of Joint Inspection Unit reports concerning the activities of the United Nations and those guidelines had been endorsed by the General Assembly, *inter alia,* in paragraph 8 of its resolution 2924 B (XXVII).

30. Another problem was the delay between the submission of reports and the comments by executive heads, the delay in the circulation of the reports with those comments and the time-lag between the date of submission of the reports and their consideration by the legislative bodies. While some delay in the comments was inevitable, particularly when the reports concerned several organizations, such delays should be minimal.

31. It was, of course, better to circulate Joint Inspection Unit reports together with the comments of executive heads and governing bodies, so as to present a complete picture. However, lack of timely comments should not be an excuse for delaying or failing to send reports to Member States. For, as the Unit had rightly pointed out, if consideration of a report was delayed too long, the report tended to lose its topical interest and some of its value. His delegation therefore agreed with the view of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions expressed at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly[4] that comments of executive heads should be submitted to intergovernmental bodies not later than three months from the date of receipt of a report. In the case of the United Nations, the Advisory Committee's comments should be made available within three months of the comments of the Secretary-General and, in other organizations, the executive or legislative bodies should consider the reports at the first practicable session after receipt of the executive head's comments.

32. With regard to the Joint Inspection Unit's functions in the field of evaluation, which was an element in all of the Unit's reports, his delegation associated itself with the views expressed in chapter II, section D, of the report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery.[5] While agreeing with the Working Group that CPC should be the intergovernmental focal point for reviewing evaluation reports, it felt that the Unit's evaluation function should and would be increased. While it did not wish to prejudge the issues to be decided in 1976, his delegation would be in favour of increasing the role of the Joint Inspection Unit in the evaluation of programmes and operational functions without prejudice to its basic function of investigation.

33. Finally, referring to paragraph 17 of the annual report of the Joint Inspection Unit concerning the importance of a dialogue between the executives of organizations and the inspectors, he pointed out that such a dialogue was necessary both before and after reports were prepared, so that the misinterpretations referred to in that paragraph would be avoided.

34. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) shared the views expressed by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee at the 1729th meeting–regrettably orally and not in writing–on the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1). Under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII), the report should have included comments on major Joint Inspection Unit recommendations which had not been implemented, together with the reasons therefor. Yet it commented more on those recommendations which were under consideration and dealt very cursorily with recommendations that had not been implemented, such as the reports on how organizations in the United Nations system dealt with the questions of treatment of water resources development, personnel problems and communications. As for the report on the capacity of the regional economic commissions for a unified approach to development, he was surprised that it had even been mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General as it had not yet been considered at all. It was vexing to have to repeat criticism which his delegation had already voiced at the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, but the Secretary-General was still not reporting on major recommendations of the Unit which had not been implemented and the reasons for failure to implement them.

35. The Unit's annual report also suffered from some substantial short-comings. There was no analysis or information on implementation to demonstrate the role of the Unit's recommendations in achieving economies and enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations system. Such information was of interest to delegations and should be included in future reports, not by expanding the reports but by eliminating superfluous material. He shared the concern expressed by other delegations over the unsatisfactory situation with regard to distribution of the reports, described–rather more lengthily than necessary–in paragraphs 11 to 17 of the Unit's annual report. The delay in distributing the reports to Member States meant that much of the value and relevance of the reports was lost.

36. His delegation intended to speak in more detail on the question of the Joint Inspection Unit at the thirty-first session, when the future of the Unit would be under consideration. At the current time, he had simply wished to draw attention to the short-comings in the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit and the Secretary-General.

37. Miss VRECH (Argentina), commending the Joint Inspection Unit for the effective and important work it was doing, welcomed its continuing consultations with the Advisory Committee, the Panel of External Auditors, the secretariats of the participating organizations and more recently the International Civil Service Commission. Her delegation shared the views expressed in the Unit's annual report.

38. In connexion with the report on the decentralization of United Nations economic, social and related activities

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3 *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-seventh Session,* document E/4716/Rev.1-E/AC.51/36/Rev.1.

4 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 8* and corrigendum, para. 77.

5 Document A/10117 and Corr.1, of 17 June 1975.

and the strengthening of the regional economic commissions, she reaffirmed the views her delegation had already expressed at the 1719th meeting during the first reading of section 8 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. She also supported the suggestions made in the reports on the utilization of office accommodation at United Nations Headquarters and at the headquarters of WHO, WMO and ITU, and the suggestions for rational utilization of space. She shared the view expressed by the Unit in its report on the regional structures of the United Nations system that a unified, integrated and concerted approach was needed at all stages of the development assistance process, and felt that the new international order should not be restricted to economic matters in respect of planning, programming, execution and evaluation of programmes and projects at the country level, and then at the subregional and regional levels in order to facilitate co-ordination at the global level.

39. She drew attention to the need to remedy certain short-comings in the current procedures for distributing Joint Inspection Unit reports, so that the value, relevance and correct interpretation of them would not be adversely affected. In that connexion, she supported the suggestions made by the representative of India.

40. She agreed with the representative of the Soviet Union that the report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1 did not explain why certain recommendations had not been implemented. Some method to monitor the implementation of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations was necessary. The Secretary-General should comply with the provisions of paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII) and report annually on those major recommendations of the Unit which had not been implemented, giving the reasons therefor.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see 1718th meeting; A/10008/Add.4, A/10279, A/10280, A/C.5/1688/Corr.1, A/C.5/1701, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1242, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1246)

Financial problems of the United Nations (continued) *(A/C.5/L.1240)*

41. The CHAIRMAN invited delegations which so desired to explain the votes which they had cast at the preceding meeting.

42. Mr. SETHI (India) said that he had voted in favour of the Iranian representative's motion for adjournment of the debate under rule 116 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. When that motion had been rejected, he had voted in favour of the Bulgarian proposal at the previous meeting to adjourn it, which had also been rejected. Accordingly, he had voted against the motion for closure of the debate. When that motion had been adopted, he had abstained in the vote on the Argentine proposal to forward the questionnaire in the note before the Committee (A/C.5/L.1240) to the Secretary-General. He had spoken once in opposition to the motion for closure of the debate to state that, if the proposal was adopted, some delegations might wish to amend or add to the text of that note. For instance, the questionnaire could have included the following questions: If the financial situation of the Organization continued to deteriorate at the current rate, when was it estimated that the normal operations and payment of salaries would stop? How long could that moment be postponed if the Working Capital Fund were increased to $80 million? What were the factors which the Secretary-General had taken into account in recommending that the Working Capital Fund be doubled? Assuming that the Committee on Contributions had examined the question, what conclusions had it reached? To what extent had factors related to inflation and currency instability aggravated the cash flow situation of the United Nations?

43. In his statement opposing the closure motion, he had asked whether adoption of the proposal would involve any financial implications. It appeared that there would be none. Yet at its 1702nd meeting the Committee had been told that just to translate and reproduce the text of a statement by the Controller in all the official languages would cost about $2,000. The work involved as a result of adoption of the Argentine proposal was much more than just translation and reproduction.

44. Although the list of sponsors of the note had been impressive, the proposal might have been adopted by consensus or at least have won greater support, had the Committee not acted in such haste. Rules of procedure should be invoked in a constructive spirit; the invoking of rule 117 at the previous meeting had been a misuse of the rules. In moving the adjournment of the debate, the representative of Iran had said that he was doing so in order that the voice of democracy might prevail. Unfortunately that had not happened and his delegation could only express its regret.

45. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the comments on the financial implications of reproducing texts such as the statement made by the Controller, pointed out that the provision of documents for the Fifth Committee was not considered separately from the provision of conference services in general. Naturally, any decision involving publication of a document had some financial implications, since extra paper and manpower were needed. The adoption of the Argentine proposal would involve minimal costs for manpower, since the work would be done mainly by Secretariat staff in the Professional category, who were not paid overtime. In any case, there were temporary assistance funds provided by the General Assembly for that purpose.

46. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the Argentine proposal. An effective solution to the financial problems of the United Nations would depend on maintenance of sufficient cash flow and balanced liquidity. A remedy was urgently needed since the United Nations was increasingly threatened by bankruptcy, particularly in view of the cash-flow projection for the next six-month period.

47. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote

on the Argentine proposal because it felt that to request the Secretary-General to provide information on the financial problems of the United Nations would merely distract the Secretariat staff from their other responsibilities. Moreover, the information was already available, as the representative of France had pointed out at the preceding meeting, in other United Nations documents. Finally, presentation of such information would do nothing but increase the United Nations expenses, although the Chairman had just explained that only paper and personnel costs would be involved.

48. His delegation shared the concern expressed by other Member States concerning the financial situation of the United Nations and had long ago put forward proposals for solving the problem. It had proposed that expenses for the payment of interest and principal on the United Nations bond issue be excluded from the regular budget, that the Western Powers who held United Nations bonds should waive repayment of the loan, which had been used to finance military operations imposed illegally upon the Organization. It would be unfair to ask the same of the developing countries and the bonds they held should be redeemed through voluntary contributions. Technical assistance expenditure should not be included in the regular budget. Those States which felt that technical assistance should be financed from the regular budget should increase their contribution to the United Nations Development Programme. The currency in which contributions were made should be left to the discretion of the State making the voluntary contribution. Finally, the imposition of strict financial discipline and control of expenditure could help to solve the financial difficulties.

49. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the proposal to forward the questionnaire (A/C.5/L.1240) to the Secretary-General because, even though his delegation had spent much time studying the available documentation and talking with members of the Secretariat in an attempt to understand the latest facts about the short-term deficit, it felt that the problem still required further elucidation. The answers to the questionnaire would provide an admirable basis for a fully up-to-date understanding of the subject and would serve as an invaluable preliminary to constructive negotiations. It should not be assumed that there was no further scope for negotiations simply because previous attempts to solve the problem had failed.

50. In a spirit of conciliation, he suggested that the Committee should consider whether further contributions by the Soviet Republics in non-convertible roubles to section 15 of the budget (Regular programme of technical assistance) should not be spent in the Soviet Union on the objectives of that section 15. That could be one element in a package solution to the short-term deficit. It should not, however, be assumed that his delegation had abandoned its objection of principle concerning section 15, namely, that technical assistance was not a proper expenditure for the regular budget. Because it believed that such new ideas should be explored in negotiations on all aspects of the problem, his delegation had voted for the essential first step, the forwarding of the questionnaire to the Secretary-General.

51. Mr. WHANNOU (Dahomey) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on the proposal to forward the questionnaire. It was opposed to many hasty actions, since they merely led to confusion.

52. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) asked the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management when the Committee could expect to receive the information requested.

53. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the information would be provided as soon as possible.

54. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) recalled that at the 1711th meeting he had asked for a statement on the status of the Working Capital Fund and for an account of the Fund's activities since the beginning, showing the ratio of the Fund to Members' contributions.

55. Mr. ZIEHL (Deputy Controller) said that of the original $40 million of the Working Capital Fund only $600,000 were still available. An account of all the funds from all sources used to finance current expenditure would be provided in the reply to the questionnaire, either together with the other information or in a separate document, for the matter was interrelated with the questions of cash flow and financing of operations.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION I SUBMITTED BY THE THIRD COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10320 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 68* (A/C.5/1680)

56. The CHAIRMAN said that, in his statement (A/C.5/1680), the Secretary-General had indicated that the adoption of draft resolution I submitted by the Third Committee in its report (A/10320, para. 27) would necessitate an additional appropriation in the amount of $10,000 under section 18 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006).

57. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had considered and accepted the Secretary-General's statement of administrative and financial implications.

58. The CHAIRMAN proposed to the Committee that it request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Third Committee, an additional appropriation in the amount of $10,000 would be required under section 18 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

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* Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination:

(a) Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination;

(b) Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;

(c) Status of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: report of the Secretary-General.

59. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy), speaking on behalf of the delegations of the nine States members of the European Economic Community, said that he had no objection to the data and calculations used in the Secretary-General's statement. The nine delegations would, however, have abstained if a vote had been taken on the ground that it was related to the draft resolution against which they had voted in the Third Committee for reasons stated in that Committee.

60. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that in the Third Committee his delegation had opposed the draft resolution linking zionism to racism (A/10320, para. 27, draft resolution III) and had consequently voted against draft resolution I. The sponsors of the former resolution had introduced an extraneous question, thus destroying the consensus on racism and jeopardizing the success of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. It seemed unclear whether the programme of action would be approved by the General Assembly, as some delegations were giving further consideration to the draft resolution, and he consequently considered it premature to earmark funds for it. Had it not been for the draft resolution linking zionism to racism, he would have supported the statement by the Secretary-General.

61. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that he did not question the statement that $10,000 would be required if the draft resolution of the Third Committee were adopted by the General Assembly. He was, however, concerned over the future of the programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination because of the adoption by the Third Committee of a draft resolution linking zionism and racism, which put his Government's participation in question. Had a vote been taken on document A/C.5/1680, his delegation would have abstained.

62. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that his Government had always condemned racism and racial discrimination and had consistently acted accordingly; its policy in that respect would remain unchanged. His delegation had voted in the Third Committee in favour of its draft resolution, but had voted against draft resolution III which had political overtones. If a vote had been taken on document A/C.5/1680, he would have abstained.

63. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that, had a vote been taken, he would have voted in favour of the appropriation in document A/C.5/1680: It was not unreasonable to decide that $10,000 would be required under section 18 if the General Assembly adopted the draft resolution of the Third Committee.

64. Mr. EDWARDSEN (Norway) associated his delegation with the views expressed by the representative of Sweden on the draft resolutions adopted by the Third Committee relating to the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, and on document A/C.5/1680. Had a vote been taken on that document, he would have abstained.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10304 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS 32* AND 33** (A/C.5/1696)

65. The CHAIRMAN said that, in his statement (A/C.5/1696), of the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee in its report (A/10304, para. 14), the Secretary-General had indicated that the adoption of that draft resolution would not give rise to additional appropriations at the current time, but could require supplementary appropriations of up to $16,000 at a later stage.

66. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, as the Secretary-General had indicated in paragraph 6 of document A/C.5/1696, a provision of $194,000 had been included under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) for the space applications programme of work. Of that amount $94,000 had been estimated for 1976. The Secretary-General now indicated that adoption by the General Assembly of the draft resolution of the First Committee would lead to financial requirements for 1976 of $110,000–$16,000 more than the original estimate of $94,000. While the Secretary-General was not requesting additional credits at the current stage, he had indicated that the $16,000 might be required later. The estimates were based on assumed full attendance at the meetings and seminars to be held, and the Advisory Committee accordingly felt that the requirements for the space applications programme of work for 1976 might prove less than was currently estimated. An amount of $100,000 had been estimated for 1977, but as the programme of work was approved annually by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the requirements for 1977 would be reviewed at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

67. The Advisory Committee accordingly recommended to the Fifth Committee that it report to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the First Committee, there would be no additional financial requirements at the current stage.

68. The CHAIRMAN proposed to the Committee that it request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it approve the draft resolution of the First Committee, no additional appropriation would be required at the current time for the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, on the understanding that the Secretary-General would report further, in 1976, on the progress of the space applications programme.

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (A/C.5/L.1225/REV.2)

69. The CHAIRMAN outlined the programme of work of the Committee for the following day; it included the

* International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

** Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

consideration in first reading of section 23 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

70. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) requested the Chairman to arrange for agenda item 100, relating to the pattern of conferences, and section 23 to be considered together.

71. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) drew attention to the fact that the revised programme of work in document A/C.5/L.1225/Rev.2 indicated that item 100 would be considered before the first reading of section 23, a procedure he approved. If the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions was not available, the Committee could consider other items on its agenda first.

72. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the 1727th meeting he had explained that, while he had intended item 100 and section 23 to be considered together, one document–the report of the Advisory Committee on the financial implications of the report of the Committee on Conferences–was not available. Accordingly, he had invited the Committee to take up section 23 on the afternoon of Friday, 7 November, and item 100 on Monday, 10 November.

73. Mr. SETHI (India) said that he had understood that the Advisory Committee would be commenting on the report of the Committee on Conferences. Administrative and financial implications were normally commented on by the Secretary-General on the basis of a decision by a legislative body before being submitted to the Advisory Committee.

74. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee was submitting observations on the report of the Committee on Conferences because that Committee had requested it to do so. The Advisory Committee had no intention of calling into question any recommendation made by the Committee on Conferences, which was an intergovernmental body.

75. Mr. SETHI (India) said that much of the work of the Committee on Conferences could be facilitated by help from the Advisory Committee, particularly as the former had to take decisions on questions which were of a fundamentally financial nature. The draft resolution contained in the report of the Committee on Conferences, approved in great haste by the Committee just before the end of its recent session, did call for comments by the Advisory Committee, but only after certain intermediary steps had been taken; those steps had apparently been omitted.

76. He suggested that the Fifth Committee might consider the report of the Committee on Conferences, which was authorized to report directly to the General Assembly, without waiting for the report on it by the Advisory Committee. It could consider the report of the Advisory Committee once it was available.

77. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) reiterated his earlier observation that the Advisory Committee had taken up the report of the Committee on Conference pursuant to the contents of the draft resolution in that report, which envisaged comments from the Advisory Committee. It was, of course, the prerogative of the Fifth Committee to decide to dispense with the comments of the Advisory Committee on the current or future reports of the Committee on Conferences.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

1733rd meeting

Friday, 7 November 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1733

AGENDA ITEM 101

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10299, A/C.5/1670)

1. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) commended the Department of Conference Services on reducing the total documentation under the control of the Secretariat by 22 per cent in 1974 from the 1970 total. Yet such documentation accounted for only one quarter of all United Nations documentation. Accordingly, he welcomed the current consideration of the control of meeting records, in which the self-discipline of all delegations was essential, and he suggested that consideration should also be given to documentation issued at the specific request of intergovernmental organs and material submitted by delegations.

2. He endorsed the 10 criteria suggested by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1670), as modified by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10299), and suggested that they should be introduced on an experimental basis in January 1976.

3. In connexion with criterion 3, he suggested two additional factors that might be applied in selecting the bodies which would dispense with summary records: summary records could be dispensed with if the membership of a body consisted of experts acting in their individual capacity, and not of representatives of Governments; and also if the purpose of a meeting was primarily to register conclusions or agreements reached rather than to record the process of reaching them. In some cases subsidiary bodies of subsidiary bodies might require meeting records because

of the importance of their drafting work. He suggested that a quota system be instituted permitting the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council to have meeting records for a specific number of items, rather than for all substantive and important items. New and more economical methods for the production and storage of meeting records should be studied. Meeting records of some kind would remain an important instrument of the United Nations, which was essentially a conference and meeting machinery; nothing should be done to impair the proceedings of the Organization, but rationalization and savings which did not impair effectiveness were welcome.

4. More use could be made of informal notes and minutes provided by the substantive department linked to a particular body or committee, not by the Department of Conference Services. Bodies such as CPC, which had summary records and a fairly extensive report, should consider dispensing with summary records. He requested information on potential savings from the elimination of summary records, since that might necessitate fuller reports.

5. He supported the Advisory Committee's suggestion that the Committee on Conferences should be entrusted with the task of reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the Secretary-General's proposals.

6. Mrs. ABELE-EMICH (Austria) supported the criteria for the provision of meeting records listed in paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's report, and the observations of the Advisory Committee in its report. She stressed particularly criteria 5 and 10 and the recommendation to entrust the Committee on Conferences with the task of reviewing and selecting the requirements for meeting records of various committees, provided that it be given a clear mandate to that effect.

7. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that his delegation considered the documentation of the United Nations an integral part of the function of the Organization, which had been created to accomplish its goal through conference diplomacy. Some publications and documents reflected the views of Member States for current and historical use, while others were prepared by the Secretariat at the request of Member States. The Committee should be discussing the most economical way of producing the documents required by the General Assembly and ways and means of reducing the documentation originating from the Secretariat. It should not be discussing proposals that some bodies should dispense with meeting records, for such proposals could originate only from the legislative organs. It was not for the Secretariat to broach such questions under the item under consideration or to give guidance to delegations on how best to fulfil their difficult task as representatives of sovereign States. It was, on the contrary, for the Committee to give guidance to the Secretary-General and his representatives concerning the conduct of their business.

8. The point of departure for the consideration of the item under consideration should be economy, naturally without jeopardizing attainment of the goals set. Savings could be made by simple measures. There was, undeniably, a certain lack of interest in economizing in the United Nations, as evidenced by two recent issues of the *Journal* of the United Nations with as many blank pages as printed pages.

9. Noting that there had been a 27 per cent reduction in documentation under the quota system in 1973, he asked whether there had been a similar reduction in the budget of the Department of Conference Services, whether the budget had remained unchanged and the resources redeployed, or whether the budget had grown at a rate of 30 per cent in spite of the reduction in the workload.

10. He accepted the recommendations and shared the concern of the Advisory Committee reflected in its report. The report, however, was unclear on some questions; for example, under criterion 1 no target date was set for completion of the lengthy procedure of studies on technological innovations.

11. He supported the suggestion made by the representative of Belgium at the 1727th meeting that the savings of approximately $2 million per year resulting from application of the criteria should be reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

12. Mr. Natwar SINGH (India) said that too many documents produced in the United Nations were confusing, imprecise and prolix; every effort should be made to reduce the burden of documentation on Members who received it and on the Secretariat which produced it. His delegation was, in general, in favour of the criteria suggested by the Secretary-General in his report and welcomed the useful comments on them by the Advisory Committee.

13. Under criterion 5, provisional summary records were to suffice, but the import of the words "subject to the issuance of corrigenda to remove serious errors only" was not clear. The problem was more complicated in respect of summary records than in respect of verbatim records, as there could be important differences of emphasis and nuance. Only delegations could judge whether an error was worth correcting. Delegations should submit corrections in keeping with the established procedure, and the various corrections submitted could be compiled in the form of a supplement to the provisional summary records, grouped into consecutive series, with an index to each supplement; those records would thus be the final records. While it was very important that delegations should be able to correct errors in summary records, that should not necessitate a reissue of the records. His suggestion would not substantially reduce the financial savings computed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 13 of its report.

14. While he was impressed by the potential savings to be derived from the application of criterion 6, he suggested that the General Assembly should take into account the views of subsidiary bodies. The criterion might be referred to the Committee on Conferences and the subsidiary bodies concerned invited to communicate their views to that Committee, enabling it to make recommendations to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. If the Committee on Conferences was empowered to deal with questions related to documentation, he hoped that the documents it would receive would be of as high a quality as the excellent report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1670.

15. Referring to the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments at the 1727th meeting, he suggested that more important results in international negotiations could be achieved by détente and a spirit of conciliation than simply by reducing the number of meetings and meeting records. The increase in the total number of meetings over the past few years had been matched by an increase in the resources used. The real growth rate for conference services had been estimated by the Secretary-General at 5.9 per cent, while the increase in estimates for the biennium 1976-1977 over the revised appropriations for the preceding biennium was almost 30 per cent. The Under-Secretary-General had referred to the informal negotiations during the seventh special session of the General Assembly, but such negotiations were continuously under way in the United Nations. Members of the Organization were negotiating not because they were already in agreement but because they had to reach agreement on questions that divided them. He requested information on the statistics of meetings at the sixth special session to facilitate a comparison between the procedures at the sixth and seventh special sessions.

16. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), commending the Department of Conference Services on its work, welcomed the report of the Secretary-General and the 10 criteria proposed, which demonstrated a praiseworthy desire to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations. His delegation, as a member of the Committee on Conferences, was well aware that the Department of Conference Services was doing its best to be of assistance to delegations. The increase in resources required was due to an increase in activities.

17. He drew attention to the difficulty experienced by some newer Members of the United Nations in obtaining documentation published prior to 1960 on important items still on the agenda of the General Assembly. He requested the Department of Conference Services to assist in that matter, possibly by reissuing the relevant documents.

18. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that his delegation was convinced that, in order to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations system, documents and publications must be issued in a timely manner. The report of the Secretary-General contained valuable information and proposed useful criteria. However, the Committee's task of reviewing and evaluating the situation would be easier if all the technical studies requested by the General Assembly at the twenty-ninth session were completed so that the Committee could take all the factors into consideration. Accordingly, his delegation agreed with the suggestion in paragraph 27 of the Advisory Committee's report that all the proposals should be tried out on an experimental basis in the biennium 1976-1977.

19. His delegation in principle endorsed the 10 criteria for the provision of meeting records proposed by the Secretary-General. His delegation was in favour of expanding the microfiche programme and increasing the use of computerized methods as proposed in criterion 1, but would first like to know when the technical studies would be completed and what would be the financial implications of implementation of that criterion. It would also like to know what was the relationship between the Department of Conference Services and the Administrative Management Service in that area. Although, as the Advisory Committee pointed out in paragraph 7 of its report, the potential savings of introducing microfilm were substantial, the comparison it had made did not take into account the cost of the equipment needed to produce and use records in microfiche. He therefore asked what would be the cost of that equipment both for the Secretariat and for the average Permanent Mission.

20. Finally, referring to the Advisory Committee's statement in paragraph 8 of its report that the traditional method of producing final records in printed form led to delays, he wondered whether any study was being conducted of that question.

21. Mr. CAREW (Sierra Leone) said that it had come as a shock to learn that, in producing meeting records, the United Nations had spent $40 million in 1974, and had used 2,190 tons of paper. His delegation felt that the Organization should set an example by introducing measures to make more efficient use of paper.

22. His delegation endorsed whole-heartedly the recommendation by the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General should pursue with great vigour his studies on technological innovations. Consideration should be given to the adoption of the microform technique or to some other similar system offering the same kind of advantages in terms of savings and efficiency. The suggestion made by the representative of Italy (1727th meeting) to the effect that delegations should hold informal discussions in order to reduce the number of draft resolutions, draft decisions and amendments on a given item also deserved the closest attention. That approach would unquestionably lead to a saving of both man hours and paper and, if adopted by the Fifth Committee, might be copied in other Committees.

23. In conclusion, he endorsed the criteria proposed by the Secretary-General and also the observations of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 25 to 27 of its report.

24. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) read out the text of a draft resolution.[1]

25. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) explained that, in confining his report to meeting records, the Secretary-General had faithfully followed the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 2303rd plenary meeting, during the twenty-ninth session.[2] The various categories of information requested in that decision were provided in the annexes to the Secretary-General's report. When the representative of Brazil had insisted at the twenty-ninth session (1648th meeting) that the Secretary-General should draw up a list of criteria which would be helpful to Member States in evaluating the usefulness of records and the kind of record most appropriate for each body, he himself had been hesitant since—as the representative of Iran had pointed out—he believed that it was not the business of the Secretariat to tell United Nations bodies what they should or should not do.

1 Subsequently issued as document A/C.5/L.1249.

2 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 31* and corrigenda, item 78, pp. 138 and 139.

26. The Secretariat had refrained from issuing a progress report on the quota system because it seemed paradoxical to produce a document about limiting documentation.

27. The representative of the Philippines had asked, at the 1731st meeting, whether the Economic and Social Council was enforcing strictly its decision to abandon the consideration of items for which the six-week rule concerning documentation could not be applied. That decision had been applied on occasions in 1974 and 1975. However, the somewhat frequent dislocations in the documentation programme caused by special meetings and conferences had meant that much of the documentation for the sessions of the Council had not been prepared in time to comply with the six-week rule; nevertheless, many of those items had been maintained on the Council's agenda. The representative of the Philippines had also asked whether there had been compliance with the Council's decision that reports by the Secretariat should be limited to 32 pages and should be action-oriented. Although in some cases the rule had been waived, in general it had been complied with. The representative of the Philippines had wanted to know whether the application of criterion 2 would result in depriving of summary records subsidiary bodies which dealt with such economic questions as the review and appraisal of the Second United Nations Development Decade. In accordance with current entitlements, the Committee on Review and Appraisal received summary records when it was discussing substantive matters. As far as a review of the requirements of committees was concerned, both the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee were in agreement in proposing that the task should be entrusted to the Committee on Conferences. That proposal had been incorporated in the draft resolution that the representative of the Philippines had just read out.

28. Certain criticisms voiced in respect of modernization were only partly true. The Secretariat was studying the application of modern technology to the production of documentation. However, delegations were not always kept informed of the latest efforts in that respect. New techniques were being used to produce United Nations publications. For example, *Commodity Trade Statistics* appeared in a much slimmer new format and was produced by new technology; each page contained one third more data and the annual savings amounted to $40,000. The *Directory of international statistics* was produced by photo type-setting with a 25 per cent reduction in cost. The *Yearbook of the United Nations* had been reduced in size by 316 pages thanks to computerized type-setting, a technique that generated savings of $12,000 per year.

29. While economy was one of the Secretariat's aims, speed of production and usability of the publication or document were also of primary importance. The Secretariat was hoping to be able to introduce a streamlined and time-efficient process for documentation from the time it left the author until it reached the user. The savings that could be achieved by microform and sound recording techniques were very attractive. However, unless Governments and Missions were prepared to switch to modern information techniques, there was little point in going ahead with them. In 1974, only some $20,000 of microfiche had been sold and for the first nine months of 1975 the figure was approximately $21,000. The delegations of Algeria, Brazil, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and a few others were prepared to make the change, but the majority of delegations were not. The maintenance of old techniques along with the introduction of modern ones was expensive.

30. The representative of Italy had called for other methods of streamlining documentation. The Secretariat intended to introduce a new system of numbering documents, beginning on 1 January 1976. The suggestion concerning the use of different mastheads would give rise to high printing costs and might prove confusing. The Secretariat kept constantly in mind the need to save money and paper. The blank sheets sometimes found in the *Journal of the United Nations* were a result of the paste process, which was less expensive than the manual stapling process.

31. He fully subscribed to the comments concerning the need for more concise reports and would do his best to see that they were respected. However, brevity was not always welcomed by all. For example, the body of the Secretary-General's report on publications and documentation (A/C.5/1670) took up some 3½ pages in English; the bulk of the report consisted of the annexes providing the information requested by the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee had found it necessary to produce an eight-page report to analyse the Secretary-General's report and still more information was being sought. The Secretariat was in something of a dilemma: should it aim to provide in the first instance all the information that delegations might need or should it restrict the size of reports to a minimum and supply further information as specific requests were made?

32. He drew attention to an error on the part of the Secretariat: the United Nations conference centres referred to in paragraph 21 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10299) should of course include Vienna.

33. In reply to a question put by the representative of Australia at the 1732nd meeting, he said that the Secretariat had not consulted the Office of Legal Affairs in connexion with criterion 6 because it was confident that no proposal would be made which would limit the usefulness and importance of United Nations treaties or agreements. Moreover, in recent years, much of the work of elaborating agreed principles for treaties had been performed in informal meetings. That was certainly true of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. A major responsibility in that respect rested with the Rapporteurs of the bodies which worked out legal agreements.

34. In reply to another question put by the representative of Australia, he said that the sound recordings of meetings of subsidiary bodies were currently made in the language used by the speaker. However, the United Nations had equipment which could produce sound recordings in all the languages of interpretation.

35. The representatives of France (1731st meeting) and Belgium (1727th meeting) had requested the Secretariat to reflect the anticipated savings from the application of the criteria, should they be approved by the General Assembly, in the budget estimates for 1976-1977. When providing the figures shown in paragraph 23 of the Advisory Committee's

report, the Secretariat had pointed out that they were tentative estimates based on the calculated costs given in the Secretary-General's report. The Secretariat assumed that, if the Assembly approved the criteria, it would request other organs to follow suit. There would clearly be some time-lag in the implementation of the proposals. Moreover, most of the calculated costs related to the value of a portion of staff time. The reduced workload would release staff for other duties but was difficult to quantify in terms of reduced budget estimates.

36. He urged the Committee to spell out its decisions with the greatest clarity so that the Secretariat would not encounter difficulties. He cited as an example the request of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Charter of the United Nations that the statements made by delegations should be annexed to its report. The thrust to reduce the size and proliferation of documents must come from delegations; the Secretariat's powers in that respect were limited. Yet it was clear that the bulky documentation was becoming more and more indigestible. Should not some way be found of reducing the flow of paper?

37. The representative of Greece, at the 1732nd meeting, had urged the Secretariat to pay greater attention to the stated needs of Missions. A request for details of documentation requirements had been sent to all the Missions in August 1975.

38. The Secretariat was concerned to learn of the problems encountered by the delegation of Algeria in respect of older documents. Such documents were increasingly being transferred to microfiche. It was hoped in 1976 to finalize a study on documentation with a view to reducing expenses and making documentation more easily retrievable.

39. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany), referring to the comments made by the Under-Secretary-General regarding the Secretariat's dilemma, said that, if the Secretariat was asked to effect economies, the General Assembly should be asked to do so too. Many statements advocating economy were invalidated when a Committee requested the Secretariat, as often happened, for new reports. His delegation had not spoken on the item earlier simply because previous speakers had already said almost all that could be said on the substance of the matter.

40. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece), referring to his statement at the previous meeting, said that it had been pointed out to him that a distinction should be made between documents of the regular sessions of the General Assembly—which were distributed according to delegations' replies to a special questionnaire sent to them at the beginning of each session—and other documents. The Department of Conference Services had been technically correct to send his mission 14 copies of document A/10299, since it fell within one of the broad categories of documents which his delegation had asked to receive. However, had the questionnaire asked for further details regarding numbers of copies, his delegation could have said that 7 copies of that document would suffice. The questionnaire should therefore be much more detailed.

41. Documents not related to regular sessions were distributed according to lists of requirements which were not up to date. He understood that a comprehensive questionnaire was being prepared and would be circulated in January and he hoped that account would be taken of his comments in its preparation. Consideration could also be given to the idea of enabling delegations to return surplus documents and to the introduction of stricter limitations on the maximum number of copies which delegations could receive. There should also be more co-operation between the Department of Conference Services and other Secretariat departments to determine what documents were of sufficient importance to warrant being reproduced in greater quantities. For instance, documents on political issues were frequently in very short supply.

42. Finally, he commended the Department of Conference Services for its over-all contribution to the drive for economy.

43. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom), referring to criterion 6 in the report of the Advisory Committee, asked whether that criterion would be applied inflexibly or whether each case would be considered on its merits.

AGENDA ITEM 103

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly *(continued)*:* *(e)* United Nations Administrative Tribunal (A/10155, A/C.5/1702)

44. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the two notes by the Secretary-General before the Committee: one (A/10155) indicating that the terms of office of Mr. Francisco Forteza and Mr. Zenon Rossides would expire on 31 December 1975; the other (A/C.5/1702) stating that, on the one hand, nominations for the reappointment of Mr. Forteza and Mr. Rossides had been received from the Governments of Uruguay and Cyprus, respectively, and that, on the other hand, the Government of Hungary had nominated Mr. Ustor for appointment to a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 1976. Members could, however, vote for anyone they pleased. He assumed that the Committee wished to hold the election under rule 94 of the rules of procesure of the General Assembly.

At the request of the Chairman, Mr Al-Zaid (Kuwait) and Mr. Rhodius (Netherlands) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	102
Invalid ballots:	3
Number of valid ballots:	99
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	98
Required majority:	50

Number of votes obtained:

Mr. Francisco Forteza	68
Mr. Endre Ustor	57
Mr. Zenon Rossides	46
Two other persons	2

Mr. Forteza (Uruguay) and Mr. Ustor (Hungary) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended their appointment as members of the United

* Resumed from the 1726th meeting.

Nations Administrative Tribunal for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1976.

45. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly on the matter.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 97

Review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets: report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery *(concluded)**

* Resumed from the 1719th meeting.

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1244)

46. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report (A/C.5/L.1244), recalled that the Committee had decided that a summary of the debate on that agenda item should be reflected in its report. He drew attention to paragraph 10, which indicated the summary records to be referred to for all other comments on the item.

47. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would assume that the Committee adopted the draft report.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

1734th meeting

Friday, 7 November 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1734

AGENDA ITEM 103

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly *(continued)*: *(e)* United Nations Administrative Tribunal *(concluded)*

1. Mr. HALÁSZ (Hungary) thanked the delegations which had voted at the preceding meeting to appoint Mr. Ustor to membership in the United Nations Administrative Tribunal. The election demonstrated the equitable application of the principles of geographical distribution and rotation among the regional groups.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)** **(A/9854 and Add.1, A/10006 and Add.1, A/10008 and Corr.2, A/10008/Add.1-5, A/10279 and Add.1, A/10280 and Add.1, A/C.5/1669, A/C.5/1671, A/C.5/1673-1675, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1678, A/C.5/L.1679, A/C.5/1681, A/C.5/1682, A/C.5/1685, A/C.5/1686, A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1692, A/C.5/1699, A/C.5/1701, A/C.5/L.1226, A/C.5/L.1229-1233, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.3, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/1247)**

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)*

SECTION 15. REGULAR PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

2. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General requested in section 15 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) an amount of $20,399,000 and that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its related report (A/10008 and Corr.2) had recommended no reduction in that amount. The Fifth Committee must therefore take a decision on the amount requested by the Secretary-General.

3. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that his delegation had always voted in favour of the appropriations requested for the regular programme of technical assistance in the belief that the inclusion in the regular budget of a technical assistance programme was in keeping with certain essential functions of the United Nations as defined in Article 55 of the Charter and with the principle of collective responsibility in that field enunciated in Article 56. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of the amount requested by the Secretary-General. However, it wished to point out that it would be better to call the programme a programme for "technical co-operation", since the responsible unit henceforth would be the Office of Technical Co-operation. Furthermore, donor countries should not, on the pretext that the regular budget included an appropriation for technical assistance, deem themselves free from the obligation to make increasing voluntary contributions to the various organs which executed technical assistance programmes.

4. Referring to table 15-4 of the proposed programme budget, he said he was surprised that the Secretary-General was requesting $500,000 more than the appropriation for the preceding financial period for industrial development when UNIDO would have its own budget. Moreover, like the Advisory Committee (*ibid.*, para. 15.5), he did not understand why the Secretary-General departed from past practice and included in section 15 an amount for projected inflation costs in 1976-1977, whereas, in keeping with the practice, he had not included any provision for inflation in

* Resumed from the 1732nd meeting.

** Resumed from the 1731st meeting.

1975 over 1974 when arriving at the necessary figure for "the maintenance of 1974-1975 programmes at 1975 rates".

5. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that his Government supported the United Nations regular programme of technical assistance, although it had long opposed funding the programme from the assessed contributions of Member States. The activities carried out under the programme should be transferred to UNDP and other voluntary funds. Assessed contributions should be used to finance the administration of the Organization and activities of common benefit to all Member States. Assistance programmes which benefited only some countries should be funded through voluntary contributions, thus permitting each country to determine for itself the amount of its own resources which should be applied to those purposes. The funding of technical assistance activities multilaterally could be detrimental to the United Nations, as it might endanger its future ability to carry out other activities of common interest. For those reasons, his delegation would vote against the requested appropriation for section 15.

6. He wished to add, however, that, its decision in that regard notwithstanding, his country paid its contributions in respect of the regular programme of technical assistance in full and in convertible currency.

7. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that her country had always believed, and continued to believe, that the United Nations regular budget was intended to cover the administrative expenses of the Organization. Technical assistance programmes were financed from voluntary funds, of which there were many, and France lent its full support, in particular to UNDP. Her delegation therefore could not support the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General and considered it all the more unfortunate that the amount requested for 1976-1977 was higher than that for the preceding financial period.

8. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), referring to the additional amount for regional and subregional services requested by the Secretary-General for ECWA, asked what formula could have been applied to achieve the reallocation of credits which the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 15.3 of its report, noted could have been an alternative to the request for additional funds.

9. He was very surprised that delegations had objections to a technical assistance programme that was nevertheless an integral part of a general effort to assist the developing countries, which were notoriously short of resources. Delegations which objected to the regular programme of technical assistance on grounds of principle invoked the existence of UNDP, which was in fact the principal organ for multilateral technical assistance. However, the future of UNDP could hardly be deemed a bright one when it was borne in mind that the total contributions from the major donor countries had decreased substantially in 1974-1975, that some of those contributions were made in currencies which were not easily utilizable and that at the recent Pledging Conference on UNDP, the 15 per cent growth target envisaged for the Programme had only barely been reached. Accordingly, if the developing countries were not to be seriously endangered, principles invoked should be applied only with some flexibility.

10. Mr. LELIKI (Sweden) agreed that voluntary contributions in 1973 and 1974, including payments to UNDP, were not very encouraging, and that the increase in the amounts pledged at the 1975 Pledging Conference on UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund would seem only enough to meet the anticipated effects of inflation for 1976.

11. The unwillingness of many Member States to share the costs of assistance programmes financed by voluntary contributions was the reason why his delegation favoured the continued inclusion in the regular budget of an appropriation for technical assistance. Moreover, under that section, the Secretary-General had, as usual, requested a comparatively modest amount, representing only one fifth of the total contribution of over $100 million that Sweden alone had pledged to UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund for 1976 and 1977. However, the importance of the regular programme should not be measured by its cost; it was more important that a programme of technical assistance should be financed by all Member States in accordance with their capacity to pay, even if for a majority of Member States that meant only $2,000 a year. Another important factor was the composition of the regular programme–economic and social development, public administration, human rights advisory services, narcotic drugs control, regional and subregional advisory services and industrial development. All those components were of great importance in the United Nations global system for economic, social and industrial development, as long as they maintained their own identity and did not duplicate other activities.

12. According to paragraph 15.2 of the Advisory Committee's report, an additional amount of $500,000 was to be devoted to special measures in favour of the least developed countries. That was another reason for the continued inclusion of an appropriation for technical assistance in the regular budget, and indeed for a higher appropriation.

13. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that his country had for long been opposed to the inclusion in the budget of the regular programme of technical assistance, because it believed that those activities should be financed by voluntary contributions and that the assessed contributions of Member States should be used only to cover the administrative expenses of the Organization. His delegation could not, therefore, approve the appropriation requested under section 15, but he wished to make clear that the United Kingdom would nevertheless continue to pay in full that part of its contribution which went to the regular programme of technical assistance, in strict accordance with Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations. It would, moreover, continue to pay in fully convertible currency.

14. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, under the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter, the regular budget covered only the expenses of the Organization; it should not, therefore, be used to finance technical assistance activities, for which only voluntary contributions could be employed. The Soviet

Union, for its part, devoted very sizable resources every year to technical assistance activities for the benefit of developing countries. Consideration should be given to asking those countries which did not wish to contribute to the regular programme of technical assistance, and which deducted the amount involved from their assessments, to increase their contribution to UNDP by the same amount.

15. The question of the currency in which countries paid voluntary contributions for technical assistance activities should be left to the discretion of the countries themselves. However, if section 15 continued to appear in the regular budget, the Soviet Union would pay in roubles that part of its contribution to the United Nations Budget which went to the regular programme of technical assistance. It would vote against the appropriation requested under section 15.

16. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said he would like to point out, as the Secretary-General had also done (A/10006, para. 15.1), that the regular programme of technical assistance complemented assistance available to developing countries under other programmes, and that the programme had always existed precisely to compensate for the inadequacies found in other areas of technical assistance. The regular programme was not a matter of charity or alms, as programmes financed by voluntary contributions were, and that was what made it particularly valuable. The misgivings about it were groundless. It might not be perfect in its programming details, but in that case all that was needed was a change of emphasis, with appropriations being distributed differently; in any event, it should not be removed from the regular budget.

17. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that he entirely agreed with the representative of Algeria. The regular programme of technical assistance was too important to the developing countries to be abolished. Those countries should not be totally dependent on voluntary contributions.

18. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) said that he supported the regular programme of technical assistance. He appreciated that it was difficult for countries which wanted to adhere strictly to the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter to do likewise, but the programme was clearly too important to the developing countries to cease being included in the regular budget.

19. Mr. SETHI (India) said that he did not agree with the interpretation of the Charter given by some representatives. From the beginning, the United Nations had assumed certain responsibilities particularly towards developing countries, in order to rectify inequalities and injustices which were the result of history. For that reason, the Organization, in behalf of those countries, made an effort which was obligatory for Member States and was not simply a matter of charity. The regular programme of technical assistance must therefore be supported for its symbolic significance. The fundamental freedoms referred to in Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Charter included economic and social freedom; it could therefore be said that the obligations of Member States in that regard were set forth in the Charter.

20. It was all the more regrettable that the regular programme, which had already been only of a token nature, continued to shrink in real value because of inflation and currency instability. He would have liked to see a planned growth for that programme at least equal to the average growth of all programmes.

21. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia) pointed out that it was owing to a combination of circumstances beyond their control that countries like Indonesia, which were among the least developed countries, found themselves in that situation. It was therefore very painful for them, where technical assistance was concerned, constantly to have to ask for alms. There were, of course, agencies other than the United Nations itself which implemented programmes of technical assistance, but it was wrong to say that the regular programme was an unnecessary addition to those programmes. Some countries expressed justifiable reservations as to the procedure to be followed in delivering that technical assistance, but, inasmuch as the General Assembly had issued guidelines on the subject, why should it be necessary to revert to it?

22. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said, in reply to the request for information made by the representative of the Philippines, that the "additional $380,000 for regional and subregional services" (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 15.3) represented the only element of real growth in the regular programme of technical assistance. The Secretary-General had been in no way obliged, in implementing General Assembly resolution 2803 (XXVI), to request an additional amount for a new regional commission, namely, ECWA, because he could have allocated that Commission its share by reducing the allocations to all the other commissions. But he had not wished to decrease the share of the other commissions, because of the decisions of the General Assembly in favour of maintaining the regular programme of technical assistance at the same level.

23. The maintenance of the programme at that level should be understood in terms of real value. In reply to the representative of India, he said that in those terms there had been no decrease; the estimate was larger than the appropriation for the preceding financial period because, apart from the additional amount requested for ECWA, the effects of inflation had been taken into account. However, the rate of growth of the programme–approximately 2 per cent–actually remained lower than the average growth rate because the General Assembly had decided to maintain the programme at the same level, which precluded any growth in real value.

SECTION 23. CONFERENCE AND LIBRARY SERVICES (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

24. The CHAIRMAN noted that the Secretary-General, in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), had requested an amount of $105,824,000 for section 23 and that, in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 23.38), the Advisory Committee had proposed a reduction of $1,813,000. The Advisory Committee had also proposed a reduction of $2,400 for representation allowances in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report. Furthermore, the reduction proposed by the Advisory Committee for reclassification of posts amounted to $19,000 for the biennium. Therefore the total amount recommended by the Advisory Committee for section 23 was $103,989,600 for the biennium 1976-1977.

25. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, to correct an error in the computation of the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General for the Publishing Division, the total requested for section 23 should be reduced by $425,000 to $105,399,000. The actual estimates were thus $24,094,000–or 29.6 per cent–higher than the adjusted revised 1974-1975 appropriations. Real growth for the section was estimated by the Secretary-General at 5.9 per cent, which was higher than that for the budget as a whole. Moreover, as could be seen from paragraph 23.2 of the Advisory Committee's report, the cost of conference services budgeted elsewhere in the programme budget totalled $43.3 million.

26. In its examination of section 23, the Advisory Committee had encountered a number of difficulties, due partly to various errors in the documents submitted to it and also to the structure of section 23 itself. The method of presentation was different for Geneva and New York. For example, the Secretary-General had, for Geneva, attempted to submit workload statistics (table 23-35 in the proposed programme budget), but there were no comparable workload statistics for New York. Statistics on the production of documentation and records of meetings and on interpretation services had just been submitted to the members of the Committee in a note by the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments and circulated as a conference room paper[1] but the Advisory Committee had not yet had time to consider them in depth. Requirements for temporary assistance under section 23 had been consolidated for Geneva (except for UNCTAD in section 11), but not for New York. Lastly, in paragraph 23.4 of its report, the Advisory Committee referred to the lack of statistical data in the proposed programme budget on workload expected for 1976-1977 in comparison with the current biennium. The Committee was quite aware that it was not possible to produce data which were faultless. It did believe, however, that there was room for improvement in the current method of budget presentation and it accordingly urged the Secretary-General to increase his efforts with a view to eliminating the short-comings pointed out by the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee also believed that there was a need for closer co-operation between New York and Geneva so that established posts and other related conference services could be utilized in the most efficient and economical manner.

27. In terms of staff, section 23 had the largest establishment in comparison with other individual sections of the programme budget. In the current biennium the number of established staff stood at 1,978. The Secretary-General had proposed the addition of 227 new posts to that establishment. Of those, 109 were in the Professional and higher categories and 118 in other levels. The Advisory Committee had recommended the acceptance of 176 additional posts, or a reduction of 51 posts in the number requested by the Secretary-General. However, included in the 51 posts which the Committee had not accepted were 10 posts which the Committee suggested, in paragraph 23.11 of its report, should be financed from credits available for vacant posts in the Department of Conference Services. The Advisory Committee had arrived at that conclusion after considering the Secretary-General's request that the number of interpretation teams at Headquarters be increased from 7 to 11. In view of the vacancy situation in the Department of Conference Services, together with the added difficulty normally associated with the recruitment of qualified interpreters, the Advisory Committee thought the best course would be to allow the teams to be raised from the current number of 7 to 10 in 1977. If it was found that the Secretary-General needed an eleventh team, it could be recruited, but its financing would be in the manner presented in paragraph 23.11 of the report of the Advisory Committee. In addition, the Committee had accepted the Secretary-General's request for an additional interpretation team for Geneva. Thus, the reductions made by the Committee in the staff requests were small compared to the over-all manning table for section 23. A look at the various proposals in paragraph 23.26 of the Committee's report would indicate that the reductions in staff recommended by the Committee were suggested because the Committee felt that either a case had not been made for the granting of all the requests or that there was a need to practise economy and maximize productivity of existing staff. With regard to the request for 14 additional posts for the Stenographic Pool, the Advisory Committee had noted that, according to table 23-35 of the proposed programme budget, the workload in 1976-1977 was expected to remain the same as that for 1974: it therefore could not approve the establishment of those posts. Similarly, in paragraph 23.27 of its report the Committee recommended that, of the requested 24 posts at the General Service level only 12 posts should be approved, in view of the trend in the workload data provided in paragraph 23.67 of the proposed programme budget.

28. For the reasons explained in paragraphs 23.18 and 23.19 of its report, the Advisory Committee had recommended non-acceptance of an amount of $15,000 requested for consultants, and a reduction of $74,000 in the credits requested for temporary assistance. The Committee had accepted 4 out of 7 posts requested under departmental administration (A/10006, paras. 23.41-23.48), but was unable to endorse 1 G-5 post whose assignment was not specified, and 1 P-4 and 1 G-4/1 post, because it thought that the areas to which those posts were to be assigned should be able to handle the extra amount of work with the posts recommended by the Advisory Committee.

29. In summary, and bearing in mind the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on reclassification of posts and representation allowances, the effect of the Committee's proposals on section 23, after taking into account the error of $425,000 in the estimates for the Publishing Division, would be to reduce the Secretary-General's initial estimates by $1,834,400.

30. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he had understood that it had been agreed at the 1727th meeting that the Committee should not embark on a first reading of section 23 until it had the report of the Committee on Conferences. That Committee was supposed to make recommendations on the use of the conference servicing capacity, and its report was therefore essential background material for the consideration of section 23. Accordingly his delegation would not participate in the discussion of that section until it had the report of the Committee on Conferences.

[1] Document A/C.5/XXX/CRP.5, of 5 November 1975.

31. Mr. SETHI (India) suggested that the Committee should reconsider the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences simultaneously with section 23 of the proposed programme budget. The section could be considered in connexion with agenda item 100, concerning the pattern of conferences.

32. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) agreed with the suggestion made by the representative of India. Algeria, which was a member of the Committee on Conferences, was well aware that the pattern of conferences and section 23 could not be considered separately.

33. The CHAIRMAN said that the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences would certainly have implications regarding the use of the conference servicing capacity. For its consideration of section 23 the Committee would, however, have the explanations provided by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and those to be provided by the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments. In any event, it did not yet have to take a decision on the amount to be approved under section 23. The suggestion made by the representative of India currently presented some problems, which the Committee could consider when it took up the question of organization of work. Since one delegation had indicated its intention of speaking on that question, he proposed that the Committee should proceed with the first reading of section 23.

It was so decided.

34. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) said that, in view of the size of the budget under section 23, he wished to explain how the Secretariat had drawn up the estimates. It had been decided not to request an increase in the Secretariat's capacity to handle documentation and it was hoped to absorb any increase in documentation by means of improved organization. That statement might seem surprising in view of the fact that 99 of the 149 new posts requested were in that area, but 89 of those posts represented the assumption by the regular budget, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3190 (XXVIII) of the Arabic services currently financed from a trust fund, and a further 3 posts were required in order to bring the Chinese services up to the level required to comply strictly with the rules of procedure. The remaining 7 posts were in various document-handling areas such as registration, reproduction and distribution where, as a result of increased language coverage, it was now necessary to distribute five or six pages for every page received. The Advisory Committee had recommended approval of 98 out of those 99 posts.

35. With regard to the United Nations Office at Geneva, 59 out of 62 new posts requested had been financed for a number of years from temporary assistance funds. The Secretariat had accepted the Advisory Committee's reduction in the number of posts, but, if future statistics of the Geneva workload confirmed that those posts continued to be required, a further submission would be presented to the General Assembly at an appropriate time.

36. With regard to the remaining additional 50 posts requested for Headquarters, 40 were to provide interpretation for the growing number of formal, and, even more, informal meetings. Interpretation assignments had continued to rise, as indicated by the fact that the number of man-days worked by free-lance interpreters at Headquarters, excluding the period of the General Assembly, had risen from 311 in 1971 to 965 in 1974. Over the first 25 years of the Organization's existence, the practice had been to limit permanent linguistic staff to the minimum necessary to guarantee a certain level of servicing of meetings and documentation and to recruit free-lance staff from the temporary assistance fund to meet unexpected demands. However, the regular calendar of meetings of the United Nations and other organizations within the United Nations system had become more difficult to manage and more unpredictable: meetings were cancelled and informal consultations were extended. The experience of the seventh special session had provided a good example of actual requirements exceeding anticipations. Furthermore, the number of free-lance staff had not grown as fast as international conference activities and they were virtually non-existent in some languages, like Chinese. Moreover, there were currently over 4,000 international organizations, all competing for expert linguists. As a result, the Secretariat had been increasingly placed in the unfortunate position of having to refuse meetings on the dates or in the places requested by Member States. The Joint Inspection Unit report on the pattern of conferences[2] had given considerable attention to the problem and the Secretariat was already implementing the recommendations which it had made concerning training and recruitment.

37. Dependence on free-lance staff to service the growing number of special conferences was not only impractical but also expensive. The Secretariat therefore requested 40 new interpreter posts, of which the Advisory Committee had recommended approval of 30, with an authorization to engage a further 10 if they should be required.

38. The other possible approach was to limit conference activity or to arrange the calendar to minimize fluctuations. The Secretariat considered that it had a duty to assist the Committee on Conferences in its difficult work. However, limitation of meetings or of documentation was not an acceptable end in itself; the task was to ensure the most cost-effective use of an expensive service. The Secretariat was convinced that its proposals to increase the permanent cadre of interpreters, which was the only area in which the requested staff increases represented real growth, were in the best interest of the Organization. The Advisory Committee had generally concurred in that view.

39. The Secretariat had also requested 10 additional posts at Headquarters in order to improve the internal management of a Department which sometimes employed over 3,000 staff. The Secretariat did not propose to contest the Advisory Committee's recommendation that only 5 of those posts be approved. There had, however, been criticism of some aspects of management, such as co-ordination with other United Nations centres, and requests for additional studies such as workload statistics and investigation of new techniques. He therefore proposed to submit a

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2 See document A/9795, of 7 October 1974.

further request for the establishment of the posts concerned at a later date.

40. Since documentation had been discussed under another agenda item, he would confine himself to saying that an attempt was being made to meet the constantly increasing demands for documentation through rationalization and through continuing review of activities with Member States.

41. At the end of October, approval had been given for a comprehensive and co-ordinated study of library operations, with a view to their possible automation; the study had been elaborated by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library with the assistance of the Electronic Data Processing and Information Systems Service. Outside assistance would be financed from the appropriations approved by the General Assembly and a progress report, including details of such expenditure and corresponding savings on other accounts, would be submitted to the Committee at the time of the performance report for the next biennium.

42. It was perhaps inevitable to use such quantifiers as the number of pages or the number of meetings in discussing conference services. It would, however, be a great disservice to the Organization to regard quantity as the only criterion. He wished to conclude by stressing the importance of quality, with which the Secretariat and, as he knew from experience, the delegations were rightly concerned.

43. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that, if one added the other allocations requested for conference services under other sections, that was to say $43.3 million, the various overhead costs included under section 22 and the cost of the time which substantive staff devoted to work on conferences, to the estimate of nearly $106 million submitted by the Secretary-General under section 23, one saw that nearly half the expenditure included in the regular budget of the United Nations was devoted to conferences. That was unquestionably the will of the Member States but, when expenditure was on such a large scale, the scope for waste was also large, and the Fifth Committee must be more than ever concerned with ensuring economy. A further consideration must be taken into account, namely the fact that the global supply of interpreters was dangerously close to being insufficient.

44. Against that background, the Committee had to answer two questions: how did the United Nations propose to meet its needs with regard to interpretation, by relying on temporary staff or by seeking to strengthen its permanent staff? How could the calendar of conferences be arranged, by allowing the various bodies to meet when and where they wished or by trying to make the best use of available resources, so as to avoid peak periods following upon periods of under-employment?

45. The Secretary-General gave an answer to the first question in section 23. He proposed that 5 new permanent teams of interpreters should be recruited, 4 of them for New York, and 1 for Geneva, namely 50 interpreters, at a cost of $1.5 million for the biennium 1976-1977 and approximately $3 million for each subsequent biennium. After allowing for the inclusion of the Arabic language service posts in the regular budget, the cost of the proposed new teams of interpreters accounted for the major part of growth in real terms, estimated by the Secretary-General at 5.9 per cent for section 23 as a whole. The Committee was not in possession of data which would enable it to compare the workload anticipated for 1976-1977 and the workload for the current biennium. The table in paragraph 23.6 of the report of the Advisory Committee did not seem to indicate a very pronounced trend of growth in conference activities and on those grounds one could question the case for a large increase in the number of permanent interpreters.

46. However, the fees commanded by free-lance interpreters were now exceptionally high and the United Nations was therefore acting wisely in increasing forthwith the number of permanent interpreters. It seemed appropriate to set up 1 additional team in Geneva and 3 teams in New York and to authorize the Secretary-General to form, if needed, a fourth team in 1977 by redeploying vacant posts in other services of the Department. His delegation hoped, however, that the cost of those new teams would be offset by a reduction in temporary staff. The Advisory Committee recommended that reliance on free-lance interpreters should be reduced considerably, if not eliminated, and its proposals would mean a reduction of $374,000 under section 1, $74,000 under section 23A and $124,000 under section 23B. However, the estimates for temporary staff for meetings were still $1.75 million for Conference Services in Geneva. His delegation hoped that expenditure would be sharply reduced as a result of the establishment of a rational calendar of conferences and the utilization of the new teams of interpreters in both New York and Geneva. Free-lance interpreters should not be recruited in Geneva during the peak periods, while the permanent teams were left idle in New York. If the various bodies met at their respective headquarters, in conformity with the established principle, the new teams should be fully occupied in New York but, if exceptions were made, it would be necessary to ensure that the permanent teams from New York covered meetings held elsewhere, in all instances when it would be more expensive to hire free-lance interpreters. The Committee could consider that question more thoroughly when it had before it the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences.

47. The appropriation required under section 23 would also depend on the financial implications of the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences. His delegation therefore reserved the right to revert to that question at a later stage, when the Committee had before it the report of the Committee on Conferences.

48. Moreover, with regard to the impact on section 23 of the decision to be taken by the Fifth Committee on the question of documentation, he would like the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services to prepare for the Fifth Committee at that stage a brief conference room paper explaining why he considered that a number of the savings on documentation mentioned by the Advisory Committee in its report on that question[3] could not be taken into account in the budget appropriations.

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3 Document A/10299, of 20 October 1975.

AGENDA ITEM 99

Joint Inspection Unit: reports of the Joint Inspection Unit *(continued) (A/C.5/1676, A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1223, A/C.5/L.1248)**

49. Mrs. DERRE (France), after commenting that the question of the future role and working methods of the Joint Inspection Unit would be considered thoroughly at the thirty-first session, recalled her delegation's share in the establishment of the Joint Inspection Unit and the importance it attached to its activities. For that reason, her delegation felt that it was particularly important for the work of the Unit to be facilitated and its recommendations considered without excessive delay and, where necessary, put into effect. In that spirit, it would endorse the draft decision before the Committee (A/C.5/L.1248).

50. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation awaited with interest the next report by the Secretary-General on the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on which the competent legislative organs had not yet acted. In its annual report on its activities (see A/C.5/1676), the Joint Inspection Unit mentioned the sometimes considerable time-lag between the issuance of a report and its consideration by Member States. In his view, that reduced the value and interest of the reports. For example, the report on the decentralization of United Nations economic, social and related activities and the strengthening of the regional economic commissions, which had been issued in July 1974,[4] would be considered by the Economic and Social Council only in 1976; while the Joint Inspection Unit was aware of the reasons for that delay, his delegation, which was not a member of the Council, would like the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management to explain the reasons to it. The report was of interest to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, and his delegation would like to know when it would be transmitted to that Committee, together with the relevant comments. It might be advisable to set a dead-line for institutions to transmit their comments on the Joint Inspection Unit reports in order to accelerate the procedure. His delegation would also like to know, with regard to paragraph 17 of the annual report of the Unit, whether the misinterpretation of the Joint Inspection Unit reports by secretariats related to substance or form. His delegation hoped that the Joint Inspection Unit would continue to base its work on the economic and social sectors of the activities of United Nations bodies.

51. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that the work of the Joint Inspection Unit was useful and that the Unit should be retained, as the evidence which would be available to the Fifth Committee at the thirty-first session would undoubtedly indicate. As a joint organ of all the agencies of the United Nations, the Joint Inspection Unit considered problems of system-wide concern as well as problems relating to individual organizations. Both the system as a whole and the organizations needed an independent inspection unit to provide the governing bodies with information and advice serving as a check on the performance of the secretariats.

52. His delegation felt that the Unit ought to take on new tasks cautiously and on an experimental basis. It had been proposed to the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery, for example, that the Unit undertake co-ordination studies in the United Nations system for the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. The Unit should not be transformed into an evaluation unit, on the lines proposed by the United States delegation, because the scope for cost-benefit evaluation of activities in the United Nations system was limited by the very nature of those activities. It would therefore be wise to retain the Joint Inspection Unit as it was and not to replace it by a bigger, more expensive organization of speculative utility. Furthermore, the Unit had already made a valuable contribution to the devising of cost-benefit evaluation techniques through the report on cost measurement systems, a brief summary of which appeared in paragraphs 45 and 46 of the annual report of the Joint Inspection Unit.

53. The reports of the Joint Inspection Unit should, as the Inspectors had recommended, be made available to Member States as soon as possible and considered by the appropriate legislative bodies without undue delay. His delegation recognized, however, in the light of the explanations given by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, that that Committee had in no way been at fault in that connexion.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (A/C.5/L.1225/REV.2)

54. The CHAIRMAN called the attention of the members of the Committee to document A/C.5/L.1225/Rev.2, which presented the tentative programme of work for the Committee for the next five weeks. That programme was very heavy and night meetings might be necessary. He proposed to make certain changes in that programme of work by advancing the consideration of item 106 (United Nations pension system), which would take place during the week beginning 10 November, and by postponing the consideration of item 100 (Pattern of conferences) to the week starting 24 November. Those changes would enable the Committee, firstly, to study the report of the Committee on Conferences and the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences together with section 23 (Conference and library services) and, secondly, to have the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions before it while discussing the report of the Committee on Conferences. The rest of the programme of work for the week beginning 10 November would not be changed. The Fifth Committee would consider sections 1, 2, 3, 17 and 25 and income sections 1, 2 and 3, and continue its consideration of section 15. It would also consider the question of assistance in cases of natural disaster in conjunction with section 17 (Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator) and would take up the revised estimates resulting from decisions of the Economic and Social Council (A/C.5/1682). The report of the Advisory Committee on that subject would appear shortly. Six meetings had been scheduled for the week. In the light of progress made, he might during the week suggest consideration of additional questions.

* Resumed from the 1732nd meeting.

4 See document E/5607 and Corr.1, of 15 January 1975.

55. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that he did not see why consideration of the question of the pattern of conferences was to be deferred until the week beginning 24 November. The Fifth Committee already had the report of the Committee on Conferences and could study it without waiting for the report of the Advisory Committee on the recommendations of that Committee, especially since the representative of India had suggested that section 23 be considered together with the pattern of conferences. As a member of the Committee on Conferences, which was a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, his delegation held the view that the Fifth Committee did not need the report of the Advisory Committee in order to consider the report of the Committee on Conferences. It would have been pointless to establish the Committee on Conferences if its task could have been entrusted to the Advisory Committee. The fact that the report of the Advisory Committee could not be issued before 24 November should therefore not prevent the Fifth Committee from considering at once section 23 together with the report of the Committee on Conferences.

56. The CHAIRMAN indicated that he had suggested the postponement of consideration of the report of the Committee on Conferences until the week beginning 24 November in order to avoid a procedural debate in the immediate future. Certain members of the Fifth Committee doubted whether the Advisory Committee should examine the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences. In order not to prejudge the question, he had thought it best to postpone consideration of those recommendations until the report of the Advisory Committee was issued, so that the Fifth Committee might then decide if it wished to consider the report of the Advisory Committee together with the report of the Committee on Conferences. He indicated, as a point of information, that the former Committee on Conferences had, on 3 November 1967, transmitted all the information in its possession to the Advisory Committee for consideration, and that the latter had submitted its conclusions to the Fifth Committee in document A/7400.[5] The work of the Fifth Committee on those two reports was described in document A/7475[5] of 20 December 1968. If the Committee wished to depart from that precedent it could make such a decision when it had before it the two reports in question.

57. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) pointed out that the tasks of the Committee on Conferences as reconstituted in 1974 were not the same as those of the 1968 Committee on Conferences. They were far more important and exceeded even those of the Advisory Committee, since the new Committee on Conferences had to establish a pattern of conferences and consider requests for departures from the calendar of conferences between General Assembly sessions.

58. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) observed that, since the question under consideration was important and several delegations undoubtedly wished to express an opinion, it might be preferable, in view of the lateness of the hour, to consider the proposed programme of work at the following meeting.

59. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) agreed with the observations of the representative of Algeria and endorsed the proposal of the representative of Iran. However, in order to avoid possible night meetings in the future and to enable delegations to carry out the tasks with which current international tensions confronted them, he appealed to all members of the Committee to limit their statements and concentrate on the substance of the problem, without futile debate. In that way the problem of the programme of work—a programme which he endorsed—could easily be resolved.

60. Mr. HUITRON CABALLERO (Mexico) moved the adjournment of the meeting under rule 118 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. After the meeting had adjourned the delegations concerned could consult in order to agree on a specific programme of work.

61. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to adjourn the meeting.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.

[5] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Annexes*, agenda item 75.

1735th meeting

Monday, 10 November 1975, at 10.15 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1735

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION CONTAINED IN DOCUMENT A/L.770 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 27* (A/C.5/1705)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1705) concerning the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution contained in document A/L.770, indicating that adoption of the draft resolution would give rise initially to an additional appropriation in the amount of $38,000 for 1976.

2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew attention to paragraph 2 of the Secretary-General's statement, in which

* Question of Palestine: report of the Secretary-General.

he noted that no meaningful estimate could be made of the financial implications of the draft resolution with regard to conference servicing, and to paragraph 3, in which he expressed the view that operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution could result in financial implications in respect of travel and subsistence, the extent of which could not be determined at the current stage. The Advisory Committee had been unable to ascertain the basis for the request in paragraph 4 for 2 additional posts initially for 1976 to man the secretariat of the proposed committee. Indeed, neither the size of the committee nor its programme of work had yet been determined. Under the circumstances, the Advisory Committee recommended that, when those various uncertainties were resolved, the Secretary-General should return to the Committee to seek its concurrence to enter into the necessary commitments under the applicable procedures for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

3. Mr. TALIEH (Iran), referring to paragraph 2 of the Secretary-General's statement, expressed the hope that the work of the proposed committee would not be hindered in the way that the work of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery had been hindered, precisely because no financial implications had been evisaged.

4. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that he wished to put on record the position of his Government on the substance of the draft resolution. The Government of Israel considered that the Palestine Liberation Organization, which was bent on the destruction of the State of Israel and was far from representing the Arabs of Palestinian origin, had no right to participate in any consultations on matters of peace. It would not negotiate with the representatives of such a body. The draft resolution made no mention of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) or 338 (1973), as if the General Assembly could ignore Council resolutions as well as the existing international machinery which had brought about the signature of the agreement between Israel and Egypt. The fact that no hint of compromise could be detected in the position taken by the sponsors of the draft resolution made it clear that adoption of the latter would gravely harm the negotiations and the cause of peace. Accordingly, his delegation would vote against any financial implications of draft resolution A/L.770 and requested that the matter be put to a vote.

5. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) pointed out that the representative of Israel had spoken out of order, since the Committee was concerned merely with the financial implications. There was therefore no need to respond to the untruthful explanation he had given.

6. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) assured the representative of Iran that the Secretariat would make every effort to service the meetings of the proposed committee to the extent of its abilities. The comparison he had drawn was not quite appropriate, because the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery had not incurred any travel expenses nor had it required the creation of 2 additional posts for its secretariat. It would be imprudent not to make provision for the Secretary-General to enter into commitments under the provisions for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

7. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that, since the draft resolution involved no financial implications, his delegation would concur with the Advisory Committee's recommendations. However, that would in no way prejudice its position on the substance of the matter, which would be dealt with in another forum.

8. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/L.770, the Secretary-General would be authorized to enter into the necessary commitments initially under the terms of the General Assembly resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 1976-1977, with the concurrence of the Advisory Committee.

9. He invited the Committee to take a vote, in accordance with the request made by the representative of Israel.

The proposal was adopted by 73 votes to 1, with 1 abstention.

10. Mr. OUATTARA (Ivory Coast) said that his delegation's vote in favour of the proposal in no way prejudged the position it would take on the substance of the matter.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the A/... and A/C.5... documents, see 1734th meeting; A/C.5/L.1226, A/C.5/L.1229-1233, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.3, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1247)

The effect of continuing currency instability on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system (A/10008/Add.4, A/C.5/1692)

11. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1692) on the effect of continuing currency instability on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system. In paragraph 3 of its related report (A/10008/Add.4), the Advisory Committee had drawn one obvious conclusion, namely, that the estimated cost of currency changes anticipated for 1976 was lower than for 1975 for all the organizations except WMO. It appeared from the report of the Secretary-General that inflation was having an increasingly greater impact on the budgets of the organizations than were exchange rates. Table B in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General showed increases in the regular budgets of the organizations since 1971, and included projections for 1976 and 1977; inflation figures for 1974 and 1975 for the United Nations were incomplete as they did not include $20 million for inflation built into the original estimates for those years or the related amount of $24.9 million in salary increases and consolidation of classes of post adjustment approved by the General Assembly.

12. The report of the Secretary-General summarized the developments in individual organizations in the system. While it could be said that no significant changes had taken place in the methods employed by those organizations to deal with exchange rates and inflationary pressures, some organizations had tried to absorb all or part of the extra costs through economies, while the United Nations had on the whole taken a more passive approach, as indicated by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 4 to 9 of its report. It was true that it was not possible to apply uniform policies throughout the system. The actions taken by each organization depended on various factors, some relating to the extent to which member States would wish the organization concerned to absorb extra costs without impairing its effectiveness. Bearing that in mind, the Advisory Committee, while appreciating the difficulty of the Secretary-General's position and recognizing that it would be unrealistic to call for economies to absorb all costs related to inflation and currency fluctuation, trusted that Member States would assist the Secretary-General by formulating clear policy guidelines, including the ordering of priorities. That did not absolve the Secretary-General from the obligation to take more imaginative measures. The Advisory Committee therefore expected that the passive attitude of the United Nations would be replaced by serious efforts to obtain savings significant enough to ease the pressure of inflation and currency fluctuations.

13. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba), recalling that his delegation had opposed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 3360 (XXIX) on the ground that it would simply delay the search for solutions to deal with the effects of continuing currency instability and inflation on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system, said that the report of the Secretary-General before the Committee took a very passive approach and did not offer any solutions. That attitude was in complete contrast to the dynamic approach taken in preparing the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 in which the Secretary-General had, without being requested or authorized to do so, followed a policy of full budgeting, including all expenses anticipated as the result of inflation.

14. It should be borne in mind that inflation and currency instability would continue since some developed countries benefited from those phenomena. On the other hand, countries which were in no way responsible for those developments were suffering considerable losses, including a decline in the real value of their international monetary reserves, a fall in the purchasing power of external financing, higher interest rates for such financing, a fall in the real value of export earnings, higher costs for technology and international transport and insurance, and deteriorating terms of trade. Those countries also had to pay increased contributions to the United Nations in order to offset the effects of inflation and currency instability on its budget.

15. At the sixth special session of the General Assembly, the developing countries had recommended that the international monetary system should be reformed in order, in the first place, to check inflation affecting the developed countries, provide compensation for the effect of inflation on the economies of the developing countries and prevent its spread to those countries; secondly, to eliminate instability in the international monetary system, particularly with regard to exchange rates which had an adverse effect on the commodities trade; and finally, to guarantee the real value of the monetary reserves of the developing countries. So far, nothing had been done to that end in the field of international monetary policies or in matters within the competence of the Fifth Committee, and the developing countries were still the main victims of the rapacity of certain major financial Powers.

16. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) observed that the report of the Secretary-General confirmed apprehensions expressed during the general discussion that inflation would have a greater effect than currency instability. He asked what measures would be taken to safeguard United Nations deposits throughout the world if New York City defaulted; that would weaken the United States dollar and would jeopardize some activities of the United Nations, particularly projects of interest to the developing countries.

17. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that default on the part of New York City, if it were to have any of the results mentioned by the representative of the Philippines, might cause concern for the financial management of the Organization, which therefore followed the developments very closely. However, thus far no effects were to be noticed which would bear on the question of avoiding losses for the Organization.

18. Referring to the question of savings to offset the effect of inflation, he said that the budget performance report to be issued soon would show that every effort had been made and that, through economies, an amount of the magnitude of $6 million had been saved to absorb the effect of inflation and currency instability.

19. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) questioned the assumption that a New York City default would have an impact on the United Nations budget and invited the Controller to comment further on the question at a later meeting.

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 15. REGULAR PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE *(concluded)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

20. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), stressing the importance his Government attached to international technical co-operation, said that it would increase its annual voluntary contribution to UNDP to $10 million in 1976. Drawing attention to the difficult economic situation in western Europe, he urged organizations in the United Nations system to make the most efficient use possible of the scant resources available to meet the needs of the developing countries by ensuring that administrative expenses were reduced to a minimum.

21. Several Joint Inspection Unit reports were relevant in that connexion. The report on cost measurement systems (JIU/REP/74/7)[1] estimated that programme support costs

[1] Document dated November 1974.

for executing agencies financed from extrabudgetary UNDP funds accounted for 20 to 32 per cent of the total cost of the projects, while UNDP administrative costs accounted for approximately 13 per cent, so that between 33 and 45 per cent of the total direct costs was spent on programme support and administration. A large part of the programme support costs was financed from the regular budget of each agency, and Member States considered those costs too high. Another Unit report (A/10279) on office accommodation provided to extrabudgetary staff showed that some programme support costs were not listed as such; the $92.5 million spent by UNDP on programme support in 1974 did not in fact represent the total actual support costs.

22. New methods must be found to reduce programme support costs. The Joint Inspection Unit in its report on the decentralization of United Nations economic, social and related activities (JIU/REP/74/5)[2] recommended decentralization of all technical co-operation activities, regardless of their source of financing. Steps had already been taken to decentralize administration of projects to the regional economic commissions, which would in future participate actively in identifying, formulating and executing regional and subregional operational projects. It was, however, necessary to ensure that the "incremental methodology" used by the Secretary-General and criticized by the Advisory Committee was not applied again, as was the case with section 15 in regard to the regional and subregional advisory services mentioned in paragraph 15.3 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008 and Corr.2).

23. Moderation in recruiting and redeployment of personnel were essential, as the programme support staff financed from the regular budget and from extrabudgetary sources was adequate. Yet, despite praiseworthy efforts, UNDP administrative expenditures were to rise 22.7 per cent in 1976 compared to 1975, while the funds pledged were only 11 per cent higher. Approximately 100 more posts were being established. Moreover, the executing agencies also had their own administrative personnel. In addition to the 3,900 posts in UNDP, there were at least 600 persons working within the United Nations on technical assistance programmes, some financed from extrabudgetary resources and others from the $20 million requested under section 15. He requested information on support staff in other organizations in the United Nations system. The situation was not satisfactory; it gave rise to criticism of the United Nations and deprived some of the developing countries of funds earmarked for them.

24. In conclusion, he suggested that arrangements should be worked out for section 15 which would provide the developing countries with resources equivalent to the estimates in the budget and which would be acceptable to the international community as a whole.

25. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said his delegation would vote in favour of the estimates under section 15 of the proposed programme budget, as his Government considered that the United Nations should have the authority to supplement the efforts of the agencies in providing technical assistance. His Government also made substantial contributions to UNDP. He expressed reservations regarding additional funds for industrial development for the same reasons for which he had opposed the inclusion of such funds in the previous budget.

26. Mr. HUITRON CABALLERO (Mexico), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that the regular programme of technical assistance was a basic programme which was supported by a majority of the Members of the United Nations, was pursuant to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and was one means of promoting the economic and social progress of all peoples. Section 15 should not be removed from the regular budget, even although voluntary contributions might be increased. Such action might also encourage those who believed in decentralized organizations, and he wondered if Members would be willing to spend more on the administration of a separate technical co-operation organization than they did on activities currently covered under section 15.

27. The provision of some contributions in non-convertible currencies created problems, and he suggested that the Committee might wish to request the Secretary-General to consult Governments with a view to resolving the problem by using such contributions under bilateral trade and technical co-operation agreements, with the consent of the donor and recipient countries. No bilateral agreement between Member States could be considered outside the framework of the United Nations. Such action would allow "frozen" assets to be used and would help to resolve the financial problems of the United Nations.

28. His delegation would vote in favour of the estimates under section 15.

29. Mr. HENČIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation attached great importance to the regular programme of technical assistance and was therefore concerned that the estimate under section 15 for the biennium 1976-1977 would simply maintain the same level of assistance as in 1975, in spite of the need of the least developed countries for more assistance. The technical assistance budgeted under section 15 should express the collective solidarity of Members of the United Nations with regard to the needs of certain of those Members.

30. The regular programme of technical assistance should not be eliminated from the regular budget. The question—basically a political one which reflected different interpretations of the Charter of the United Nations and of the role and effectiveness of the United Nations—had been given in-depth consideration on several occasions in the past, and his delegation's views on it were well known. The solution whereby the elimination of technical assistance from the regular budget would be offset by an increase in voluntary contributions to UNDP was not acceptable to his delegation. Such an arrangement would not be in keeping with the interests of the least developed countries; it would also give rise to difficulties in the United Nations as it would encourage the payment of contributions in local non-convertible currencies. The proposal was in effect an attempt to evade the application of one of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the collective responsibility of Members for encouraging economic and social development.

2 See document E/5607 and Corr.1, of 15 January 1975.

31. Mr. WOLDE-AREGAY (Ethiopia) said that the regular programme of technical assistance should be financed from a dependable source of funds. His delegation intended to vote for the estimate recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 15.

An appropriation in the amount of $20,399,000 under section 15 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 71 votes to 9, with 2 abstentions.

32. Mr. MINCHEV (Bulgaria) explained that his delegation had voted against the appropriation because it believed that technical assistance should be financed on a voluntary basis. In keeping with that view, his Government had paid its contribution to the technical assistance programme in national currency.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK *(continued)* (A/C.5/L.1225/Rev.2)

33. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to continue its consideration of the revised programme of work (A/C.5/L.1225/Rev.2). It had been suggested that consideration of item 106 (United Nations pension system) should be advanced and that consideration of item 100 (Pattern of conferences) should be deferred until the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had submitted its comments on the report of the Committee on Conferences. Although the Committee on Conferences, being an intergovernmental body, did not need to consult the Advisory Committee, the fact remained that the Committee on Conferences had decided in its report[3] to ask the Advisory Committee to comment on the report. He had taken that decision into account in drawing up the programme of work for the Fifth Committee. A meeting of the Committee on Conferences was to be held that afternoon. Whether or not the consideration of item 106 could be advanced would depend upon the outcome of that meeting. He therefore proposed that the Committee should adopt its programme of work for the week on the understanding that the relative position of items 100 and 106 would be determined once the Committee on Conferences had met and taken a decision.

34. Mr. SETHI (India) asked where in the report of the Committee on Conferences he could find that Committee's decision to invite the Advisory Committee to comment upon its report. The only reference that he could find was in the draft resolution at the end of chapter VI.

35. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Committee was wasting a lot of time on discussion of a secondary matter and should turn to the items on its agenda.

36. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) supported the proposal made by the Chairman with regard to the programme of work. He would like to know who decided whether the Fifth Committee should have the Advisory Committee's comments on the report of the Committee on Conferences and who was supposed to inform the Fifth Committee of the financial implications of that report. The Fifth Committee must know what they were before it could take a decision on the report.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that the situation with regard to the financial implications would be clearer after the Committee on Conferences had met.

38. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) supported the Chairman's proposal and welcomed the information that the Committee on Conferences was going to meet. A literal interpretation of operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Conferences would indicate that the Committee on Conferences was asking for the Advisory Committee's comments. The Advisory Committee would have to pronounce on it in any case, since one of its responsibilities was to advise the General Assembly on all matters having financial implications.

39. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) asked whose fault it was that the Advisory Committee's report was not available and, secondly, whether the purpose of the meeting of the Committee on Conferences was to enable that Committee to reverse its earlier decision to refer its report to the Advisory Committee.

40. The CHAIRMAN said that the meeting had been scheduled because it was felt that the Committee on Conferences should not have implied that its report should go first to the Advisory Committee.

41. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had met to consider the question of the report of the Committee on Conferences and had decided that additional information was needed. The Secretary-General's representative had been requested to furnish that information and the Advisory Committee was still waiting to receive it.

42. Mr. SETHI (India) reserved his right to make a statement on the matter when the outcome of the meeting of the Committee on Conferences was known. He had at no time wished to focus the debate on the relationship between intergovernmental bodies and expert bodies, but had simply been concerned to see that the Fifth Committee was not able to consider the report of the Committee on Conferences until it received the Advisory Committee's comments. The Advisory Committee appeared to be standing in the way of the transmittal of the report of an intergovernmental body to the General Assembly. He had not meant to deny the Advisory Committee the right to comment on a report when it had been requested to do so.

43. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) moved the closure of the debate on the organization of work as it concerned the pattern of conferences.

44. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) pointed out that, if the debate was closed, the Committee would be unable to take a decision on the matter. He therefore moved the adjournment of the debate under rule 116 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

45. The CHAIRMAN said that, under rule 119 of the rules of procedure, the motion to adjourn the debate had

3 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 32.*

precedence over the motion to close the debate. Accordingly, he invited the Committee to vote on the motion to adjourn the debate.

The motion was adopted by 46 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

AGENDA ITEM 99

Joint Inspection Unit: reports of the Joint Inspection Unit *(continued) (A/C.5/1676, A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1,* A/C.5/L.1223, A/C.5/L.1248/Rev.1)

46. Mr. SETHI (India), introducing a revised text (A/C.5/L.1248/Rev.1) of the draft decision before the Committee explained that the sponsors—which numbered 11—had been guided by the desire to improve the procedures for handling the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, rather than to change them. The scope of the draft decision was thus restricted because the procedures in question would be thoroughly reviewed at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

47. The procedures for handling the Joint Inspection Unit's reports and for the implementation of the recommendations they contained were defined in the second report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies.[4] With the growth of the Unit's activities, the need had arisen to work out some additional arrangements. The matter had been considered by CPC and ACC, both separately and jointly. Certain of the recommendations made by CPC at its third session, in 1969, and the joint CPC/ACC consensus had subsequently formed the nucleus of the supplementary arrangements laid down in Economic and Social Council resolution 1457 (XLVII). Those arrangements had later been endorsed by the General Assembly. However, certain short-comings in the handling procedures continued to cause concern to the various intergovernmental bodies that dealt with Joint Inspection Unit reports.

48. The first subparagraph of the draft decision reflected the Committee's recognition of the high quality of the work done by the Unit, as expressed in the discussions on the question at the current and preceding sessions.

49. The second subparagraph reflected the sponsors' concern to see an improvement in current procedures and to correct certain defects noted by the Joint Inspection Unit itself in paragraphs 12, 13 and 14 of its annual report (see A/C.5/1676). The wording closely followed the recommendation of the General Assembly reproduced in paragraph 13 of that report. The sponsors felt that the Unit's reports should receive uniform treatment and should be considered as soon as possible after issue. Indeed, when the item on the Unit was discussed at the thirty-first session, it might be advisable to devise a system that provided for the transmission of those reports to Member States as soon as they appeared. It would be recalled that as early as June 1969 the Unit had expressed concern because the consideration of its reports was being unduly delayed.

50. The third subparagraph was essentially aimed at making the Unit's work, whether inspection operations or tasks entrusted to it by the legislative organs, more effective, convenient and speedy. A dialogue when the reports were being prepared was necessary so that the Inspectors could gather the information they needed for a full understanding of the problems under consideration. A dialogue after the completion of the reports was required to ensure appropriate follow-up.

51. As was apparent from the fourth and fifth subparagraphs, the sponsors felt that the implementation of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations depended upon the will of the legislative organs in the United Nations system.

52. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that the recommendations in the draft decision echoed his delegation's concern to give the Joint Inspection Unit optimal working conditions and thus enhance its effectiveness. While the aims of the draft decision were restricted for the reason explained by the representative of India, the application of its provisions would nevertheless be of extreme value. Accordingly, his delegation supported the draft decision.

53 Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that his delegation, too, was in favour of the revised draft decision. The Unit's work was of extreme importance to the United Nations. Close co-operation between the Joint Inspection Unit and the Secretariat should be maintained in the interest of the rationalization of work. Prompt consideration of the reports by the legislative organs of the United Nations system should be accompanied by a speedier implementation of recommendations thereby enhancing the efficiency of management and administrative procedures.

54. Mr. ZDROJOWY (Poland) observed that the wording of the revised draft decision represented an improvement over that of the previous version. His delegation would vote for the draft decision because it provided that the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit should be implemented without delay and that the Secretary-General should report annually on the degree of implementation of the Unit's recommendations.

55. Mr. HUITRON CABALLERO (Mexico) welcomed the provisions of the draft decision: earlier consideration of the Joint Inspection Unit's reports by Member States and prompter discussion by legislative bodies would benefit both the Secretariat and the Unit.

56. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) endorsed the comments made by the speakers who had preceded him. He commended the delegation of India for its willingness to reflect the views of other delegations and expressed support for the draft decision.

57. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), after endorsing the draft decision, proposed that the words "Member States" in the second subparagraph should be amended to read "all Member States". He expressed the hope that the draft decision would be adopted by consensus.

58. Mr. SETHI (India) said that the sponsors could accept that amendment.

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4 *Ibid., Twenty-first Session, Annexes,* agenda item 80, document A/6343.

59. Mr. MURG (Romania) felt that the Indian representative's statement reflected the views expressed by delegations concerning the Joint Inspection Unit and its future activities. He fully supported the draft decision, which he would like to see adopted by consensus.

60. Mr. VANDERGERT (Sri Lanka) commended the Joint Inspection Unit for its useful and thought-provoking report and expressed support for the draft decision, particularly the fifth subparagraph.

61. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) commended the excellent statement made by the representative of India in introducing the draft decision, and agreed with previous speakers that the Fifth Committee should adopt the text unanimously.

62. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the reports prepared by the Joint Inspection Unit were unquestionably of great value. He had learned from the report on the utilization of office accommodation at United Nations Headquarters that there were many "squatters" who were not paying rent. He wondered how that situation was tolerated by the United Nations Administration.

63. The purpose of the draft decision was very clear; attention was drawn to the need for prompt implementation of the Unit's recommendations. A regrettable trend of late was that the Unit seemed to be losing some of its authority in certain organizations within the United Nations system. The draft decision was intended to improve the situation.

64. He requested that the draft decision should be put to the vote.

65. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that the analytical reports prepared by the Joint Inspection Unit were extremely useful to the United Nations system. His delegation would support the draft decision.

66. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that the procedures envisaged in the draft decision represented a great improvement over previous procedures.

67. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management), replying to the Algerian representative's comments concerning "squatters", said that, with one exception, all the specialized agencies which had offices at Headquarters paid rent. UNESCO, the one exception, reciprocated by offering the United Nations rent-free space at its headquarters. It was true that a number of individual officers were financed from extra-budgetary funds and did not pay rent. That point had been raised in a Joint Inspection Unit report which would be considered by the Committee at a later stage. In particular, the Committee would be called upon to decide whether it was desirable to encourage contributions to voluntary funds by making concessions on overhead costs or whether to insist that dues should be met in full with the consequent risk that voluntary contributions might diminish in the future. It should be borne in mind that the practices in that area had developed over 30 years and would not be changed overnight.

68. The United Nations attached the greatest importance to reports produced by the Joint Inspection Unit and was anxious to develop satisfactory procedures for their handling. However, there were some very serious problems of timing to be overcome. A Unit report might reach the Secretary-General and the executive heads at any time of the year and it might not be easy to fit it into the time-table for handling. Reports whose recommendations affected departments in the United Nations must be referred to those departments for comments, entailing a delay of up to three months. Once that stage had been completed, the reports were referred to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary questions or to CPC and the Economic and Social Council, and, if they were not in session, there would be a further delay. The procedure was even more complicated in the case of reports which dealt with problems affecting the United Nations system as a whole, where the comments of the executive heads were sought and the reports had then had to be referred to the governing bodies of the specialized agencies concerned. Subsequently, all the views expressed had to be compiled in a report for submission to the General Assembly.

69. Clearly, there was a need to reconsider the handling procedure with a view to eliminating the considerable time-lag. It might be that the General Assembly would like to receive the Joint Inspection Unit reports without awaiting the comments of the individuals and bodies concerned; if so, their immediate distribution could be arranged. At the current juncture, the Advisory Committee was responsible for determining whether the reports and the related comments should be released before it had had an opportunity to consider them.

70. Regarding the scope of the distribution of the reports, he pointed out that the Secretary-General's practice was to make available to all States Members of the United Nations, without exception, any reports dealing with the Organization itself. The same practice was not, however, followed by all the organizations in the United Nations system.

71. He drew attention to the fourth subparagraph of the revised draft decision, whose provisions conflicted with the Assembly's instructions to the Secretary-General. Previously the Secretary-General had been asked to report on any of the Joint Inspection Unit recommendations which had not been implemented; there had been no requirement to report on the stage of progress in implementing those recommendations. It should be borne in mind that it was not easy to give a precise account of the implementation of each recommendation. In many instances, the Secretary-General strove, with only partial success, to put the recommendations into effect. For example, there were a number of recommendations concerning personnel matters by both the Joint Inspection Unit and the Administrative Management Service which could not move forward substantially until a job-classification system had been developed. Two experts had been recruited to work out such a system, but it was a time-consuming task. Furthermore, it was sometimes difficult to determine objectively whether a recommendation was being implemented. For example, a recommendation in one of the Unit reports had been that there should be more co-ordination between the specialized agencies and the regional economic commissions

and that every effort should be made to avoid duplication. However, it was not easy to measure increased co-ordination and consequently to affirm positively that that particular recommendation was being implemented.

72. The representative of the Soviet Union had asked why the Secretary-General in his latest report to the Committee (A/C.5/1693 and Corr.1) had not explained the reasons for the non-implementation of certain recommendations. While that might be true of certain sections of that report, it was certainly not the case in the narrative relating to either the report on treatment of water resources development in the United Nations family of organizations or the report on personnel problems in the United Nations. In the majority of cases, the Advisory Committee had concurred with the Secretary-General's decisions.

73. The representative of the Philippines had drawn attention to paragraph 17 of the annual report of the Joint Inspection Unit and had asked for some explanations. He could only say that misinterpretations of Joint Inspection Unit reports by secretariats occurred from time to time, although every effort was made to prevent them. The representative of the Philippines had also asked why the report on the decentralization of United Nations economic, social and related activities and the strengthening of the regional economic commissions would not be considered by the Economic and Social Council until some time in 1976. He explained that the Advisory Committee had recommended that the Secretary-General should submit his views on both that report and another one on a related subject at the same time; that was the reason for the delay.

74. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with the request by the representative of Algeria, a vote would be taken on the revised draft decision (A/C.5/L.1248/Rev.1).

The draft decision was adopted unanimously.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

1736th meeting

Tuesday, 11 November 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1736

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1735th meeting)

United Nations accommodation in Addis Ababa, Bangkok and Santiago, Chile* (concluded)* *(A/C.5/1673)

1. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), referring to paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1673), said that he was surprised to find no mention of the depreciation of the Chilean currency vis-à-vis the United States dollar and thus of savings in the cost of the project in Santiago, Chile.

2. The normal practice was to use the word "revaluation" to describe an upward adjustment of a currency and the word "devaluation" to describe a downward adjustment. The use of "revaluation" at the end of paragraph 3 and in the first sentence of paragraph 6 of the English version of the Secretary-General's report, where one would have expected "devaluation", was therefore somewhat puzzling.

3. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in accordance with its position of principle, his delegation would be unable to support the Secretary-General's requests for sizable amounts in connexion with the construction projects at Addis Ababa and Bangkok in order to counterbalance the effects of inflation and currency instability. His delegation therefore intended to vote against approval of those additional amounts.

4. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the question put by the representative of the United Kingdom, said that, while it was somewhat early at the current stage to make an accurate assessment of the situation in Chile, it seemed likely that the effects of the weakening of the Chilean currency vis-à-vis the United States dollar and the effects of inflationary pressures would cancel each other out.

5. The United Kingdom representative was correct in assuming that a downward adjustment of the United States dollar was referred to in the two passages he had cited and that the word in the English text should have been "devaluation"; in the French text, the word *"dévaluation"* was employed.

6. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked whether, as a matter of policy, the United Nations required construction firms to supply a performance bond so as to ensure that extra labour costs were not entailed when the construction work was not completed on schedule.

7. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) thanked the Director of the Budget Division for his reply. The Committee should note that in the Santiago project the United Nations had gained as a result of the depreciation of a currency in relation to the dollar. Indeed, in future it was quite possible that the United Nations would gain as a result of appreciation of the dollar in relation to other currencies required by its regular budget.

8. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) recalled that in the statement made at the 1730th meeting by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the

* Resumed from the 1730th meeting.

latter had pointed out that a request for $600,000 had been included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 in connexion with some construction at Addis Ababa; he had further stated that he had been informed by the representative of the Secretary-General that a supplementary estimate of $105,000 in connexion with the work at Bangkok would probably be included in the Secretary-General's performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975. In view of the uncertainty of the latter estimate, he felt that the Committee would be better able to appraise the situation when it received the Secretary-General's performance report.

9. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled his actual words, which were that the representative of the Secretary-General had informed him that an amount of $105,000 would be included in the Secretary-General's performance report; consequently, the word "probably" should not have appeared in the summary record of his statement.

10. Mr. TIMBRELL (Office of General Services), replying to the representative of the Philippines, said that the Secretary-General endeavoured to make provision for performance bonds in all contracts relating to construction work. Performance bonds had been arranged in the contracts for the construction projects at both Bangkok and Addis Ababa. At Santiago the situation was somewhat different, because it had been impossible to obtain performance bonds owing to the conditions prevailing at the time the contract had been written. Consequently, the Secretary-General had made alternative arrangements for guaranteeing performance through a bank guarantee.

11. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1673).

It was so decided.

United Nations public information policies and activities* (continued)* *(A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.3, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1247)

12. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the third revised version (A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.3) of the draft resolution before the Committee, which had been submitted by Colombia and Tunisia, announced that the following countries had joined the sponsors: Costa Rica, Dahomey, Ecuador, Guinea, Madagascar, Mauritania, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Republic of Cameroon.

13. Mr. RIVAS (Colombia), introducing the revised draft resolution, said that the third revised version differed from the second one only in that the order of the preambular paragraphs had been changed and the amendment proposed by Tunisia (A/C.5/L.1246) had been incorporated in the text as operative paragraph 3.

14. Mr. SCHÜTZE (Federal Republic of Germany) said that, in accordance with suggestions made the preceding week, his delegation had attempted to work out a compromise text for the fifth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution—which was the same as that of the previous version (A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2). However, despite the co-operation of the delegation of Colombia, it had not been possible to elaborate a compromise text satisfactory to all. His delegation was therefore maintaining its amendment (A/C.5/L.1247), which took into account the suggestions made by a number of other delegations. The purpose of the amendment was to ensure that public information activities were both comprehensive and balanced; in other words, the main information topics selected by the competent bodies should have priority, but should not lead to neglect of other aspects of the work of the Organization.

15. The priorities were further outlined in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution. His delegation believed that the topics of peace-keeping, international security, the halting of the arms race, human rights, the elimination of all forms of discrimination, and the establishment of new, more equitable economic relations between all nations, to name but a few, were of particular importance.

16. It was essential to encourage public support of and confidence in the United Nations. The Secretary-General had observed that the situation which had recently arisen in the General Assembly reflected a deep and bitter division among the membership at a time when the need for understanding on a wide range of critically important questions is more than ever necessary. There existed the inherent temptation to blame the United Nations as a whole when one was opposed to a majority opinion expressed in the General Assembly. It was not easy for the Office of Public Information (OPI) to convince the man in the street that the issue had been simplified in a misleading way. The difficulties of OPI should be seen in that light.

17. The text of the fifth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution as it stood was ambiguous and subject to conflicting interpretations. Was it, for example, implied that OPI should be given an enlarged mandate to influence public opinion in order to change "the prevailing attitude" in "some of the Member States"? Was it not taking the effect for the cause to say that the attitude of the media and public opinion threatened to lead to a decline in support for and confidence in the United Nations? The Organization was judged by its accomplishments. When Governments and peoples felt that their national interests were being jeopardized or ignored in United Nations proceedings, public support and confidence could be affected; however, the information media reflected national concerns to a far greater extent than they influenced them.

18. When controversial issues were dealt with, many people no doubt regarded some of the media comments as one-sided and the news coverage as incomplete. How could it be otherwise in a public debate in which so many conflicting opinions were voiced on domestic and international affairs? It was nevertheless unfair to equate information media with public opinion, as was done in the fifth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution.

19. In submitting its amendment, his delegation was motivated primarily by a concern to avoid ambiguity of language and substance in an important draft resolution on information policy.

* Resumed from the 1730th meeting.

20. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that his delegation supported the third revision of the draft resolution although it had preferred the first version. He had the impression that more was expected from OPI than that Office could deliver. OPI was not a propaganda service whose purpose was to defend the reputation of the United Nations. Its function was rather to enlighten the public as to United Nations aims and principles and to provide information on the Organization's activities. In some countries, including the host country, there was latent and even open hostility towards the Organization. That, however, was not the fault of OPI. The United Nations could easily preserve an excellent public image if it chose to confine its debate to such subjects as outer space and pollution. However, so long as it discussed *apartheid*, decolonization and the Middle East situation, it would always encounter mounting hostility—in New York at any rate.

21. The draft resolution had considerable merit. His delegation would have supported it without any reservation had it not been for the incorporation of the new paragraph 3. That paragraph was superfluous for three reasons: first, the inclusion of a new item on the agenda of the General Assembly, at the current or the following session, could have been effected merely by transmitting a note to the Secretary-General, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly; secondly, apart from the Fifth Committee, only the Assembly in plenary meeting was equipped to deal with the item; thirdly, the Fifth Committee should not relinquish consideration of a question that had sizable financial implications. His delegation therefore requested a separate vote on operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution.

22. Mr. BENKIRANE (Morocco) said that, with the incorporation of the Tunisian amendment, the draft resolution aptly reflected the aims sought by the Committee. The request to the Secretary-General to submit a report on the activities of OPI and the Assembly's decision to consider information policies and activities as a separate agenda item would, if approved, have a great impact and would improve the United Nations image in the eyes of the general public.

23. Mr. GHAFOURZAI (Afghanistan) expressed wholehearted support for the intent underlying the draft resolution and said that the third revision was a much improved text.

24. He proposed the addition in operative paragraph 1, after the words "humanitarian achievements", of the words "and undertakings". The public image of the United Nations system would surely be enhanced if the attention of the public was drawn to such undertakings as the convening of conferences and the proclamation of decades in all the major areas with which the United Nations was concerned.

25. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) expressed appreciation to the delegation of Colombia for the pains it had taken to accommodate the diverse views of delegations; as a result, the draft resolution had been strengthened and had gained wider support.

26. At an early stage, the delegation of Pakistan had commended OPI on its useful work in disseminating information about the United Nations. It believed that the operative part of the draft resolution would encourage OPI to make new efforts, while at the same time the Secretary-General would be able to achieve the objective stated in the sixth preambular paragraph, namely, to improve the public image of the United Nations.

27. His delegation was prepared to accept the idea of making United Nations information policies and activities a separate item on the agenda, even though it was opposed in principle to the proliferation of agenda items. The reason why it was prepared to make an exception in the case at hand was that the subject should be given the importance it deserved.

28. His delegation could have supported the amendment submitted by the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247) but for the fact that it called for the deletion of the existing fifth preambular paragraph.

29. He had no objection to the oral amendment of the delegation of Afghanistan, which, in his view, would improve the text; however, he looked forward to hearing the reaction of the sponsors to that amendment.

30. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said that OPI should be given both the encouragement and the resources to carry out the very important work assigned to it in its mandate. His delegation continued to support that mandate, which called upon OPI to provide factual and balanced information to the news media and the Member States on the work of the United Nations. Given the diversity of ideologies and national priorities, it would be impossible for OPI to attempt to influence public opinion other than by the factual reporting of the accomplishments of the Organization. Since OPI had to enlist the co-operation of the national news media in Member States, it was essential for it to provide information in a form that would be used by those media. OPI must retain its objectivity and must not become politicized in any way. His delegation could not endorse operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, which would tend to politicize OPI and thereby reduce the effectiveness of that Office. It preferred the wording which had earlier been proposed in the second revision (A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2) or in the draft decision in document A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.1.

31. Mr. KEDADI (Tunisia) said that he fully concurred with the draft resolution in its revised form (A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.3), as it placed United Nations public information policies and activities in their proper context. Consultations with the sponsors of the draft decision in document A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2 had revealed that the decision to consider the question as a new separate agenda item and the recommendation that the item be considered normally in off-budget years were entirely compatible. His delegation could therefore also support the draft decision. Its main concern was that public information should be considered as a separate item at the thirty-first session without prejudging the organ to which it should be allocated. He recalled that requests for the inclusion of items on the agenda of the General Assembly could be made either by one of the Main Committees or by a delegation. It had been deemed more appropriate for the Fifth Committee to make the request simply because that

Committee had dealt with the questions so far and intended to deal with it in future, as indicated in the draft decision.

32. Turning to operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, he suggested that the title of the proposed separate item on the agenda should be amended to read: "United Nations public information policies and activities" to bring it into line with the title of the item under discussion. His delegation had no objection to the amendment proposed by the representative of Afghanistan.

33. Mr. NAUDY (France) did not agree that adoption of operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution would mean that the Fifth Committee would no longer consider the question. The inclusion of a new item on the agenda of the General Assembly would not prejudge the choice of the Committee to which that new item would be allocated. The provisions of paragraph 3 would in no way prevent the Fifth Committee from dealing with the financial aspects of the item, regardless of which Committee considered the new item.

34. Moreover, it could not be stated that public information activities had predominantly financial aspects. That could equally well be said of all the other activities financed under the budget and, according to that reasoning, the Fifth Committee would have to deal with all of them. Accordingly, his delegation had not been convinced by the Algerian representative's arguments. However, it had noted the Turkish representative's explanation that there would be no contradiction between draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.3 and the draft decision in document A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2.

35. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his reasons for wanting to ensure that the question was not discussed outside the Fifth Committee were much the same as those cited by the representatives of Algeria and Canada. He therefore supported the request for a separate vote on operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. In fact, it might suffice to have a separate vote on the last phrase of that paragraph. Naturally, it would be more satisfactory if the sponsors deleted those lines.

36. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that, if the question were to be allocated to another Committee, there was a danger that it might become politicized. Due attention would be given to the question when it was discussed in the Fifth Committee in off-budget years, for the degree of attention it received did not depend on whether it was a separate item. Accordingly, he supported the statements made by the representatives of Algeria, Australia and Canada and proposed that the end of paragraph 3, beginning with the words "and decide", should be deleted.

37. Mr. RELLIE (United Kingdom) said that his delegation continued to be most uneasy at the change in the role of OPI implied by the draft resolution. In order to change the image of the United Nations in countries which had a free press and public opinion that was open to change, OPI would have to be unbiased with respect to the decisions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly. While no one would object to OPI giving maximum publicity to the attainment of certain objectives–such as those enshrined in the Charter–it must select other causes with extreme care. Once it earned the reputation for propagandizing contentious issues, its credibility would be lost. OPI was still bound by the provisions of annex I of General Assembly resolution 13 (I), of 13 February 1946, which stated that it should not engage in propaganda and should engage in positive informational activities that would supplement the services of existing agencies of information. Those provisions had been reaffirmed in resolution 595 (VI), of 4 February 1952. His delegation had expressed admiration for the objectivity of OPI and it opposed any action that would tend to politicize the activities of that office. Accordingly, it strongly supported the amendment proposed by the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247) and the comments made by the representatives of Algeria, Canada and other countries with specific reference to operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. For similar reasons, it proposed that the last words in operative paragraph 1 should be "a new international economic order" rather than, "the new international economic order". His delegation would have preferred not to see economic subjects singled out but, since they were, it should be remembered that what was involved was a new international economic order.

38. Mr. RAMANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the activities of OPI were traditionally considered in the Fifth Committee even though the question involved not only financial aspects but other important and very sensitive ones which, with all due respect to those present, could not always be dealt with in the Fifth Committee. The doubts which had been expressed in that regard were justified and it was quite possible that at some time in the future certain other Committees might be entrusted with the consideration of certain aspects of the question. Accordingly, there was no reason to prejudge at the current time the question of which organ should consider it. The two fundamental resolutions to which the representative of the United Kingdom had referred had been adopted many years eariler and much had changed in the intervening period both in the world and in the United Nations Paragraph 3 of the draft resolution would be entirely acceptable, since it would not prejudge how the matter was to be considered.

39. The words "politicization" and "propaganda", which had been used in connexion with OPI, should be clarified whenever they were used, as they had decidely negative overtones. Finally, he stressed the need for OPI to present a balanced picture of the facts regardless of the likes and dislikes of delegations. Concern for the good name of the Organization had nothing to do with propaganda.

40. Mr. RIVAS (Colombia) noted that, despite long consultations with the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, his delegation had felt unable to accept the latter's proposal for both substantive and technical reasons. The preambular paragraph proposed by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247) would have changed the purpose of the draft resolution. In addition, the text proposed by that country properly belonged not in the preambular part of the draft resolution but in the operative part. Accordingly, his delegation pleaded with members to vote against the proposed amendment.

41. Although some delegations might believe that the original text had been weakened in the attempt to reach a compromise, the revised text before the Committee still reflected the basic concern which had led his delegation to submit it.

42. The sponsors had no objection to the oral amendments presented by the delegations of Afghanistan and Tunisia to operative paragraphs 1 and 3, respectively.

43. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation could not support the draft resolution, which reflected a serious misunderstanding of trends in international public opinion with regard to the United Nations. The corrective action that it proposed was neither appropriate nor wise, for the public image of the Organization would not improve until the spirit of conciliation and compromise returned to its halls. The situation was not, however, entirely without hope: as recently as the seventh special session of the General Assembly there had been encouraging signs that the period of confrontation politics had run its course. Unfortunately, subsequent developments had revived his delegation's concern and it was not surprised that the Organization's image had changed. The United Nations would be judged by its deeds and not on the merits of any public information campaign. His delegation saw no purpose in asking the Secretary-General for a report on the activities of OPI or including a new item on the agenda of the thirty-first session, and requested that a vote be taken on the draft resolution. It would vote against the text and, if the operative paragraphs were put to a vote separately, would vote against them all. If the amendment proposed by the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247) were put to the vote, his delegation would abstain. His delegation would abstain. His delegation would support the draft decisions in documents A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2 and A/C.5/L.1243. It felt that the amendments in document A/C.5/L.1245 were no longer relevant but would be guided by the Chairman in that connexion.

44. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) moved the closure of the debate under rule 117 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

45. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) opposed closure of the debate on the grounds that not all delegations had expressed their views on the question and that not all aspects of the question had been fully explored. At the 1728th meeting, he had requested information from the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information on the financial implications of the draft resolution, and the debate should not be closed until that information was provided.

46. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) opposed closure of the debate.

The motion was rejected by 42 votes to 21, with 24 abstentions.

47. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), referring to rules 116 and 119 of the rules of procedure, moved the adjournment of the debate on the question under discussion.

48. The CHAIRMAN said that, as no member of the Committee wished to speak against adjournment of the debate, he would take it that the Committee agreed to adjourn the debate on the question under consideration.

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

49. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee on Conferences had met the previous afternoon and decided that it was not its intention to have its report[1] transmitted to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for comments. In view of the delay in scheduling item 100 (Pattern of conferences) because of the implications of the reference to comments of the Advisory Committee in the draft resolution recommended in chapter VI of the report of the Committee on Conferences, the latter had decided to amend the draft resolution by deleting that reference and to issue the amended draft resolution as a corrigendum to its report.

50. Accordingly, he proposed that the Committee take up item 100, together with section 23 of the proposed programme budget, at its next meeting, and that consideration of item 106 (United Nations pension system) be deferred.

51. Referring to the question raised by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany at the preceding meeting, he said that, if the Fifth Committee took a decision on the report of the Committee on Conferences which involved financial implications, the Secretariat would produce a paper on those implications which would be reviewed by the Advisory Committee and submitted to the Fifth Committee.

52. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) pointed out that, under the procedure recommended by the Chairman, the Fifth Committee would consider the report of the Committee on Conferences before having a paper on its financial and administrative implications; such a paper would be submitted by the Secretariat, considered by the Advisory Committee, and made available to the Fifth Committee only after that Committee had adopted a draft resolution on the question. Under the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Secretariat was required to submit papers on the financial implications only for proposed draft resolutions; indeed, a proposed draft resolution had to be accompanied by a statement of its financial implications before it could be adopted and recommended to the General Assembly. However, nothing in the rules of procedure prevented a Main Committee of the General Assembly from asking the Secretariat to provide a paper on the financial and administrative aspects of a report by an intergovernmental committee. Accordingly, he proposed that the Secretary-General provide a paper on the financial and administrative aspects of the report of the Committee on Conferences, and that the Advisory Committee be invited to comment on that paper. He also proposed that the Fifth Committee defer consideration of the report of the Committee on Conferences until the paper by the

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 32.*

Secretariat and the comments by the Advisory Committee on it were available.

53. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) supported the proposal by the United Kingdom representative.

54. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) also supported the proposal by the United Kingdom representative.

55. He recalled that at the 1735th meeting the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had said that the Advisory Committee had studied the report of the Committee on Conferences and was awaiting information it had requested from the Secretariat before issuing its comments. In that connexion, he expressed the concern of his delegation over the attitude of the Secretariat towards the request for information and the long period of time required before information was made available. A problem had arisen because the Secretariat had not provided appropriate answers in due time in response to requests by the Advisory Committee for information.

56. Mr. NAUDY (France) supported the United Kingdom proposal.

57. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), like the representative of Iran, was concerned over the delay on the part of the Secretariat in providing information requested by the Advisory Committee.

58. Referring to the United Kingdom proposal that the Secretariat should provide information on the financial and administrative implications of the report of the Committee on Conferences, he said that he had expected the Secretariat to provide such information in connexion with the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Conferences. He requested clarification of the reasons for the Secretariat's failure to provide that information.

59. Mr. SETHI (India) suggested that, in the light of paragraph 11 of the report of the Committee on Conferences, the United Kingdom proposal was tantamount to asking the Advisory Committee to do work identical to the work already done by the Committee on Conferences. The Committee on Conferences had certainly taken factors of a financial nature into consideration in reaching its decisions.

60. Mr. RUTLEDGE (Chief Editor), replying to the question by the representative of the Soviet Union, said that the Secretary-General had not felt it necessary to submit a statement of financial implications specifically on the report of the Committee on Conferences. The recommendations of the Committee on Conferences on the calendar of conferences for the following year contained only very few items which would have any substantial effect on the budget estimates; probably the only such item was the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. The Secretary-General had assumed that the paper on the financial implications of that Conference would be submitted in connexion with the eventual draft resolution submitted on the relevant agenda item.

61. The Committee on Conferences had also reported on the pattern of conferences and on exceptions to the basic principle that bodies should meet at their respective established headquarters. In reviewing that question, the Committee on Conferences had considered, not specifically the financial implications, but whether it could reasonably recommend a reduction in the number of exceptions to the rule with the general objective of a more rational use of resources. The Secretariat had been requested to provide to the Advisory Committee the material on financial implications which had been before the Committee on Conferences and that had been done. That material, however, related to only two of the total number of exceptions. The Advisory Committee had then asked the Secretary-General to provide additional information which, as the representative of Iran had said, had not yet been provided. The delay was due to the need for information as precise as possible, some of which had to be obtained from overseas offices. He assured the representative of the Soviet Union that there had been no desire or attempt on the part of the Secretariat to obscure the situation. The Secretariat had intended to provide the information to the Advisory Committee as soon as it was available, but it could instead provide it to the Fifth Committee if that Committee so decided.

62. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the United Kingdom proposal.

63. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) proposed that a target date be set for the submission of the Secretariat paper on the administrative and financial implications of the report of the Committee on Conferences.

64. Mr. KISEKA (Uganda) asked the representative of the United Kingdom if he maintained his proposal after hearing the statement by the Chief Editor.

65. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that he maintained his proposal. Important financial implications were involved, as could be seen from conference room papers supplied to the Committee on Conferences, and there were also very important administrative implications.

66. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Chief Editor for his clarification. He expressed deep concern over the statement by the representative of Iran, a member of the Advisory Committee, who felt that the provision of information requested by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee was being inordinately delayed by the Secretariat.

67. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) expressed support for the United Kingdom proposal as amended by the representative of Iran.

68. The CHAIRMAN said he assumed that the Committee wished to adopt the United Kingdom proposal. As a consequence, item 106 would be included in the programme of work for the week and item 100 would be postponed.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

1737th meeting

Wednesday, 12 November 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1737

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the A/... and A/C.5/... documents, see 1734th meeting; A/C.5/L.1226, A/C.5/L.1229-1233, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1247)

The effect of continuing currency instability on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system* (continued)* *(A/10008/Add.4, A/C.5/1692)

1. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that, in reading the report of the Secretary-General on the effects of continuing currency instability on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system (A/C.5/1692) and the related comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.4), he had noted that unfortunately the situation had not changed much since the twenty-ninth session. At that time the Fifth Committee had had before it the report of the Working Group on Currency Instability which, according to General Assembly resolution 3360 (XXIX), had found that there were "no generally agreed alternatives to policies already being utilized in the United Nations and related agencies", and it did not appear that any new techniques which would command general support had been devised since then to solve the existing problems. It would not therefore serve any useful purpose for the Committee to engage once again in a long debate on the question, since the arguments put forward during the debate at the previous session were reflected in the summary records of the 1652nd to 1659th meetings and in the report of the Fifth Committee.[1] Following that debate, the General Assembly had, by an overwhelming majority, adopted resolution 3360 (XXIX) in which, bearing in mind the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations, it noted, in particular, the statement of the Working Group on Currency Instability that currency fluctuations and inflationary pressures were likely to continue and that there were no generally agreed alternatives to policies already being utilized in the United Nations and related agencies. It further stressed that the early payment of their contributions by Member States and the elimination of the short-term deficit of the Organization would resolve many of the currency problems faced by the United Nations. Finally, it requested the Secretary-General to keep those problems under review and to ensure that the programmes and activities concerning the developing countries were not adversely affected.

2. It would also serve no useful purpose to engage in a theoretical discussion on concepts of full budgeting or semi-full budgeting, first, because it was unlikely that members of the Committee would be able to agree on a definition of those concepts, and, secondly, because, if they did not agree on a definition, they would probably disagree on which formula to apply. Most delegations would probably favour semi-full budgeting, but it should be remembered that UNESCO had used that method without any great success whereas FAO had been successful in applying the full-budgeting method. The success of either formula depended on many factors which were difficult to foresee and which were beyond the control of those responsible.

3. The question of the effect of continuing currency instability should therefore be approached in a pragmatic and realistic way, taking General Assembly resolution 3360 (XXIX) as a point of departure. Both national and international administrations must take inflation and currency instability into account when preparing their programme budgets and appropriation the resultant costs. At the same time, however, they should take counter-inflationary measures by cutting expenses where possible. It was therefore important for the years 1976 and 1977 and to allow for percentages which were slightly below those expected. The amount of money to be spent during the biennium having thus been set, the Secretary-General, through economies and austerity measures, should seek to absorb the costs resulting from inflation that were over and above the amount anticipated. If, for reasons beyond his control, he could not stay within the limits set and if the execution of priority programmes was endangered, the Committee might have to accept revised estimates. By taking that pragmatic and reasonable approach, a measure of controlled growth in United Nations activities would be assured and the Secretary-General would be urged to look for economies and to weed out obsolete programmes.

4. As far as the documents before the Committee were concerned, the Committee could do no more than take note of the report of the Secretary-General and endorse the comments of the Advisory Committee.

5. Mr. SETHI (India) noted the relative passivity of the United Nations compared with other organizations in the United Nations system in the face of currency instability and inflation. That passivity resulted from the fact that programmes were not considered in a budgetary context in the United Nations. The Advisory Committee admittedly devoted great attention to efforts to achieve economies, but, even with the help of the Secretariat, it could not solve the problem without full and accurate information on the programmes and workload of the Secretariat departments, as he had said at the 1724th meeting, when the Fifth Committee had been considering section 5A of the proposed programme budget.

* Resumed from the 1735th meeting.

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 73, document A/9960, paras. 60-81.

6. Other organizations in the United Nations system, such as WHO, UNESCO and the ILO, had machinery for reviewing programmes with a view to pruning their budgets; in those organizations, committees for the review of programmes met almost continuously since, if that operation was to yield results, it must take place at the intergovernmental level. The action of the Advisory Committee was limited by considerations relating to its mandate and by the fear that too drastic measures might adversely affect the substantive work. The redeployment of resources should make possible the partial absorption of additional costs by the budget according to the modalities outlined in paragraphs 13 to 16 of the report of the Working Group on Currency Instability.[2] It was, of course, impossible to reorganize the Secretariat or to adjust priorities with each sudden currency fluctuation, but the action taken by an intergovernmental organ dealing with programmes should make it possible to achieve better results.

7. That operation would have three aspects and would consist in redeploying staff as new activities replaced obselete activities, continually reallocating resources according to changing priorities—it being understood that the most detailed programming within the context of the budget by reflecting policies defined in the medium-term plan by means of biennial targets and intermediate stages. Constant pressure by an intergovernmental organ could remedy the current lack of rigour in such operations. In that connexion, his delegation associated itself with the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery (see A/10117) and deplored the fact that little attention had been paid to them in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1227/Rev.2, which the Committee had adopted at its 1719th meeting, under agenda item 97, relating to the review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets.

8. While none of the methods envisaged by the Working Group on Currency Instability for making economies had proved useful to the United Nations, economies would not in any case be achieved by using the "incremental" method or by advocating the creation of 826 new posts.

9. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said he had noted with concern the information provided in their preliminary statements at the 1700th meeting by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1685) and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee (A/C.5/1686) and by the Controller in reply to the questions which had been put to him. The problem of currency instability resulting from inflation and fluctuations in rates of exchange was currently having a disturbing effect on organizations in the United Nations system. It appeared from the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1692) that UNESCO had taken vigorous measures to deal with the effects of inflation, while the United Nations Secretariat was accused with some reason in paragraph 4 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008/Add.4) of not having taken any initiative to combat the effects of inflation. In fact, the Secretariat should fill the vacant posts; as in 1972, it could apply a policy of a "staff freeze" and not create any more posts. The United Nations and its Member States were in a difficult situation as a result of the fact that, in the budget for the biennium, most of the increase was due to inflation and currency fluctuations and not to the growth of programmes. The Secretary-General should therefore examine the question in depth before proposing the creation of new posts while there were posts unfilled. He should, in particular, take account of the report of the Advisory Committee and adopt measures similar to those taken by UNESCO.

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)*

SECTION 1. OVER-ALL POLICY-MAKING, DIRECTION AND CO-ORDINATION (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

10. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) observed that section 1 consisted of two parts—A. Policy-making organs; and B. Executive direction and management—which corresponded to sections 1 and 2 respectively in the 1974-1975 programme budget. The Secretary-General's request in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) amounted to $20,545,000 and the Advisory Committee recommended a total reduction of $1,250,000, i.e., $1,123,000 under part A and $127,000 under part B. In addition, the impact of the Advisory Committee's recommendations in its report on representation allowances (A/10008 and Corr.2, paras. 63-65) and reclassification of posts (*ibid.*, para. 61) would entail an additional reduction of $13,000, so that the total estimate recommended by the Advisory Committee in section 1 was $19,282,000. The apportioned costs budgeted in other parts of the budget were estimated at $53,619,200, comprising $49,716,000 for policy-making organs and $3,903,200 for executive direction and management.

11. In paragraph 1.6 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of $374,000 in the temporary assistance credits requested for the General Assembly. In paragraph 1.18, the Advisory Committee recommended that the credits requested for conference services for the programme of meetings of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation ($347,000) be reduced by $170,000, because they had been overstated, and in paragraphs 1.19 and 1.20 it recommended a reduction of $44,000 in the credits requested for consultants and the travel of members of the Scientific Committee to the meetings of that body. Finally, in paragraph 1.23, the Advisory Committee recommended that the estimate of $535,000 for the United Nations Special Fund be deleted pending the submission during the current session of a more realistic assessment of the Fund's requirements.

12. Under executive direction and management, the Secretary-General was requesting a total of 11 additional posts: 6 new posts and the conversion into permanent posts of 5 posts formerly financed from allocations for temporary personnel. He also requested the reclassification of 1 G-5 post to the P-2 level, which would increase the number of

2 Document A/9773, of 26 September 1974.

* Resumed from the 1735th meeting.

Professional posts, and also the reclassification of 5 other posts. The Advisory Committee had accepted all of the Secretary-General's requests for additional posts, except for 1 P-5 post and 1 G-5 post in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs. For the reasons explained in paragraph 1.29 of its report, the Advisory Committee had accepted the request to reclassify 1 post from the D-1 level to the D-2 level in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs. The remainder of the reclassification requests were covered by the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 61 of its report.

13. In paragraph 1.30 and 1.31 the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of $19,000 in the travel and temporary funds requested for the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination. Thus, taking into account the Advisory Committee's proposal and on higher delayed recruitment deduction in paragraph 55 of its report, the total reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee for executive direction and management under section 1 of the budget amounted to $127,000.

14. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that the estimates for the whole section 1 represented an increase of $2.9 million, i.e., 16.7 per cent, over the revised estimate for 1974-1975. The main factors in that increase in expenditure were, as in the other sections of the programme budget, inflation, additional Professional and General Service posts and the increase in temporary staff. His delegation had already explained its position regarding such expenditures in connexion with other sections; the observations it had made on those occasions applied also to section 1. Consequently, it could not approve the additional expenditure entailed by inflation and currency instability, which should be covered by economies in the United Nations budget. Likewise, it could not approve the estimates for additional temporary personnel, for the increase in programmes could and must be covered by permanent staff through increased productivity, better organization of work and the elimination of obsolete programmes. If it were possible to vote separately on the credits requested to cover the effects of inflation and for the recruitment of additional temporary staff, his delegation would vote against such appropriations. With regard to the over-all credits requested under section 1, his delegation would be obliged to abstain during the vote.

15. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said he was surprised to see that the estimates for conference services were indicated for some subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and not for others. He wondered whether it should be concluded that the amounts not given in section 1 were included in section 23 (Conference and library services).

16. He requested clarification concerning paragraph 1.7 of the Advisory Committee's report, where it was stated that an amount had been earmarked to cover the travel and subsistence expenses of 25 staff members from the United Nations Office at Geneva. If the General Assembly approved the creation of the permanent interpreter posts requested by the Secretary-General, would it still be necessary to bring staff from Geneva?

17. He also wondered on what basis the revised estimate the Secretary-General was to submit for the United Nations Special Fund would be established: would it be established on the basis of the Fund's programme of work? He also inquired whether the World Food Council had already submitted its estimates for 1976-1977.

18. He wondered whether there might not be duplication between the work of the Documentation Planning and Editing Section of the Division of General Assembly Affairs and that of the Editorial and Official Records Division of the Department of Conference Services. Perhaps the two units in question could be merged to ensure better co-ordination.

19. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) explained that the estimates for conference services were included in section 23, which constituted a self-contained programme, but were also indicated for information purposes in section 1 under apportioned costs.

20. With regard to the World Food Council, the United Nations had concluded a cost-sharing agreement with FAO. The latter had already approved an appropriation of $600,000 to cover the expenses of the Council secretariat and had also offered to provide office space for the Council and to assume responsibility for a number of other expenses. The Secretary-General intended to submit a revised estimate to the Assembly on the basis of that agreement, details of which would be provided to the Assembly.

21. With regard to the editing of documents, the Secretariat could give more information on the division of labour between the two units in question, but he believed he could assure the Committee that the current system was necessary to ensure the rapid issue of documents.

22. With regard to the staff who were to be brought from the Geneva Office, the Secretariat would study the question and provide an explanation as soon as possible.

23. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) considered that the estimate under section 1 could have been reduced still further. However, the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee was reasonable, since it would make it possible to maintain the real growth of the programmes under that section at more or less the same level as that of the budget as a whole.

24. He wished to put two questions concerning paragraph 1.24 of the proposed programme budget: what kind of services did the secretariat of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund provide to the United Nations Staff Pension Committee, and was the latter Committee composed solely of representatives of the staff of the Organization itself?

25. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) explained that the United Nations Staff Pension Committee was composed solely of elected or appointed representatives from the Organization itself, whereas the Joint Staff Pension Board was composed of elected or appointed representatives, from all the organizations of the United Nations system. The Secretariat of the Pension Fund provided services not only to the Joint Staff Pension

Board but also to the Staff Pension Committee of the affiliated organizations, and that was why a cost-sharing system had been established in agreement with all the organizations.

26. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) suggested that the representative of Belgium might refer to the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board,[3] in particular paragraphs 24 to 29 of that report and table 1 of annex III, and to the corresponding report of the Advisory Committee.[4] It would be preferable to raise the question of the financing of the Pension Fund and the share of expenses assumed by the United Nations when the Committee took up agenda item 106.

27. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) observed that the Controller had not answered the question put by the Philippine delegation concerning the estimate for the United Nations Special Fund, which the Advisory Committee had recommended should be deleted for the time being. He would welcome clarification on that point: the Special Fund was in fact to be financed from voluntary contributions, and it would be normal that its administrative expenses should be covered by the Fund itself and not charged to the United Nations regular budget.

SECTION 2. POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS; PEACE-KEEPING ACTIVITIES (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

28. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that section 2 was one of the sections affected by the changes in presentation referred to by the Secretary-General in paragraph 6 of his foreword to the proposed programme budget (A/10006). The estimates under section 2 covered items which had been budgeted for in the 1974-1975 biennium under several sections.

29. The Secretary-General's estimates amounted to $39,913,000, or 6 per cent more than the revised 1974-1975 appropriations. Real growth was estimated by the Secretary-General at 1.2 per cent, which was rather small compared with that of the programme budget as a whole. However, as the Advisory Committee had stated in paragraph 2.2 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), no provision had been made for several programmes and activities because the competent intergovernmental organs had not yet taken decisions at the time when the estimates had been prepared.

30. The Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of $899,000 in the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General for section 2. Moreover, its recommendation in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report, on the subject of representation allowances, would involve an additional reduction of $2,000, so that the total amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 2 was $39,012,000. Under part C (Department of Political and Security Council Affairs) of section 2, the Secretary-General requested $6,986,000; the reduction recommended by the Committee amounted to $55,000 when the higher delayed recruitment factor proposed by the Committee in paragraph 55 of its report was taken into account. The Advisory Committee had accepted the request for 1 new P-5 post as well as the proposed reclassification of 1 G-4 post to G-5 in the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs. However, the Committee was not fully convinced of the need for 1 additional P-3 and 1 General Service post for the Unit for Co-ordination and Political Information, as requested by the Secretary-General in paragraph 2.30 of the proposed programme budget. The Unit had been created in 1975 by merging two smaller units, giving the new unit a complement of 4 Professional and 4 General Service posts. The Advisory Committee felt that the merger should maximize productivity and make the need for the 2 additional posts less urgent. The request for the 2 posts had been predicated upon an anticipated increase in the workload of the Unit following recommendations to be put forward by a consultant engaged to study improved flow of information to the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee was unable to see the basis on which an assumption of workload increase had been made even before the results of the consultant's study were known. The Committee was therefore unable to support the request for the 2 posts.

31. Under part D (Special missions) of section 2, the Advisory Committee was recommending a reduction of $844,000 in the estimate of $25,772,000 submitted by the Secretary-General. In the Committee's opinion the estimates submitted for the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine for miscellaneous supplies and services were susceptible of economies in the amount of $39,000. In view of the somewhat high vacancy rate in UNTSO, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should undertake a review of the situation in the light of staff requirements and available staff resources. Pending that review, the Advisory Committee was of the opinion that the 20 UNTSO field-service posts which had been vacant for some time should not be filled. In paragraph 2.24 of its report, the Committee had recommended the application of an additional 10 per cent turnover deduction to the existing UNTSO field-service posts. The effect of that recommendation and of a minor reduction of $2,000 in travel funds was to bring the total reduction recommended by the Committee under part D of section 2 to $844,000.

32. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should follow the procedure adopted in the case of section 1, and first consider section 2 as a whole and then discuss each of its component parts.

It was so decided.

33. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the proposed increase of 6 per cent for section 2 when compared with the revised appropriations for 1974-1975 was lower than that for other sections. However, in principle, his delegation did not approve of requests for funds to cover expenses due to inflation, currency instability and the recruitment of temporary staff. As it had already stated in the case of section 1, if the amount corresponding to such expenses was put to a

3 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 9.*

4 Document A/10335, of 7 November 1975.

separate vote, his delegation would vote against the appropriation. However, the Soviet Government had always been concerned about the effectiveness of the Organization as an instrument for the maintenance of peace and security, and as section 2 dealt with the financing of peace-keeping activities, his delegation would vote for the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under that section.

34. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he approved of the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the whole, but had a question to ask concerning the United Nations Supply Depot at Pisa. It was indicated in paragraph 2.79 of the proposed programme budget that the average value of equipment and supplies stored in the Depot was above $500,000. According to table 2-30, the amount estimated to cover all the costs of the operation of the Depot during the budget period was in the same region. At first glance that amount seemed excessive, and he would appreciate receiving some explanations on the subject.

35. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that in order to compare the value of the supplies and the costs of operating the Depot one would need to know the rate of turnover of the supplies. The Secretariat was not in a position to provide the representative of Belgium with that information immediately but it would do so as soon as possible.

SECTION 3. POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TRUSTEESHIP AND DECOLONIZATION ACTIVITIES (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

36. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that section 3 was a new section, created in pursuance of a decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session to rationalize the presentation of the estimates relating to political affairs, trusteeship and decolonization. As a result, the section contained estimates budgeted for in the 1974-1975 biennium under several sections. That consolidation did not, however, imply a consequential rationalization of managerial responsibility. For example, various African issues continued to be dealt with under several programme heads.

37. The Secretary-General's estimates under section 3 amounted to $7,294,000. The $5,000 reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee was consequential to the Committee's proposal that a higher delayed recruitment deduction should be applied to new posts requested by the Secretary-General for the forthcoming biennium (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 55); a further $400 reduction would arise out of the Committee's recommendation on representation allowances (*ibid.*, paras. 63-65). Otherwise, the Advisory Committee had accepted the rest of the Secretary-General's estimates. The total amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 3 was $7,288,600.

38. In paragraph 3.4 of its report, the Advisory Committee observed that the $959,000 requested by the Secretary-General for policy-making organs was subject to revision in the light of decisions that might be taken by the organs concerned. In paragraph 3.8, the Committee noted that, as the number of Territories within the purview of the Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization had diminished, it trusted that the Secretary-General would keep under continuing review the related staff and other resources with a view to aligning them with workload requirements. Finally, in paragraph 3.13 of its report, the Advisory Committee had noted that pending decisions to be taken by the General Assembly at its current session, the Secretary-General had not included any request for a grant for the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa.

39. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said he was sure that a much larger reduction could be made in the estimates under section 3. He was particularly surprised that no reduction was planned for the Trusteeship Council, which now only had one Territory to deal with, or for the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, whose workload should have decreased now that the Portuguese Territories had achieved independence and that other Territories were about to do the same. He also wondered how the Secretary-General could justify the sum of $166,000 requested for programme growth in the Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization, since the workload of that Department should normally decrease as Territories gained independence.

40. With regard to the Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia, he noted that the Secretary-General proposed creating 2 new posts at Lusaka and transferring 2 New York posts there. It would seem more rational to transfer the whole Office to Lusaka leaving only 1 liaison officer in New York. He would like the Secretariat to calculate the amount of savings that could be made as a result of such a transfer.

41. He had noted with surprise that the funds requested for the New York Office of the South West Africa People's Organization amounted to $122,000, or exactly double the appropriation for 1974-1975, and would like to have some explanations in that connexion.

42. Lastly, he thought that no funds should be appropriated for the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa, which should be financed entirely from voluntary contributions.

43. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he, too, was surprised that the Secretary-General should be planning a real growth in the programme of the Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization when most of the problems dealt with by that Department had now been solved. The comment made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 3.8 of its report was interesting, but inadequate, and the Committee should recommend a reduction in the estimates under part B of section 3.

44. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said he was of the same opinion. He felt that reductions were possible in the whole of section 3 and he hoped that they would be achieved in the future.

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)

SECTION 17. OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Financing of emergency relief assistance and technical co-operation activities (A/10008/Add.5, A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1)

45. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider section 17 of the proposed programme budget in conjunction with the question of assistance in cases of natural disaster, which was dealt with in a separate report under agenda item 96. The Committee had before it a report by the Secretary-General on the question of creating a special voluntary fund for financing emergency assistance to Governments in cases of natural disaster (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1) and the corresponding report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.5).

46. Under section 17 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), the Secretary-General had requested an amount of $1,476,000. In its related report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 17.14) the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of $28,000. Furthermore, the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 63 to 65 of that report, concerning representation allowances, would entail an additional reduction of $400. Therefore, the total amount recommended under section 17 was $1,447,600.

47. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that the Secretary-General's estimate under section 17 showed an increase of 26.5 per cent over the revised appropriations for 1974-1975. The Advisory Committee indicated in its report (*ibid.*, para. 17.1) the main reasons for the increase. The Secretary-General was not proposing any additional posts to be financed from the regular budget. But the number of posts financed from extra-budgetary funds had risen (*ibid.*, paras. 17.4 and 17.6). That might well have implications for the regular budget beyond 1977 in view of the decision taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 3243 (XXIX) that the method of financing extra expenditure for strengthening the co-ordinating role of UNDRO would be reviewed. The Advisory Committee had found it necessary to reiterate its view that the manning table financed from extrabudgetary resources did not reflect a prior General Assembly commitment.

48. The Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of $28,000 in the estimates for the reasons given in its report (*ibid.*, paras. 17.9-17.14), plus a reduction of $400 in respect of representation allowances.

49. The estimate for UNDRO included under the regular budget an amount of $400,000 for emergency assistance to Governments in connexion with natural disasters, i.e., $200,000 per annum, subject to a normal ceiling of $20,000 per country in the case of any one disaster. The Secretary-General, in his report on the financing of emergency relief assistance (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1), envisaged the establishment of a single special voluntary fund to support the strengthening of UNDRO, as called for in General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX), as well as an increase in the resources available for emergency aid. For 1976-1977, the new fund would be financed through a transfer to it of the $400,000 already included for emergency aid under section 17 and through the raising of $1 million in voluntary contributions which the Secretary-General expected to receive during the biennium. The total amount of the resources of the fund would thus be $1,400,000. Out of that total $800,000 would be set aside for emergency assistance and $600,000 for pre-disaster planning assistance, for the biennium 1976-1977. If the Secretary-General in fact received the $1 million expected, he proposed to increase the normal ceiling of $20,000 to $30,000 in emergency aid per country for any one disaster.

50. For its part, the Advisory Committee, as indicated in its report (A/10008/Add.5, para. 6), had been informed by the Co-ordinator that he had every hope of attaining the desired goal of $1 million in voluntary contributions for the biennium 1976-1977. The Co-ordinator had assured the Advisory Committee that no financial commitments would be made until the funds to which those commitments would relate were actually forthcoming. The Advisory Committee interpreted those assurances as meaning that the increase in the cieling fixed for emergency aid, per country and per disaster, would become effective only when voluntary contributions had reached the total of $1 million.

51. It was clear from the Secretary-General's report and from the assurances given by the Co-ordinator that from 1978 onwards it might no longer be necessary to include an appropriation in the regular budget for emergency disaster assistance or for pre-disaster planning assistance. In the light of those conclusions, the Advisory Committee accepted the Secretary-General's proposals (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1, para. 14).

52. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) pointed out that the Committee must decide upon the possible transfer of $400,000 from the regular budget to a special single fund which did not yet exist. It must also decide, among other things whether to establish a single fund to finance both emergency disaster assistance and pre-disaster planning assistance, what the resources of the fund should be and what portion of those resources should be assigned to the activities in question. However, the Second Committee was dealing with those questions in the form of a draft resolution,[5] the operative part of which made provision for the transfer to the new special fund, for 1976-1977, of $400,000 from the regular budget. It seemed therefore that the Second Committee was encroaching on the responsibilities of the Fifth Committee. On the other hand, for the other questions which arose, it might be asked whether the Fifth Committee was itself competent.

53. For his part, he would agree that the amount of $400,000 should be transferred from the regular budget to the new special fund, if it was set up, on the understanding

5 Document A/C.2/L.1447, of 5 November 1975; text subsequently revised, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 63, document A/10387.

that such a measure was strictly exceptional. If the voluntary contributions to the new special fund did not attain the required amount, the fund should not be financed again from appropriations in the regular budget. On that question the Advisory Committee might have been more firm and not have confined itself to stating that "the regular budget input may no longer be needed by 1978, after which the fund would be entirely financed by voluntary contributions" (A/10008/Add.5, para. 5). The Federal Republic of Germany, in any case, would formally oppose any new appropriation from the regular budget for the fund.

54. On the question of post financed by extrabudgetary funds, whose subsequent inclusion in the regular budget was often requested, he endorsed the warning given by the Advisory Committee: there again, a very distressing tendency must be very firmly opposed.

55. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said he did not wish to touch upon the substance of the matter, to which he would revert later, but to question the procedure to be followed. He asked the Chairman how the Fifth Committee could take up the matter at a time when the Second Committee had before it a draft resolution including all the proposals in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1). To what extent could the Fifth Committee deal with questions already before the Second Committee and how could the Second Committee take a decision on questions with which the Fifth Committee was obviously competent to deal?

56. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) recalled that his delegation had voted for General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX) which had been designed to strengthen the activities of UNDRO. The Assembly had then decided that the additional expense of strengthening the capacity of UNDRO should be financed from voluntary contributions during a period extending up to the biennium 1976-1977. For its part, Sweden had undertaken that new commitment. However, the strengthening of the capacity of UNDRO by voluntary contributions could be only a provisional solution. Sweden felt it was normal that over the long term the administrative expenditure of UNDRO should be covered by the United Nations regular budget. His delegation could not therefore share the hopes expressed by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1, para. 14) and endorsed by the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.5, para. 5) that such activities should be fully financed from voluntary contributions by 1978.

57. The CHAIRMAN said, in reply to the representatives of the Netherlands and of the Federal Republic of Germany, that clearly the responsibilities and the competence of the Second and Fifth Committees overlapped on the question of section 17 of the proposed programme budget and on the Secretary-General's proposals concerning the financing of emergency aid. He would consult the Chairman of the Second Committee before proposing what procedure the Fifth Committee should follow.

58. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out to the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany that he had no intention of going beyond, either explicitly or implicitly, the assumptions made by the Advisory Committee and by the Secretary-General himself on the question of financing a single special fund. All that could be said at the current stage was that, if voluntary contributions in fact amounted to $1 million, emergency assistance and pre-disaster planning assistance would not require any further appropriation in the regular budget. He refused to envisage in the abstract what would happen if voluntary contributions did not attain the expected amount.

59. The Second Committee had before it a draft resolution which at first sight concerned the same figures as those before the Fifth Committee: on the one hand, an amount of $400,000 to be included in the regular budget; on the other, an amount of $1 million in voluntary contributions expected during the biennium 1976-1977. Obviously, consultations would have to be held between the Chairmen of the two Committees. Nevertheless, the Secretary-General's report, issued as document A/C.5/L.1688 and Corr.1, was a Fifth Committee document and dealt with the financing of emergency aid: the Fifth Committee was fully competent in that field, and any decision taken by another Main Committee should be reached subject to the decision taken by the Fifth Committee. The principal concern should therefore be to ensure that two Main Committees of the General Assembly did not take contradictory decisions. Accordingly, efforts to ensure co-ordination must be made by the Chairmen and by delegations.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

1738th meeting

Thursday, 13 November 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1738

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system:
***(a)* Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/10009, A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1);**
***(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General (A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1697)**

1. The CHAIRMAN said that, in addition to the documents already before the Committee for its consideration of the question of the United Nations pension system, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions would be submitting a report on the report of the Secretary-General on pension coverage for members of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/C.5/1697). That question would be considered at a later meeting.

2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introduced the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10335), which dealt with the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/10009) and the report of the Secretary-General on the investments of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1).

3. In paragraphs 2 to 15 of its report, the Advisory Committee dealt with questions on which the Board had submitted recommendations for action by the General Assembly at its thirtieth session. It had accepted the Board's recommendation that articles 36 and 39 of the Regulations of the Fund, dealing with widowers' benefits and residual benefits, should be amended to implement the principle of equal treatment of male and female participants, endorsed by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session. The Advisory Committee had suggested that the amendment to article 39 should be in the form indicated in paragraph 3 of its report.

4. The Advisory Committee had not found it easy to accept the Board's proposal that the current maximum contributory service of 30 years be extended to 32 years, an interim measure to be reviewed by the Board in 1977. It could be argued that, when a participant joined the Fund, he did so with the knowledge that the maximum contributory service was 30 years, and that it was therefore not necessary to amend the Regulations so as to accommodate a participant whose contractual participation had only envisaged a maximum of 30 years' contributory service. The Advisory Committee, however, recognized that the problem had arisen for the first time and that the Regulations did not cover it. In paragraph 5 of its report, it forecast the number of staff not yet of retirement age who, on 1 February 1976 and succeeding years, would have accumulated 30 years of contributory service, should they remain with the organizations until the age of retirement. The Advisory Committee had concluded that at the current time there was no alternative course of action which would meet the principle of equity and fairness to the participant and at the same time guard against a possible negative actuarial effect on the Fund, and had therefore recommended acceptance of the Board's proposal subject to the understanding specified in paragraph 7 of the report of the Advisory Committee.

5. In paragraphs 9 to 15 of its report, the Advisory Committee had commented on administrative expenses of the Fund. In examining the supplementary estimates for 1975, the Advisory Committee had emphasized, in paragraph 10, that the Board, before taking any decision that might have financial implications, should consider such implications. It also suggested that contractual arrangements for investment services should be kept under constant review so as to take advantage of any possibility of reducing as much as possible the expenses involved in the provision of investment services. Subject to those observations, the Advisory Committee accepted the supplementary estimates for 1975 and the estimates of administrative expenses for 1976.

6. In paragraphs 16 to 22 of its report, the Advisory Committee had dealt with the question of the investments of the Fund as described in the Board's report and the related report of the Secretary-General. The comments in paragraph 22 on investment opportunities in developing countries in no way implied that the Advisory Committee was somehow discouraging investment in those countries or indeed in any country; the Advisory Committee was simply saying that rendering assistance was not a function of the Fund. It had therefore indicated that it trusted the Secretary-General would continue to be guided in his investments by the soundness of the particular investment involved and that placement of the assets of the Fund in individual countries would derive solely from the belief that those markets presented the best potential opportunity for the Fund. The question of investment was an important subject and the Fifth Commitee now had an opportunity to review in detail the investment policy followed in the past in the context of the report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1). Any comments by members of the Fifth Committee would be of great value to the Secretary-General in fulfilling his responsibilities under article 19 of the Regulations of the Fund.

7. In paragraph 29 of its report, the Advisory Committee referred to the interim report of the Board on the adjustment of pensions (A/10009, annex V); paragraph 36 of that report summarized the major matters of substance which the Board was studying. The Advisory Committee had not felt it necessary at the current time to offer

detailed comments on that report, but felt that any comments made in the Fifth Committee would certainly be taken into account by the Board in preparing the report it was to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The Advisory Committee had, however, found it necessary to refer to its view that a unified scheme should not add to the current or potential liability of the membership.

8. In paragraph 23 of its report, the Advisory Committee expressed some concern about the results of the most recent actuarial valuation of the Fund, which indicated an excess of anticipated liabilities over assets of some $116.6 million. The Advisory Committee noted that the Board had regarded that actuarial deficit with conservative optimism, but it believed that the situation would need to be carefully watched so as to guard against significant liberalization of benefits which might exacerbate the actuarial position of the Fund.

9. Mrs. TSIEN (Chairman of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) introduced the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/10009). She invited the Committee to adopt the proposals contained in the report and thus complete the task begun in 1974 of establishing equality of treatment for women and men in pension matters. The most important of those proposals would grant the same survivors' benefits to the widowers of pensioners as were currently accorded to widows, under exactly the same conditions. She hoped that the Committee, taking into account the provisions of Article 8 of the Charter of the United Nations, would adopt that proposal and certain ancillary proposals contained in annex VII of the report, in the slightly amended formulation suggested by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 3 of its report (A/10335). Adoption of the proposals would be a belated act of justice, and the financial implications were modest.

10. The Board had also proposed a change in the Regulations in respect of the 30-year limit on the length of contributory service which could be accumulated. It was necessary to deal with the problem of how to treat a number of participants in the United Nations and other member organizations of the Fund who, prior to reaching the retirement age of 60, would have accumulated the maximum 30-year period of 1 February 1976. The various alternatives had been analysed by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 5 and 7 of its report. She stressed that the solution proposed by the Board, while deriving from considerations of equity, was an interim solution, and the Board would take up the matter again with a view to making further proposals in the light of the next actuarial valuation of the Fund in 1977.

11. The Board had been fully aware of the need for restraint because of the situation of the Fund as reflected by the actuarial valuation of 31 December 1974. It regretted that it had not been able to consider the urgent need for other changes, especially those relating to death and disability benefits, and intended to take up that question after the next actuarial valuation.

12. In response to the request by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session for an interim report on the adjustment of pensions, the Board had prepared a survey of the functioning of the current "dual" system. It had also outlined the issues of principle and of practical implementation which would have to be resolved in the search for a new system which would meet the requirements of unity, equity, durability and flexibility laid down by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session. Some of those issues were of a fundamental nature, such as how to maintain and adjust the level of purchasing power which a pension should have at the time of its award according to changing conditions in different parts of the world. That meant that differences in the pensions of staff members who retired at different times after equivalent service in the organizations would have to be considered. The effect on pensions of the difference in the salary systems of staff in the General Service and in the Professional and higher categories also required examination. She invited members of the Committee to facilitate the Board's task by expressing their views on the basic questions listed in annex V of the report and in particular on the relative importance they attached to the key factors involved. The Board would appreciate most of all guidance on the course to be pursued in the event that it should appear that one or more of the desired features in the scheme could not be included within the financial limitations.

13. In conclusion, she expressed appreciation to the Advisory Committee for the constructive analysis and recommendations provided in its comments on the Board's report.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1737th meeting)

The effect of continuing currency instability on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system* (continued) *(A/10008/Add.4; A/C.5/1692)

14. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), recalling the growing concern of Member States over the impact of the crisis in the capitalist world and of currency instability on the budgets of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1692) showed a considerable increase in the expenditure due to the effects of inflation and currency instability. While that report indicated that the cost of currency changes anticipated for 1976 was lower than for 1975, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had pointed out in paragraph 2 of its report (A/10008/Add.4) that the cost of currency changes and inflation for the biennium 1974-1975, estimated at $27 million by the Secretary-General, was in fact much higher—approximately $72 million, and much more if the budgets of all specialized agencies were included.

15. The Secretariat had been following the somewhat dubious practice of covering the additional costs arising from currency changes and inflation by increasing the contributions payable by Member States. Such a practice was unjust because there were many States that were in no way responsible for inflation in the capitalist countries or

for currency instability. The practice was, moreover, wrong because it was contrary to General Assembly resolution 2150 (XXI) which approved the second report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies. In that report, the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts[1] had recommended that increases in expenditure due to rises in prices should so far as possible be absorbed by savings, reassessment of priorities, redeployment of resources, and, where necessary, by adjustments within the budget. The inclusion in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 of amounts to cover the effects of inflation was also counter to the provision of General Assembly resolution 3360 (XXIX) requesting the Secretary-General to keep the problem under review, taking into account the views expressed by Member States.

16. One solution, considered of great importance by all Member States, was that saving should be affected and adjustments made within the budget. Yet the report of the Secretary-General gave no information on what measures had been taken to that end. He supported the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 4 of its report that, while a number of agencies had attempted to absorb all or part of the extra costs through economies, the United Nations had taken a more passive approach with reliance on "full budgeting" technique and supplementary appropriations. He also fully supported the suggestion by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of the same report and in its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2) on the proposed programme budget that a serious effort should be made to obtain significant savings. His delegation expected the Secretariat to take urgent and effective measures to that end. The Secretary-General should report on those measures and their effect on all main activities of the United Nations and its budget in his next report.

17. It had been suggested by a large group of Member States that additional costs due to inflation should be covered by voluntary contributions from the developed countries which were responsible for inflation and in which the additional expenditures would be made. Yet the report of the Secretary-General did not contain any information on action to follow up that suggestion. He requested information on what steps had been taken, what consultations had been held with which countries and what their outcome had been. A decision on the question under consideration should be deferred until that information was made available.

18. In conclusion, he reiterated his opposition to the inclusion in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 of estimates to cover additional costs due to inflation. Such costs should be excluded from the budget estimates, in keeping with earlier General Assembly decisions and the views of Member States. He hoped that the Secretary-General would endeavour to achieve savings to lessen the effect of inflation on the budget and that he would hold consultations with the Governments of the developed countries with a view to reaching an agreement on voluntary contributions to offset the effect of inflation on the budget.

19. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) observed that, since the economic circumstances had remained much the same in 1975 as in 1974, there had been very little change in the approaches adopted by the agencies and the governing bodies with regard to the effects of currency instability and price movements. Document A/C.5/1692 showed quite clearly, however, that some organizations, including the ILO, UNESCO and WHO, were more successful than others in containing those effects and had at least partially absorbed the additional costs due to price movements. Whereas in the case of the agencies the savings might entail a scaling-down of operational activities and thus directly affect the interests of Member States, economies by the United Nations would simply result in the employment of fewer staff and the preparation of thinner reports.

20. The Secretary-General was accustomed to requesting and obtaining supplementary funds to offset almost every upward movement in prices and every currency adjustment. Similarly, the General Assembly was accustomed to acceding to virtually every proposal for new studies and additional staff. Sooner or later the passive attitude displayed by both the Secretary-General and the General Assembly would have to change. As a start, serious consideration should be given to the suggestion that CPC should look into the matter of the absorption of the additional costs generated by inflation.

21. Semi-full budgeting was one way of ensuring the absorption of additional costs, but the same results could be achieved by tighter budgetary control. While it might not be wise to carry reform to the extreme point of excluding from the budget all costs attributed to inflation, as was proposed by the delegation of Cuba in document A/C.5/L.1232, the Organization might well go part of the way in that direction. He would like the Secretariat to inform the Committee what savings could be achieved if inflation factors of 6 to 8 per cent or 5 to 7 per cent were applied to the budget estimates, instead of the current factor of 7 to 9 per cent.

22. His delegation was wholly opposed to the suggestion that costs arising from currency adjustments and inflation should be excluded from the budget altogeher and be borne by a number of developed countries which were supposedly responsible for inflation. If such a policy was adopted, the chances were that those asked to bear the additional costs would refuse to do so and that the Organization's deficit would become even larger.

23. Rather, the view should be taken that the inflation component was an inseparable part of the Organization's budget. Although it represented a fairly small proportion of the budget for any given year, the inflation component over a 10-year period was sizable and could not simply be removed. He urged the Committee to display moderation and to rely on the Secretariat to keep the situation under close review. There was no need for further reports unless there were new developments.

24. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that the delegations of Cuba and the Soviet Union had again engaged in brain-washing and double talk. On the difficult subject of assigning responsibility for inflation, he would merely say that no country sought either inflation or devaluation;

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 80, document A/6343, para. 40.

indeed, all were struggling against the former and trying to avoid the latter. That was certainly true of his country. An article in a Soviet publication entitled *Soviet Life*, dated July 1975, had expressed the view that even though the price of alcoholic beverages had risen, there was no inflation in the Soviet Union and there never had been any. The article also spoke of a great improvement in productivity and the standard of life in the Soviet Union. His delegation was puzzled that such a prosperous country should continue to employ a non-convertible currency and that all it could do to help the developing world was to export arms and terminological inexactitudes.

25. It was unrealistic to maintain that the additional costs caused by inflation and currency changes could in some way be absorbed or removed from the United Nations budget. The prices of the resources in the budget had gone up and must be paid for. The size of the budget could be reduced, but the inflation element would remain. The only method of almost totally eliminating the inflation element from the budget would be to abolish the post adjustment system so that the price of employing staff remained static in money terms; that method was totally unacceptable to his delegation. However, the inflationary rise in the budget could be reduced somewhat through an increase in productivity. The United Nations needed more programme for less input and must eliminate wasteful and obsolete activities. His delegation agreed with the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany that the Committee should decide on a conservative figure for inflation for inclusion in the budget estimates and it would co-operate with other delegations in producing a draft resolution embodying that approach.

26. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that there was no point in dealing at length with the origin and cause of currency instability and inflation. Accordingly, his delegation would merely ask the Fifth Committee to endorse in strong terms the observations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 4 to 9 of its report (A/10008/Add.4) and to adopt measures to ensure that the budget for 1976-1977 would absorb a large part of the additional costs resulting from inflation. His delegation looked forward to the Secretariat's reply to the questions put by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany and would participate in any endeavour that would bring about a reduction of some $20 or $30 million in the budget for the next biennium.

27. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) noted that the problems connected with inflation and currency instability had been discussed exhaustively in the past two years, particularly at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

28. He drew attention to paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's report to the effect that the review by ACC during 1975 had not produced substantial changes in the solution adopted in the United Nations system and had failed to generate any new approaches that could be uniformly applied on a system-wide basis. He endorsed the Advisory Committee's comment in paragraphs 4 and 5 of its report that the United Nations had taken a passive approach with reliance on the "full budgeting" technique and supplementary appropriations and agreed that there was a need for "a much more imaginative and less passive approach". At the very beginning of the session, his delegation had noted the lack of a uniform approach in the budget towards determining the additional costs arising from currency instability and inflation. It had also pointed to the disturbing trend whereby an increasingly large number of posts was requested without any information on the fate of the funds released as a result of discontinued programmes. It realized that the problem was very complex; none the less it believed that the effects of inflation could be alleviated in part through a freezing of requests for new posts, an examination of programmes by an intergovernmental body, and a redistribution of resources.

29. His delegation to some extent shared the concern expressed by the delegation of the Philippines at the 1735th meeting, regarding the bankruptcy threatening New York City and the need to safeguard any funds that the Organization had on deposit in New York banks. While it seemed virtually certain that the Federal Government would provide the assistance requested by the municipal authorities, any measures taken by the Secretariat to preserve the value of those funds would be most welcome.

30. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) said that, as far as the budget was concerned, the problem of inflation was even more important than the effects of currency instability. Like the Advisory Committee, his delegation had been unable to ascertain to its satisfaction the accuracy of the Secretariat's estimates relating to inflation and continuing currency instability. It fully shared the views expressed by the delegations of Cuba and the Soviet Union, among others, on that point. Additional costs resulting from inflation and currency instability should be financed from savings achieved in the course of programme implementation or from contributions by the developed countries which generated inflation and acted as hosts to the various Secretariat offices. The Secretary-General should evolve and apply effective measures to counteract the effects of inflation and currency instability. Such measures should focus on any possible savings, better planning and consultations with the developed countries acting as hosts to United Nations Secretariat units, with a view to reaching agreement on potential contributions to defray the additional costs. His delegation shared the views of the Advisory Committee as expressed in paragraph 8 of its report. It opposed the inclusion in the regular budget for the next biennium of additional expenses generated by inflation and currency instability.

31. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that his delegation fully shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee that the United Nations had taken too passive an attitude in the face of the pressures caused by currency fluctuations and inflation. Those problems, together with the competing demands on the resources of all Member States, made thrifty management essential. His delegation supported in particular the Advisory Committee's recommendation that posts falling vacant should be filled only when such action was fully justified by the workload.

32. His delegation attached a great deal of importance to the principle of collective responsibility for meeting the operational costs of the Organization—a principle which had been repeatedly affirmed by the General Assembly. Inflation was a world-wide phenomenon and responsibility for it could not be pinned on any one nation or group of

nations. Furthermore, it effects varied widely. One of the countries which had complained the loudest about the impact of inflation had been more helped than harmed in its foreign trade by the recent world-wide inflation.

33. His delegation sympathized with the approach suggested by the delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom, whereby a lower figure would be assigned to the inflation component in the budget estimates. It looked forward to the Secretariat's reply to the request made by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany.

34. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), exercising the right of reply, recalled that, at the twenty-ninth session, the representative of the United Kingdom had opposed a proposal under which the countries responsible for inflation would assume part of the burden of inflationary costs in the United Nations regular budget. The same representative had attempted to prove that inflation afflicted all countries, including the socialist countries. Having no facts to support his fabrications, the representative of the United Kingdom had resorted to dubious anecdotes and tricks. The facts, however, spoke for themselves: the socialist countries were not plagued by inflation because they planned their economies in such a way that state expenditures were fully covered by national income. They avoided deficit budget financing, a technique used only by the Western capitalist countries.

35. It was easy to see why the representative of the United Kingdom was so concerned at the prospect that the countries which generated inflation should pay the additional costs in the budget. The United Kingdom had the highest inflation rate of all the capitalist countries in Western Europe: in the preceding year the retail price index had risen to 26 per cent. The socialist countries and the developing countries were highly concerned about the additional burden placed on the United Nations budget by inflationary pressures and sincerely believed that it would be equitable if at least a part of that burden was assumed by the countries responsible.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) took the Chair.

United Nations public information policies and activities* (continued)* *(A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1247)

36. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait), referring to the fourth revised version (A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4) of the draft resolution before the Committee, said that since the amendment submitted by Tunisia (A/C.5/L.1246) had been incorporated in the new text, his delegation would fully support that text. However, it would vote against the amendment submitted by the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247).

37. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) said that OPI should direct its activities more towards the countries of the third world which were particularly in need of detailed information about the activities of the United Nations, particularly those concerning the establishment of a new economic order. His delegation was pleased to note that the representatives of Tunisia, Algeria and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics concurred to some extent with its view that the Fifth Committee's mandate extended only to the administrative and financial aspects of United Nations public information policies and activities. Accordingly, it had joined the sponsors of the latest revised text of the draft resolution, which incorporated the amendments proposed by the representatives of Afghanistan and Tunisia to operative paragraphs 1 and 3, respectively, of the previous text (A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.3).

38. Mr. AGYEMAN (Ghana) said that his delegation maintained the amendment to the preamble which it had proposed at the 1730th meeting; by that amendment, the words "to improve" in the sixth preambular paragraph would be changed to read "to improve further".

39. His delegation would be happy to support the amendment proposed by the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247) provided that the words "full and balanced" were replaced by "comprehensive".

40. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) agreed to that change.

41. Mr. RIVAS (Colombia) said that, in view of the advanced stage of the discussions on the draft resolution, the sponsors would prefer to leave the text as it was.

42. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4. It was opposed to the United Kingdom proposal that the definite article be replaced by the indefinite article before the words "new international economic order" in operative paragraph 1 and could not accept the amendment of the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247).

43. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that his delegation objected to the fact that, following all the amendments made to it, the draft resolution would in effect take the question away from the Fifth Committee. Yet it was not the first time that the Fifth committee was considering a question that had political as well as financial aspects; moreover, it was not for the Fifth Committee to divest itself of a very important question. His delegation was not against the draft resolution as a whole but only against operative paragraph 3, first of all, because it felt that the budgetary and political aspects should not be separated and secondly, because any delegation could submit a written request the following year for the inclusion of a new question on the agenda of the General Assembly. The General Committee would then decide which organ should consider it. He requested that the Committee should vote on the draft resolution paragraph by paragraph.

44. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) recalled that in introducing his amendment (A/C.5/L.1246) he had said that his intention was not to deprive the Fifth Committee of the privilege of considering the question. However, the matter was very important and should be studied with a little more care and

* Resumed from the 1736th meeting.

interest. His delegation had stressed the need to seperate budgetary questions from matters of substance and had therefore welcomed the suggestion that the question of information should be discussed in off-budget years. His delegation did not wish to create any ill feeling between the various Committees or to make the question a source of confrontation, but it maintained its position.

45. Mr. SCHÜTZE (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation was prepared to support the proposal to keep the question of information in the Fifth Committee.

46. Mr. QUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta), speaking on a point of order, suggested that, in view of the lateness of the hour and the lengthening list of speakers, the meeting should be adjourned. Those delegations which were still inscribed to speak on the question under consideration should do so promptly at the start of the afternoon meeting, after which the Committee could take a decision.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

1739th meeting

Thursday, 13 November 1975, at 3.05 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1739

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see 1737th meeting)

United Nations public information policies and activities* (continued) *(A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4, L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1247)

1. Mr. DJELOU (Togo) said that all delegations had stressed the importance that should be attached to United Nations public information policies and activities. He agreed with the representative of Tunisia at the 1738th meeting that the effect of operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 would not necessarily be to take that question away from the Fifth Committee. In any event, the Committee would always have to decide on the financial implications of the OPI programme submitted by the Secretary-General. Besides, it might be preferable—precisely because of the importance of that question—if other Committees were also called on to decide on some of the other aspects, for instance the political aspects. On the whole, he unhesitatingly supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4.

2. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that he would not be able to support the amendments (A/C.5/L.1245) submitted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the draft decision contained in document A/C.5/L.1242, or the amendment (A/C.5/L.1247) submitted by the Federal Republic of Germany to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.2. However, he supported the draft decision of Pakistan (A/C.5/L.1243) and the draft decision contained in document A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2.

3. He would also support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4, although he would express reservations on the fifth preambular paragraph. He was not sure that OPI would be able to do anything about the public's disaffection with the United Nations system.

4. Mr. OUATTARA (Ivory Coast) felt that the main thing was to ensure that the United Nations had an infrastructure that would enable it to provide abundant and objective information to the public in general. He could accept the amendment of the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247), but would have more difficulty in accepting the suggestions made by the representative of Tunisia at the 1738th meeting since, in his view, the Fifth Committee was perfectly competent to study the question of public information policies and activities from every aspect, political as well as technical.

5. He had reservations on the fifth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4, for the prevailing attitude of the information media and the public opinion in some of the Member States towards the United Nations system was not within the competence of the United Nations but of the State concerned.

6. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) noted that the latest 12-Power text (A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4) of the draft resolution continued to create difficulty on two points.

7. The first point was whether or not the Fifth Committee should remain competent to examine the substance of United Nations public information policies and activities. No delegation had proposed that the question should be taken away from the Fifth Committee. On the contrary, many delegations wished the Committee to continue to consider it. The Tunisian delegation itself had said that it had no objection on that score. Under the circumstances, he formally proposed that the Rapporteur should include, in the section of the report relating to the consideration of that question, a sentence or paragraph that might read as follows:

> "It was the sense of the Fifth Committee that it would prefer that the question entitled 'United Nations public information policies and activities' should continue to be considered by the Fifth Committee".

8. The second point which was creating difficulty was whether or not draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 would

have financial implications. The Secretariat had already said that it would not, and the Colombian delegation, which had taken the initiative of introducing the draft resolution, had said the same. Nevertheless, a good many delegations would find it easier to vote for that text if—and that was a second formal proposal—it was stated in the report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly that:

> "It was the understanding of the Fifth Committee that the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 would have no financial implications during the course of the biennium 1976-1977".

9. He supported the proposal made by the representative of the Netherlands at the 1736th meeting to delete the end of operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, beginning with the words "and decides". If the Committee adopted that proposal, many more delegations would be able to support the draft resolution.

10. He also supported the amendment proposed orally by Ghana at the previous meeting, to the amendment of the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247), namely, to replace the words "full and balanced" by "comprehensive".

11. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) endorsed the comment by the representative of New Zealand to the effect that no delegation would want the question of United Nations public information policies and activities to be taken away from the Fifth Committee and proposed that the following words should be added at the end of operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4: "it being understood that this new item would be considered by the Fifth Committee."

12. Mr. WHANNOU (Dahomey), speaking as a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/L.1241/Rev.4, asked the competent officials of OPI why production of the planned film on the establishment of a new international economic order was behind schedule.

13. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) expressed satisfaction at having urged the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 to revise the draft on a number of points. The result was now excellent and he would unreservedly support the latest version. He would also support the oral amendment that the representative of Algeria had just submitted.

14. Mr. SETHI (India) endorsed the comments of the representative of Brazil.

15. Mr. AKATANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information) recalled that at the 1728th meeting the representative of New Zealand had asked how OPI planned to implement the operative part of the draft resolution initially submitted by Colombia (A/C.5/L.1241) and whether OPI would have to request additional appropriations or could carry out the work in question within the limits of the appropriations already requested. He could not yet answer the first question in detail because he wished to examine carefully the draft resolution and the statements preceding and following its adoption. In any event, the action which OPI would eventually take would be based to the largest extent possible on those statements. Concerning the financial implications of the draft, he reaffirmed that OPI did not intend to ask for additional appropriations to implement the provisions of the draft resolution. In so far as OPI would have to concentrate on particular activities, it would endeavour to reorder its priorities, redeploy the available resources and report thereon in the context of the Secretary-General's budget performance report in 1976.

16. In reply to the representative of Dahomey, he said that OPI had sought to produce a film on the seventh special session of the General Assembly as quickly as possible. The film on the establishment of a new international economic order required more research but it was now in production and the representative of Dahomey would be kept informed of progress.

17. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said he readily admitted that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 had shown an admirable spirit of compromise. He wondered, however, what the final outcome of the draft might be. The Committee was considering a proposed programme budget with a pre-established order of priorities, and the programme of OPI had already been formulated. Any resolution which deviated from that programme, or added new elements to it, would inevitably have financial implications, unless, as a subsequent measure, the initial programme was modified. The Secretariat had reaffirmed that draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 would have no financial implications. If that was really the case, it meant either that the initial programme would be modified so as to enable the inevitable financial implications of the draft resolution to be covered by the estimates finally approved, or that the draft would have no real follow-up and the policies envisaged for the biennium 1976-1977 would in no way be modified. In that case, he would abstain, since the draft resolution could make no positive contribution if it was to have no financial implications.

18. He had no objections to the amendment by the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247), but, again, that text focused on activities which apparently were already determined in the proposed programme budget. In view of his position of principle on the draft resolution itself, he would abstain in the vote on that amendment. He would also abstain in the vote on the oral amendment by Algeria to operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4, because its adoption would mean that the Fifth Committee was encroaching on the prerogatives of the General Committee, which was the only body authorized to allocate agenda items to the Main Committees.

19. He had doubts about the real usefulness of the draft decision of Pakistan (A/C.5/L.1243), aimed at ensuring a more timely publication of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, since the Secretary-General could certainly reply that he was already doing everything in his power in that regard. He would nevertheless vote for the draft decision.

20. He also had doubts about the usefulness of the 5-Power draft decision (A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2), if it was to have no financial implications, as appeared to be the case. He would nevertheless vote for the draft.

21. So as to prevent any misunderstanding, he wished to make it clear that his position in no way meant that he

attached little importance to public information policies and activities. He considered, however, the absence of financial implications to be too simplistic a formula to be above suspicion.

22. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 could not accept the oral amendment to operative paragraph 3, proposed by Algeria, since it would be excessive to include three provisions designed to avoid the risk that the Fifth Committee might be relieved of the responsibility of considering the question of United Nations public information policies and activities. According to draft decision A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, the item would be considered "in off-budget years", which implied that it would be considered by the Fifth Committee. Moreover, New Zealand had suggested that, in its report to the General Assembly, the Fifth Committee should specify that, in its opinion, it should continue to consider the question on a regular basis. Were the Committee to endorse the Algerian proposal, it would be making a third and even more categorical statement to that effect in the operative part of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4. The sponsors considered that the double guarantee offered by draft decision A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2 and the New Zealand proposal was ample. It should also be borne in mind that it was the General Committee which decided on the allocation to the Main Committees of the agenda items of the General Assembly.

23. Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone) recalled that his delegation had voted in favour of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the budget of OPI because that office should be allowed to continue its excellent work, intensify its efforts, and make them more effective. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 in its entirety, for it gave the Secretary-General the necessary mandate to make new efforts in the whole area of information to keep the general public informed. The inclusion of a new separate item on United Nations public information policies and activities in the agenda of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly would generate more detailed discussion and lead to the adoption of more effective methods of running OPI.

24. Operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 sought basically to have the question included as a separate item on the agenda of the thirty-first session. Draft decision A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, the oral amendments by Algeria and the Netherlands to paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4, and the first New Zealand proposal all appeared to be insisting that the Fifth Committee should continue to consider the question. It was the prerogative of the General Committee, however, to allocate agenda items. Since it was quite possible that the General Committee might allocate the item to the Fifth Committee, where the question had been regularly discussed over the years, it was pointless to formulate specific recommendations to that effect. He would therefore vote against draft decision A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, against the amendments by Algeria and the Netherlands, and against the first New Zealand proposal. For the same reasons, he would vote against the amendment by the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247).

25. The CHAIRMAN invited members of the Committee to vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 and on the proposed amendments to that draft resolution, in accordance with rule 130 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and in the following order. The Committee would vote first on the amendment by the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247), as modified by the replacement of the words "full and balanced" by "comprehensive"; next, on the oral amendment by the Netherlands, calling for the deletion of the end of operative paragraph 3 of the words "it being understood that this new item will be considered in the Fifth Committee"; and finally, on the oral amendment by Ghana calling for the addition in the sixth preambular paragraph of the word "further" after the word "improve". As the Algerian representative had requested at the previous meeting, the operative paragraphs would be voted on separately before the vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

26. The Committee could then examine the two proposals by New Zealand calling for specific statements in the Committee's report to the General Assembly to the effect that the question of United Nations public information policies and activities should continue to be considered by the Fifth Committee, and that draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 would have no financial implications.

27. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said he favoured the procedure suggested by the Chairman with one exception: the New Zealand proposals should be voted on before draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4. As the representative of Colombia had pointed out, the oral amendment by Algeria would become superfluous if the Committee adopted draft decision A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2 and the first New Zealand proposal, which invited the Fifth Committee to state in its report that it should continue to consider the question of public information policies and activities. The New Zealand proposal was a moderate one and would allow a number of delegations, anxious to ensure that the question continued to come before the Fifth Committee, to arrive more easily at a decision on the draft resolution in question. It would therefore be judicious to put the New Zealand proposal to the vote before the draft resolution as a whole. However, his delegation would abide by the decision of the other delegations.

28. The CHAIRMAN said he agreed that the points made by the representative of Japan with respect to the order of voting on the proposals were reasonable, but pointed out that the New Zealand proposal related to the Committee's report to the General Assembly, while the amendments were to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4, and that it was logical for the Committee to vote on the draft resolution before the report on the question was drawn up.

29. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) and Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) agreed with the order of voting suggested by the Chairman.

30. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the amendment proposed by the Federal Republic of Germany (A/C.5/L.1247), as modified.

The amendment was rejected by 45 votes to 20, with 26 abstentions.

31. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the amendment submitted orally by the Netherlands providing for the deletion of the last part of operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, beginning with the words "and decides".

The amendment was rejected by 57 votes to 24, with 17 abstentions.

32. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the amendment submitted orally by Algeria, providing for the addition at the end of operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution of the words "it being understood that this new item will be considered in the Fifth Committee".

The amendment was rejected by 42 votes to 35, with 21 abstentions.

33. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the amendment submitted orally by Ghana, providing for the insertion in the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution of the word "further" after the word "improve".

The amendment was rejected by 27 votes to 26, with 40 abstentions.

34. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote separately the operative paragraphs of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4.

Paragraph 1 was adopted by 79 votes to 3, with 9 abstentions.

Paragraph 2 was adopted by 86 votes to 1, with 9 abstentions.

At the request of the representative of Tunisia, a vote was taken by roll call on paragraph 3.

Mauritius, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zambia, Afghanistan, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Kuwait, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania.

Against: Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Yugoslavia, Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany (Federal Republic of), India, Ireland, Israel, Italy.

Abstaining: Mexico, Philippines, Senegal, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, Upper Volta, Zaire, Austria, Chile, China, Ethiopia, Finland, Ghana, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia.

Paragraph 3 was adopted by 63 votes to 17, with 20 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 as a whole was adopted by 78 votes to 3, with 19 abstentions.

35. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee of the two texts that the representative of New Zealand had proposed for inclusion in the Committee's report to the General Assembly (see paras. 7 and 8 above).

36. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that he had no objection to the first New Zealand proposal, which would be adopted by consensus, but regarded the second one as superfluous because, if the draft resolution adopted had financial implications, the Secretary-General would have had to submit a statement of those implications. Since no such statement had been submitted, it was clear that the resolution had no financial implications. He proposed that the Committee's report to the General Assembly should state that, after the adoption of the draft resolution, in view of the statements of the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information to the effect that the adoption of the draft resolution would have no financial implications, the Committee had taken a decision worded as follows:

> "The Fifth Committee requests the Secretary-General to indicate in his report on the question what changes in priority have been made in the proposed programme budget as a result of the implementation of the provisions of the resolution adopted."

The Committee should be informed of the reordering of priorities. That procedure would enable the Committee to avoid inconsistency, because if the New Zealand proposal were rejected it would mean that the adopted draft resolution did have financial implications, contrary to what the Assistant Secretary-General had said.

37. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) felt that it might be preferable to word the New Zealand draft decision differently, so that it would better reflect the debate and the views of the Fifth Committee. The Committee might have the Rapporteur indicate that during the debate no delegation had been opposed to the retention of the question of United Nations public information policies and activities on the Agenda of the Fifth Committee.

38. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) and Mr. SETHI (India) pointed out that voting was in progress and that, under rule 128 of the rules of procedure, no representative should interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connexion with the actual conduct of the voting.

39. After a brief exchange of views in which Mr. ROMANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) and Mr. KEDADI (Tunisia) participated, the Chairman put to the vote the first New Zealand proposal (see para. 7 above).

The proposal was adopted by 44 votes to 16, with 21 abstentions.

40. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the second New Zealand proposal (see para. 8 above).

The proposal was adopted by 43 votes to 4, with 18 abstentions.

41. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) explained that his delegation had abstained from voting on the Algerian amendment because it felt that the question which organ would consider the new item relating to United Nations public information policies and activities should not be prejudged.

42. The way in which the decision on the New Zealand proposals had been taken resulted in an inconsistency. The Committee had decided to state in its report that it had been the "sense" of the Committee that it should continue to consider the question of public information. However, the very fact that it had taken a vote and 37 delegations had been unable to vote in favour of the proposed text clearly indicated that it did not represent the sense of the Committee, but only that of a majority. The same was true of the second proposal.

43. Mr. SADOU (United Republic of Cameroon) said that he had listened with great interest to the statement by the representative of the Upper Volta expressing surprise that draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 would have no financial implications. What the sponsors had had in mind when submitting their draft was not simply a reordering of the activities of the Office of Public Information but rather a new and original programme of activities, especially activities to be undertaken in collaboration with the national information media and non-governmental organizations. By operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would be requested "to make new efforts" in the field of information activities. It had been obvious to the sponsors that their draft had financial implications; they had thought that the Secretary-General would study the question and submit a report and a statement of the financial implications to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

44. It was because of its belief that the draft resolution did have financial implications that his delegation had not participated in the vote on the second New Zealand proposal but had voted for the first proposal, the purpose of which was that the question of public information should continue to be considered by the Fifth Committee.

45. Mr. RELLIE (United Kingdom) supported the proposal of the representative of the Upper Volta to ask the Secretary-General to say what priority changes he had made in the programme budget in order to implement the provisions of the draft resolution. His delegation hoped that the Secretary-General could explain the shifting of priorities not only as between subjects but also as between countries, since the fifth preambular paragraph referred to the attitude and public opinion of "some of the Member States".

46. Mr. ROMANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had voted against the first New Zealand proposal because it would have put the Committee in the absurd position of having no sooner rejected the Algerian amendment than it adopted without due consideration a New Zealand proposal to the same effect. The text of the proposal did not accurately reflect the discussions; the Committee had not been of the "sense" that it should continue to consider the item. On the contrary, most members considered that the General Committee's decision must not be prejudged. It would have been more accurate to say that some delegations insisted that the Committee should continue to consider the matter.

47. Furthermore, the decision on the first New Zealand proposal had been taken in violation of rules 23 and 81 of the rules of procedure, the latter of which provided that when a proposal had been adopted or rejected, it could not be reconsidered at the same session unless the General Assembly by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, so decided. But having rejected the Algerian amendment, the Committee had adopted a similar proposal by the New Zealand delegation. His delegation disagreed with the decision and would certainly say so at the next plenary meeting of the General Assembly; it insisted that the report should objectively reflect the discussions.

48. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that he had not voted on the second New Zealand proposal because he thought it absurd. The draft resolution obviously had financial implications and all that the New Zealand text said was that the expenditures would be absorbed in the programme budget and there would be no additional expenditure.

49. He recalled that he himself had submitted a proposal which did not become inapplicable by the adoption of the New Zealand text.

50. The CHAIRMAN said that he would put that proposal to the Committee when all delegations which wished to do so had explained their vote.

51. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) recalled that she also had submitted a proposal. She wished to make another, for the inclusion in the Committee's report, immediately after the paragraphs proposed by the New Zealand delegation, of a paragraph containing the results of the votes on the amendments, on the various operative paragraphs of the draft resolution, and on the draft resolution as a whole.

52. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the text of the report would be put to the Committee which could decide whether it accurately reflected the discussions.

53. Mr. KEDADI (Tunisia) regretted that he had been unable to speak before the vote on the New Zealand proposals. He was disappointed that they had not been submitted in writing since he would have preferred to study the exact wording before voting. Not having been able to do so he had been obliged to vote against.

54. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that he would in principle have no objection to United Nations public information policies and activities being considered outside the Fifth Committee, whose members were not, generally speaking, information specialists. If the matter was also considered by another organ, OPI might receive better guidance. However, the Consultative Panel on Public Information already offered such a possibility, while many delegations could

count on the services of information specialists when the Committee was considering that topic.

55. His delegation attached great importance to information on economic and social development, human rights and other humanitarian matters, as witness the financial and other support which Sweden had provided for the Centre for Economic and Social Information since its establishment.

56. His delegation also attached great importance to United Nations information activities and policies being studied by the body which was best able to give them the attention they deserved. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 did not guarantee that, and his delegation had therefore been unable to support it and had voted against operative paragraph 3, and had been obliged to abstain in the vote on the draft as a whole.

57. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) stressed that the decisions contradicted one another: the Committee had adopted a draft resolution which in fact left it to the General Committee to decide which organ should consider matters of public information, and having rejected the Algerian amendment that the Fifth Committee should continue to consider the question, it had accepted the New Zealand proposal to indicate in the Fifth Committee's report that the matter should continue to be considered by the Fifth Committee.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that the Algerian amendment and the New Zealand proposal were not identical. The former said that it was "understood" that the question of information would be considered by the Fifth Committee, whereas according to the latter, the Committee was of the "sense" that it should continue to consider the matter, which amounted to saying that the majority in the Committee was of that opinion.

59. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) agreed with the Chairman and thought the report should state that the majority of the Committee was of the sense that the matter of information should be considered by the Fifth Committee.

60. His delegation was also sure that it was quite impossible to know at the current stage whether the draft resolution which the Committee had just adopted would have financial implications, since that would depend on what was done to carry it out.

61. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) said that he had voted for the draft resolution since he was sure that it would be a means of strengthening the activities of OPI in the interests of the work of the United Nations in general.

62. Mr. KISEKA (Uganda) said that the adoption of the second New Zealand proposal had more or less neutralized draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 by preventing the Secretariat from taking measures to promote the activities of OPI. In his delegation's view, the draft resolution did have financial implications which should have been considered. Moreover, his delegation did not think that the Fifth Committee was the only body competent to consider information matters, and it would have been better to leave the General Committee complete freedom to decide the matter.

63. The CHAIRMAN did not think that adoption of the first New Zealand proposal prejudged the General Committee's decision. In fact, none of the representatives who had commented on operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution had expressly stated that the matter should no longer be considered by the Fifth Committee. The members of the Committee had indicated by a majority vote that they would prefer the Fifth Committee to continue considering the matter, but that did nor prejudge the General Committee's decision.

64. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the Committee had acted in its own interests by intimating that it would prefer to retain the matter as an item for consideration.

65. Mr. KEDADI (Tunisia) said that the Committee had adopted by a large majority a draft resolution which did not specify which organ should consider the matter of public information. The General Assembly itself would decide the issue, and the Committee must not prejudge its decision.

66. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) moved closure of the debate on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4 and the amendments and proposals relating to it.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

1740th meeting

Friday, 14 November 1975, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1740

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous A/... documents and the A/C.5/... documents, see 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6, A/C.5/L.1226, A/C.5/L.1229-1233, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1250, A/C.5/L.1251)

United Nations public information policies and activities* (continued) *(A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245)

1. Mr. ROMANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on a point of order, said that his delegation believed that the procedure followed at the 1739th meeting, when a vote had been taken on the New Zealand proposal following the rejection of the Algerian amendment, the sense of which was almost identical, had been a violation of rule 81 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. According to that rule, when a proposal had been adopted or rejected, it might not be reconsidered at the same session unless the General Assembly, by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, so decided. He requested that the Legal Counsel should be asked to give an opinion on the matter.

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget (continued)*

SECTION 1. OVER-ALL POLICY-MAKING, DIRECTION AND CO-ORDINATION *(concluded)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

2. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) replying to the representative of Belgium who, at the 1737th meeting, had requested information on the activities of the secretariat of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund and of the staff pension committees, said that article 4 of the Regulations of the Fund provided broadly for the Fund's administration by the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board and its central secretariat, on the one hand, and by a staff pension committee and a related secretariat in each member organization, on the other. The functions of staff pension committees included the registration of participants, payment of contributions on their behalf to the central secretariat of the Fund, maintenance of appropriate records during a staff member's service and, ultimately, admission of the necessary documentation to the central secretariat to ensure payment of pension or other benefits as appropriate when that service ended. Most of the work was done by the secretariats of the local committees, while the committees themselves met relatively infrequently to deal with discretionary matters, such as the award of disability benefits and consideration of policy matters proposed or scheduled for discussion at the annual sessions of the Board.

3. Article 8 of the Regulations of the Fund provided that the secretariat of the Board should serve as the secretariat of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee. It thus performed the routine work normally performed by the secretariats of local committees. Under a formula agreed between the Fund and the United Nations, based on the number of United Nations participants–18,500 or approximately 42 per cent of the total–the secretariat of the Board was reimbursed in the amount of one third of the cost of its established posts and common staff costs. That explained the amount of $629,000 for the United Nations share of the expenses of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund.

4. With respect to the question raised by the representative of the Philippines concerning translation services and temporary assistance costs in section 1, he said that the 25 posts to be lent by the United Nations Office at Geneva comprised 8 for interpreters, 9 for translators and 8 for secretarial staff. The interpreters were additional to the number on the teams of interpreters referred to in paragraph 1.6 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008 and Corr.2), which must be provided from the permanent New York staff or from temporary assistance and were therefore not affected by the recommendation in that paragraph. Commenting on the question of budgeting for the cost of conference services, he said that, in a move towards rationalization, all conference servicing costs in Geneva except those for UNCTAD, had been consolidated under section 23 under the heading "Conference Services, Geneva"; nevertheless the apportionment of costs among the different users had also been shown. The same system would be introduced at Headquarters for the biennium 1978-1979 and all costs of conference services would be under section 23.

5. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), referring to the comment by the representative of the Philippines concerning the respective roles of the Documentation Planning and Editing Section in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs and of the Department of Conference Services, said that there was no overlapping since the section dealt only with documents relating to the work of the Assembly, i.e., documents in the A/... series. All other documents were issued by the Department of Conference Services. That division of labour seemed justified in view of the very special working conditions and strict deadlines which had to be met for the plenary meetings of the Assembly.

* Resumed from the 1737th meeting.

6. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he believed that, in calculating the number of United Nations participants in the Pension Fund at about 42 per cent of the total, account had been taken not only of the 10,000 staff members paid under the regular budget, but also of some 6,000 paid from other funds. If that was correct, the charge on the regular budget should be only $400,000. He suggested that the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee should study that question.

7. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 1 (see 1737th meeting, para. 10).

An appropriation in the amount of $19,282,000 under section 1 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 61 votes to none, with 10 abstentions.

SECTION 2. POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS; PEACE-KEEPING ACTIVITIES *(concluded)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

8. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked which intergovernmental organs were expected to reach decisions that would result in an increase in the real growth of that section, as indicated in paragraph 2.2 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008 and Corr.2).

9. He asked why the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine was having difficulty in filling vacancies, pointing out that an unfortunate vacuum might be caused if the situation persisted.

10. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the decisions in question would concern the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

11. The recruiting difficulties of UNTSO were no doubt due to the fact that the salaries were not sufficiently attractive.

12. Replying to a comment by the representative of Belgium, at the 1737th meeting, concerning the seemingly high administrative costs of the United Nations Supply Depot in Pisa, he said that the stock turned over about three times a year. The Depot also served as a focal point for the receipt of goods for various missions and distributed about $6 million worth of matériel to the peace-keeping missions, bringing the total value of supplies there to around $10 million. Thus the administrative costs were perhaps not excessive.

13. Replying to a question put by Mr. VANDERGERT (Sri Lanka), the CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would have to consider estimates for the Conference on the Law of the Sea once the General Assembly had adopted resolutions concerning a possible fourth and fifth session of that Conference.

14. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 2 (see 1737th meeting, para. 30).

An appropriation in the amount of $39,012,000 under section 2 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved unanimously in first reading.

SECTION 3. POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TRUSTEESHIP AND DECOLONIZATION ACTIVITIES *(continued)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

15. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that it would be incorrect to assume that the work of the Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization should stop when a former colony gained independence. In fact, that Department must keep a watchful eye on such countries to safeguard their independence. South Africa's efforts to acquire the capacity for producing nuclear weapons were a grave menace and constituted an impediment to decolonization in southern Africa, and the Department should prepare a detailed study on the new situation resulting from those developments. Accordingly, he introduced a draft decision proposing that the tasks of the Africa Division should be related more closely to questions concerning the decolonization of southern Africa.[1]

16. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) drew attention to the comment by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 3.8 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) that, despite the actual or imminent accession to independence of some of the Territories with which the Department had been primarily concerned, no decrease in the total workload was expected during 1976-1977. Paragraph 3.37 of the proposed programme budget (A/10006), which stated that the specific work programme of the Secretariat Services Division in 1976-1977 would be partly determined by future decisions of the legislative bodies, seemed to imply a reduction in the existing work programme. His delegation had examined that programme carefully and had been struck by the fact that the contribution of short articles to the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, which other departments did not even mention, had been cited no less than eight times in the programmes of work. While his delegation was second to none in appreciating the Department's past work and in stressing the importance of tackling the remaining decolonization problems, it felt that the limited resources of the United Nations should be constantly redeployed to matters requiring priority attention which, of course, included the remaining colonial questions. It would therefore agree to any reasonable suggestion to reduce the appropriations in section 3 by more than the amount which the Advisory Committee had recommended.

17. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation could support the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on section 3. The statement in paragraph 3.35 of the proposed programme budget that there would be no decrease in the workload in 1976-1977 was not surprising. Rather than reducing its activity as the number of colonial Territories decreased, the United Nations should use every available means to give its full support to those Territories still under colonial rule. His delegation approved the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and was sympathetic to the proposal made by the representative of Algeria.

18. Mr. WANG Lien-sheng (China) said that the liberation struggle of the colonial peoples had made great progress over the last few years. The disintegration of the Portuguese

* Resumed from the 1737th meeting.

1 Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1251.

colonialist system had been a great break-through and had provided an impetus for the struggle for national independence. The Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization had done a great deal of work in implementing decisions relating to decolonization. While some Territories had obtained their independence, the problems of decolonization had become more complicated. Accordingly, his delegation could not accept any reduction in the appropriations budget or in the number of posts under section 3. His delegation supported the proposal by the representative of Algeria.

19. Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone), observing that decolonization was of paramount importance in the context of Africa, said that the decolonization of the former Portuguese Territories had not changed the situation in Zimbabwe or Namibia, but had heightened the political, military, social and humanitarian problems in those countries. Accordingly, his delegation supported the views of the Secretary-General on the matter and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. He also supported the Algerian proposal.

20. Mr. SETHI (India) associated his delegation with the view that, while considerable success has been achieved, there was much work still to be done in the field of decolonization. He therefore supported the recommendation by the Advisory Committee. He recognized that there was a need to redeploy the staff in the Department with a view to following developments in Africa in order to find solutions to the new social, political and economic problems. Accordingly, he supported the Algerian proposal.

21. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) requested the circulation of the Algerian draft decision in writing, in accordance with rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

22. Mr. DJEKILAMBERT (Chad), expressing appreciation for United Nations efforts in the field of decolonization, expressed his delegation's support for the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and for the Algerian proposal.

23. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) expressed his delegation's support for the estimates by the Secretary-General under section 3, as revised by the Advisory Committee. He also supported the Algerian proposal.

24. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) and Mr. PONCE (Peru) supported the Algerian proposal.

25. The CHAIRMAN said that the text of the Algerian proposal would be circulated in writing.

SECTION 25. STAFF ASSESSMENT (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

26. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the fact that section 25, as well as income section 1, would be affected by decisions which the Committee might take in the course of the session on other sections of the budget and on other matters.

27. In the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 (A/10006), the Secretary-General had proposed an amount of $100,743,000 for section 25. In its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 25.2), the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of $2 million in that amount. Of the total reduction relating to reclassification of posts, recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 61 of its report, an amount of $37,000 applied to section 25. The total amount recommended for section 25 by the Advisory Committee for the biennium 1976-1977 was thus $98,706,000.

28. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the $2 million reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee was consequential on the recommendations in other parts of its report.

An appropriation in the amount of $98,706,000 under section 25 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading.

ESTIMATES OF INCOME (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

29. The CHAIRMAN said that in the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977, the Secretary-General had estimated that income from staff assessment under income section 1, would amount to $102,274,000. In its report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. IS.1.2), the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction of $2 million in that amount, giving a total estimate of $100,274,000.

30. In the proposed programme budget, the Secretary-General had estimated receipts from general income, under income section 2, in the amount of $8,444,000. In its report (*ibid.*, para. IS.2.6) the Advisory Committee had recommended an increase of $626,000 in that amount, giving a total estimate of $9,070,000.

31. In the proposed programme budget, the Secretary-General had estimated that income from revenue-producing activities, under income section 3, would amount to $5,824,000. In its report (*ibid.*, para. IS.3.15), the Advisory Committee had recommended an increase of $756,000 in that amount, giving a total estimate of $6,580,000.

32. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had recommended a decrease of $2 million in the amount under income section 1, corresponding to the reduction of $2 million under section 25.

33. The Advisory Committee recommended an increase of $626,000 under income section 2 for the reasons stated in paragraph IS.2.5 of its report. The expenditure by the United Nations on the servicing of meetings of the specialized agencies at Geneva had been estimated at $966,000 in section 23; accordingly, the $340,000 estimated reimbursement for reproduction, document distribution and other services rendered at the United Nations Office at Geneva should be increased by $626,000 to correspond to the amount of $966,000. The Secretary-General had estimated income from the rental of premises at $801,000, as against $553,000 in the biennium 1974-1975. In that connexion, the Advisory Committee had recalled the observations in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the utilization of office accommodatio

at United Nations Headquarters (see A/9854); pursuant to that report, the Secretary-General was undertaking a comprehensive review of the policies and practices concerning the rental of United Nations premises and intended to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. Pending completion of that study, the Headquarters rentals had been raised by 20 per cent effective 1 January 1975. In connexion with the reimbursement of services rendered to UNRWA and the International Lead and Zinc Study Group, he noted that the reimbursement should fully cover the cost of the services provided by the United Nations.

34. The Advisory Committee had recommended an increase of $756,000 under income section 3. In paragraph IS.3.3 of its report, it had noted that the administrative costs of the sale of United Nations postage stamps were somewhat high and had recommended that care be taken to maintain them at a reasonable level, particularly in respect of temporary assistance. In paragraph IS.3.5 of its report, the Advisory Committee had recommended an increase of $691,000 in the estimate of income from sales of stamps. In paragraph IS.3.8 the Advisory Committee had reiterated its views that daytime and overnight garage parking fees should keep pace with rising costs and recommended that the rate structures be reviewed every biennium. In paragraph IS.3.9, the Advisory Committee had indicated that it could not accept the Secretary-General's request for 2 posts, 1 P-4 and 1 General Service, to implement the recommendations of the survey of revenue-producing activities involving visitors, undertaken by a consultant firm in 1974. The survey would be available by late 1975, and the Advisory Committee had felt that it would be best to wait until the survey was available and the recommendations made before approving the 2 posts. Finally, in paragraph IS.3.12, relating to the new location for the Geneva bookshop, the Advisory Committee had recommended that existing resources be used to carry out the move and that the estimate for temporary assistance be reduced to $25,000.

Income section 1. Income from staff assessment

An estimate in the amount of $100,274,000 under income section 1 was approved in first reading.

Income section 2. General income

35. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked whether the UNICEF office at Geneva paid rental to the United Nations. He also asked whether the press agencies located in the Headquarters building in New York paid rent to the Organization.

36. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) replied that the UNICEF contribution to the general expenses of the Palais des Nations had been fixed at 141,000 Swiss francs a year from the outset and had not been changed. Now that the Fund was considering moving to new premises, consultations on the question were under way.

An estimate in the amount of $9,070,000 under income section 2 was approved in first reading.

Income section 3. Revenue-producing activities

37. Mr. BACHE (United States of America), commending the Advisory Committee on its reports on the income sections, expressed agreement with that Committee's view that daytime and overnight parking fees should keep pace with rising costs and should be reviewed every biennium. He requested an explanation of the high temporary assistance costs–almost one third of the gross cost of the established posts–in the United Nations Postal Administration.

38. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the Secretary-General accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the garage parking fees should be reviewed every biennium. The rates had remained the same since the garage had been opened, but would be reviewed early in 1976, and any increase would take effect in 1976.

39. Temporary assistance would be required for the United Nations Postal Administration until 1978, when orders would start to be processed by computer.

40. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) recalled that the same arguments relating to garage parking fees had been put forward two years previously. Some elements at the Secretariat level seemed to militate against any increase in the rates. In that connexion, he suggested that it was not normal for the Fifth Committee to have to ask the Secretariat to raise the rates. The garage should not be a profit-making operation, but it should not show any loss either. He asked whether, if rates were increased, the increase would be reflected in the revised estimates to be submitted in 1976.

41. Mr. SEALY (Trinidad and Tobago), observing that United Nations publications were on sale in the bookshops at United Nations Headquarters and the Palais des Nations, asked what was being done to promote the sale of such publications outside those two centres. Wider dissemination, particularly among the universities of third-world countries, would enhance public awareness of the work done by the United Nations and would bring valuable United Nations studies to the attention of students, technocrats and the public in general.

42. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that the Visitors' Section performed an important task by informing the public about United Nations activities. Despite the slight loss it had incurred, its operation should not be reduced for fear that its activities might be paralysed.

43. He hoped that the review of the garage rates would not result in a steep increase in parking fees. The Secretariat should bear in mind that the garage operation was not a commercial venture; rather, it was provided as a convenience for Secretariat staff and delegations.

44. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) commended the Advisory Committee on its evaluation of the income estimates. His delegation had been surprised to learn that, although the number of visitors at Headquarters had shown a steady

decline since 1968, the number of staff in the Visitors' Section had remained the same. Moreover, the Visitors' Section in New York employed 5 Professional staff and 12 General Service staff, whereas at Geneva there were 5 General Service staff and no Professional staff. Yet it seemed to him that the areas to be visited at the Palais des Nations at Geneva and those at Headquarters in New York were comparable. He suggested that the Secretariat should ascertain why Professional posts were required at Headquarters.

45. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the garage operation should not be viewed solely in financial terms; it was also a service. The issue was sensitive in terms of personnel management. Clearly, however, the rates were due to be revised, having remained stable over a number of years.

46. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) pointed out that the garage operation was not losing money; in fact, it was making a slight profit and was expected to continue doing so over the next biennium. As the representative of the Philippines had stated, the garage facilities were provided as a convenience for both the Secretariat and delegations; the most that should be asked of the garage was that it should not incur a loss.

47. In reply to the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, he said that a programme already existed under which universities sold United Nations publications. He would provide the Committee with a list of the participating universities, if it so wished.

48. He would reply to the question of the representative of Belgium when he had had time to study the situation in the Visitors' Section.

49. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Advisory Committee had been perfectly right to recommend that the garage parking fees should be reviewed every biennium and adjusted to keep pace with rising costs. It was not reasonable that Secretariat staff, who received higher salaries than United States civil servants, should pay only $6 a month for daytime parking, when rates throughout New York were so very much higher. He failed to understand why the Secretariat was adopting such a casual approach to a potential source of income.

50. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) agreed that garage rates should be increased to the level of commercial rates. In the host country's view, the United Nations was under a moral obligation not to add to the problems of pollution and traffic by subsidizing parking to such an extent that it discouraged the use of mass transit. Furthermore, the staff had no need of the added fringe benefit that subsidized parking represented, their salaries having been raised only the previous year over his delegation's objections. He therefore trusted that the rates would be reviewed and raised in 1976.

An estimate in the amount of $6,580,000 under income section 3 was approved in first reading.

The effect of continuing currency instability on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system* (continued)* *(A/10008/Add.4, A/C.5/1692)

51. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the problem of currency instability was extremely complex and did not lend itself to generally accepted solutions. The Secretariat had taken one approach; however, during the debate, some delegations had highlighted the problems from other, quite different angles.

52. Lest it be thought that he was defending the rather passive role of the Secretariat too strenuously, he wished to draw attention to the remark by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the effect that, in order to achieve economies to meet the pressures of inflation and currency fluctuations, the Secretary-General required policy guidance from Member States on the ordering of priorities.

53. Although the Secretariat fully acknowledged its overriding responsibility for being economical and, as far as possible, absorbing the pressures of inflation and currency instability within the budget, the latter did not simply provide for expenditures but also determined the programmes to be undertaken. It was true that some limited opportunities for savings presented themselves in the implementation of the programmes. However, the more carefully the budget was drawn up and the tighter the control exercised over it, the earlier one arrived at the point at which economy encroached on the substance of programmes and their implementation. The Secretariat would be remiss if, once the programmes had been decided upon by the legislative bodies, it were to ignore the decisions of Member States by rearranging priorities or altering programme content. As had been pointed out by several delegations, the achievement of essential economies, if they were to be of a substantial nature, must be preceded by a rearrangement of programmes and a reordering of priorities by the legislative organs in question. In that connexion, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had referred, at the 1738th meeting, to the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, which recommended that, as far as possible, unavoidable increases in expenditure should be financed in the first instance by savings, particularly where they were due to rises in prices. It went without saying that any such action depended on the magnitude of the amounts at stake. At the time when the *Ad Hoc* Committee had made that recommendation, the problems caused by inflationary trends and realignment of exchange rates had been minor, as compared to the current ones, while the continuous fluctuation of exchange rates had not existed. As the representative of the Soviet Union had rightly observed, even the figures shown in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1692) required some upward correction. Table A in the annex to that report showed the impact of currency instability for each of the years 1974 and 1975 as $7,172,000, on the basis of exchange rates of 2.98 and 3.10 Swiss francs to the dollar. Since actual experience now showed a rate of 2.75 Swiss francs to the dollar, the figures for both years should be

* Resumed from the 1738th meeting.

increased by approximately $11 million. In respect of the figures shown for 1976 and 1977, the difference between the budget assumption of 3.10 Swiss francs to the dollar as compared with 2.75 at the current stage might well involve a further increase of some $12 million. The figures shown for 1974 and 1975 in Table B of the annex, as adjusted by the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.4, para. 2), showed an amount of approximately $36 million due to inflation in respect of each of the two years. An amount of $1.7 million, based on the Secretariat's latest calculation, would have to be added, concerning which detailed information would be given in the Secretary-General's performance report. In short, the potential magnitude of the impact of inflation and rates of exchange for the years 1976 and 1977 was currently in the order of $78 million.

54. The representative of the Federal Republic of Germany had asked how much saving would be achieved if the assumed rate of inflation were reduced by 1 percentage point. If rates for the biennium of 7 and 6 per cent for New York and 8 and 7 per cent for Geneva were assumed instead of the current rates, the net saving for the whole biennium—after the deduction of staff assessment—would be somewhat more than $8 million; detailed calculations to substantiate that figure could be provided in due course. Consequently, to achieve a reduction of the order of $20 to $30 million in the budget estimates would require such a severe drop in the inflation rate that it could no longer be considered a realistic forecast.

55. In the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee to which he had referred earlier, it had been suggested that the heads of organizations might be provided with a modest amount to meet any contingencies which could not be postponed or absorbed and that a special appropriation line should be included in the budget. That had never been done in the case of the United Nations. UNESCO, on the other hand, had a contingency provision of some $10.3 million in its budget for 1975-1976. Moreover, its Executive Board had standing authority to approve during the biennium supplementary estimates of up to 5 per cent of the appropriations. In other words, it had a total potential contingency provision of $20 million.

56. The United Nations would be in a somewhat worse position than other organizations in the system if the already conservative allowances made for possible further inflation were to be substantially reduced. Its situation would become even more disadvantageous if the favourable rates of exchange on which the Secretariat's estimates were based failed to materialize during the next two years. The Secretariat had reached the firm conclusion that the magnitude of the figures involved in the forecasts of inflation and currency fluctuation could not be ignored. In that regard, he was deeply grateful for the Advisory Committee's statement that it would be unrealistic to call for the achievement of economies sufficient to absorb all the costs of currency fluctuations and inflation.

57. In the light of that conclusion, it might be asked what other means were left for the achievement of savings. The Advisory Committee in its first report[2] on the proposed programme budget for 1974-1975 had advocated in essence the following courses of action. First, there should be at least partial continuation of austerity measures such as those adopted in 1972, including a freeze in respect of recruitment to fill vacant posts. He would comment on that recommendation at a later stage. Secondly, a more thorough examination should be made of the current activities of the Organization, preferably through the adoption of zero-base budget preparation. In that connexion, he reminded the Committee that, at the 1712th meeting, he had analysed the possibilities and limitations of a zero-base approach. Thirdly, the inevitability of some natural erosion of programmes should be recognized. The possibility of savings in that area seemed rather slender. Fourthly, there should be no duplication of effort and improvement of productivity should be sought. Those important goals had never been fully considered by the Fifth Committee in the course of its examination of budget proposals. Fifthly, full advantage should be taken of the United Nations entitlement to tax exemption. As he had explained at the 1716th meeting, in reply to a question raised by the representative of Bulgaria, the Organization already strictly observed that recommendation.

58. In the same report, the Advisory Committee had made two further recommendations.[2] It had advocated the achievement of more effective and economical use of conference services by: discouraging night meetings; shortening sessions through better organization and time-keeping; having more regard to cost when determining the location of meetings; and rationalizing the production of publications and documentation. It had also stressed the need for more resolute action to ensure that decisions by legislative bodies took full account of the financial implications of their proposals.

59. Implementation of those two recommendations depended in large measure on the legislative bodies themselves. The Secretary-General, for his part, had proposed a series of criteria governing the future volume of meeting records which could lead to savings of some $2 million a year. As the Secretariat saw it, such savings depended almost entirely on the willingness of the organs and subsidiary organs involved to accept a curtailment of services. The question of fewer night meetings and shorter sessions also depended on delegations.

60. The other means of savings mentioned could not remove the core of the perennial budgetary problem of inflation and currency instability. Irrespective of the approach adopted, the Secretariat could not vouch for the implementation of the programmes entrusted to it by the legislative organs if it did not receive the means which were needed for the discharge of its responsibilities. It was for the legislative organs themselves to reassess and re-evaluate the programmes and priorities if savings were to be made in that area.

61. The only chance of achieving substantial savings lay in freezing recruitment. Several delegations had referred to the austerity measures taken in 1972, when an embargo had been imposed on all but the most essential appointments to fill vacant posts in the Secretariat. At the end of the embargo, there were 322 vacancies, corresponding to about 10 per cent of the approved manpower in the Professional

2 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8* and corrigendum, para. 28.

category at that time. The savings of approximately $3.5 million resulting from that action had seemed fairly adequate in the light of the situation existing at that time. However, savings of that magnitude had no relation to the problems of inflation and currency instability currently facing the Organization. If the 265 posts approved by the Advisory Committee were left unfilled for the biennium 1976-1977, the Organization would save $8.2 million. If, in addition, the 70 vacant Professional posts in respect of which no offers of appointment had been made were left unfilled, the Organization would save $7 million. If one added the 219 posts in respect of which the Organization had already extended offers to candidates, there would be further savings of $20 million. Thus, the maximum saving to be achieved by leaving unfilled all the vacancies that existed at the current stage would be $35.2 million. Since some $78 million were necessary to cope with inflation and currency instability, even a total embargo on recruitment would be only half the answer.

62. What would a total freeze mean in terms of the implementation of programmes decided upon by the governing bodies? In that connexion, he drew attention to the Committee's recent discussion of the budget sections for the regional economic commissions, when the Secretariat had been requested to fill existing vacancies as soon as possible in order not to imperil the programmes. Furthermore, as shown by the information that he had given to members of the Committee in a working paper dated 16 October 1975,[3] the majority of vacancies were in economic and social areas, in which Member States had a vital interest, and in conference services, which directly affected the ability of delegations to participate effectively at the intergovernmental level. While he agreed with the suggestion that posts remaining vacant for a long period should be redeployed, and while he subscribed to the Advisory Committee's recommendation that vacancies should be filled only when the workload of the unit concerned justified such action, he warned that those particular remedies presented certain constraints. As a rule, vacancies existed because of the difficulty of finding suitable candidates, particularly for assignments of a specialized or technical nature. Similar constraints faced the Secretariat when it endeavoured to redeploy staff. He had mentioned those facts not because he wished to sound a negative note but in order to emphasize the Secretary-General's responsibility to ensure that measures of economy which resulted in poor performance were not introduced. A proper balance must be kept between the quest for savings and the needs of programme implementation.

63. The Secretary-General welcomed any guidance and instructions given to him by the governing bodies. At the same time, some degree of flexibility was essential to proper administration in a world of continuously changing conditions.

64. The Secretariat's silence on the subject of savings—which had perhaps added to its image of passivity—was due to the fact that an account of its efforts in that direction properly belonged in the performance report. That report, which would soon be submitted to the Committee, showed that the Organization expected to be able to offset additional costs amounting to approximately $14 million, largely caused by fluctuating exchange rates, by economies totalling some $7.6 million. As a result, the net supplementary appropriations could be kept in the range of $6.4 million, which represented an increase of only 1 per cent over the revised appropriations approved in 1974.

3 Circulated as Conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.4.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

1741st meeting

Tuesday, 18 November 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1741

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:*
(a) Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued) (A/10009, A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1);**
***(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1697)**

1. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that she would make preliminary comments on the item, to which her delegation would have occasion to revert.

2. Her delegation could not help but approve the proposals formulated by the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board in paragraphs 16 to 19 of its report (A/10009) to eliminate all sex-based differences between participants in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, since the principle of equal survivor's benefits for men and women was already applied by the French Government with respect to its officials. She therefore endorsed the proposed amendments to the Regulations of the Fund, in the new wording recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraph 3 of its related report (A/10335).

3. With regard to the maximum length of contributory service (A/10009, paras. 20 and 21), her delegation was more hesitant. In France it frequently happened—and was considered normal—that officials with many years of service contributed for several years at the end of their careers, even though those years were not taken into account in the calculation of their pensions. Before reaching a decision on the matter, her delegation would like to know what

* Resumed from the 1738th meeting.

practice was followed by other Governments in that respect.

4. With regard to the Emergency Fund (*ibid.*, paras. 22 and 23), her delegation had no objection to the continuation of the practice of supplementing voluntary contributions to that Fund by an amount of $100,000. However, the Board mentioned that the Emergency Fund had not been able to meet all the requests it had received. Such a situation should be avoided, since it was precisely in emergencies that people turned to that Fund; the reasons for the delays referred to should be sought.

5. As to the administrative expenses of the Joint Staff Pension Fund (*ibid.*, paras. 24 to 29), it was to be hoped that the additional staff who had had to be recruited to set up the new pension adjustment system would no longer be needed after a year or two, once that system was well established. She endorsed the remarks made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 14 of its report concerning investment costs.

6. The question of the Fund's investments (*ibid.*, paras. 31 to 39) deserved special consideration. Those investments had a fairly satisfactory average rate of return, but they were not sufficiently diversified. Moreover, the losses resulting from the sale of securities were disquieting, even taking into account the fact that the market had not been favourable.

7. Her delegation felt, as did the Committee of Actuaries and the Pension Board, that the current financing basis of a contribution rate of 21 per cent should be continued (*ibid.*, para. 45). It also felt that steps should be taken to avoid delays in the payment of monthly contributions by the member organizations, since that resulted in not inconsiderable income losses for the Fund.

8. Turning to the most important question, namely, the adjustment of pensions, she expressed satisfaction at the efforts made to introduce a new system. It was unfortunate that the interim report (*ibid.*, annex V) did not give more details and that in places–particularly in paragraph 18 which was perhaps one of the most important ones–it was rather obscure. Certain anomalies should be eliminated, in particular, the fact that two staff members of the same grade who had worked the same number of years did not receive the same pension because they had retired at different times. The studies conducted so far on the subject of the adjustment of pensions had established too clear a distinction between currency fluctuations and inflation, which were in fact related. The calculation of the initial amount of a pension in local currency should not only take into account the fluctuations in the dollar, since those might not be very significant in certain countries, but should introduce from the outset a "cost of living" element which would safeguard the purchasing power of the pension in the pensioner's country of residence. Moreover, that concept did appear in paragraph 28 of the interim report, which stated that an indexing approach based on the actual costs of baskets of goods and services relevant to a pensioner might be utilized. In the view of her delegation, however, that element should be taken into account from the outset in determining the amount of the pension and not only once the pension had been determined.

Mr Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

9. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) said that the funds of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund were a sacred deposit which must be protected at all cost against speculation and financial upheavals. All too often, he had seen men and women, after a life of hard work, forced to work after they retired and until they were very old because their savings had melted away as a result of economic crises. Formerly, it had been the rights of widows and orphans that were defended: the fate of pensioners whose pensions were inadequate and who were too old to find work and were reduced to living on relief programmes–at least in countries where they existed–was just as tragic. That state of affairs was due, on the one hand, to the policy of deficit spending–which should be only an exceptional solution, but which Governments practised on a permanent basis–and, on the other hand, to galloping inflation which Governments were unable to control although they surrounded themselves with economic advisers. It was true that inflation was not new. Prior to the collapse of the Bretton Woods system, at least it had not been aggravated by currency speculation. The international economic system had suffered a real upheaval and the criteria and solutions of the past were no longer applicable. It was necessary to innovate and the Fund should adapt its investment policy to the new circumstances. Accordingly, it was no longer possible to have the same faith in real estate equities as before, because of the risk that the municipality or the State might increase land taxes in order to obtain additional funds. Stocks and bonds, too, were not always as safe as might be desired: bonds because of inflation, stocks because in the United States, for example, the existence of any expanding company was immediately threatened by lawyers and politicians who, under cover of applying the anti-trust legislation, hampered the free play of capitalism. As to investments in the developing countries, they were too risky because of the political instability there.

10. On the other hand, gold remained despite everything a solid investment, as did platinum, if only because of the industrial uses of those two metals; the Fund would be well advised to invest some of its assets in that manner. The bulk of its assets should be invested in equally solid stocks which would withstand all the uncertainties of the economic situation and yield a completely guaranteed return–for instance, stocks in the fertilizer industry or in the major international data-processing and computer-manufacturing companies such as the International Business Machines Corporation. It was even conceivable that sooner or later, in such continually expanding branches of industry, even the communist countries might allow subsidiaries of those companies to be set up in their territories and to guarantee returns to national or foreign investors.

11. The fact remained that, in the interest of the beneficiaries of the Fund, a much more radical effort of imagination must be made. He recommended immediate indexation of contributions to the Fund, by apportioning the increase due to inflation to be paid each year in accordance with the scale of assessments of Member States. Since some Member States were already taking steps to index the pensions paid to their own civil servants to the rate of inflation, it was essential to develop and apply to the Fund a formula of that nature; otherwise the interests

of Secretariat staff would be very seriously jeopardized. It should be understood that that indexation formula could be adopted only if all Member States adhered to it.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) resumed the Chair.

12. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) noted that 39,500 persons were contributing to the Joint Staff Pension Fund. According to the Joint Inspection Unit, there should be about 27,000 staff members paid from the regular budgets of United Nations organizations and about 5,700 permanent staff members paid from various funds financed by voluntary contributions at the headquarters of the various organizations. He would like confirmation that the remaining participants in the Fund, almost 7,000 persons, were experts.

13. The Fund's assets amounted to nearly $1 billion. After many years, the book value of the Fund's holdings had reached $934 million, whereas their market value was currently $936 million. The fact that there was so little difference between the two figures showed that, in the interests of the participants themselves, the Fund's investments should be much more productive. In that connexion, his delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's repeated requests for greater diversification of the Fund's investments, and would support any request by the Advisory Committee for a much more detailed study of the question of investments.

14. Of the six actuarial valuations established as at 31 December 1974, the Board had decided to adopt one which revealed an imbalance in the form of a deficit of some $116.6 million, due for the most part (see A/10009, para. 42) to higher than expected rates of increase of salary over the past two years. Since salaries continued to rise, he asked whether the imbalance would become more marked. The Committee of Actuaries estimated (*ibid.*, para. 44) that the Fund's assets would very likely be sufficient to meet its liabilities over the long-range future. He hoped that that did not mean that there might be difficulties in the medium-range future.

15. The Board was proposing a number of improvements to the pension system, which would place new burdens on the Fund, while the Committee of Actuaries felt that any increase, however minor, in benefits or any updating of the Regulations should be undertaken with great prudence. He supported the proposals for implementation of the principle of equal treatment for male and female staff members, but felt that there was no reason to tax the Fund's resources by raising the maximum length of contributory service to 32 years, a measure which would cost about $17 million in actuarial lump-sum terms.

16. Like the Advisory Committee, he noted with concern that the administrative expenses of the Fund were increasing and wondered whether some of them could be reduced. The greater part of the increases was in the fees payable to the two institutions providing advisory and custodial services for the Fund's portfolio. Those fees were contractually linked to the market value of the investments and had been estimated by the Secretary-General at about $1.5 million for 1976 (*ibid.*, para. 28). However, at the same time, the Fund was paying considerable brokerage commission on transactions to the same two institutions (see A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, para. 14) which were responsible for the purchase and sale of securities. He asked for an indication of the volume of transactions of all types carried out by the Fund during the past year, which were known to have shown a net loss of $22.7 million in 1974. He also asked for information on the amount of commission paid by the Fund, whether it was only the amount shown in the Board's report, annex I, statement I, under the heading "Payable for securities purchased", which was about $2 million for 1974, or whether that sum represented only part of the commission paid. In the current stock-market situation, a monopoly on the purchases and sales of a large fund was extremely valuable to the institution to which it was granted. It was therefore not enough merely to trust that contractual arrangements for provision of investment services to the Fund would be kept under constant review so as to minimize investment expenses. He asked the Advisory Committee to follow that matter closely.

17. His delegation would speak on the question of the adjustment of pensions at the thirty-first session, when the Board was to submit its final report on the matter. However, it could already state that the current system was complicated and might well prove very expensive for the Fund in the long term. It was obviously very difficult to develop a standard formula which would be acceptable to all interested parties and for which the cost to the community of States would remain modest.

18. However, with regard to the Board's observations on the costs and financing of the adjustment of pensions (A/10009, annex V, paras. 34 and 35), he recalled that the percentage for contributions to the Fund had originally been fixed at the high level of 7 per cent of net salary for staff members and 14 per cent of the same net salary for organizations because it had been necessary to establish the Fund on a sound basis. Subsequently, the contributions had been calculated on the average of the net and gross salaries, then on the gross salary, and finally, since 1 July 1975, on the basis of 120 per cent of gross salary. He agreed with the Advisory Committee that that percentage should be lowered.

19. The member organizations of the Fund—in other words, States—paid large sums every year to make up pensions and, in 1974, those sums had amounted to about $86 million. Furthermore, those funds were indexed. They were contributions which had been calculated, for the time being, on the basis of 120 per cent of the gross salary of the participants. He asked whether the Saudi Arabian proposal would apply a double indexation formula to the expenses of States in that field. In any case, when drawing up its proposals for submission to the General Assembly in 1976 on the adjustment of pensions, the Board should show moderation, as recommended by the Advisory Committee (A/10335, para. 29), and should consider the possibility of reducing the high payments made by organizations—in other words, States.

20. The Board proposed (A/10009, annex VIII) amendments to the Administrative Rules of the Fund. A new rule B.4 was intended to prevent the disclosure of information provided by a participant or beneficiary without his written consent or authorization. He wished to receive assurances

that the Board did not intend to use that new rule to prevent any Member State making such a request from receiving the list of its nationals who were receiving pensions or benefits from the Fund and that the new rule would therefore not apply to Member States.

21. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said that the representative of Saudi Arabia had painted a rather dramatic picture of the fate currently in store for retired staff members of the Secretariat in order to justify very careful examination of the question of the Pension Fund by the Committee. His delegation endorsed the recommendations of the Board on certain substantive questions concerning the pension system, particularly concerning the elimination of any difference between the entitlements of male and female participants in the Fund and the maximum length of contributory service.

22. The Secretary-General had submitted a separate report (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1) on the investments of the Fund, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 3354 (XXIX). He agreed with the Secretary-General, who felt obliged to follow a policy which would give the best results for participants, in other words, to opt for investments that were both safe and profitable, particularly since the assets of the Fund were undoubtedly the property of its participants and beneficiaries. In accordance with article 19 of the Regulations of the Fund, the investment of assets should be decided upon by the Secretary-General after consultation with an Investments Committee and in the light of observations and suggestions made by the Board.

23. Since the net loss on sales of securities during the year ended 31 December 1974 was nearly $23 million, one might well ask whether, in order both to preserve the value of the capital and to obtain an adequate return, the investments of the Fund should not be oriented differently and in such a way as also to reflect the aims of the establishment of a new international economic order. The Secretary-General indicated (*ibid.*, para. 23) that the losses realized should not be regarded as indicative of the over-all end result of the Fund's investment; however, the auditors in their report (A/10009, annex IV, para. 9) stated that the market value of the investments of the Fund amounted to 86.1 per cent of cost on 31 December 1974, which showed that the financial situation of the Fund was fairly critical. Current inflationary pressures could only make matters worse.

24. The Advisory Committee, like the Secretary-General, had sought remedies; it had concluded (A/10335, para. 20) that the Secretary-General and his advisers should study ways of diversifying the investments of the Fund. His delegation considered that there should be a diversification of the geographical regions and currencies in which the investments were made. In paragraph 10 of their report, the auditors indicated that investments in non-US dollars had decreased from 20.5 per cent as at 31 December 1973 to 16.9 per cent as at 31 December 1974. Neither the relative size of other stock markets nor the obligation to follow a sound investment policy were adequate reasons for a failure to diversify holdings, since the volume of transactions in other stock markets might derive from the fact that fewer shares were bought; the New York Stock Market was not the only one to offer sound investment opportunities. His delegation considered that the Fund should actively seek ways of investing funds in the developing countries, thereby swelling the financial resources of those countries and endowing the investments of the Fund with greater flexibility in times when conditions in the international market were unfavourable. The Secretary-General indicated (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, para. 30) that, in order to implement the provisions of General Assembly resolution 3354 (XXIX), section IV, paragraph 2, he had continued to examine opportunities for investments in developing countries and that during the preceding year investment by the Fund in the obligations of the largest regional or international development institutions had risen to about $40 million. Such a sum was modest when compared to the assets of the Fund and it was to be hoped that it would be increased in the future. Expansion of that type of investment would be helpful to the development institutions and at the same time would be in keeping with the provisions of resolution 3362 (S-VII), section II, paragraph 7, adopted by the general Assembly at its seventh special session, in which the World Bank Group had been invited to consider new ways of supplementing its financing with, *inter alia*, private capital and also to consider new approaches to increase financing of development in developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and priorities.

25. The Advisory Committee noted (A/10335, para. 22), rightly, that the statements by the Board (A/10009, para. 39) and also those by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, paras. 30 and 32), seemed to imply that investments in developing countries were to be made for the purpose of rendering "assistance" to those countries. He saw the situation in a totally different light. The General Assembly's recommendation that consideration should be given to investment opportunities in developing countries had been based on its conviction that developing countries offered extremely secure investment prospects from which the Fund could greatly benefit. That was why his delegation urged the Secretary-General to engage in a systematic search for ways of directly investing in the developing countries. To that end, the Secretary-General should be given any technical advice that he needed; it was therefore vital that the Investments Committee should include among its membership nationals from developing countries and should use the services of specialists from developing countries.

26. His delegation would like the members of the Joint Inspection Fund to be able to participate in the Fund and trusted that the necessary amendments would be made to the Regulations of the Fund. The fact that the question of the continuation of the Joint Inspection Unit would be considered by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session should not be used as a pretext to postpone a decision on the subject, since equity alone required that pension rights should be extended to the members of the Unit.

27. Mr. AKASHI (Japan), speaking with reference to the interim report of the Board on the adjustment of pensions (A/10009, annex V), said that he was convinced of the urgent need to devise "a unified and durable scheme" for the adjustment of pensions, notwithstanding the immense difficulties to be overcome. At the twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly had approved a dual arrangement,

combining the weighted average of post adjustments (WAPA) system and the consumer price index (CPI) system, the advantages and disadvantages of which were described in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the interim report. His delegation noted that the CPI system had aroused little enthusiasm among pensioners and recalled that, at the twenty-ninth session, it had stated its preference for the WAPA system. While some elements of the CPI system should no doubt be incorporated into whatever scheme was adopted, the WAPA system should be retained as a "fall-back" arrangement. He attached great importance to the exploration of other more basic approaches, as suggested in paragraphs 27 and 28 of the interim report, which might reflect some elements of the post adjustment index or a similar indexing approach based on the costs of baskets of goods and services relevant to a pensioner. The task of defining a basic approach was complicated due to disparate national income tax systems, which, however, should remain outside the field of investigation of the Board.

28. The General Assembly should certainly keep in mind the costs of and ways of financing any new systems of adjustments. The apparent conflict between having a logical and equitable scheme and financing it without any additional cost presented a challenge of major magnitude. His delegation was unable at the current stage to offer any guidance to the Chairman of the Board regarding the course to be followed if the cost of certain of the elements in the scheme could not be absorbed within current actuarial limits. The General Assembly, at its thirty-first session, should be given an opportunity of deciding on a comprehensive scheme based on the Board's consideration of various alternatives and their cost implications.

29. His delegation supported the alignment of entitlements for male and female staff members in respect of survivors' benefits, and endorsed the proposal to add, on an experimental basis, two years to the maximum length of contributory service at half the prevailing rate of accumulation, on the understanding that the new arrangement would not affect the statutory age of retirement, which should remain 60. He underlined the warning issued by the Board (A/10009, para. 44), namely, that no significant liberalization of benefits should be made unless some additional source of financing became available, and he welcomed the Board's intention to review death and disability benefits in 1976 in the light of the next actuarial valuation.

30. With regard to the estimates of administrative expenses, his delegation noted with concern that a very significant increase in expenditure was envisaged in the forthcoming biennium. The dual system for the adjustment of pensions was indeed very expensive, involving as it did the use of 10 additional staff members whose posts were financed from temporary assistance funds (*ibid.*, paras. 26 and 27). His delegation had also noted that fees in respect of portfolio management amounted to approximately $1.5 million, or more than 0.1 per cent of the total value of investments, and it accordingly endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/10335, para. 14) that, in view of the keen competition existing among investment firms, the contractual arrangements for provision of investment services to the Fund should be kept under constant review. The Fifth Committee might consider whether it would not be advisable for the Fund to retain the services of one rather than two advisory firms.

31. As the Secretary-General had indicated in his report on the investments of the Fund (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1), the overriding objective of investments should be to achieve optimum results for the benefit of participants, so as to provide the highest long-term return consistent with the protection of the assets of the Fund. The table in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10335) showed that the investments of the Fund showed a better record on cumulative annual rates of return than other similar funds. It was not essential that 75 per cent of the assets of the Fund should be invested in equities for, in view of the volatility of equity markets and the enhanced profitability of the bond market in recent years, it appeared desirable that the portfolio of the Fund should include a somewhat greater ratio for bonds, at least for the immediate future. At any rate, a certain flexibility of approach was necessary.

32. His delegation wished to see more geographical diversification of investments, although it was true that there were only a limited number of equity markets suitable for investment by the Fund. The table in the report of the Advisory Committee showed that the equity investment outside the United States had achieved a better record than that in the United States. Such diversification of investments would not only broaden investment opportunities but would also serve as a hedge against currency fluctuations. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee (*ibid.*, para. 22) that the Secretary-General should continue to be guided in his choice of investment exclusively by the soundness of the particular investment involved, for the assets of the Fund were a sacred trust.

33. While it was understandable that, as the Secretary-General indicated in his report (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, para. 24), in the case of bonds the accounting statement for a well-managed portfolio would usually show greater realized losses than realized gains, it was less understandable in the case of equities for, as the investments of the Fund should be based on stable, long-term factors in an industry or a firm and not on transient, technical factors, there seemed no need to engage in frequent changes in the investment portfolio.

34. In conclusion, he endorsed the view expressed by the Board of Auditors (A/10009, annex IV, para. 36) that intensified efforts should be made in order to make it unnecessary for the Fund to pay direct taxes on the transfer of stocks.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION CONTAINED IN DOCUMENT A/L.767/REV.1 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 28* (A/10008/ADD.7, A/C.5/1707/REV.2)

35. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in his statement (A/C.5/1707/Rev.2) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution A/L.767/Rev.1, the Secretary-General had indicated that $60,000 would be required for the biennium 1976-1977 for the installation and initial operation of a radio recording studio on the premises of OAU, a sum which would be allocated as

* Co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity: report of the Secretary-General.

indicated in paragraph 3 of the corresponding report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.7). The Advisory Committee had no objection to either the expenditure of $40,000 on technical equipment or the purchase of one year's supply of recording tape at a cost of $2,000, as requested by the Secretary-General. In the case of the $18,000 envisaged for the salary, travel and subsistence of a radio writer/producer, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General replace the staff member who would be assigned to OAU from the United Nations Office of Public Information by redeployment of existing staff resources instead of filling–through recruitment and on a temporary basis–the post which would fall vacant. In view of that recommendation by the Advisory Committee, the only costs necessary to provide the assistance envisaged would be those for travel and subsistence–approximately $5,500–of the staff member assigned to OAU. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/L.767/Rev.1, an additional appropriation of $47,500 would be required under section 21 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

36. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), noting that his delegation attached great importance to the question of co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, which should have priority over all other programmes, expressed surprise at the position taken by the Advisory Committee on the financial implications of draft resolution A/L.767/Rev.1. The Fifth Committee had just approved in first reading large estimates under section 21 of the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, and additional estimates had already been requested under that section. It was unlikely that the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee could not be absorbed within the estimates under section 21, bearing in mind the priority nature of the proposed programme.

37. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/L.767/Rev.1, an additional appropriation of $47,500 would be required under section 21 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

38. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that his delegation recognized the vital importance of OAU, but it could not support the inclusion in the draft resolution of a call for equipment and staff support to a body which was not part of the United Nations system. It was not appropriate for the United Nations to subsidize a radio operation which would be used by a third party without the Secretary-General having any control over it. If the proposal had been put to the vote, his delegation would not have been able to support it.

39. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that, if the proposal relating to the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution A/L.767/Rev.1 had been put to the vote, his delegation would have abstained because of reservations it had on the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution.

40. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that, although his delegation had accepted the consensus with regard to the financial implications of draft resolution A/L.767/Rev.1, it did have reservations with regard to operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution. The cost of assistance provided to a body which was not linked with the United Nations should not be financed from the regular budget of the United Nations. The work of OAU and co-operation between the United Nations and that Organization were of course of major importance, but the provisions of operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution could create a dangerous precedent. If the financial implications of the draft resolution had been put to the vote, his delegation would have abstained.

41. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that, if the financial implications of draft resolution A/L.767/Rev.1 had been put to the vote, his delegation would have abstained.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

1742nd meeting

Tuesday, 18 November 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1742

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued) (for the previous documentation, see the 1740th meeting; A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/L.1253)**

The effect of continuing currency instability on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system* (continued) *(A/10008/Add.4, A/C.5/1692, A/C.5/L.1253)*

1. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba), introducing a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1253), recalled that his delegation had stated its position on the question of the effect of currency instability on the budget of organizations in the United Nations system at the three preceding sessions of the General Assembly and that at the twenty-ninth session it had introduced two draft resolutions, one[1] on the continuing currency instability, the other[2] on the impact of inflation, suggesting that countries in which United Nations organizations were located should assume responsibility for the losses suffered by the United Nations because of those two factors. Many delegations had critized those draft resolutions pointing out that they were inconsistent with paragraph 2 of Article 17 of the Charter, which stated that expenses of the Organization should be borne by the Members as apportioned by the General Assembly. That criticism had been taken into account in the draft resolution before the Committee. While his delegation continued to hold certain developed countries responsible for inflation and currency instability and believed that those countries in which United Nations offices were located received many benefits, it was suggesting in its draft resolution that the countries which were not responsible for inflation should shoulder 20 per cent of the additional burden while the remaining 80 per cent should be shouldered by the developed countries in which United Nations offices were located.

2. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) asked the Controller what would be the amounts proposed under all sections of the programme budget for 1976-1977 on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, taking into account the fact that that Committee, in calculating the annual inflation rate had used rates that were 2 to 3 per cent lower than those used by the Secretary-General. His delegation would also welcome some indication from the Secretary-General concerning the manner in which the over-all reductions in the budget estimates, resulting from the application of lower inflation rates, should be distributed among various budget sections. Naturally, programmes for which there was a legislative authority and which directly benefited developing countries should have priority.

3. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) recalled that in his statement at the 1740th meeting the Controller had referred to a recommendation by the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, that as far as possible unavoidable increases in expenditure should be financed in the first instance by savings. The *Ad Hoc* Committee had also recommended that heads of organizations should prepare reports on the budget performance, emphasizing salient features and showing the principal changes that had occurred since the original estimates, and should take measures to meet cost increases through savings, reassessment of priorities and redeployment of resources. He asked whether he was correct in assuming that the reason the Committee had not seen those performance reports was that they had subsequently been replaced by the progress report of the Secretary-General. His delegation would be interested to see the progress report lay stress on what had been achieved in the realm of savings, reassessment of priorities and redeployment of resources.

4. In connexion with the achievement of savings, the Advisory Committee, in its report, had advocated continuation of the existing austerity measures and had lent its support to the zero-base approach, while recognizing the difficulties such an approach involved. Although the Controller had stated that he had already referred to the possibilities and limitations of such an approach, his delegation had been unable to find a precise analysis of the matter. While his delegation would not advocate a complete zero-base approach, that method did offer the best institutional means of persuading and encouraging the Secretariat to economize.

5. His delegation wondered whether it would be possible to introduce a system whereby programmes would automatically lapse after an agreed period, after which it would be up to the General Assembly to determine whether a particular programme should continue or not. In the general discussion, although many delegations had advocated doing away with the older programmes, none had specified precisely which those programmes were.

6. Finally, he supported the request made by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany for information on how the cuts would be applied to the budget if 1 to 3 per cent of the allowance made for inflation were sliced off.

7. As for draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253, it was an example of the sort of document which was out of touch

* Resumed from the 1740th meeting.

1 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 73, document A/9960, para. 66.

2 *Ibid.*, para. 67.

with reality and, as far as his delegation was concerned, it contained nothing which could be discussed.

8. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) supported the request made by the Federal Republic of Germany. His delegation believed that economies could be made in some areas at little or no cost to the priority programmes, particularly those relating to economic and social development and those affecting the interests of the developing countries.

9. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) supported the request made by the Federal Republic of Germany. The world economic situation required that the United Nations should absorb part of the increased expenditure due to inflation without detriment to programmes of concern to the developing countries.

10. Turning to the proposal introduced by the representative of Cuba, he said that it was original but could not be a basis for solving the problem of inflation in the United Nations system.

11. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) supported the request made by the Federal Republic of Germany but expressed doubts as to whether it was within the competence of the Secretary-General to make a public statement concerning the degree of usefulness of particular programmes and whether they were of direct benefit to Member States. Perhaps the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany had meant that the Secretary-General should report on the basis of the resolutions adopted by CPC, the Economic and Social Council or the General Assembly. His delegation had doubts as to the usefulness of the New Zealand proposal that programmes should lapse after an automatic period. It was the Fifth Committee's responsibility and that of competent bodies in other organizations to scrutinize the continued usefulness of existing programmes. Finally, his delegation reserved its position on the Cuban draft resolution.

12. Mr. MONSHEMVULA (Zaire) said that his delegation endorsed the comments made by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10008/Add.1, paras. 7, 8 and 9). While it was true that the workload of the Organization was increasing each year, the Secretariat should strive harder to make substantial savings in various sections of the budget so that the sums thus released could be reallocated to priority sectors.

13. With regard to the attempt to make certain countries shoulder the expenditure resulting from currency instability, his delegation recalled the principle of collective responsibility of all Members of the Organization for the expenses of the Organization. It would not associate itself with any proposal that such expenses should be borne by certain countries. It was, of course, clear that the industrialized countries were responsible for the existing imbalance in the outdated international economic system. That system was all the more outdated now that all Members of the Organization were convinced of the need to establish a new international economic order, one of whose main features would be the reform of the international monetary system. A very good way of assisting the Organization was by Member States paying their contributions as soon as they fell due.

14. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), responding to the request by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany for more precise information about the consequences of assuming different inflation rates, said that the data was being processed by computer and full, detailed information would soon be available. An amount of $20 million would have to be absorbed during the biennium because of changes in the exchange rates. One possible solution advanced in the Fifth Committee was that cuts should be made in various programmes. However, the Secretary-General would have serious difficulties in deciding which programmes should be cut and which should receive priority without guidance from the Committee, as programmes were approved by the legislative bodies.

15. Replying to the representative of New Zealand, he said that an account of savings, redeployment of resources and reassessment of priorities was contained in the performance report, and that he had the same views on that question. In connexion with zero-base budgeting, he pointed out that even those who advocated such a system for good financial management did not believe it possible to implement it in the purest sense by starting from a zero base every year. It had been said that programme budgeting was somewhere between the incremental method and an annual zero-base review of all programmes. While zero-base budgeting was not a real panacea for all problems facing the Organization, the idea was a good one, provided that it was applied in terms of programmes so as to ensure maximum output and maximum savings.

16. There was, of course, always some leeway for savings, but there were limits; the tighter the budget, the sooner the substance of the programmes approved by the legislative bodies would be affected. The main point was to decide whether certain programmes should be singled out for rejection or for priority, or whether an across-the-board reduction was preferable; both methods suffered from certain short-comings.

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions (A/10184, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1224):

***(a)* Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General (A/10184, A/C.5/L.1224);**

***(b)* Other personnel questions: report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1)**

17. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/10184) and his note (A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1) on the amendments he had made to the Staff Rules.

18. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that the United Nations should take the lead in promoting the international cause of womanhood. Some progress had been achieved by the amendment of the Staff Rules, the decision to establish a Standing Committee on Employment of Women in the Secretariat, and the efforts of the Secretary-General to recruit more women to the Secretariat. However, there remained a need to increase the number of women recruited to Professional posts and to improve the status, promotion prospects and conditions of service of women in the Secretariat.

19. He recalled that, in several resolutions, the General Assembly and other United Nations organs had recognized the necessity for the recruitment of more women to Professional posts in the United Nations. The time had come to look at the problems faced jointly by Member States and the Secretary-General in specific terms, in view of the decline in the proportion of women in Professional posts subject to geographical distribution. Although in his last report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/10184, para. 35), the Secretary-General had indicated—as he had done in his previous report[3]—that it was not possible under current guidelines to reconcile effectively the principle of geographical distribution with the objective of increased representation of women; both principles were sound and must be retained as essential elements in the recruitment policy of the Organization. The objective could be attained by taking a regional approach to the recruitment of women. That would mean giving the Secretary-General authority to set aside a certain number of posts in each region; a particular effort would then be made to fill those posts with qualified women, especially women from under-represented countries, in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution on a regional basis. For example, if, for each biennium a figure of 5 per cent of the 2,600 Professional posts subject to geographical distribution was taken, about 130 posts out of the approximate total of 580 new and vacant posts available during each biennium could be set aside for women. Setting a percentage figure would give the Secretary-General the added flexibility he needed, and would provide him with desirable guidelines. There were precedents for that proposal. The Committee had recognized, in a decision taken at the twenty-ninth session,[4] that the system of desirable ranges was a flexible management tool that would help guide the Secretary-General in his recruitment efforts, so that the introduction of a degree of flexibility in the system was consistent with that decision. Furthermore, in its resolutions 2736 A (XXV) and 1852 (XVII), the General Assembly had recognized the regional approach as being a valid basis for appointments to certain posts. The Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System had included in its report[5] a proposal that would allow countries in a region or subregion to pool the number of Secretariat posts allocated to them. The effective implementation of those proposals would depend in a large part on the Secretariat and on the efforts of Member States to put forward well-qualified women candidates.

20. With regard to alleged discrimination in the promotion of women within the Secretariat, his delegation considered that the Secretary-General should entrust a senior officer with the task, *inter alia*, of investigating cases of discrimination and bringing them to the attention of the responsible authorities. The officer should have considerable freedom of action and should report directly to the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, rather than to the Office of Personnel Services. Such a person could also review the over-all position of women in the United Nations in conjunction with the *Ad Hoc* Group on Equal Rights for Women. He noted that the United Nations had already supported a proposal to appoint a special adviser when it had endorsed the *Ad Hoc* Group's petition to that effect.[6] His delegation further believed that greater efforts should be made to enable well-qualified women in senior positions in the General Service category to be promoted to the Professional grades subject to equitable geographical distribution. The staff development programme should contribute to the elimination of discrimination against women and attempt to provide the means of defining the problems that women faced in their jobs, and the proposals of the *Ad Hoc* Group for improving the 1975 staff development programme deserved consideration. His delegation also endorsed the recommendation of the *Ad Hoc* Group that the administration should establish a small editorial review committee to examine United Nations editing practice with a view to eliminating outdated terminology with discriminatory implications. His delegation believed that the United Nations should provide or assist in the provision of day-care facilities in New York for women with children, and asked for more information on the problems of providing such facilities and on what the United Nations intended to do to resolve them.

AGENDA ITEM 101

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General *(continued) (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10299, A/C.5/1670, A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1)**

21. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) introduced, on behalf of the sponsors, a revised text (A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1) of the draft resolution he had submitted at the 1733rd meeting and announced that Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Singapore and Thailand had become sponsors. The main thrust of the text was the application of the criteria proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 14 of his report (A/C.5/1670), taking account of the comments made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10299), with a view to further reducing the volume of documentation.

22. The preambular paragraph reflected the views and feelings expressed by members of the Fifth Committee and also by the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments. In connexion with operative paragraph 2, he pointed out that the Advisory Committee had endorsed all 10 criteria proposed by the Secretary-General. The words "as appropriate" in paragraph 3 had been included to give the Secretary-General more flexibility in applying the criteria. Paragraph 4 had been worded carefully, and the principal organs were being invited to observe the criteria, not being enforced to apply them; they would observe the criteria at their own discretion. In paragraph 5 the Committee on Conferences was requested to monitor the application of the criteria and to review on the basis of appropriate consultations the optimum requirements for meeting records of bodies.

3 Document A/9724, of 27 September 1974, paras. 15 and 18.

4 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 81, document A/9980, para. 43.

5 *A New United Nations Structure for Global Economic Co-operation* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.7), para. 93 *(b)*.

6 For the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Group, see its report: *Survey of Staff Attitudes on Sex Discrimination in the United Nations Secretariat: Analysis and Recommendations for Action*, part V.

* Resumed from the 1733rd meeting.

23. The draft resolution consisted mainly of passages taken from the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee. It had been drafted in such a way as to take account as far as possible of the views expressed in the Fifth Committee. Accordingly, he hoped that it would receive the unanimous support of the Committee.

24. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), making preliminary comments on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1, requested the representative of the Philippines to clarify the implications of the words "as appropriate" in operative paragraph 3. He also suggested that the Security Council as one of the principal organs of the United Nations could not be invited to observe the criteria, as it was in paragraph 4, but could only be requested to state its views on the criteria. Commenting on paragraph 5, he recalled that the terms of reference of the Committee on Conferences, established at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, did not include reviewing on the basis of consultations the optimum requirements for records of bodies of the United Nations. He regretted that the draft resolution did not reflect an important point made in the report of the Advisory Committee about potential savings to be derived from the application of the criteria.

25. Mr. VANDERGERT (Sri Lanka) said that his delegation, convinced like many others of the need to reduce the ever-increasing volume of documentation and reduce expenditure, welcomed the report of the Secretary-General. However, documents and meeting records were essential working instruments, and the greatest caution should be exercised so as not to impair the functioning of the Organization and that of small delegations, like Sri Lanka's, which greatly relied on meeting records.

26. Sri Lanka was concerned about the implications of some of the suggested criteria for the provision of meeting records, and associated itself with the preoccupations expressed with regard to criterion 6 by the representatives of Australia and the United Kingdom (1732nd meeting). Criterion 3 also gave his delegation cause for concern.

27. The original draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1249) had suggested that the Committee on Conferences should be entrusted with the task of carrying out proposals for reducing meeting records without impairing the effectiveness of the bodies concerned. Although Sri Lanka held the Committee on Conferences in high regard, it felt that it was not the appropriate Committee to evaluate the comparative usefulness of United Nations bodies. That was the task of the General Assembly. His delegation therefore welcomed the amendments to operative paragraph 5 in the revised draft (A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1). Nevertheless, it would welcome an assurance that the conclusions of the Committee on Conferences would be merely recommendations to the General Assembly, which would make the final decision.

28. Sri Lanka was also anxious to know whether Member States which were members of bodies whose requirements for records were being reviewed would have the opportunity to express their views to the Committee on Conferences. For example, Sri Lanka was keenly interested in the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Indian Ocean and therefore should be afforded an opportunity to express its views when the requirements for records of that Committee were being reviewed by the Committee on Conferences.

29. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1, if adopted, would allow for the maximum reduction of expensive meeting records without impairing the effectiveness of the bodies concerned. Some of the criteria endorsed in the draft resolution could be applied immediately and without controversy by the Secretariat, and should result in considerable savings. An example was criterion 5, whereby provisional records of many bodies would be issued initially in "general" distribution and, with corrigenda, would serve as the final records of those bodies. His delegation wished to know what would be the first year for which records not already printed would not be printed in future.

30. Other criteria endorsed by the draft resolution demanded a review by the Committee on Conferences of certain bodies currently entitled to meeting records. Nobody would be deprived of meeting records unless the General Assembly so decided on the basis of the recommendations of that Committee.

31. The Committee on Conferences would also be able to take on the task of arbiter where the application of a particular criterion could lead to dispute, as with criterion 6, which stated that subsidiary bodies of subsidiary bodies should not receive meeting records other than sound recordings. Particular committees in that category might have a very strong case for the retention of records, and, in such circumstances, the Committee on Conferences would be able to review each case on its merits and make recommendations to the body concerned and to the General Assembly. In that way, it would be ensured that the effectiveness of important United Nations bodies could not be summarily impaired by an inflexible decision of the General Assembly depriving them of meeting records. The onus would be on each committee feeling itself entitled to records to prove its case. The draft resolution, therefore, was tough enough to ensure positive action in the field of meeting records, while retaining a minimum degree of flexibility to enable account to be taken of special circumstances.

32. His delegation hoped that all delegations would feel able to support the draft resolution and stressed that the proposals of the Secretary-General would be applied on an experimental basis only. The General Assembly would be able to assess the effect of the various proposals in due course with the help of the reports and recommendations of the Committee on Conferences.

33. In a note by the Secretariat,[7] the reasons why no reductions should be made in the budget estimates to correspond to the estimated savings resulting from the adoption of the suggested criteria for the provision of meeting records had been set out. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that it was not possible to estimate accurately all the savings, particularly where

7 Circulated as conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.6 and Corr.1 of 11 November 1975.

implementation might be flexible. However, the United Kingdom considered that if the draft resolution was adopted, it was possible to say with confidence that there would be an irreducible minimum of financial savings. It was those savings which his delegation wished to see reflected in the budget estimates, together with an assurance that any further savings would be reported to the Fifth Committee and to the General Assembly.

34. Mr. HENČIĆ (Yugoslavia) said it was quite understandable that the volume of publications and documentation should increase as United Nations activities expanded and the number of Member States and official languages increased. The question of the volume of documentation was also closely linked to the working methods of the United Nations. Efforts to reduce the volume of documentation should thus concentrate on improving working methods so as to "maximize the chances of agreement . . . without incurring the threat of longer and longer meetings with longer and longer records", as the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments had pointed out at the 1727th meeting.

35. A general improvement in the international climate would help to reduce the volume of documentation such as summary records, but it would also lead to an increase in documentation as United Nations activities expanded and more conferences and meetings were organized. Accordingly, he believed that the item on publications and documentation should be considered regularly by the Fifth Committee, together with the item on the pattern of conferences and the section of the programme budget on conference services.

36. The current volume of documentation did not reflect the real needs of the United Nations or of delegations. A reduction would thus not only lead to economies but could also enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations. That would allow the Secretariat to concentrate on improving the quality and ensuring the timely circulation of documents and publications. The work of the Department of Conference Services and the proposals by the Secretary-General in respect of meeting records reflected meritorious efforts to reduce documentation. The proposal that some bodies should dispense with summary records, however, could be applied only on an experimental basis as the legislative bodies concerned should be able to present their views as to whether that system would impede their work on questions of paramount importance to the international community before the system was instituted. The financial aspect of the problem, which should be given due attention, should not be limited to the question of reducing expenditure since that might endanger the efforts and effectiveness of the United Nations. His delegation believed that the Committee would be acting wisely in approving the application of the Secretary-General's proposals on an experimental basis.

37. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1 reflected to a considerable extent the concern of his delegation. He had, however, some difficulty with the wording of operative paragraph 4; it would be more appropriate for the General Assembly to appeal to the principal organs to consider the usefulness of the application of the proposed criteria instead of inviting them to observe those criteria. He suggested that paragraph 4 might be amended, if the sponsors agreed, to read:

> "4. *Invites* the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council to consider the usefulness of applying the proposed criteria to their meeting records and of ensuring that the meeting records of their subsidiary bodies follow the same criteria".[8]

That was, he felt, more in keeping with the intention of the sponsors.

38. Mr. SETHI (India) stated that, at the 1727th meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services had referred to the atmosphere of conciliation marking the seventh special session of the General Assembly, at which there had been 25 official meetings and 67 informal meetings. He wished to know the corresponding figures for the sixth special session, which, in the opinion of some persons, had been marked by an atmosphere of confrontation.

39. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) said that at the sixth special session there had been 25 plenary meetings provided with verbatim records, 24 meetings provided with summary records and 12 informal meetings with no records.

40. In reply to the question put by the representative of the United Kingdom, he stated that criterion 5 would begin to be applied on 1 January 1976.

41. Mr. SETHI (India) said that the figures showed that there had been fewer meetings at the sixth special session, which was supposedly marked by an atmosphere of confrontation, than at the seventh special session. The hypothesis that détente and an improvement in the general atmosphere resulted in fewer meetings was therefore unfounded.

42. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), urging support for draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1, which was aimed at reducing expenditure, said he would need to consult the sponsors in connexion with the rewording of paragraph 4 proposed by Yugoslavia.

43. The representative of the Soviet Union had asked for clarification in operative paragraph 3, where the Secretary-General was requested to apply the criteria "as appropriate". The phrase implied that the Secretary-General would have a great deal of flexibility and would endeavour not to impair the effectiveness of the bodies concerned.

44. With reference to paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, the representative of the Soviet Union had questioned whether the General Assembly could "invite" the Security Council to observe the criteria for its meeting records. Since General Assembly resolution 2836 (XXVI) had used the phrase "*Invites* the Security Council", he could not understand the concern of the representative of the Soviet Union.

[8] Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1256.

45. He hoped that the questions raised about paragraph 5 of the draft resolution by the representative of Sri Lanka had been adequately answered by the representative of the United Kingdom.

46. The representative of the Soviet Union had declared that the Committee on Conferences did not have the mandate to perform the tasks suggested in that paragraph 5. General Assembly resolution 3351 (XXIX) set forth the terms of reference of the Committee on Conferences, which were, *inter alia,* to recommend to the General Assembly means to ensure the optimum apportionment of conference resources, facilities and services. The Committee on Conferences could perform that task only on the basis of appropriate consultations.

47. Mr. CARRESSE (Uruguay) said that his delegation had viewed with concern the ever-increasing volume of documentation and welcomed the initiative by the representative of the Philippines. The Fifth Committee should endorse the proposed criteria for the provision of meeting records in the report of the Secretary-General. The application of those criteria was sure to lead to a reduction in expenditure, and since their application would be on an experimental basis, the General Assembly would have an opportunity to examine the results at the end of the biennium 1976-1977. His delegation considered that the criteria could be applied without impairing the effectiveness of the bodies concerned, and had confidence in the ability of the Committee on Conferences to perform its task.

48. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that his delegation endorsed the rewording of paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1 proposed by the representative of Yugoslavia.

49. Mr. NAUDY (France) said his delegation felt that the tone of paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1 was somewhat authoritarian and endorsed the rewording suggested by Yugoslavia.

50. Paragraph 3 requested the Secretary-General to apply the criteria, and paragraph 5 requested the Committee on Conferences to review the optimum requirements for records of bodies and organs. A review of those requirements implied an intervention in the application of the criteria, a task which the Secretary-General was being requested to perform in paragraph 3. His delegation saw a certain contradiction between paragraphs 3 and 5, and found paragraph 5 unclear.

51. France regretted that the draft resolution did not reflect the effect of the acceptance of the criteria in terms of a reduction in expenditure for documentation.

52. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation agreed with the United Kingdom that bodies should not be deprived of meeting records unless the General Assembly so decided.

53. His delegation was concerned that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was one of the bodies which, under criterion 3, would be reviewed to determine whether their meetings had an important substantive character or whether the cost of providing records appeared to be out of proportion with the possible benefit. It would benefit those suffering from discrimination if the meeting records of that Committee were given the widest possible dissemination. His delegation would also like to consider the possible implications of the Yugoslav suggestion on the meeting records of the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

54. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that in paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.1 the words "as appropriate and" should be deleted.

55. He endorsed the rewording proposed by Yugoslavia for paragraph 4, but suggested that in paragraph 5 the words "to review on the basis of appropriate consultations the optimum requirements for records of bodies and organs of the United Nations" should be deleted.

56. He suggested the addition of a paragraph 6, concerning the potential savings referred to in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10299), which would be drafted on the following lines:

"6. *Approves* the recommendations contained in the relevant paragraphs of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and proposes that the Secretary-General should report on the implementation of those recommendations to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session."

AGENDA ITEM 99

Joint Inspection Unit: reports of the Joint Inspection Unit *(concluded)**

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1252)

57. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/L.1252), expressed the hope that it would be acceptable to the Committee.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that if there was no objection, he would take it that the Fifth Committee adopted the draft report.

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

59. The CHAIRMAN said that since the Committee was approaching the end of its first reading of the individual sections of the programme budget it would have to consider the draft proposals concerning that question. While he had originally intended to establish an informal subcommittee in order to attempt to consolidate, to the extent possible, the various proposals, he had come to the conclusion that the time element and preoccupations of most of the delegates would not allow the convening of such a

* Resumed from the 1735th meeting.

subcommittee. Accordingly, those draft proposals would be discussed at the morning meeting on 21 November.

60. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) noted the Chairman's statement with regret and expressed the hope that the fact that it was not possible to set up a subcommittee at the current time would not preclude the possibility of doing so in future, in accordance with rule 102 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

61. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of Greece should have no fears on that score.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

1743rd meeting

Wednesday, 19 November 1975, at 8.10 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1743

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:*

***(a)* Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued)** (A/10009, A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1258);**

***(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1697)**

1. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that the most important issues before the Fifth Committee, with regard to the pension system, were those relating to the valuation of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, its past performance, its future prospects and the principles which should underlie its management and investment policy.

2. The valuation showed an imbalance of $116.6 million. Although that sounded serious, his delegation agreed with the Joint Staff Pension Board and the Committee of Actuaries that it was not a cause for immediate concern or action. The imbalance was equivalent to 0.55 per cent of the payroll and was within the margin of error of the actuarial valuation. A very small change in the static interest rate assumption would result in an exact actuarial balance. The question arose, however, whether the assumptions about the future, on which the valuation was based, were valid, having regard to the recent performance of the Fund's investments. The first thing to be said was that the Fund had been well managed, judging by the performance of its investments. Although in recent years the conditions for profitable investment had been universally lacking, it would be an error to give too much significance to that temporary trend. Better investment opportunities would come, both because of an improvement in world economic conditions and because the Secretary-General would look for good investment opportunities more widely throughout the world. In that connexion the question of investments in developing countries arose: the sole criterion in the matter was the best interests of the beneficiaries.

3. His delegation rejected the contention that the management of the Fund stood condemned in the light of the capital losses which had been incurred in the last year or two. Of course, it was to be hoped that the Investments Committee and its professional advisers would spot the future losers while their price still stood high. However, it was also necessary to have the courage to sell at a loss when, as a result, investments could be switched so that bad prospects were abandoned and good opportunities were grasped. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that, if losers were sold while they stood high, the winners would also be standing high. The funds realized by sale could be held in short-term investments until the market fell, but that would be speculation and wrong in principle for the management of a pension fund. The Secretary-General was therefore right not to try to beat the market.

4. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that the minor proposals of the Board could be accepted, although, like the Advisory Committee, his delegation stressed that no significant liberalization of benefits should be made unless some additional source of financing became available. With regard to the new scheme of adjustment which the Board would prepare for the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, his delegation endorsed the view of the Advisory Committee that a unified scheme should be financed without adding to the current or potential liability of the membership.

5. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) pointed out that the imbalance of $116.6 million brought to light by the actuarial valuation of the Fund was somewhat fictitious because it was based on a set of assumptions and on a choice between several sets of assumptions. However, the results of the actuarial valuations made between 1968 and 1974 revealed a downward trend which illustrated the Fund's position better than any single figure. Economic conditions had changed considerably, and while benefits were promptly adjusted to take account of the rate of inflation, contributions increased more slowly when the amount corresponding to a certain number of classes of post adjustment was incorporated into the base salary. Consequently, his delegation attached considerable importance to the conclusions to be drawn from the actuarial valuation, namely that, as the Committee of Actuaries and

* Resumed from the 1741st meeting.

the Board had pointed out, the actuarial situation of the Fund did not allow of any significant increase in benefits. Unless additional sources of financing were found, any proposed increase in benefits would have to be considered with the utmost circumspection, whatever intrinsic merits the proposed increase might have.

6. His delegation was not opposed to a change in articles 36 and 39 of the Regulations of the Fund, aimed at aligning the entitlements of the two sexes, which was a matter of paramount importance and should therefore override financial considerations.

7. However, his delegation had doubts about the advisability of extending the maximum length of contributory service. The contention that it would be only an "interim measure" was meaningless since a right could not be granted to beneficiaries and then withdrawn at a later date. There was no moral obligation to increase the benefits of staff members who continued to work after 30 years, because during their 30 years of service the amount of benefits had already increased considerably. The contributions paid by participants represented an integral whole corresponding to the sum total of benefits to which they were entitled, and if the amount of contributions over a given period were reduced, the corresponding amount of benefits would have to be reduced as well. His delegation agreed with the delegations of Belgium and France that it was not necessary for the Committee to take a decision on the matter at the current stage. In any event, staff members who would be retiring in 1976 after 30 years of contributory service would not benefit from any change, and the others could wait until the Board proposed a definitive measure at the thirty-first session. Actually, the Committee would be in a delicate situation at that time, since it would be considering an improved system of pension adjustment and, in view of the precarious financial situation of the Fund, it would have to determine which benefits would be increased. It would, therefore, be better to wait and take a decision regarding the extension of the maximum contributory service at the thirty-first session when the Committee considered the new adjustment system that was to be proposed.

8. With regard to the system of adjustment, he found it hard to make any specific comments at the current stage since annex V of the Board's report (A/10009) outlined problems rather than suggesting guidelines. The option given to retired staff members seemed to present more difficulties than had been anticipated and might therefore be abolished. If the new system was not to entail additional expenditure–and his Government fully endorsed that idea–the possibilities of instituting a logical and adequate system in the interest of all retired staff members were limited. If adjustments based on country of residence were to be continued and acquired rights were to be safeguarded, the only solution would be to adjust pensions both on the basis of a weighted average, applicable to 50 or 60 per cent of the pension, and on the basis of the consumer price index, applicable to 40 or 50 per cent of the pension.

9. His delegation congratulated the Secretary-General on the results of the management of the Fund's investments, given the difficulties of the market. As the Advisory Committee had stated, the sole objective of the Fund was to provide enough money for retirement benefits.

10. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey), referring to the recommendation contained in the report of the Board regarding the alignment of the entitlements of male and female staff members, said that he was happy to see that the principle of equal treatment of male and female staff was in the process of implementation. His delegation supported the proposal of the Board to amend the Fund's Regulations in order to provide benefits for widowers identical in all respects to those now payable to widows and to abolish the existing differences, depending on the sex of the participant, in the entitlement to residual benefits, starting on 1 January 1976, without retroactive effect. He welcomed the Board's decision to abolish all differences based on the sex of the participants in the amounts payable under the current Regulations. His delegation therefore supported the Board's recommendation that articles 2 *(b)*, 29 *(d)* (ii), 36, 37 *(e)* and *(f)*, and 39 of the Regulations of the Joint Staff Pension Fund should be amended, as indicated in annex VII of the Board's report.

11. With regard to the amendment of article 29 *(b)* (i), designed to increase, as an interim measure, the maximum length of contributory service from 30 to 32 years, at a rate of accumulation of 1/100 of final average remuneration during the last two years–instead of the standard rate of 1/50–the actuarial advisers had given their assurance that the actuarial balance of the Fund would not be materially affected by the cost of the change estimated at $17 million approximately. His delegation had no wish to discuss the substance of the matter at the current stage, however, and, like the delegations of France and Belgium, hoped that the Board would consider the question again in 1976.

12. With regard to the Emergency Fund, his delegation supported the Board's recommendation that the experimental period should be continued for a further year and that the maximum authorization of $100,000 should be maintained.

13. He noted with concern that the Board's estimate of administrative expenses for 1976 represented an increase of nearly 66 per cent over actual expenses in 1974 and 26 per cent over the initial appropriations for 1975, as shown by the figures in table 1 of annex III of the Board's report. The supplementary estimates for 1975 included an amount of $65,000 for supplementary actuarial services contracted for on the basis of various decisions of the Board which had been taken in the absence of a statement of financial implications, as was indicated in paragraph 10 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10335). Like the Advisory Committee, his delegation trusted that future decisions of the Board on matters which had financial implications would be taken only after such implications had been discussed.

14. With regard to investment costs, which amounted to $1,450,000 for 1976, he agreed with the Advisory Committee that contractual arrangements with the investment firms concerned should be kept under constant review so as to minimize investment expenses. He would, however, like to hear the comments of the representative of the Board regarding the suggestion made by the representative of Japan at the 1741st meeting, to the effect that the Fund should retain one advisory firm rather than two.

15. Concerning the Secretary-General's report on the investments of the Fund (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1), he said that he had nothing to add to the statement that the investment objective should be to provide the highest long-term return consistent with the protection of the assets of the Fund. He was glad to see that the cumulative annual rate of return on the investments of the Fund in the 10-year period ended 31 March 1975 (A/10335, p. 6) indicated that the Fund had a better performance record than other institutions. Since the United States equity component of the portfolio showed an average annual return of 3.49 per cent, as against 8.63 per cent for equities outside the United States, and 3.91 per cent for the bonds, efforts should be made to emphasize geographical diversity in the investments of the Fund, by investing not only in industrialized countries but also in developing countries. He noted with concern that the net loss on the sale of securities had been $22,698,000 in 1974 (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, para. 22). While it was no doubt true that a well-managed portfolio would usually show greater realized losses than realized gains, the Board should constantly review the situation for the benefit of the Fund.

16. Finally, his delegation supported the recommendation of the Board of Auditors (A/10009, annex IV, para. 38), to the effect that effective measures should be taken on a priority basis to secure the rescinding of direct taxes on stock transfers.

17. Mr. MARTIN (Spain) said he welcomed the proposals made by the Board with a view to aligning the entitlements of male and female participants in the Fund. The measures proposed would represent further progress towards the elimination of discrimination based on sex, and his delegation supported the proposed amendments to articles 36 and 39 of the Regulations of the Fund, with the wording suggested by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10335, para. 3).

18. The proposal to extend the maximum length of contributory service was reasonable, for it would not be fair if participants with 30 years of contributory service before retirement age were unable to increase their benefits. It was regrettable, however, that the financial situation of the Fund allowed only of an interim measure. The problem was a very important one which, as was apparent from paragraph 5 of the Advisory Committee's report, would become increasingly important in the future since the number of participants in that situation would be higher every year. His delegation would like to have some explanations regarding the amount of $17 million given as the cost of the proposed interim measure (A/10009, para. 21): did it reflect the amount needed to provide the benefits of the extension to the 294 staff members who would have accumulated 30 years of contributory service by 1976 or the amount required to provide benefits, as from 1976, to all participants who would be in the same situation in the future? Clearly, if a right was granted to a group of persons, even on a provisional basis, it would be impossible to withdraw it at a later stage. He would also like to know the total estimated cost of extending the length of contributory service to be considered in calculating the pension for each participant up to the time of retirement.

19. His delegation approved of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee regarding the Emergency Fund and the administrative expenses of the Pension Fund. It had duly noted the comment by the Advisory Committee (A/10335, para. 10) to the effect that the Board should abide by regulation 13.1 of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations when it took decisions on matters which had financial implications.

20. His delegation had carefully considered the report of the Secretary-General on the investments of the Pension Fund (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1). It hoped that the Secretary-General would continue to provide the Committee each year with that kind of information, which made it possible to follow investment policy by making the necessary comparisons between years. While he agreed with the view expressed by the Board in paragraph 37 of its report to the effect that investment policy should be exclusively concerned with such technical considerations as safety of capital, high return and freedom to liquidate securities and to transfer the sales proceeds, he did not think that those criteria entirely justified the fact that the vast majority of the assets of the Fund consisted of securities expressed in United States dollars, particularly in the current period of monetary instability.

21. The reasons given by the Secretary-General for the losses resulting from sales of securities were not completely satisfactory. It was evident that no conclusions could be drawn from those losses about the over-all return on investments and that the purpose of the sales had been to cull out unproductive securities. However, an accurate evaluation of the losses incurred would have required information not only about the total losses in absolute figures, but also about their magnitude in relation to the cost value, and the time interval between purchase and sale. On the other hand, while it was evident that no judgement could be passed on the basis of a short period of time, certainly the pace of investment diversification would depend on the possibility of culling out securities at short notice without sustaining a loss.

22. Like the Advisory Committee, his delegation was not completely satisfied with the Board's new interpretation of the recommendation concerning investments in developing countries. It was one thing to invest in development institutions, as the Secretary-General had done (see A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, annex), and quite another to invest directly in enterprises in developing countries. His delegation hoped that in the future that alternative would be examined with all due attention.

23. An actuarial valuation of the Fund showed an imbalance of $116.6 million, which was clearly more substantial than the imbalance disclosed by the previous valuation. His delegation shared the concern of the Advisory Committee and endorsed the recommendations in paragraphs 23 and 24 of its report (A/10335). His delegation's only question was whether it had not been a mistake to conduct that valuation on the assumption of a 9 per cent interest rate for 10 years (A/10009, para. 42) when the Secretary-General stated, in paragraph 25 of his report, that the Investments Committee considered it reasonable to expect the cumulative annual return to be about 8 per cent.

24. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan) said that the Member States owed the staff of the international civil service, male or female, who had loyally served the world community in the United Nations and the specialized agencies, a decent pension so that they could live with dignity and with a sense of economic security, and disability and survivors' benefits. His delegation supported the prudent and conservative proposals of the Pension Board, which was the expert body on pension matters for the staff of the United Nations and of the other member organizations, and was in favour of the draft resolution contained in annex VI to the report of the Board particularly as the Board's recommendations had been endorsed by the Advisory Committee in its report, subject to the explanations given by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

25. His delegation was hesitant to comment on the substantive aspects of the complicated and intricate problem of pension adjustment, but wished to voice its strong support for the concept of equitable treatment of pensioners, regardless of the duty stations where they had served or the countries they came from. Pensions were functions of remuneration, a pension being, in fact, a deferred remuneration. In the Regulations of the Pension Fund, pensions had always been defined as a proportion of final average pensionable remuneration related to the number of years of contributory service. That was the essential base of the initial pension to which all staff members were entitled, and to which they should remain entitled, in accordance with their terms of appointment. It was of course necessary to protect the fixed income of pensioners against the ravages of inflation and currency instability which eroded their purchasing power, achieving that through an adjustment system, which must be equitable for all pensioners regardless of where they lived or of the duty station where they had been employed. The adjustment system should not benefit disproportionately a particular group of pensioners in a particular country at the expense of the other pensioners. His delegation was confident that those considerations would be taken fully into account by the Board when it submitted its final report on the adjustment question to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The Board had submitted, as requested, an interim report (*ibid.*, annex V) showing the problems involved, and had quite rightly not proposed any solutions at the current stage.

26. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that for the second time the Joint Staff Pension Board had failed to give in its report adequate information about the nationality of its members and their alternates, in spite of the decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session.[1] The information given in the Board's report provided no clue to its geographical composition. That was a flagrant violation of the decision of the General Assembly, apparently aimed at hiding from the Committee the fact that a number of regions had been under-represented on the Board for many years. His delegation insisted that the Board should comply with the decision of the General Assembly, and for that purpose it was officially submitting a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1258). It hoped that implementation of the terms of the draft decision would enable Member States to have a better insight into the composition of the Pension Board and to see that its efficiency and prestige were increased.

27. Delegations which advocated the economic and efficient utilization of United Nations resources could only be astonished at the remarks on pension adjustment contained in the Board's interim report (A/10009, annex V). According to paragraphs 34 and 35 of that report, the Board considered that a new adjustment system would require an increase in contributions to the Fund by the organizations of the United Nations system. The position of the Board appeared contrary to General Assembly recommendations and to simple logic. The contributions of member organizations already seemed excessive, and the Advisory Committee and some Member States were requesting a reduction in appropriations for the Fund. Moreover, in its resolution 3354 (XXIX), section VI, paragraph 1, the General Assembly had endorsed paragraph 20 of the report submitted by the Advisory Committee at the twenty-ninth session,[2] which had stated that the financing of a new pension adjustment scheme should not add to the current or potential liability of the membership. Far from attempting to implement that unequivocal General Assembly resolution, the Board was proposing to formulate a scheme which would impose an additional unjustified liability on Member States.

28. His delegation had already declared in the Fifth Committee at the twenty-ninth session (1681st meeting) that it was undesirable for the Board itself to be entrusted with the task of formulating a new pension adjustment scheme. Since experience had shown that the Board was incapable of devising a unified scheme to meet the interests of both the participants in the Fund and States Members, it would be more judicious to delegate that responsibility to the International Civil Service Commission. The Board could not make objective recommendations because of its unbalanced composition; only one third of its members represented the Member States, which provided most of the Fund's resources, whereas two thirds of its members represented the participants in the Fund, whose contributions amounted to only one third of its resources. Under those circumstances, it was not surprising that the Board, as at present constituted, should propose, without considering the interests of the Member States, an increase in their already substantial liability. A new pension adjustment scheme must be devised, preferably by the International Civil Service Commission, within the framework established by the General Assembly, without increasing the liability of the membership.

29. His delegation could support the Board's proposal concerning the alignment of the entitlements of male and female participants, on the understanding that such a change would not entail additional financial liability and would ensure total equality with respect to the benefits payable to retired male and female staff members.

30. On the other hand, his delegation did not see the need to extend the maximum length of contributory service from 30 to 32 years, since as the Board indicated in its report (A/10009, annex V, para. 35), the United Nations

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 30*, p. 137, item 88.

2 Document A/9879, of 29 November 1974.

scheme had the characteristics of a high average entrance age and a low retirement age. Furthermore, the regulations of the Fund had been adopted at the time of its establishment and staff members belonging to the Fund had accepted its conditions. There was therefore no reason to modify those conditions and thereby impose unjustified or additional liability on the membership.

31. It was also unnecessary to add rule B.4 to the Administrative rules of the Pension Fund, as proposed in annex VIII to the Board's report; it could only cause misunderstandings and complications.

32. His delegation was very concerned about the Fund's investment situation, which was becoming worse every year, as shown by the reports of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1) and of the Board (A/10009): the relationship between the market value and the cost of investments, which had been 106.1 per cent in 1973, had fallen to 86.1 per cent in 1974 (*ibid.*, annex IV, para. 9), and the losses resulting from sales of securities had increased yearly since 1971 and had reached some $22.7 million in 1974. It seemed that such losses had become the rule in the Fund's investment policy. That was regrettable, because they reduced the value of the Fund's resources. The losses, which were unjustified, were proof of the incompetence of those responsible for the Fund's investment policy, and it was urgently necessary to rectify that situation. The composition of the Investments Committee, 7 of whose 8 members were from Western countries, was hardly conducive to the effective and prudent management of the Fund's portfolio, and that explained the poor earnings of the portfolio. Neither the Secretary-General nor the Board gave any serious reasons in their reports for the losses incurred on the Fund's investments. Consequently, his delegation requested the Board to provide the Fifth Committee with information at the current session, before the Committee took any decision, in reply to the following questions: what securities (stocks and bonds) had been sold in 1974 and at what price, and what was the current value of the stocks and bonds sold in 1974? What was the average return on the investments (stocks and bonds) made in United States companies between 1971 and 1975? In that connexion, his delegation wished to knows whether resources from the Fund had been invested in New York City bonds. Finally, had the Fund invested in companies which took an active part in the manufacture of arms? That was a question of principle, and his delegation demanded an answer. The study of the Fund's investment policy should be entrusted to an impartial body, such as the Joint Inspection Unit, which should prepare a detailed report and recommendatons on the subject for the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. In addition, it would be advisable for the Board of Auditors to examine the reasons for the losses incurred as a result of sales of shares and to report the results of that study to the Fifth Committee. It was essential to take vigorous measures to remedy the unsatisfactory situation which characterized the Fund's investments.

33. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) stressed the responsibility of States to secure for those who retired pension benefits allowing them to live in dignity and without fear for the morrow. His delegation was grateful to the Joint Staff Pension Board for its efforts in recent years to develop a pension adjustment scheme capable of compensating effectively for currency changes and inflation. The introduction of the WAPA (weighted average of post adjustments) system in 1973 and the optional CPI (consumer price index) system in 1974 had been important steps in the right direction. The fact that, so far, few beneficiaries–927 out of 5,404–had chosen the CPI system was not at all discouraging; one must understand the uncertainty of the pensions because, once they had chosen the CPI system, they could not change back to the WAPA system. His delegation greatly appreciated the useful role played by the secretariat of the Fund in replying to requests for comparative estimates of the two systems. It considered that the increased administrative costs in connexion with the CPI system were justified.

34. During the debate, there had been much discussion of inflation and of the decreased value of the Fund's assets and return on investments. In that connexion, his delegation paid tribute to the Secretariat and the Investments Committee for their efforts to decide upon the most favourable investments and for their very comprehensive reports on the item.

35. The Board was in a very difficult situation. On the one hand, many delegations agreed with the Advisory Committee that any unified pension adjustment scheme should be financed without adding to the current or potential liability of the membership (A/10335, para. 29). On the other hand, the number of periodic benefits from the Fund continued to increase. In addition, as the Pension Board had indicated in paragraph 35 of annex V to its report, the Fund's 21 per cent total contribution rate had not originally been conceived as including provision for post-retirement pension adjustment. Moreover, the United Nations pension scheme had the characteristics of a high average entrance age and a low retirement age, which added to its costs. The aim of his delegation was certainly not to give the Board *carte blanche* to go ahead with a scheme whose cost could not be absorbed within the current total contribution rate, but it wished to point out the difficulties the Board would face in presenting to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session the new unified pension adjustment scheme which had been requested of it. He thought it realistic to expect the Board to submit, at the same time, proposals designed to increase contributions, which would, of course, have to be considered in the light of developments in the coming year.

36. He agreed with the Board's statement in paragraph 23 of annex V to its report that it would be necessary to study the question of whether–and if so, how–the level of pensions now in payment could be adjusted in proportion to the movement of remuneration of serving staff.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1740th meeting; A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/L.1253, A/C.5/L.1254)

The effect of continuing currency instability on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system* (continued) *(A/10008/Add.4, A/C.5/1692, A/C.5/L.1253)

37. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that the Cuban draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1253) brought to the fore once again a proposal which most members of the Committee had believed had been laid to rest at the previous session. While one was forced to acknowledge the persistence of the sponsor of the draft resolution, one must recognize that the proposal was an affront to a number of countries, including the United States, which had been the major financial supports of the United Nations since its inception.

38. Furthermore, the economic rationale for the Cuban proposal was simply erroneous. The Committee had debated the matter to the saturation point in past years, and his delegation would therefore revert to it only briefly. Inflation and currency fluctuations resulted from many interactions within the world economy, and it was impossible to isolate the causes or to place the onus upon one group of countries. Inflation had widespread origins and its effects were quite diverse. Some countries had enjoyed a substantial net gain from inflationary increases in the export prices of their raw materials.

39. If the draft resolution was adopted, it would, at least in the United States, erode public support for the United Nations and agitate public opinion to the detriment of the Organization. Under the United States system of government, the appropriation by the Congress of funds for any purpose was possible only if there was grass-roots support for such expenditure. It was no secret to anyone that support in the United States for the United Nations had diminished recently, particularly during the past few weeks, as a result of a number of actions taken by the Organization which violated the American sense of justice. Another ill-considered resolution, directed in great part at the United States, could only further erode the American people's support of the United Nations.

40. That would be particularly regrettable, because it had seemed at the conclusion of the seventh special session of the General Assembly that a new chapter in co-operation had opened. That special session had been characterized by the willingness of developed and developing countries to replace confrontation by dialogue. The Cuban draft resolution, if adopted, would jeopardize that important advance and gratuitously drive a wedge between the two groups of countries.

41. While the draft resolution dealt only with the financing of the United Nations, it would certainly have effects throughout the United Nations system. If the method proposed in the draft resolution for financing losses resulting from inflation was adopted by the United Nations, similar ill-conceived demands could be expected from WHO, FAO, UNEP and other agencies and programmes of the United Nations working towards the betterment of the condition of man. The draft resolution was inimical to the interests of all Members of the United Nations. His delegation intended to vote against it and urged other delegations to do likewise.

42. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that he firmly believed that the United Nations should continue and intensify its efforts to ensure that the principles of the Charter did not become a mere blueprint for a utopia. His delegation had always sought to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations as an instrument for the maintenance of peace and security and for promoting social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. On all such matters the Organization should take principled stands and adopt bold measures. To be able to do so, however, it would have to be able to solve or at least alleviate its financial problems. Greece, a founder Member of the United Nations, had always sought to assist it in that respect by prompt payment of assessed contributions and by financing a not unimportant share of extra-budgetary expenses related to peace-keeping operations. It was because it believed in the principles of the Charter that his delegation was appealing for moderation. In his view, the Cuban draft resolution was an example of a well-meant initiative which led to arguments that might sooner or later prove fatal to the Organization. He did not doubt the idealistic motives of the Cuban delegation. The draft resolution, however, raised not only the classic doctrinal controversy regarding the economic phenomenon of inflation but also the question of which countries were actually profiting from the existing inflationary situation. Moreover, it was obvious that the Cuban proposal would meet with opposition from a large number of delegations in the Committee.

43. In the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution the Cuban delegation had referred to Article 17 of the Charter, a symbol of a grave and futile crisis which the Organization had experienced not long before. It was because his delegation feared that a future crisis over United Nations finances might be even graver that he could not accept the Cuban draft resolution and was apprehensive about proposals to take decisions on the thorny question of the amounts which certain States, as a matter of principle, withheld from their assessed contributions.

44. Some might say that accusations and confrontation would prevent paralysis of the United Nations. Others might stress that recrimination over financial issues would only exacerbate differences on political, economic and humanitarian questions and so weaken the tacit consensus among Member States regarding the usefulness of the Organization. His delegation believed that, in dealing with United Nations finances, traditional methods of diplomacy should be used with a view to reconciling or minimizing differences. Accordingly, his delegation would abstain in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253.

45. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Cuban draft resolution proposed realistic and effective ways of resolving the problem of the effect of currency instability on the budgets of organizations in the United Nations system.

46. Indeed, according to decisions taken by the General Assembly, additional costs resulting from inflation and currency instability should be covered primarily by budgetary savings and should not be shared between Member States. It would be unjust for States which were in no way responsible for the inflationary process to have to suffer

from it, and it would be quite normal for at least part of the cost to be borne, in the form of voluntary contributions, by the countries in which the United Nations had offices. The Cuban draft resolution did not go as far as he would have wished, since it provided for only part of the additional costs to be paid by the developed countries in which the United Nations had offices, the rest being financed by other Member States in the proportions reflected in the scale of assessments. However, the draft resolution showed a spirit of compromise which he commended.

47. As the United States representative had said, inflation was caused by a whole series of closely related factors, but the fact was that it affected certain groups of countries worst and was fuelled by certain economic policies, particularly the policy of systematic budget deficits. In those circumstances, it was quite normal that losses caused to the United Nations by inflation should be borne in part by countries which pursued an inflationary policy, particularly by those countries in which the United Nations had offices. Accordingly his delegation would vote in favour of the Cuban draft resolution.

48. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) apologized to the representative of Cuba for his rather harsh words at the previous meeting when the draft resolution had been introduced. His delegation had since then given very serious consideration to the draft resolution, which gave rise to major difficulties.

49. Naturally, he had to endorse the sixth preambular paragraph, which referred to the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter, but he suggested that the following phrase should be added:

> "and of the advisory ruling thereon by the International Court of Justice[3] which stressed, *inter alia*, the collective responsibility of all States Members of the Organization for all expenses incurred by it".

On the other hand, the proposal that the costs caused by inflation should be borne by the countries in which the United Nations had its offices, and therefore by the United States of America in particular, might well be contrary to resolution 2961 (XXVII) in which the General Assembly had decided that the maximum contribution of any one Member State to the ordinary expenses of the United Nations should not exceed 25 per cent of the total. The Cuban proposal thus implied a revision of the scale of assessments, which was set, not by the Fifth Committee, but by the Committee on Contributions for three-year periods and was not due to be revised during the current year.

50. The Cuban draft resolution also established a dangerous precedent: while the developing countries were not affected for the time being because, as was stated in the fifth preambular paragraph, the losses resulting from domestic inflation and realignments and fluctuations in the exchange rates of their currencies were relatively small, the developing countries in which the United Nations had its offices might be penalized in turn when those losses increased.

51. The draft resolution was the product of differences of opinion between Cuba and the United States, and it was regrettable that the Fifth Committee, with its essentially technical functions, should have before it a draft resolution with political implications. If the Cuban delegation was attacking the United States in particular, there was no reason why it should also penalize all developed countries in which the United Nations had offices.

52. The text, moreover, might reopen all the controversies between developed and developing countries that had supposedly been ended at the seventh special session, and it might jeopardize the efforts to establish a new international economic order. He hoped that the Cuban delegation would withdraw its draft resolution before it was put to the vote.

53. He pointed out that New Zealand imported sugar from Cuba, and that the price of sugar had risen 200 per cent in the previous two years, which proved that inflation was a world-wide phenomenon, that it brought benefits and losses to all countries and that it would be unwise to place responsibility for it on any one country.

54. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that the essential thought underlying the Cuban draft resolution was that responsibility could be allotted for inflation and currency instability. The delegations of Cuba and the USSR saw no difficulty in stating the issue in very simple terms: the socialist countries were pure and guiltless. The capitalist developed countries were guilty, and those which were also host countries must bear the extra costs to the Organization caused by inflation and currency instability. The only exception was the United Kingdom which was undeniably a socialist country but still had problems of inflation and currency instability.

55. His delegation had repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that the United Kingdom was a socialist country to demonstrate that inflation and currency instability had very little to do with socialism and capitalism. On the other hand, those two phenomena had a great deal to do with commitment to the world market, the price of imported raw materials, the terms of trade, relative productivity and competitiveness. Was the British Government responsible for the inflationary rise in food prices in the United Kingdom, when it imported much more than half of its consumption of food? Or could one blame the Soviet Union for coming repeatedly to the world market for grain and thereby forcing up the price for the rest of the world? Should one blame the Soviet Union for having enormous areas devoted to agriculture and yet failing repeatedly to produce enough food for itself? Or should the United Kingdom be blamed for being an industrialized trading nation which, for over a hundred years, had relied heavily on imports of food?

56. The British delegation did not deny that the Soviet Union had managed its economy, apart from its agriculture, very successfully, and had become prosperous and avoided inflation. The United Kingdom had already asked in an earlier intervention why so prosperous a country, with high

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[3] *Certain expenses of the United Nations (Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter), Advisory Opinion of 20 July 1962: I.C.J. Reports 1962*, p. 151.

productivity and no inflation, should have a non-convertible currency. It had also asked why such a prosperous country contributed so little to UNDP, and so much of that little in non-convertible roubles. Since the Soviet delegation had not replied to those questions, he would reply for them: the Soviet Union had a non-convertible currency because it pursued a policy of economic isolationism and its ideal was economic self-sufficiency. So far as possible it avoided commitment to the world market. It did not want to become dependent on imports from abroad, or to be obliged to struggle in competition for overseas export markets. It followed that the rouble could not be allowed to be convertible, because its first reaction would be to sink. It was probable that the vaunted strength of the Soviet economy was more apparent than real and that was the reason why the Soviet Union did not contribute to UNDP in convertible currency and why its contribution was so paltry. The Soviet Union could not do any better, or perhaps it could but did not want to try.

57. The developing countries which, since the seventh special session of the General Assembly were entering into more constructive relations with developed countries, were not going to be misled into destroying the United Nations just to satisfy the vanity and spite of certain countries.

58. Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations provided that the expenses of the Organization should be borne by the Members as apportioned by the General Assembly. That had always been interpreted as requiring a rational scale of assessment based on the principle of ability to pay. In other words, Member States had hitherto contributed to the expenses of the United Nations in conformity with the principles of justice endorsed in Article 1 of the Charter. By the terms of the draft resolution before the Committee, the delegations of Cuba and the Soviet Union were attempting, by paying lip service to Article 17, to disregard the Charter and reapportion the expenses of the Organization in accordance with two new principles of unreason and vindictive spite. The General Assembly had rejected those principles at its twenty-ninth session and should reject them again, still more vigorously.

59. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the representative of the United States of America had endeavoured to politicize the question rather than adhering strictly to the Cuban draft resolution. In particular, the United States representative had endeavoured to establish an adverse relationship between the adoption of the draft resolution and the disastrous consequences which that would have on American public opinion. The Committee was discussing the effects of inflation and currency instability on United Nations finances and not considering the reactions of American public opinion. He noted also with regret that the New Zealand representative had chosen to associate himself with the diatribe and that the United Kingdom representative elected to be insolent towards the Soviet Union. In those circumstances he proposed to take no decision on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253.

60. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that the Cuban proposal was very similar to that which Cuba had submitted to the Working Group on Currency Instability and to the Fifth Committee at the twenty-ninth session. Her delegation therefore took the same position on the current proposal as it had in the previous year: in a world of constantly increasing economic interpenetration, in which relations were becoming ever closer between market-economy and planned-economy countries, it was difficult to accuse one group rather than the other of being responsible for persistent inflation, as though there was only one reason for inflation. In particular it must not be forgotten that certain countries had seen their income increased by inflation. In accordance with the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter, her delegation would vote against the Cuban draft resolution.

61. Curiosity impelled her to ask the Cuban representative how he would go about obliging Switzerland to share the expenses of the United Nations Office at Geneva since it was not a Member State and was therefore not amenable to the sanctions provided by Article 19 of the Charter.

62. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that he had endorsed the principle of full budgeting because it seemed to him difficult to maintain that countries which could not be held responsible for inflation and currency instability should no longer bear any expenses of the Organization, as they were required to do by Article 17 of the Charter. By holding that view, the Upper Volta had perhaps let slip the opportunity to contribute towards seeking a solution to the problem of the effects of currency instability on the budget of the Organization. In particular, it might have been possible to study how the effects of exchange rate variations might be reduced, since those variations alone accounted for an item of $20 million in the budget. It would also probably be necessary to consider amending regulation 3.2 of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations which provided that the budget should be expressed in United States dollars. Consideration might be given to calculating Member States' contributions at the exchange rate in force at the time of payment. But it was unreasonable to seek out the guilty and oblige them to bear the full cost of inflation and of currency instability because that would imply a positive contradiction between the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 1 of the Cuban draft resolution.

63. He hoped that the Cuban delegation would reconsider the advisability of putting the draft resolution to the vote, because if the Cuban representative stood by the text, the delegation of the Upper Volta could not support it. Since 60 per cent of budgetary allocations were for staff costs, it was not logical to ask one group of countries to bear the costs of the international staff. The solution would be, at least partly, to pay staff members in a stable currency, but again, the Financial Regulations would have to be amended.

64. Mrs. ABELE-EMICH (Austria) recalled that inflation was a world-wide phenomenon for which experts had found no acceptable solution. The Committee could certainly not solve so complex a problem single-handed. Austria was against pointing to the guilty parties and placing the sole responsibility for inflation on the developed States which were hosts to United Nations offices. Austria's contribution to the United Nations was far above its share of the expenses, and it was paying all the construction costs for a building in Vienna which would accommodate United Nations bodies. Austria refused, however, to assume additional costs to cover the effects of inflation.

65. Costs arising out of currency instability and inflation could be covered only in accordance with procedures based on the principle of the collective responsibility of Member States; any other procedure would merely add to the deficit of the Organization, to the detriment of many important programmes.

66. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that he could not support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253, which was based on the idea that the Committee could determine the causes of inflation, where the world's best economists had failed. Furthermore, the draft resolution spoke of the economic benefits derived by developed countries from the United Nations having offices in them, but it made no mention of the corresponding costs–for the construction of buildings and police protection, for example–which those countries had to bear.

67. The adoption of the Cuban draft resolution would result in some savings for Australia, which was not one of the host countries involved. His delegation could not, however, accept a text which was so unjust as to hold a single country responsible for what was a world-wide phenomenon. For all those who took the Organization really seriously, the question was too important for the Committee to be led astray by emotive arguments. During the seventh special session of the General Assembly, significant progress had been made in the sphere of economic co-operation. The adoption of the Cuban draft resolution would wipe out that progress. He sincerely hoped that, given the choice which lay before them, members of the Committee would shoulder their responsibilities.

68. Mr. OUATTARA (Ivory Coast) noted that the Cuban draft resolution envisaged preferential treatment for the developing countries, so that, logically, his delegation should support it. But it was not just to penalize the host countries in the manner proposed by Cuba. Furthermore, he was not convinced that it was a simple matter to determine either the degree of responsibility of the countries which were alleged to be promoting currency instability or the costs which would have to be borne by those countries in which the United Nations had offices. Like the French representative, he wondered what would happen to Switzerland if the provisions of the text proposed by Cuba were put into effect.

69. Mr. MINCHEV (Bulgaria) pointed out, in reply to the New Zealand representative, that there was no constitutional issue involved: all that the Committee on Contributions did was to submit proposals on the amount of contributions required, and it was the General Assembly which decided on the matter. In the case of the Cuban text, it was likewise the General Assembly which would make the decision.

70. The Cuban draft resolution was extremely reasonable and constructive, and his country would vote in favour of it. The proposals should be supported by all delegations which were concerned by the continuing growth of the Organization's budget.

71. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that he could not countenance the Committee's taking it upon itself to accuse any one country of being primarily responsible for currency instability and inflation. They were a world problem, and could be solved only a world-wide basis.

72. The sponsor of the draft resolution referred in the text to the economic benefits which accrued to the developed countries in which the United Nations had offices. It was true that such benefits existed, but the sponsor of the draft resolution had unfortunately provided no figures to show whether they significantly outweighed the sacrifices made by those countries. Consequently, the argument, as presented, was not convincing. His delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

73. Miss FORCIGNANÒ (Italy) said that she could not see how the Cuban delegation could reconcile the ineluctable principle of collective responsibility of Member States with the proposals which it was making in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253. Inflation was a world phenomenon, and it was impossible to blame one country alone for it. Her delegation, which was opposed to the adoption of any funding procedure which differed from that used to make up the resources of the regular budget, would vote against the Cuban draft resolution.

74. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he wished to exercise his right of reply in view of the observations of the United Kingdom representative, who had claimed that the United Kingdom was a socialist country. That observation proved that he was unaware of the objective criteria concerning the form of ownership and method of production and distribution on which a socialist régime was based. When the greater share of the national wealth was shared by large banks and monopolies and the economy was controlled by them, there was no socialism.

75. Price fluctuations on world markets had some effect on the economy of socialist countries, but those fluctuations did not cause inflation, because the socialist countries were able to protect their domestic market from the negative effects of such fluctuations by appropriate planning of domestic commodity circulation. The main reason for the chronic inflation characteristic of the capitalist countries was not so much the fluctuation of world prices as the systematic policy of deficit budget financing pursued by the capitalist countries.

76. The United Kingdom representative had spoken ironically of the non-convertibility of the rouble, as if the convertibility of a currency was a measure of its soundness. In fact, within the framework of the world socialist system, the rouble was partly convertible. It was not convertible into the currencies of the capitalist countries, because the socialist countries were thus deliberately defending their economies against the anarchy of capitalist economy and against the fatal consequences of the chronic inflation which characterized capitalism.

77. The United Kingdom representative had said that the Soviet Union practised a policy of economic isolation; that meant that he did not know the facts. The USSR had trade relations with more than 100 countries, and its share of international trade was growing from year to year.

78. The representative of the United Kingdom could not claim that the socialist countries were benefiting from inflation because, apart from his ridiculous and maliciously repeated references to the rise in the price of vodka, he had no other facts. On the other hand, he was not able to refute the obvious fact that the United Kingdom itself was suffering from rampant inflation. There was some irony in the recent report in *The New York Times* under the headline "Inflation in the United Kingdom Successfully Halted", stating that prices in the United Kingdom were now rising at an annual rate of 25.9 per cent. Those rates of inflation were among the very highest in the industrially developed capitalist countries. Thus the representative of the United Kingdom was resorting to specious ploys, which were not even supported by facts.

79. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) pointed out that he had been quite right in stating that the United Kingdom was a socialist country. The most important branches of industry, such as the coal and steel industries, were State-owned, as were schools and hospitals, and the State had its own corporations, such as the one responsible for North Sea oil exploitation.

80. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had noted the United Kingdom representative's assertion that the United Kingdom was a socialist country. He, himself, however, could regard that assertion as no more than a statement of intent. The fact that certain branches of industry were State-owned merely reflected a policy, frequently adopted in capitalist countries, of having the State nationalize certain large-scale branches of industry which were unprofitable for private capital. That did not alter the objective fact that the economy continued to be controlled by monopolies. The United Kingdom representative had not, incidentally, mentioned the other branches of industry which were still dominated by monopolies.

81. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba), replying to the representative of France, who had inquired what situation would apply to Switzerland, which was not a Member of the United Nations, in the event that the provisions of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253 were implemented, said that the matter should be referred to the Office of Legal Affairs.

82. He pointed out to the representative of Japan that the question of the economic benefits derived by the developed countries from having the headquarters of United Nations organizations situated in their territories had been studied in depth by the Working Group on Currency Instability. His calculations, which had never been refuted, showed that the benefits for the United States of America alone amounted to $1 billion annually.

83. He wished to recall, for the benefit of other delegations which had commented on the Cuban draft resolution, that in the three years during which he had represented Cuba in the Fifth Committee, he had always been most respectful and courteous towards all delegations, including those representing countries which held different views from Cuba on certain items. Sarcasm, insults and threats were weapons wielded by those who were in error.

84. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of Algeria had withdrawn his proposal to defer a decision on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253. The text would therefore be put to the vote at the current meeting.

85. Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark), explaining his vote before the vote, said that he would vote against the Cuban draft resolution because the proposal was unrealistic and contradicted certain fundamental principles of the Charter. It was only through a common effort—necessary in view of the interdependence of all countries, which henceforth was inescapable—that a solution to the problem of inflation could be found, for that phenomenon was world-wide in scope. Simple common sense suggested that the adoption of the draft resolution would have extremely unfortunate consequences for all Member States.

86. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said that she could not support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253 because the proposals it contained, rather than facilitate a solution to the problem, would compound the confusion and were likely to increase the burden borne by certain host countries of the United Nations. However, in view of the virulent attacks against a delegation which had simply exercised its basic right to introduce a draft resolution, her delegation would only abstain in the vote.

87. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that he would vote against the Cuban draft resolution. The proposal was illogical, in that it invoked the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter and then immediately proceeded to undermine the very principle underlying those provisions.

88. The Cuban proposals were probably also illegal, because they sought to distribute the expenditures of the United Nations on the basis of a scale which differed from the scale of assessments already approved for the period in question. The proposals also contradicted the provisions of General Assembly resolution 3360 (XXIX), which had been adopted virtually unanimously by Member States, with the exception of the countries of Eastern Europe and Cuba. Moreover, the Cuban draft resolution was likely to have serious consequences which no one could deliberately ignore.

89. Some delegations from developing countries perhaps believed that the Cuban proposal would have the result of providing them with financial aid. In his view, the assistance extended through bilateral and multilateral channels was infinitely greater. The generous contributions by the Netherlands provided convincing proof of that.

90. Mr. HUCKE (German Democratic Republic) said that he would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253 because it was unfair to burden all Member States with the expenditures resulting from inflation. That was a question of principle, and his delegation had already stated at the twenty-ninth session, on the same issue, that the injustice had been compounded by the fact that the great majority of Member States already were required to pay their contribution in a currency other than their own, primarily, the United States dollar. The Cuban draft resolution sought to remedy those injustices in the interests of all Member States.

91. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia) said that the Cuban draft resolution disregarded the fundamental principle of

the collective responsibility of Member States and, in addition, would penalize certain countries, to the exclusion of others, for the impact of a phenomenon which was entirely beyond their control.

92. He would have liked the decision on the draft resolution to be deferred, but since the Algerian representative had withdrawn his proposal to that effect, he regretfully would be obliged to vote against the text.

93. Mr. EKONG (Nigeria) said that he could not support the Cuban draft resolution in its current form. The text was based on the mistaken hypothesis that only some countries were responsible for persistent inflation, but the Committee was not really competent to take a position on the question. Furthermore, the draft resolution was contrary to the spirit and the letter of Article 17 of the Charter.

94. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) recalled that in the Working Group on Currency Instability, he had exchanged views with the representative of Cuba, who already in that forum had submitted a very similar proposal. Kenya and Cuba ultimately had cast different votes on that text. The new Cuban draft resolution was a slight improvement in that, in operative paragraph 2, it made concessions for developing countries where United Nations organizations had offices, and Kenya was in fact one of those countries. However, he would also at the current stage be unable to vote in favour of the Cuban draft resolution, in view of the consequences it would have for all Member States. Inflation could not necessarily be blamed on any one Member State in particular.

95. The CHAIRMAN put the draft resolution submitted by Cuba (A/C.5/L.1253) to the vote.

At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a vote was taken by roll-call.

Madagascar, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Madagascar, Mongolia, Peru, Poland, Romania, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Algeria, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Congo, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen, German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Republic.

Against: Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Rwanda, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Ghana, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Kenya.

Abstaining: Malaysia, Mexico, Mozambique, Niger, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Afghanistan, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Burma, Chad, China, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Guyana, Jamaica, Kuwait.

The draft resolution was rejected by 35 votes to 20, with 33 abstentions.

96. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1692) and that it concur with the observations of the Advisory Committee in its related report (A/10008/Add.4).

It was so decided.

97. Mr. SETHI (India) wished to explain why his delegation, perhaps for the first time since it had been participating in the sessions of the General Assembly, had not taken part in the vote although its representative had been in the room. That attitude meant that his delegation had been convinced, on the one hand, that the time had not yet come to proceed to the vote and, on the other hand, that some of the statements made had been inadmissible in the committee concerned with administrative and budgetary questions.

The meeting rose at 11.35 p.m.

1744th meeting

Thursday, 20 November 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1744

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF GENERALISSIMO FRANCISCO FRANCO BAHAMONDE, HEAD OF THE SPANISH STATE

On the proposal of the Chairman, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Generalissimo Franco, Head of the Spanish State.

1. Mr. MARTÍN (Spain) said that, on behalf of his Government and the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations, he wished to express appreciation for the condolences received.

AGENDA ITEM 105

United Nations salary system:
***(a)* Report of the International Civil Service Commission (A/10008/Add.9, A/10030, A/C.5/1700, A/C.5/1703);**
***(b)* Report of the Secretary-General**

2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.9), referred to the recommendation made by the International Civil Service Commission concerning possible amendments to the application of the post-adjustment system. The cost of implementing the recommendation had been estimated by the Commission at about $2.7 million a year. A recalculation had showed a total estimated cost in 1976 of $2.5 million, but the actual cost of the Commission's recommendations in 1976-1977 would depend on changes in the biennium in the post-adjustment classification of duty stations.

3. The Advisory Committee had no objection to the Commission's recommendation being implemented as of 1 January 1976, if it was accepted by the General Assembly.

4. Document A/C.5/1700 should be entitled "Revised estimates of the International Civil Service Commission"; that designation would be more consistent with the nature and form of the proposals it contained.

5. In its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, the Advisory Committee had taken note[1] of the Secretary-General's provisional submission for the Commission pending the submission of revised estimates to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session. A comparison between the revised estimates for the Commission for the biennium 1976-1977 and the initial proposals revealed an additional requirement of $286,000. The Commission's revised established post requirements for the next biennium called for an increase of 13 posts. The Advisory Committee had agreed to recommend acceptance of the Commission's requests, after examining them in the light of its programme of work. Bearing in mind, however, that the Commission would be taking over certain functions currently performed by the staff of agencies in the common system, the Advisory Committee invited the Secretary-General to consider a possible redeployment of existing posts from agencies in the common system, and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the steps taken to give effect to such redeployment.

6. The Advisory Committee had therefore accepted the revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General for the work programme of the Commission. Out of the additional requirement of $286,000, $95,000 would be chargeable to the United Nations regular budget; the rest would be covered by income from contributions of agencies in accordance with agreed formulae.

7. Mr. QUIJANO (Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission) said that the Commission had begun its activities on 1 April 1975 and, with the co-operation of the Vice-Chairman, Mr. A. L. Adu, and the Executive Secretary, Mr. Roger Barnes, the offices had been installed and a small secretariat had started to function, thereby enabling the first session to be held in May and the second in August.

8. The Commission was gradually assuming the functions entrusted to it in its statute. Among other things, it had convened an advisory group of statistical experts in connexion with a comparative analysis of the cost of living in the various cities in which the headquarters of international organizations were located, and had been carrying out since July monthly revisions of post-adjustment classifications and of schedules of daily subsistence allowance rates throughout the United Nations system. It had held meetings specifically to discuss the personnel questions raised by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, had prepared numerous technical studies as a basis for the general review of salaries called for by the General Assembly in paragraph 3 of resolution 3357 (XXIX), and had adopted its rules of procedure and a programme of work for the next two years. Other activities had included the introduction of a system of full consultation with administrations and staff representatives and a continuous effort to make more widely known the functions of the Commission and the concept of an international civil service. Perhaps the most difficult task of all was to find a satisfactory niche for the Commission within the over-all machinery that dealt with the co-ordination and administration of the United Nations system, with the least possible disruption of the activities of bodies already in existence.

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 8* and corrigendum, para. 22.6.

9. It would be recalled that in 1945 the Preparatory Commission for the United Nations, which had met in London, had recommended[2] the establishment of an international civil service commission to advise the United Nations and the specialized agencies on personnel matters. The General Assembly had adopted that recommendation in resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946. In practice, however, the resolution had not been strictly applied and instead the International Civil Service Advisory Board, which had without a doubt played an important role in the elaboration of principles and standards in personnel matters, had been established in 1948.

10. In 1974, by its resolution 3357 (XXIX), the General Assembly had finally established the Commission envisaged 30 years earlier. In the interim the international civil service had assumed proportions that no one could have foreseen at the birth of the United Nations. The small secretariat inherited from the League of Nations, the several hundred or so staff members in the specialized agencies existing at the time, and the handful of persons supplied by a number of founding Governments to set in motion the Preparatory Commission in London had swelled to the present over-all total of some 50,000 staff members in the ranks of the organizations making up the United Nations family.

11. That growth, which had not always been systematic or planned, had given rise to a host of questions and problems connected with the international civil service. Finally the General Assembly had concluded that it was necessary to establish new independent machinery–namely, the Commission–which would advise it and take on certain executive functions in specific areas relating to the conditions of service of international civil servants. The membership of the Commission–a happy mixture of administrative expertise and political representation–gave reason to hope that the Commission would attain its objectives and could thus help to lessen, or at least rationalize, the tremendous impact of personnel expenses on the budget of international organizations and also would see to it that the personnel were the most highly qualified and the best able to serve the organizations and, through them, their member States.

12. The General Assembly had intended that the Commission, in order to carry out its work properly, should maintain close ties with the administrations and staff members, and provisions to that effect had been incorporated in the statute of the Commission. That was why formal contacts had been established at the outset with, on the one hand, the executive heads of the organizations, through the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and their representatives on the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ), and, on the other, the staff representatives assembled in the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA). That tripartite relationship was essential to the successful work of the Commission, and its rules of procedure stipulated that staff representatives should participate in all its meetings and working groups, not as a concession, but as a full right.

13. Document A/10030 provided a summary of the work done by the Commission in its first few months. In that connexion, it was essential to point out that, in accordance with the terms of reference established by the General Assembly in resolution 3357 (XXIX), paragraph 3 of which provided that the Commission should review, as a matter of priority, the United Nations salary system, the Commission had converted itself, at least for the early years, into another salary review committee. That had led to difficulties since the review was absorbing almost all the Commission's limited time and staff resources and, currently, it was being prevented from dealing with other extremely important matters, such as job classification standards, recruitment procedures, standardization of staff rules and training programmes. The importance of the priority review should be recognized in view of the valid reasons–even more valid currently than in 1970–which had led the Assembly to establish, by resolution 2743 (XXV), the Special Committee for the Review of the United Nations Salary System; it had met in 1971 and 1972, but no decisions had yet been taken on its report.[3] The comprehensive report prepared by that Committee–three bulky volumes totalling more than 700 pages–contained numerous recommendations and proposals, few of which, however, had been considered. Instead, it had been decided to adopt a series of provisional measures and modest adjustments in order to provide temporary solutions to the more urgent problems. The prospects of a steady growth in activities arising from various General Assembly decisions, particularly the agreements reached at the seventh special session, made it more indispensable than ever to have, without further delay, a consolidated salary system that would meet the need both to recruit highly qualified personnel and to compute the costs so that they could be included as fairly accurate elements in the short-term and medium-term plans currently being envisaged by the organizations in order to give shape to the new demands of Governments.

14. In order to discharge the priority task assigned to it, the Commission, after organizing its programme of work and adopting its rules of procedure at its first session, had devoted the second session almost exclusively to reviewing the salary system, and intended to continue the study at its third and fourth sessions, to be held in March and June 1976, with a view to submitting as comprehensive a report as possible to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

15. As would be seen from chapter V of its report, the Commission had not wanted to reach any conclusion yet in respect of the salary review other than to express the opinion, as outlined in paragraph 29, that, inevitably, the salary system should be comparable to that of the highest-paying national civil service. The Commission had thus left all its options open until it reached the decisive phase of the review at its meetings in 1976. It should be said, however, that the Commission had covered a great deal of ground, and he firmly hoped that it could formulate conclusions on the main elements of the salary system by June 1976.

2 *Report of the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations* (PC/20), chap. VIII, sect. 1, para. 19.

3 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 28* and corrigendum.

16. At its second session, the Commission had also dealt with two matters which had been submitted by ACC for urgent consideration, in accordance with rule 6 of the Commission's rules of procedure.[4] The first related to the revision of the system of post adjustments in order to take into account the losses incurred by staff members without dependants assigned to duty stations with a high post adjustment; the second concerned the increase in the education grant. The Commission had carefully considered those questions and recommended that, as a provisional measure, at duty stations classified, for the purposes of application of the post adjustment system, in class 8 and above, staff members without dependants would receive an additional payment equal to the difference between the current rate of two thirds of what staff members with dependants received and 85 per cent of that rate. With reference to the revision of the amount of the education grant, the Commission had felt that the urgency of an increase had not been fully demonstrated and that, moreover, the number of cases in which the grant proved insufficient was approximately 11 per cent of the total. For those reasons, it had preferred to consider the question on the basis of new data as part of the general study of the salary system, when the complete scale of remunerations could be determined more precisely.

17. In the decision on the revision of the post adjustment for staff members without dependants, on the other hand, the main consideration was that the remuneration of those staff members had decreased, a state of affairs that had created an imbalance as compared with staff members with dependants. In some cases the difference amounted to 40 per cent. The Commission had agreed to solve that problem through an emergency measure, deferring consideration of other formulae–which could be described as "permanent"–proposed by UNESCO and GATT, which would be taken up in the context of the general study of the salary system. It had been considered that the thesis of ACC that the additional payment for staff members without dependants should amount to 95 per cent of the amount received by staff members with dependants left very little margin for variation, and could prejudice the long-term solution which might be finally decided upon. The 85 per cent formula had therefore been recommended to the Assembly, on the understanding that it would represent a strictly temporary supplement to the remuneration of staff members without dependants, effective until the General Assembly adopted a more permanent general solution. Since it represented a provisional measure, its application had been recommended from 1 January 1976. He requested the Fifth Committee to give particular attention in due course to that proposal, since it remedied a situation which could only be described as unfair.

18. The Commission had also undertaken the preparation of proposals for the 1976-1977 budget, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 of article 21 of its statute. Those proposals were extremely cautious, and took into account the budgetary implications of the Commission's gradually assuming its other functions.

19. It had also been deemed necessary to establish, and the authorization of the General Assembly for that had been sought, a subsidiary body composed of statisticians and presided over, *ex officio,* by a member of the Commission, which could perform tasks of the kind which up to 1974 had been carried out by the Expert Committee on Post Adjustments. The eminently technical nature of many of the problems arising from the complex system of post adjustments and their effects on the remuneration received by staff members had led to the conclusion that such advice was essential to the satisfactory performance of the Commission's functions. Paragraph 18 of the report defined the scope of that request. It should be added that the operating cost of that body, composed of experts who received no remuneration other than the payment of their travelling expenses, was practically the equivalent of that already included in the budget when the Expert Committee was acting as adviser to ACC. When those functions had been transferred to the Commission, the corresponding appropriation for ACC was also transferred to the Commission's budget. There would be an additional amount of approximately $10,000 requested for the biennium 1976-1977, because the Commission had considered it necessary to meet three times during the period, instead of meeting once annually as in the past, since, with the changing pattern of responsibilities which had led to the establishment of the Commission, various problems of classification of duty stations had arisen and required prompt solutions.

20. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had already had the opportunity to consider the Commission's budget estimates for 1976-1977, on the basis of a document prepared by the Secretariat, in which some adjustments had been introduced (A/C.5/1700). In its related report (A/10008/Add.9), the Advisory Committee accepted those estimates which were designed to enable the International Civil Service Commission gradually, rationally and organically, to assume the functions entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

21. In its report the Advisory Committee also commented on the possible modifications in the application of the system of post adjustments for staff members without dependants, and indicated that it had no objections to the date of 1 January 1976 proposed for the application of that measure.

22. Finally, it should be noted that the Commission was a co-ordinating body. Although it had been established with its headquarters at the United Nations and as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, its functions extended, with the resulting *pro rata* expenditure, to all the specialized agencies and other international organizations participating in the common system and accepting the statute of the Commission. To date the following organizations had formalized that arrangement through decisions of their Executive Councils, Assemblies or General Conferences: FAO, the ILO, UPU, IMCO, WMO, ITU, UNESCO, WHO, WIPO. It was hoped that the statute would soon be accepted by ICAO, IAEA and GATT, whose authorities had indicated that the appropriate formalities were being completed. It should be added that the United Nations and the 12 organizations included in the common system participated in the meetings of the Commission, and that there was close co-operation among them on matters in their respective fields of interest.

[4] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.I.18.

23. The fact that the Commission was a co-ordinating body must be reflected in its procedures and activities, and especially in the programme of meetings. From the outset, a large number of specialized agencies had expressed great interest in the Commission's holding meetings at their headquarters so that broader contacts and a better knowledge of staff problems would be made possible. The Commission had received various firm invitations to that end, and after consulting with the Committee on Conferences, which had viewed the matter favourably, had decided that, in the years in which more than one session was held, it would be appropriate for one of them to take place at the headquarters of one of the participating organizations, so that the members could familiarize themselves directly with the conditions existing at other duty stations and establish contacts with the legislative bodies, executive heads and staff of those organizations. It was understood that the holding of sessions outside New York would be dependent upon invitations being received from the organizations concerned, which would normally provide the necessary conference services.

24. In view of the fact that the current programme of activities called for at least two annual sessions in the first stage of the Commission's existence, a pattern of meetings had been established, according to which the first session in every year would be held at Headquarters in New York and the second at the headquarters of another organization. Invitations had been received from the ILO, where the second session had been held in August 1975, from FAO for 1976 and from IAEA for 1977.

25. In order to obtain the best information and establish contacts with other duty stations where thousands of international civil servants were working, as in the case of field stations, a series of visits to offices in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and, somewhat later, Latin America, had been organized in conjunction with UNDP. From the outset, the Commission had recognized the significance of the role to be played by field service personnel in the area of international co-operation, and the special problems which could occur at many of those duty stations. The Commission had therefore granted the Administrator of UNDP, under whose jurisdiction most of those officials worked, a status equivalent to that of executive head during his participation in the Commission's meetings, and the right to submit such items and proposals as he might deem appropriate. That rule was set forth in the rules of procedure.

26. It was a fitting moment to express the Commission's gratitude for the support received, from the outset, from all the organizations and from staff representatives. The Commission was anxious to win the complete confidence of the Governments, administrations and staff, because its task required the goodwill of all parties concerned. Although it had some executive authority, the Commission was basically an advisory agency, and its success greatly depended on the acceptance of its recommendations. It was difficult to satisfy all parties, because even if there were common ideals and objectives, there could at times be conflicting interests, as had already been demonstrated by the reactions to some of the Commission's early decisions. Its objective, however, was to direct all its efforts towards strengthening the organizations by establishing adequate conditions of employment to attract the best possible staff, at a cost that was reasonable and equitable both for the Member States and for the staff.

27. It was obvious that questions concerning international civil servants would become of more and more importance. His impression, on taking up his duties, had been that a certain stage of consolidation had been reached on the level of human resources required by United Nations agencies when the aforementioned figure of almost 50,000 persons had been attained. However, Member States had been very definite in their recent requests for more services, more meetings, more studies and even more organizations. Logically, that renewal of confidence in the usefulness of United Nations organizations should be encouraging, but the inevitable result would be a larger increase in the size of the international civil service.

28. In the preceding few weeks, many delegations, and the Secretary-General, had repeatedly referred to the fresh impulse received by the United Nations and the challenge facing it. There would be important implications for the future role of the Commission and its possible contribution.

29. The tempo of the Commission's work should be intensified within the limits imposed by its composition, with only two of its members serving full-time. The Commission would have to complete the review of the salary system as soon as possible in order to take up other matters, all of great importance, such as the rationalization of recruitment methods, and the strengthening and standardization of common personnel standards, methods and arrangements for all the organizations. It was also hoped that the Commission would manage to bring an element of objectivity to bear on the inevitable and continual increases in salaries, allowances and other personnel expenses, thus facilitating relations between the administrations and policy-making bodies. In that regard, it was to be hoped that the Commission would fill a role in those matters within its competence equivalent to that of the Advisory Committee in the area of administative and budgetary questions.

30. If it succeeded in realizing those and other goals and duly assuming the functions entrusted to it by its statute, the Commission would have justified the motives which led to its establishment. It was to be hoped that such positive results would soon be visible. To make that possible, however, the Commission's own efforts must be bolstered by the support, confidence and respect of Governments, administrations and staff.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1740th meeting; A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/L.1254)

The effect of continuing currency instability on the budgets of the organizations in the United Nations system* (concluded) *(A/10008/Add.4, A/C.5/1692)

31. Mr. HUITRON CABALLERO (Mexico) said that his delegation was worried by recent events in the Fifth

Committee. Although the Committee had been advocating the need for maximum savings in implementing the United Nations budget, it was setting a bad example through long, useless and distasteful discussions.

32. His delegation had abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253, agreeing with the representative of India that it was unwise to conduct a vote at that time.

33. Those representatives who pointed to one or more causes of currency instability showed a lack of understanding. The fact that needed recognition was that the developed countries were in a better position to cope with the current financial crisis than the third-world countries. It was not possible for the developing countries to view passively the losses incurred by United Nations organizations as a result of inflation and currency instability. The Fifth Committee had a responsibility to seek adequate solutions to the current problems, which were simply making the rich richer and the poor poorer. It was not the developing countries which created inflation; their exports and imports were governed by the prices on the world market, which were not fixed by third-world countries. Mexico would support just and equitable procedures aimed at meeting the costs of the United Nations regular budget in cases not envisaged by the San Francisco Conference in 1945.

34. Mr. ZDROJOWY (Poland) stated that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1253 for reasons of solidarity with Cuba and because of the intrinsic merits of the document. He thanked Cuba for its efforts to cope with the problem of the effect of continuing currency instability and for its initiative in submitting a coherent proposal. That Cuba's proposal was constructive had not been denied by those representatives who had opposed the operative part of the draft resolution.

35. His vote reflected the position of the Polish Government that those countries which were not responsible for inflation should not have to bear the losses occasioned thereby. The discussions on the Cuban proposal had indicated a broad interest among Member States in finding a satisfactory solution to problems which had originated in the Western world, but which were affecting all nations. Although the Cuban proposal had been disposed of, the problem still remained and awaited a just and appropriate solution.

36. Mr. MARTIN (Spain) said that, despite his delegation's great esteem for Cuba, it had voted against the draft resolution because of its questionable, and perhaps erroneous, economic foundation and its possible implications for the United Nations.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION G SUBMITTED BY THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10342 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 53* (A/10008/ADD.8, A/C.5/1706 AND CORR.1)

37. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1706 and Corr.1) indicating that adoption of draft resolution G submitted by the Special Political Committee in its report (A/10342, para. 27) would give rise to an additional requirement of $283,000 under the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977. The report on that subject of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions appeared in document A/10008/Add.8.

38. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) corrected some errors in paragraphs 2 and 9 of the Advisory Committee's report and pointed out that the table in paragraph 2 showed the total costs relating to the implementation of the programme against *apartheid* whether borne by the regular budget or by extra-budgetary sources.

39. The Secretary-General estimated that, if the draft resolution of the Special Political Committee was adopted, the programme of work for 1976 of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* would require an amount of $165,000 under section 3A—of which $94,000 had already been included in the Secretary-General's initial programme budget proposals. The Advisory Committee indicated in paragraph 4 that $92,000 of that amount was related to the cost of holding an international seminar in 1976. The Advisory Committee had been informed that the detailed arrangements for the seminar had not yet been finalized and that the Secretary-General had not therefore been able to forecast accurately the total cost. In the light of the information given to it, the Advisory Committee had recommended that the Secretary-General should endeavour to achieve economies and that the estimate should be reduced by $17,000.

40. In connexion with the establishment of the proposed Centre against *Apartheid* the Secretary-General had requested the creation of 5 additional posts, together with the upgrading of 1 post from D-1 to D-2. The Advisory Committee had been informed that the existing Section for African Questions would form the nucleus of the proposed Centre and that the 16 posts currently assigned to the Section would be transferred to the new Centre. The additional resources required for the extra posts and the proposed reclassification amounted to $177,000 under section 3D. In paragraph 8 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's request for the P-5 post, the P-2 post and 1 General Service post; however, on the basis of additional information given to it, the Advisory Committee had remained unconvinced of the need for the P-4 post and the second General Service post. Details of the organizational structure of the proposed Centre were given in the annex to the Advisory Committee's report, together with information on the deployment of the new posts requested and the structure of the current Section for African Questions.

41. The Secretary-General's request for the upgrading of 1 post from D-1 to D-2 had placed the Advisory Committee in a dilemma. In paragraphs 61 and 62 of its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2) the Advisory Committee had made certain observations with regard to the reclassification of posts. In paragraph 62 it recommended that the Secretary-General should submit no further request for the reclassification of posts until the International Civil Service Commission had had an opportunity to look into the matter.

* Policies of *apartheid* of the Government of South Africa:
(a) Report of the Special Committee against *Apartheid;*
(b) Report of the Secretary-General.

However, the Secretary-General had indicated in the Fifth Committee that, while taking note of the Advisory Committee's recommendation, he reserved the right to submit further requests for the reclassification of posts where such action was warranted in order to meet the requirements of the Organization. The Advisory Committee felt that that reservation should be viewed in the light of the general endorsement of paragraph 61 of its first report by the Fifth Committee, even though the Fifth Committee had not raised any explicit objections to the reservation made by the Secretary-General.

42. In summary, the Advisory Committee recommended to the Fifth Committee that it might wish to inform the General Assembly that, should the draft resolution be adopted, additional requirements would arise in the biennium 1976-1977 in the amount of $232,000, offset by estimated income of $26,000 under income section 1.

43. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) recalled that, when the Committee had discussed the section of the budget relating to UNEP, a number of delegations, including his own, had expressed concern because the Advisory Committee had not recommended any reductions. No environment could be worse than that in which *apartheid* flourished; yet the Advisory Committee, perhaps against the wish of some of its members, had recommended substantial reductions in two areas pertaining to *apartheid* which the continent of Africa considered of paramount importance. The recommendations in question—the one affecting the budget for the seminar and the other the staffing of the proposed Centre against *Apartheid*—were not of purely budgetary significance; they would have far-reaching political repercussions. While the Secretary-General had indicated that the estimates of the cost of the seminar were provisional, there could be no doubt that any curtailment of his proposals would substantially reduce the number of participants in the seminar.

44. His delegation therefore proposed that the Committee should vote on the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General.

45. Mrs. CISSE (Guinea) said that the Special Committee against *Apartheid* had recommended that the United Nations should intensify its activities against *apartheid*. Finding itself at bay after the liberation of former Portuguese Territories, the racist régime of South Africa had stepped up its campaign of repression against black South Africans and other opponents of *apartheid*. It was threatening neighbouring independent African States, had doubled its military budget and had launched a propaganda offensive to hoodwink world opinion. With the co-operation of certain Governments which disregarded United Nations resolutions, it was doing everything possible to emerge from its isolation.

46. The Special Political Committee had endorsed the proposals of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* and had recommended that the General Assembly should solemnly proclaim that the United Nations had a special responsibility towards the oppressed people of southern Africa. It had reaffirmed its commitment to the struggle against *apartheid*.

47. The programme of work of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* had certain financial implications. The Special Committee proposed to continue sending missions to Governments in order to encourage implementation of United Nations resolutions; to send missions to trade unions and non-governmental organizations; to organize an international seminar to publicize United Nations activities against *apartheid* and promote the international campaign; and to strengthen the Unit on *Apartheid* and renaming it the "Centre against *Apartheid*". A strengthened Centre against *Apartheid* would be an indispensable complement to the Special Committee against *Apartheid*, which would then have all the resources and services required to publicize United Nations action against *apartheid*.

48. The Unit on *Apartheid* required additional staff and needed to be headed by a high-level officer. Although the statement of financial implications submitted by the Secretary-General concerned only one of the draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political Committee, they should be considered in conjunction with all draft resolutions on *apartheid*, which called for more vigorous action from the Special Committee against *Apartheid* and the Secretariat. The reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee were arbitrary and unjustified. The Special Committee had always been prudent in its expenditures and should not be prevented from performing its important functions by arbitrary budgetary limitations. The refusal of the Advisory Committee to support the proposal to reclassify the post of Director was not entirely justified, since the only reason given for the refusal was that it was consistent with the Advisory Committee's policies. She was therefore requesting the Fifth Committee to approve the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General, unless he could give a firm assurance that, despite the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee, the Special Committee would receive all the assistance required.

49. Mr. ZIMBA (Zambia) said that his country had always unreservedly condemned *apartheid* as the greatest evil ever to be visited upon Africa, and as a crime against humanity. His Government had vehemently attacked the "bantustan" policy in all international forums. It had been one of the first Governments to advocate the release of political prisoners in South Africa and to support the right of South Africans to engage in normal political activities.

50. His delegation therefore endorsed the recommendations of the Special Political Committee, which were designed to enable Africa to rid itself of an obnoxious system. It trusted that the Advisory Committee would review its recommended reductions in the Secretary-General's proposals in the light of the pressing needs of the Special Committee against *Apartheid*. Accordingly, he supported the proposal made by the delegation of Algeria.

51. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his country, too, viewed with grave concern the oppressive policies of the Government of South Africa. The Philippines had been a founding member of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* and its strong stand against that political system was reflected in the meeting records of the Organization. In keeping with that position, his delegation advocated the strengthening of the Special Committee against *Apartheid*

and its secretariat. While it appreciated the efforts of the Advisory Committee to achieve economies, it was extremely concerned that in the present case the recommendations would adversely affect the important work against *apartheid*. He suggested that the Chairman of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* should consult with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee with a view to ensuring that the Special Committee's programme of work would not be hampered and that its restructured secretariat would be strengthened in the way envisaged by the Special Political Committee. He endorsed the proposal by the delegation of Algeria that the Committee should vote on the Secretary-General's proposals.

52. Mr. RUPIA (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the question before the Committee was of the greatest importance to Africa. Despite numerous debates and resolutions condemning *apartheid*, the South African régime had intensified its ruthless repression of Africans. That was why the Special Political Committee had made recommendations aimed at intensifying the work programme of the Special Committee against *Apartheid*. In furtherance of an intensified world-wide campaign to combat *apartheid*, the Special Committee planned to hold a seminar in 1976 which would discuss, among other things, the role played by transnational corporations in buttressing *apartheid*. His delegation could not understand why the Advisory Committee wished to reduce the impact of that seminar by recommending a specific reduction in the Secretary-General's proposals rather than simply requesting the Secretary-General to exercise economies wherever possible. It was equally puzzling that the Advisory Committee had failed to see the need for an adequate number of staff for the new Centre against *Apartheid* in view of its recognition that the secretariat would be assuming added responsibilities. His delegation therefore supported the proposal made by the delegation of Algeria.

53. Mr. ADAM (Somalia) expressed concern that the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in its report might adversely affect the work of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* at the very time when action against *apartheid* should be intensified. In paragraph 16 of the statement he had submitted, the Secretary-General had requested a P-4 post for a senior research officer to research the implementation of United Nations resolutions on *apartheid*, the relations of various States with South Africa and the involvement of foreign economic interests in South Africa, and to act as the secretary of the Special Committee's Sub-Committee on the Implementation of United Nations Resolutions and Collaboration with South Africa. The Advisory Committee had not recommended approval of that post, and he questioned its reasons. Failure to establish the post would hamper the extremely important work of the Special Committee to provide full information about Governments and economic interests collaborating with South Africa and its efforts to discourage support for the criminal régime. He also expressed concern at the recommended reductions for missions and the international seminar scheduled for 1976. While it was important to economize on unnecessary expenditure, savings should not be made at the expense of the Special Committee which was endeavouring to ensure implementation of General Assembly resolutions and should be strengthened.

54. In conclusion, he called for approval of the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution of the Special Political Committee.

55. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia), observing that the United Nations had a special responsibility for the victims of *apartheid* and should do all it could to eradicate that evil, expressed support for the draft resolution submitted by the Special Political Committee and said it was essential to provide adequate resources for the Secretariat to act effectively. As the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee might lessen the effectiveness of United Nations activities in that field, she supported the Algerian proposal and said that her delegation would vote in favour of the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications.

56. Mr. SUNDRAM (Malaysia) said that the Advisory Committee had not provided an adequate explanation for what appeared to be almost arbitrary and sizable reductions in the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution of the Special Political Committee. There was a danger that the work of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* might be hampered by budgetary restrictions. One of the most worth-while activities of the Special Committee was to send missions to various countries and conferences to secure a wider consensus on international action against *apartheid* and respect for United Nations resolutions. Yet the Advisory Committee had recommended a 25 per cent reduction in the request for an additional appropriation under section 3A, bringing it to $54,000, with the result that the number of missions would have to be cut, or the benefits from the missions would be reduced.

57. Referring to the requested P-4 post, approval of which had not been recommended by the Advisory Committee, he said that his delegation, one of whose members was Chairman of the Sub-Committee on the Implementation of United Nations Resolutions and Collaboration with South Africa, was well aware that the workload of the Secretary of that Sub-Committee was too heavy for one person. The Special Committee had requested the new post because of the workload of the Sub-Committee and also because it needed thorough research and analysis of General Assembly resolutions to persuade Governments to take effective action against *apartheid*. He supported the Special Committee's request that the post of Director of the Centre against *Apartheid* should be reclassified in keeping with the importance of the subject matter and the mandate of the Special Committee.

58. While he supported reasonable economies in the budget, he felt it was essential not to hamper anti-*apartheid* activities during the current crucial period. Accordingly, he appealed to the Committee to support the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution, or at least to request the Advisory Committee to review its recommendations.

59. Mr. EKONG (Nigeria), stressing the vital importance of the struggle against *apartheid*, expressed concern over the unfounded recommendations by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of its report. The estimated cost of the seminar, for example, was not

arbitrary but was based on the actual cost of a recent seminar. He considered the amount that the Secretary-General had estimated the minimum required; any reduction would jeopardize work in that field. He would discourage any measures that put the Secretary-General at a disadvantage or deprived him of flexibility of action. As the Advisory Committee had already requested the Secretary-General to make any possible savings in that field, he relied on the good faith of the Secretary-General to do so. Accordingly, he supported the Algerian proposal.

60. Mr. BENKIRANE (Morocco) said that, while his delegation usually supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations and appreciated its serious consideration of matters brought before it, he could not accept its recommendation with respect to the financial implications of the draft resolution of the Special Political Committee. As he considered the amount estimated by the Secretary-General essential to maintain the anti-*apartheid* struggle, he intended to vote in favour of the Secretary-General's estimates.

61. Mr. NSUBUGA (Uganda) recalled that the United Nations had been born out of events similar to what was currently happening in South Africa. World public opinion, which included public opinion in all, not just some, countries, including in particular African, Scandinavian and socialist countries, supported the anti-*apartheid* campaign. He trusted that all Member States would also be able to take that approach.

62. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that, while he appreciated the views of those members of the Committee who supported the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution, he had every faith in the Advisory Committee which undoubtedly had applied the same standards in its review of the item under consideration as it did on all other questions before it.

63. Mr. WANG Lien-sheng (China) said that his delegation consistently supported increased international action against *apartheid* in South Africa and had accordingly voted in favour of the draft resolution in the Special Political Committee. He drew attention, however, to a reference in paragraph 9 of document A/C.5/1706 and Corr.1 to the World Peace Conference; on the basis of his delegation's position of principle on that body, he had reservations as to any relationship between the Special Committee and the World Peace Council.

64. Mr. VERRET (Haiti), observing that his country had always supported the struggle of oppressed peoples everywhere, particularly in Africa because of its close ties with that continent, called on the Committee to vote in favour of the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution of the Special Political Committee.

65. Mr. SETHI (India), noting that India had always supported the anti-*apartheid* struggle, supported the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution.

66. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia) said that, while he usually accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendations, he disagreed with its recommendation under consideration. The only criterion applied by the Advisory Committee in considering matters before it was economy. The Advisory Committee had certainly not said that *apartheid* was not an important matter; it was simply concerned as to whether the United Nations could pay the additional amount requested. He felt that the Advisory Committee had been too pessimistic in that respect, as the amount involved was only $34,000 to be distributed among all Member States. He supported the Secretary-General's estimate.

67. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) called on the Committee to accept the estimate of the Secretary-General on the financial implications of the draft resolution as the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee could only impair the effectiveness of much-needed measures called for in the draft resolution.

68. Mr. GHAFOURZAI (Afghanistan) said that, while he had always supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations in the past, he could not accept its recommendation on the matter under consideration since adequate moral and material support was essential to support the anti-*apartheid* struggle of the oppressed peoples of South Africa. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution.

69. Mrs. BASTOS SANDIFER (Portugal) said that her delegation supported maximum resources for the anti-*apartheid* struggle and called for approval of the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution.

70. Mr. PONCE (Peru) said that in view of the importance his delegation attached to the role of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* in its struggle against racial discrimination, he would vote in favour of the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution.

71. Mr. BOYE (Senegal) supported the Algerian proposal that the Committee should vote in favour of the Secretary-General's estimate.

72. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq), noting that the Advisory Committee had recommended reductions in the Secretary-General's estimate for technical reasons, nevertheless supported the Algerian proposal that the Committee should vote for the Secretary-General's estimate.

73. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates), commending the work of the Advisory Committee in general, said that he could not accept its recommendation for reductions in the Secretary-General's estimate as such reductions would adversely affect the anti-*apartheid* struggle. He hoped the Committee would approve the Secretary-General's estimates.

74. Mr. DJEKILAMBERT (Chad), expressing support for the anti-*apartheid* struggle, endorsed the Algerian proposal that the Committee should approve the Secretary-General's estimate.

75. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the Algerian proposal to accept the Secretary-General's estimate of the financial implications of the draft resolution of the Special Political Committee, as summarized in paragraph 18 of document A/C.5/1706 and Corr.1, whereby an additional appropriation of $283,000 would be required.

At the request of the representative of Zambia, the vote was taken by roll-call.

Botswana, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Burma, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados.

Against: France, Germany (Federal Republic of), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Australia, Austria, Belgium.

The Algerian proposal was adopted by 66 votes to 4, with 22 abstentions.

76. The CHAIRMAN said that he would request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Special Political Committee, an additional appropriation in the amount of $283,000 would be required for the biennium 1976-1977, of which $177,000 under section 3D, $71,000 under section 3A and $35,000 under section 21.

77. Mr. NAUDY (France), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had voted on purely technical grounds. His delegation was not willing to depart from the normal procedure whereby the Committee voted on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee first. From the point of view of administrative and budgetary considerations, the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee were justified. The Advisory Committee had made its recommendations in good faith for the Fifth Committee to accept or reject.

78. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee defer its consideration of the question until a later meeting.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.

1745th meeting

Friday, 21 November 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1745

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION G SUBMITTED BY THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10342 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 53* *(concluded)* (A/10008/ADD.8, A/C.5/1706 AND CORR.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN, recalling that the Committee, at the previous meeting, had voted on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution of the Special Political Committee concerning the Special Committee against *Apartheid*, invited delegations wishing to do so to explain their votes.

2. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, said that the position of those delegations with regard to the South African Government's policies of *apartheid* was well known: they had given, and would continue to give, the struggle against *apartheid* all possible support in voting, in financial contributions, in assistance to victims of *apartheid* and in other actions. That position had found expression in the Special Political Committee when the draft resolution in question had been put to the vote. The Nordic delegations did not always follow the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and sometimes took a more generous line. In the case under discussion, they could have accepted some revision by the Fifth Committee of the estimates recommended by the Advisory Committee, if the proposal had

* Policies of *apartheid* of the Government of South Africa:
(a) Report of the Special Committee against *Apartheid;*
(b) Report of the Secretary-General.

not been to overrule all the Advisory Committee's recommendations. Since the Advisory Committee had been much better able to examine the matter than the delegations of the Nordic countries, the latter had found that they could not go so far as to disavow the Advisory Committee completely, especially as principles relating to many sections of the budget had been involved. They were convinced that the Advisory Committee had taken care not to recommend any cut in the estimates of the Secretary-General that could have hampered the carrying out of the tasks entrusted to the Special Committee against *Apartheid* in connexion with the implementation of the draft resolution. For that reason, the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden had abstained from voting on the proposal to overrule the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

3. Mr. WOLDE-AREGAY (Ethiopia) said that, in his delegation's opinion, the struggle against *apartheid* should be intensified by all possible means. He had been absent during the vote on the financial implications of the draft resolution of the Special Political Committee, but he would have voted in favour of the Secretary-General's estimates. He requested that the report of the Fifth Committee should include his delegation among those which had voted in favour of the proposal to accept the Secretary-General's estimates.

4. The CHAIRMAN informed the representative of Ethiopia that his request could not be acceded to. However, his position would be noted in the summary record of the current meeting and in the Committee's report.

5. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) explained that, despite his country's support for the struggle against *apartheid*, he had voted against the proposal to accept the Secretary-General's estimates because he agreed with the Advisory Committee's analysis of the resources needed to carry out the activities in question. He was sure that the Advisory Committee had, as usual, drawn up its recommendations in good faith and with complete fairness.

6. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled the importance which the Soviet Union attached to the need to intensify the struggle against *apartheid* by all means. On the political level, the position of the Soviet Union could not be clearer, and it had been stated without ambiguity in the Special Political Committee. In the Fifth Committee, however, his delegation had confined itself to the financial aspects of the question. In its opinion, the programme for combating *apartheid* should be given priority, but not to such an extent that additional appropriations were needed; that priority programme should be carried out at the expense of certain programmes of secondary importance and, if need be, by eliminating useless programmes. It would be easy, from among the host of staff members who made up the bureaucratic apparatus of the Secretariat, to designate competent individuals to carry out that priority programme, and there was no need to establish new posts for the purpose. In rejecting the recommendatons of the Advisory Committee at the preceding meeting, the Committee had therefore taken an arbitrary decision which was particularly unjustified, in that the Advisory Committee had studied the question much more carefully and in much greater detail than the Fifth Committee had been able to do, and its opinion had been as authoritative as usual. What was more, the Advisory Committee had been extremely moderate in its recommendations, since it had, contrary to the wishes of the Soviet delegation, agreed to the establishment of a number of posts requested by the Secretary-General. What the Fifth Committee should therefore have done was not only to follow the recommendations of the Advisory Committee but to be even more rigorous, particularly with regard to the establishment of new posts. His delegation had accordingly voted against the proposal to accept the Secretary-General's estimates.

7. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that he had voted in favour of the Algerian proposal that the Secretary-General's estimates should be accepted, not because he questioned the soundness of the Advisory Committee's recommendations, but because the United Nations must devote the maximum resources possible to the struggle against *apartheid.*

8. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that he had abstained in the vote, without prejudice to the support which his delegation wished to give to the struggle against *apartheid* and which it had manifested in the Special Political Committee by voting for the draft resolution in question. However, his delegation had too much respect for the impartiality and fairness shown by the Advisory Committee in its recommendations to accept the idea that in the current case the Advisory Committee had been unduly influenced by value judgements. His delegation would have voted in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendations if they had been put to the vote.

9. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote for the same reasons as had been stated by the representative of Sweden.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1740th meeting; A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/L.1254)

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)

SECTION 17. OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR *(concluded)*** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Financing of emergency relief assistance and technical co-operation activites* (concluded)** *(A/10008/Add.5, A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1254)

10. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) said he was convinced of the need to strengthen the capacity of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX), and therefore supported the proposal in

* Resumed from the 1740th meeting.

** Resumed from the 1737th meeting.

implementation of that resolution submitted by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1). Nevertheless, the recommendations with regard to strengthening the staff of UNDRO made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report on the subject (A/10008/Add.5) were reasonable. He noted that under section 17 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006, para. 17.17) the Secretary-General proposed the opening in 1975 of a small liaison office for UNDRO in New York, and he agreed with the view of the Advisory Committee (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 17.12) that the Secretariat should give the Fifth Committee additional information on that question, which would make it possible to judge whether it was indeed necessary to set up such a liaison office.

11. As to the modalities of financing emergency assistance and technical co-operation activities in disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning, he drew attention to the fact that, despite changes in the international economic and monetary situation since 1965, the maximum amount of emergency assistance to be granted per country for any one disaster was still $20,000 a year, the ceiling imposed by the General Assembly in its resolution 2034 (XX), of 7 December 1965. For some developing countries, such as those whose annual rate of growth of gross domestic product was almost completely absorbed by population growth, that was a very small amount in 1975. His delegation wanted the ceiling to be raised to a level compatible with the effectiveness expected of United Nations action in cases of natural disaster. No time should therefore be lost in implementing Economic and Social Council resolution 1972 (LIX), of 30 July 1975, which would increase the resources available to the Co-ordinator for emergency assistance to countries stricken by natural disasters and for technical co-operation in disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning. His delegation accordingly supported the Secretary-General's proposals to raise the ceiling on emergency assistance and on funds provided for technical co-operation in pre-disaster planning.

12. With reference to the financing of the trust fund established under General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX), his delegation felt that the appropriation of $400,000 for emergency assistance should be retained in the regular budget so that it could subsequently be transferred to the trust fund to supplement the expected voluntary contributions. The inclusion of that amount in the regular budget of the United Nations gave countries which might be stricken by disaster the assurance that the emergency relief machinery would function normally. Apart from that, his delegation could only hope that the target for voluntary contributions proposed by the Secretary-General would be achieved. It would be useful to centralize all voluntary contributions from Governments for disaster relief activities, as recommended by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1972 (LIX). Moreover, the procedure for joint assessment of needs and provision of emergency assistance should be made more flexible, so that the action taken would have its full impact within the time required by the seriousness of the situation.

Mr. Matseiko, (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

13. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan) noted that at the twenty-ninth session his delegation had firmly supported the strengthening of UNDRO by the addition of 4 new posts to be financed from the regular budget of the United Nations. At the same session, it had also supported the initiatives in the Second Committee and in the Economic and Social Council which had resulted in a further strengthening of the Office. At the current session, it had had occasion in the Second Committee to support the idea of establishing national fund-raising committees and an honorary committee of distinguished persons to assist the Secretary-General.

14. His delegation supported the request of the Secretary-General to appropriate $400,000 in the regular budget for 1976-1977 to be used for providing emergency assistance to countries stricken by natural disasters. It also supported the proposal (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1, para. 12), to create a subaccount of $600,000 for technical assistance to Governments in pre-disaster planning and prevention because there was a growing belief in the international community that a modest investment in that sector could lead to substantial savings later, when disaster struck.

15. His delegation also favoured the Secretary-General's proposal to raise the ceiling for annual emergency relief per country for any one disaster from $20,000 to $30,000, even though, in relation to the millions or hundreds of millions of dollars in damage which could be caused by some disasters, such as the 1973 floods in Pakistan or the more recent earthquake in north Pakistan, it might appear that such a sum would have no impact whatsoever. In fact, in the early stages some means, however limited, should be available to the Co-ordinator to enable him to act without delay by providing emergency relief, to which the international community would subsequently add its generous contribution. His delegation found it all the more possible to support the proposed increase of the ceiling on relief per country for any one disaster because it hoped that by 1978, as envisaged by the Secretary-General, both emergency assistance and pre-disaster planning assistance would be fully financed from voluntary contributions. His delegation supported the draft resolution submitted by the Chairman (A/C.5/L.1254).

16. Mr. MURG (Romania) said that his delegation, being aware of the necessity of strengthening the capabilities of the Office of the Co-ordinator, would vote for the appropriation requested under section 17 of the proposed programme budget, subject to the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. His delegation would also support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254.

17. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he attached great importance to the activities of UNDRO and noted that Belgium participated in the financing of the trust fund established under General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX).

18. In the proposed programme budget, the Secretary-General proposed the opening in 1975 of a small liaison office in New York to support the activities of UNDRO in Geneva. He agreed with the comments of the Advisory Committee on that point (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 17.12), because he was not convinced of the need for

such an office. Moreover, he was concerned at the proliferation of offices financed by extra-budgetary funds, because the trend had reached such proportions that it was now difficult to ascertain the total number of United Nations employees. He would appreciate precise information, some time before the end of the thirtieth session, on the composition of the secretariats of the United Nations system, by organization and by source of the funds used to remunerate their staff members.

19. He wondered whether it was really essential to appropriate in the regular budget a sum of $400,000, or $200,000 per year, for emergency assistance. The Organization could perhaps have advanced that amount to the trust fund established under General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX) until such time as the fund received the expected $1 million in voluntary contributions.

20. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) said that his country, being normally disaster-prone, recognized perhaps better than any other country the value not only of disaster relief, but also of disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning assistance. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General's conclusions and recommendations (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1, para. 14), and therefore supported the suggestion that $400,000 should be appropriated in the regular budget for 1976-1977 to be transferred to the trust fund, as described by the Secretary-General (*ibid.*, paras. 8 and 11). He was glad to note that the Co-ordinator was confident that the target of $1 million from voluntary funds could be reached and that the Advisory Committee accepted the recommendations of the Secretary-General.

21. He supported the draft resolution submitted by the Chairman proposing the establishment of two new subaccounts for emergency assistance and for disaster prevention and pre-planning technical assistance. He was happy to note that the annual ceiling on emergency assistance per country for any one disaster was to be increased to $30,000 but hoped, given the current rate of inflation and cost increases, that the amount would be further increased in the near future.

22. It would be useful to establish new posts in UNDRO in order to strengthen its capabilities; some of the senior staff for those posts should be recruited from developing countries, as their knowledge and experience could be valuable to the Co-ordinator. In that connexion, his delegation requested the Secretariat to inform the Committee of the composition of UNDRO, so that it would know the number and grade of posts for which officials from developing countries had been recruited.

23. Mr. LOUDON (Netherlands) said that the delegation of the Netherlands had always supported the activities of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, by financial and other means and, as his country was one of the sponsors of General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX), had sought to strengthen UNDRO. The prime task of the Office was to mobilize and promptly co-ordinate relief activities in cases of natural disaster, and it had never been intended to act as an independent relief organization in an area where other organizations were already working. The administrative and budgetary arrangements should be tailored to that limited but very important task. At the current stage, UNDRO was in a transitional phase; in 1974 proposals for strengthening its capabilities had been adopted for 1975, 1976 and 1977, including the proposal to establish a voluntary fund, which now amounted to $2.8 million. His Government was willing to make available about $600,000 to that fund. The method of financing UNDRO for the succeeding periods would be subject to review after 1977. But in order to take the interim decisions that were necessary at the current stage, the Committee needed to have a clear picture of the future administrative and budgetary structure of UNDRO.

24. The support of the United Nations membership as a whole for UNDRO should be reflected not only in numerous resolutions but also in the regular budget of the United Nations. Activities of a promotional nature could be financed from voluntary funds but, once their usefulness had been established, an important part of the costs should be incorporated in the regular budget. The distinction usually made between operational costs, which were generally paid out of voluntary contributions, and administrative costs, which were financed from the regular budget, should apply to the financing of emergency assistance, and from 1978 all personnel and related costs should be borne by the regular budget, with the extra personnel costs currently financed from voluntary contributions being transferred to the section of the programme budget relating to UNDRO. The operational costs of UNDRO for emergency assistance should then be mainly financed from the extra-budgetary funds available to the Office. However, provision should be made for continued symbolic support from the regular budget for emergency assistance, as evidence of the support of the membership as a whole for the operational activities of UNDRO. The necessary technical assistance for disaster prevention should be included as soon as possible in the UNDP country programming procedures. That was how his delegation saw the financing of UNDRO from 1978 onwards.

25. As far as the next biennium was concerned, his delegation could on the whole go along, as an interim measure, with the draft resolution as proposed by the Chairman (A/C.5/L.1254); it was consistent with the draft resolution[1] which the Second Committee had just adopted. His delegation was not convinced, however, that it was necessary to increase the amount for technical assistance in pre-disaster planning and prevention from $105,000 to $600,000 and would have preferred a more modest increase of about $100,000. He welcomed the fact that provision had been made in the draft resolution for periodic reporting on the status of the trust fund.

26. Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark) said that his Government attached great importance to speedy and adequate emergency assistance to other countries in the event of natural disasters, as the substantial contributions which it had made through the United Nations or national relief organizations had shown. Natural disasters could be especially severe to the developing countries and detrimental to their development, unless emergency assistance was provided by those who were better off. Co-ordinated relief efforts were the most effective means of helping developing

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 63, document A/10387, para. 10, draft resolution I.

countries during disasters, and concerted action to elaborate plans in advance to meet natural disasters was also very useful. The damage caused to a number of developing countries because of natural disasters often greatly surpassed the total development assistance provided to those countries. That is why his country had been a sponsor of General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX), which called for a strengthening of UNDRO through voluntary contributions, an undertaking to which his country had also contributed. It was in that context that his delegation supported the estimate under section 17 of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977, as recommended for approval by the Advisory Committee, as well as the proposal of the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1) for strengthening the capacity of UNDRO to render emergency assistance in the case of natural disasters and for offering technical assistance in disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning.

27. The suggested transfer for the biennium 1976-1977 of $400,000 from the regular budget to the trust fund, as recommended by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10008/Add.5) was a modest amount indeed and should be acceptable to all those who realized the importance of co-ordinated and effective relief efforts through UNDRO. His delegation also agreed with the delegations of Sweden, Madagascar and the Netherlands that the long-term administrative expenses of UNDRO ought to be covered by the United Nations regular budget. It fully supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254.

28. Mr. SEALY (Trinidad and Tobago) said that he was aware of the very worth-while efforts which were being made by UNDRO, not only in co-ordinating assistance from donor countries in times of natural disaster but also in providing technical assistance to Governments in disaster preparedness and planning as well as affording limited emergency financial assistance to Governments faced with natural disaster. Member States had shared the cost of such activities in the spirit of international co-operation. There were at least 20 natural disasters every year in which United Nations assistance was requested, and no country was immune to such disasters. Therefore UNDRO had to be equipped both financially and otherwise to come to the assistance of all Member States which requested assistance and more particularly those developing countries in regions which appeared prone to natural disaster. His delegation therefore welcomed the initiatives taken earlier to secure new ways of financing the activities of UNDRO so that it could carry out its threefold task, and had no objections to the suggestion of the Secretary-General that all those activities be financed entirely from voluntary contributions and that the $400,000 requested in the 1976-1977 programme budget for emergency assistance should be used as a nucleus of the special fund, whose initial target was $1 million. He had no reason to doubt that the donor countries would provide sufficient contributions to meet that target, but he felt that there should continue to be a regular input of $400,000 in the biennium budget for emergency aid until Member States were satisfied that those vitally important actitivies of UNDRO could be satisfactorily financed from voluntary contributions on a regular basis. That sum, the amount of which could be changed as needed, expressed the commitment of the international community to emergency disaster relief.

29. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) indicated that his Government gave high priority to improvement of the ability of UNDRO to perform its major functions effectively, particularly that of relief co-ordination, but also that of assistance for pre-disaster planning and disaster prevention. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of the proposed appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 17 of the proposed programme budget, which included $400,000 for the biennium for emergency assistance. His delegation was also prepared to support a modest increase in the amount available to UNDRO for emergency assistance in order to accommodate inflationary factors which had arisen since the amount was set in 1971. It was reasonable to increase modestly the maximum amount allowed per disaster as well as the number of disasters per year for which UNDRO could provide aid. It had been proposed in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254 that the funds available under the regular budget for that purpose be augmented by an additional $400,000 in voluntary funds. Since the Advisory Committee had indicated in its report (A/10008/Add.5, para. 6) that the Co-ordinator had assured it that the proposed increase in the ceiling for emergency relief would only be applied to the extent that sufficient funds had been received, his delegation was prepared to support the proposals contained in the draft resolution. It also agreed that the costs for technical assistance in disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning be funded from a special subaccount in the already existing voluntary trust fund. It would, however, wish to re-examine the method of funding the strengthened operational capacity of UNDRO after 1977.

30. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) pointed out that his Government firmly supported UNDRO emergency relief activities, as the substantial contribution it had made to strengthen the capacity of that Office showed. His delegation fully shared the views expressed by the delegations of the Netherlands and the United States of America with respect to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254 and would vote for it, but with the same reservation as had been expressed by the representative of the Netherlands. His delegation had at the current session already criticized proposals for transforming posts financed temporarily from extra-budgetary funds into permanent posts and endorsed the observations which the Advisory Committee had made in that respect in paragraph 52 of its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2). Therefore, with respect to the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General under section 17 of the proposed programme budget, his delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the General Assembly could not be asked to commit itself in advance to making regular budget appropriations for the posts currently financed from extra-budgetary funds, should the voluntary funds be insufficient in future, because those posts had neither been examined nor approved by the General Assembly. However, the possibility of including posts financed from extra-budgetary funds in the regular budget was implicitly recognized in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX). Although his Government had made a large contribution to cover the cost of new posts financed from extra-budgetary funds, it did not feel that the manning table was necessarily perfect and hoped that it would be closely examined by the Advisory Committee if it was decided to transform those posts into permanent ones at

the end of 1977. In conclusion he said that his delegation would support the Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding the appropriation requested under section 17.

31. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) approved the appropriation for UNDRO recommended by the Advisory Committee and also the inclusion of $400,000 for emergency assistance in the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. His delegation expressed the hope that, if the target fixed for voluntary contributions was reached, the annual ceiling of $20,000 per country for any one disaster would be raised to $30,000, an amount which remained modest in view of the effect of inflation on the price of the goods and services which had to be furnished to countries stricken by disasters. According to the delegation of the Netherlands, the resources available to the trust fund now stood at $2.8 million, and he would like to know whether the fund could absorb the increase in costs. He would also like to know how the trust fund was managed and under which financial regulations.

32. With reference to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254, he suggested bringing the wording of operative paragraph 1 *(b)* into line with General Assembly resolution 3243 (XXIX), by replacing the words "pre-disaster planning and prevention" with the words "disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning assistance to Governments". He also proposed the inclusion of the word "trust" before the word "fund", at the end of operative paragraph 3.

33. Mr. WOLDE-AREGAY (Ethiopia) said that his Government attached great importance to UNDRO and thanked that Office, the Governments and the international organizations which had provided aid for those regions of Ethiopia that had been stricken by drought. In the long term, the Ethiopian Government aimed at satisfying its own needs, and with that end in view, it had adopted measures to aid the victims of the drought, but if it did not succeed in overcoming all the problems arising from the drought, it hoped that the international community and the international organizations would continue to provide aid. The Ethiopian Government supported without reservations the measures that had been taken to facilitate the task of the Office in helping to establish co-operation in disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning, and in providing emergency assistance. It also approved the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 17 of the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

34. In conclusion, his delegation expressed its gratitude to the Chairman for having submitted draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254.

35. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his country had responded to the urgent needs of those countries suffering from the effects of natural disasters, by providing bilateral assistance, a system which facilitated the granting of aid. By that means the Soviet Union had supplied the countries suffering from the effect of natural disasters with food-stuffs, transport, medical supplies and other essential goods. As in the past, his country was prepared to help the stricken countries to the full extent of its powers.

36. He noted that the appropriations under section 17 of the proposed programme budget amounted to $309,000 (26.5 per cent) more than the revised appropriations for 1974-1975, an increase which was basically due to the extra costs incurred by the creation of new posts ($53,000) and inflation ($222,000). His delegation could not approve the additional expenditure. Furthermore, he was astonished by the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a liaison office in New York, because the Office of the Co-ordinator at Geneva apparently met the needs of the situation and a suitable liaison with Headquarters was guaranteed by modern methods of communication. He therefore wished to ask representatives of the Secretariat to explain why such a liaison office was necessary, particularly since its creation would involve extra costs which would have to be examined with care, even if those costs could be met from extra-budgetary funds. As it had stated during the previous session, his delegation could not approve the inclusion in the regular budget of an appropriation of $400,000 to provide emergency disaster relief, because it felt that such assistance should be financed by voluntary contributions. His delegation would therefore vote against the appropriations under section 17 of the proposed programme budget.

37. It could not support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254, as that draft implied the inclusion of appropriations for emergency assistance in the regular budget.

38. Mrs. DERRE (France) recalled that in the Second Committee her delegation had already expressed its appreciation of UNDRO and would therefore limit itself to budgetary considerations. The French delegation endorsed the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, and in particular those concerned with the creation of a liaison office in New York. It would support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254 on the understanding that the transfer of $400,000 from the budget to the trust fund would only be approved on a temporary basis, in view of the unorthodox nature of such a financing procedure. Her delegation attached special importance to disaster prevention, but the Co-ordinator would have to restrict himself to the role of co-ordination and not drift imperceptibly towards operational activities. The task of preventing disasters was so important that it had to be included in the programme of UNDP. Her delegation had no objection to the other paragraphs of the draft resolution, but felt that it was not advisable to include in the regular budget posts which ought to be financed by voluntary contributions.

39. Mr. SETHI (India) was glad to note that the deliberations of the Second Committee and Fifth Committee were complementary, as the corresponding draft resolution of the Second Committee, of which his country was a sponsor, had just been adopted by that Committee. He supported the draft resolution submitted by the Chairman (A/C.5/L.1254) as amended by the representative of the Philippines, as well as the recommendations of the Advisory Committee concerning section 17 of the programme budget. Nethertheless, he would like some explanation of the figures included in paragraph 10 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1). His delegation supported the basic intention of section 17 because the essential aim of the programme was to provide relief to the developing countries, which did not have sufficient resources to deal with natural disasters. Of course, disaster prevention, pre-disaster planning and the selection of different types of assistance required a high level of

technical development, but it also required a knowledge of the countries which were the victims of disasters. It was therefore desirable for UNDRO to include staff members from the developing countries. Despite modern techniques, there was a danger that the assistance provided, even if well suited to the disaster in question, would be ill-adapted to the country stricken by the disaster, unless the staff members of the Office responsible for management and planning included persons with an adequate knowledge of the human and other non-technical factors involved. As it was, UNDRO included an overwhelming number of staff members from the developed countries, a situation which no doubt arose because it was those countries which made the largest contributions. However, in view of the nature of such disaster relief operations, the personnel should be selected in an equitable manner from both developed and developing countries. He requested the representative of the Secretariat to indicate the geographical distribution of high-level staff members in UNDRO.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) resumed the Chair.

40. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece), reiterating his delegation's support for the operational activities of UNDRO, supported the draft resolution submitted by the Chairman (A/C.5/L.1254). He drew attention to the international appeal made in 1974 after the earthquake in Turkey as one of the many real achievements of the Office.

41. As his delegation had said in the Second Committee, the Office must have its capacity for co-ordination strengthened to become more effective. He hoped that the proposals by the panel of disaster relief managers, established at the beginning of 1975, concerning possible insurance coverage of disaster risks would be examined more thoroughly than they had been.

42. Mr. DJEKILAMBERT (Chad) accepted the estimate under section 17 of the proposed programme budget. Although natural disasters had so far mainly affected the poorest countries, no country was disaster-proof and all countries should co-operate in trying to prevent such disasters. His country was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution adopted by the Second Committee, and it also supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254.

43. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) stressed the importance of the activities of UNDRO. Natural disasters most often struck developing countries whose economic progress was thus hampered. His delegation had voted for the draft resolution adopted by the Second Committee to strengthen the capability of the Office, and it also accepted the estimate under section 17 of the proposed programme budget and draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254, particularly the proposal to increase to $30,000 the annual emergency assistance ceiling per country for any one disaster.

44. Mr. PONCE (Peru) said that the international community should be as united as possible in efforts to alleviate the consequences of natural disasters. His delegation endorsed draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254. He hoped that the resources of the Office would be increased in future so that it could do its work more effectively.

45. Miss GARCÍA DONOSO (Ecuador) said that the work of UNDRO was part of general development activities in that natural disasters hampered the development of countries which suffered such disasters. Her delegation welcomed the studies and assessments made by the Office to help the countries concerned, but she hoped that the activities would be strengthened in future. She endorsed draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254 and the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10008/Add.5).

46. Mr. HABYARIMANA (Rwanda) said that his delegation attached great importance to the activities of UNDRO which, along with friendly countries and international agencies, had provided assistance to his country when disastrous rains had struck Rwanda, destroying most of the harvest. As prevention might well be more important than cure, he welcomed the proposals by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1) for assistance for disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning. He endorsed the proposal to establish a liaison office in New York and the inclusion in the regular budget of an amount of $400,000 for disaster assistance. Although the amount was not large, it would be the seed of the trust fund which was to be increased, and he hoped that Governments in a position to do so would be generous and increase the resources of the fund.

47. His delegation endorsed the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10008/Add.5) and draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254, particularly the proposal to raise to $30,000 the annual emergency assistance ceiling per country for any one disaster.

48. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), responding to the representative of Madagascar, said that liaison between Headquarters and the Office of the Co-ordinator at Geneva had so far been provided by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, whose many important functions did not allow him to carry on this additional task as permanently and effectively as necessary. The panel of experts established early in 1975 to help UNDRO had unanimously recommended that the person responsible for liaison with Headquarters should be an official with adequate experience of co-ordination of disaster activities and at a sufficiently high level to be able to consult with other units and agencies concerned. That was why the Office of Financial Services considered it normal to accede to the request of the Co-ordinator, and approved the establishment of 1 D-1 post and 1 secretary's post which would be financed from extra-budgetary resources.

49. Responding to the representatives of Bangladesh and India, he said that personnel recruitment for UNDRO was not yet far enough under way for any clear picture of the geographical distribution of posts to have emerged. The information would be provided as soon as possible to members of the Committee who had requested it.

50. The representative of the Philippines had asked if the voluntary contributions currently available would permit the increase from $20,000 to $30,000 in the annual emergency assistance ceiling per country for any one disaster. The amount mentioned by the representative of the Philippines, $2.8 million, corresponded to the pledges of Member States for three years to cover the costs of

additional posts financed from extra-budgetary funds needed by the Co-ordinator. The amount was not linked to the amount of $1 million mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1) and draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254. To raise the assistance ceiling to $30,000, it was hoped that additional resources in the form of voluntary contributions, for which the target was $400,000, would be available.

51. Replying to the representative of India, he said that the difficulty relating to paragraph 10 of the report of the Secretary-General arose because the figures given in the report were the annual amounts, whereas the figures in the draft resolution submitted by the Chairman (A/C.5/L.1254) were amounts for the biennium. The amount mentioned in paragraph 10 of the report of the Secretary-General thus corresponded to an amount of $1,400,000 dollars for the biennium, including the $400,000 already included in the regular budget and $1 million to be provided by voluntary contributions.

52. Replying to the representative of France, he simply said that General Assembly resolution 2816 (XXVI) establishing UNDRO provided explicitly for disaster prevention and pre-disaster planning activities. The method of financing activities was a question which the Fifth Committee was best qualified to decide.

53. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) asked when the Committee would receive the information requested on the geographical distribution of posts in UNDRO.

54. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the information would probably be provided at the summer session of the Economic and Social Council.

55. Mr. SETHI (India) pointed out that the information had been requested by the Fifth Committee and not by the Economic and Social Council. What the Committee wanted was a list of the current staff of UNDRO showing the geographical distribution of posts. He expected the information to be provided to the Committee in time for the second reading of section 17.

56. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said he had understood that the Committee wanted a complete manning table. The information requested by the representative of India could be provided very quickly.

57. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation under section 17 recommended by the Advisory Committee (see 1737th meeting, para. 46).

An appropriation of $1,447,600 under section 17 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 78 votes to 8.

58. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote draft resolution A/C.5/L.1254, as orally amended (see para. 32 above).

The draft resolution was adopted by 79 votes to 9.

59. Mr. MINCHEV (Bulgaria) said that he had voted against the draft resolution because he could not endorse the inclusion in the regular budget of an amount of $400,000 for emergency assistance as authorized by that draft.

60. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) said that he had voted for the draft resolution because of its target figures. He was, however, somewhat apprehensive about the methods for financing the trust fund, which were not stated explicitly: apparently the amounts required would be provided exclusively from voluntary contributions.

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(continued) (A/10184, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257):**

***(a)* Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/10184, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257)**

61. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that while the guiding principle of the recruitment policy should continue to be that of securing the highest-calibre staff for the Organization, at the same time it should be emphasized that no single State or group of States enjoyed a monopoly of talent and skills. The principles governing recruitment were clearly set forth in Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, and his delegation firmly believed that all Member States had an abiding interest in the development of a competent, efficient and impartial international civil service which was representative of all nations and cultures of the world.

62. During the twenty-ninth session his delegation had co-operated with other delegations in preparing a decision[2] which proclaimed that there was no contradiction between the principle of equitable geographical distribution and the criteria of the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity in the recruitment of staff. Indeed, those principles should be harmonized and reconciled with each other as, slowly and sometimes painfully, the personnel policy of the United Nations was evolved.

63. His delegation had noted with satisfaction that, according to the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/10184), certain improvements had been made in staff recruitment procedures, including: the introduction of a modified vacancy announcement system; greater use of newspaper advertisements; the dispatch of recruitment missions to Member States; the organization of competitive examinations for young professionals; and the establishment of a computerized roster of candidates. His delegation welcomed the fact that, in nearly 40 per cent of the recruitment actions for Professional posts, five or more candidates had been considered. It was to be hoped that those practices would be extended so that the Secretariat was able to choose from among the most highly qualified candidates. Recruitment missions and competitive examinations for young professionals were devices of particular interest to under-represented countries like Japan, and he pledged his Government's full co-operation with the Secretariat in its efforts in that direction. At the same time, his delegation was deeply disappointed about the continued under-representation of Japan in the Secretariat. Whereas the desirable range of

* Resumed from the 1742nd meeting.

2 *Ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 81, document A/9980, paras. 29 and 43.

posts for Japan was between 107 and 150, only 65 Japanese Professional staff were now in posts subject to geographical distribution, as against 74 in 1974. That under-representation was even more flagrant if one considered the weighted figures which included senior posts. It was hard to believe that the United Nations was unable to find qualified candidates from a country in which 2 million students attended universities. If language was a barrier to the recuitment of nationals from Member States whose mother tongue was not one of the official languages of the United Nations, the Organization might do well to follow the example of the World Bank, which selected candidates on the basis of their professional qualifications and, if necessary, gave them intensive language training after recruitment.

64. His delegation saw little advantage in seeking an immediate change in the procedure for determining the range of posts subject to geographical distribution. In its view, the existing system of combining the factors of membership, population and contributions was entirely satisfactory. His delegation took exception to the hasty conclusion reached in paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's report, which implied that the majority of delegations were in favour of giving more weight to the factor of membership. Apparently the Secretary-General had misconstrued the silence of many delegations as indicative of their consent to the views expressed by a handful of representatives. That finding compelled his delegation to speak out on some of the issues.

65. The Secretary-General indirectly suggested that some shift of emphasis from national to regional balance in the composition of the Secretariat might be desirable. However, some geographical regions were not homogeneous enough—culturally, linguistically or in their educational and social systems—to make possible the equitable application of such a measure. That was regrettably true of the region of Asia and the Pacific.

66. The Secretary-General invited delegations to consider a possible widening of the scope of the principle of geographical distribution, which was at present confined to Professional and senior posts other than those requiring special language qualifications. His delegation had no objection to applying the principle of geographical distribution to the posts in the language services. It was opposed, however, to reducing the contribution factor from 71.7 per cent to 65 per cent, since it felt that Member States could contribute to the work of the United Nations, not only financially, but also by providing skilled staff. In that connexion, it should be pointed out that the table in paragraph 29 of the Secretary-General's report was already out of date, owing to the fact that five States had recently joined the Organization, and two more would probably join before the end of the session. Even if the current formula was maintained, the membership factor would grow in importance on account of the increase in the number of Member States.

67. His delegation was in favour of employing a larger number of women in the Secretariat. That aim could and should be achieved through an application of the principles defined in the Charter, namely, the criteria of the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity and the principle of equitable geographical distribution. His delegation was also in favour of eliminating all differential treatment of staff based on sex. That did not mean, however, that any numerical relationship between men and women should be established at any given level or for any given activity. His delegation cautioned against the attitudes of paternalism latent in suggestions that had been made in some quarters. It saw no reason why the same standards should not be applied to all applicants—women as well as men—for it was confident that enough women in the world met the most exacting professional qualifications. Those who were proposing to suspend, even temporarily, application of the principle of geographical distribution and of the three objective criteria defined in the Charter in order to establish a special quota for women did not necessarily foresee the serious repercussions of such a step. Time was needed in order to bring about a better balance between men and women in the Secretariat. In that connexion, the role played by national educational systems and by the attitudes of men and women towards society and the family should be emphasized. It was difficult to see how the United Nations could achieve a balance of men and women in the Secretariat until Member States had done so in their own societies and were therefore in a position to recommend qualified women candidates. In that regard he recalled that about 70 per cent of the women candidates for Secretariat posts came from North America and Western Europe.

68. If compartmentalization of the Secretariat were to be allowed by establishing a quota for women, the door might be open to encouraging racial, religious and other groupings. If that were to happen, what would become of the ideal of a single unified Secretariat dedicated to the purposes and principles of the Charter?

69. On the question of the recruitment of young people to the United Nations, his delegation recalled that it had already voiced its agreement with the concern expressed by the Joint Inspection Unit in its report on personnel problems in the United Nations[3] over the composition by age of the Secretariat, in which more than 70 per cent of the Professional staff were over 40 years of age and only 4 per cent were under 30 years of age. Such a disproportionately high ratio of older staff could result in a lack of innovation and carried high cost implications for the budget. His delegation was not satisfied with the steps taken so far by the Secretary-General, and it trusted that he would renew his efforts to recruit youthful staff members from all Member States, particularly the under-represented countries.

70. With regard to the entry of General Service staff into the Professional category—which the representative of Australia had urged with great ardour—he recalled the observations made by the Joint Inspection Unit and the Administrative Management Service[4] and noted that liberal transfers from the General Service category to the Professional category had in the past contributed to the current imbalance in the composition by age, and probably also by nationality, of the Professional category in the Secretariat.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

3 See document A/8454, of 5 October 1971.

4 See document A/C.5/1601/Add.1, of 14 October 1974.

1746th meeting

Monday, 24 November 1975, at 3.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1746

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous A/... and A/C.5/... documents, see the 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6, A/C.5/1682/Add.1, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1229-1233, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245, A/C.5/L.1250, A/C.5/L.1251)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 3. POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TRUSTEESHIP AND DECOLONIZATION ACTIVITIES *(concluded)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2, A/C.5/L.1251)

1. Mr. ZIMBA (Zambia) noted that, owing to the attainment of independence by former Portuguese Territories and other Territories, some delegations maintained that the estimates for the Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization required a more drastic reduction than that recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2). His delegation did not support that view, because the situation in southern Africa in regard to decolonization did not yet give grounds for optimism.

2. Now that the international community was psychologically prepared for decolonization, greater attention should be directed to the decolonization of Southern Rhodesia and Namibia, which could be achieved only by allocating sufficient funds to the Department concerned. Even though no substantial reduction had been recommended by the Advisory Committee, his delegation would have preferred the Fifth Committee to endorse the Secretary-General's proposals in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006).

3. The Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization required funds in order to carry out in-depth research on a number of questions with a view to facilitating the decolonization of southern Africa. Those questions included: *(a)* military relationships in southern Africa, with special reference to the military build-up and actions of South Africa in Namibia and the use of that Territory for incursions into neighbouring countries; *(b)* relationships of foreign economic companies in the region; *(c)* continued violations of economic sanctions against Southern Rhodesia; and *(d)* brutality against and arrests of Africans in Zimbabwe and Namibia in order to perpetuate *apartheid.*

4. In addition, funds were required to deal with the problems that had arisen in southern Africa as a result of a growing number of refugees from Namibia and Zimbabwe. Moreover, it was necessary to maintain supreme vigilance at all times in order to thwart the efforts of the minority régimes of South Africa and Rhodesia aimed at dividing the oppressed masses in order to perpetuate minority rule over them.

5. Zambia had paid a heavy price, in human lives as well as financial terms, as a result of United Nations sanctions against Southern Rhodesia. It would continue to make sacrifices with a view to preserving ideals of justice, liberty and peace. His delegation would therefore support the Algerian draft decision (A/C.5/L.1251).

6. He drew attention to a decision by the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa concerning the allocation of $100,000 to the Programme, to the recommendations made as a result of the evaluation of the Programme as requested by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session, and to a draft resolution on the Programme adopted by consensus in the Fourth Committee.[1] Expansion of the Programme was vital in order to meet growing needs arising from recent developments in the region and the administration of the Programme also needed to be strengthened.

7. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that in the Secretariat's opinion the draft decision submitted by Algeria had no financial implications; it merely entailed a reallocation of resources under section 3.

8. In reply to the questions raised at the 1737th meeting by the representative of the United States of America, he said that the estimated costs for 1976-1977 of maintaining the South West Africa People's Organization Office in New York was double the previous appropriation because it covered two years, whereas the earlier appropriation had been for 1975 only. The transfer from New York to Lusaka of 2 posts in the Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia was expected to generate economies of $15,000, owing to the lower cost of living at Lusaka; however, additional provisions in respect of travel, supplies and material would be required. With regard to estimates for the Trusteeship Council and for the Special Committee against *Apartheid,* he said that, as was indicated in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.20 of the proposed programme for the biennium 1976-1977, the estimates were tentative and would not be finalized until the annual programmes of work had been drawn up.

* Resumed from the 1740th meeting.

1 Subsequently adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 3422 (XXX).

9. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), recalling that the representatives of the United States of America, Belgium and Canada had asked why it had not been possible to make reductions in the staffing requirements of the Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization, said it was true that there had been a substantial reduction in the number of dependent Territories during 1974, from 37 to 32. However, as would be seen from the explanations given in paragraph 3.35 of the proposed programme budget and paragraph 3.8 of the Advisory Committee's report, it was the opinion of the Secretary-General and of the Advisory Committee that it was nevertheless unlikely that there would be any immediate decrease in the workload since the legislative bodies concerned–notably the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the United Nations Council for Namibia–would be called upon to give closer attention to the remaining problems of decolonization.

10. As far as the secretariat of the Trusteeship Council was concerned, the number of Professional staff had in fact been reduced to 2, which was felt to be the minimum required to service the Council and the forthcoming visiting mission to Micronesia.

11. More generally, there had been no reduction during 1975 in the servicing requirements of the Special Committee, nor was it expected that there would be any reduction during 1976. On the contrary, additional demands were expected to be placed on the Department in regard to the servicing of a larger number of special and other visiting missions. For example, during 1975, in addition to a regular visiting mission to Montserrat, the Department had been called upon to service two special missions, the second of which had been to the Spanish Sahara and had involved the detailing of 3 staff members for a period of five months. It was anticipated that similar demands might arise during 1976 in connexion with several dependent Territories whose decolonization raised special problems.

12. The Secretary-General was, of course, very conscious of the need to make the optimum use of the staff available and intended to take advantage of any spare capacity and to apply it to areas where additional resources were required. During the current phase of decolonization, the problems had become much more complex and in many cases required intensive in-depth study.

13. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation under section 3 recommended by the Advisory Committee (see 1737th meeting, para. 37).

An appropriation in the amount of $7,288,600 under section 3 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 70 votes to 2.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to adopt the draft decision submitted by Algeria (A/C.5/L.1251).

It was so decided.

15. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had voted for the appropriation under section 3. However, it would not have been able to approve the funds appropriated to cover inflationary increases if they had been put to the vote separately.

16. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that, if a vote had been taken on the Algerian draft decision, his delegation would have abstained.

United Nations public information policies and activities *(concluded) (A/10008/Add.2, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1243, A/C.5/L.1245)**

17. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) formally introduced, on behalf of the sponsors, the second revised version (A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2) of their draft decision.

18. The objective was to establish a time-table for the programming and budgeting of the activities of OPI. Section 21 of the proposed programme budget contained budget estimates for OPI for the biennium 1976-1977, while the report of the Secretary-General on United Nations public information policies and activities (A/C.5/1679) described the activities of OPI over the same period, making certain suggestions and proposals, some of which had financial implications. If the suggestions in the Secretary-General's report were approved, supplementary estimates would probably be submitted in 1976 or 1977. Yet decisions by the Fifth Committee on questions with financial implications should be taken only after such implications had been submitted and considered. According to the concepts of programme budgeting, the report of the Secretary-General was an input for the programming process, and its implications should be reflected in the budget estimates of OPI for the next budgetary cycle as an output.

19. The report of the Secretary-General should be considered, normally and as a matter of principle, in off-budget years. Consideration of United Nations public information policies and activities in off-budget years did not, of course, preclude consideration of the question in budget years. The budget estimates of OPI and progress and interim performance reports would be considered in budget years.

20. Referring to the amendments submitted by the Soviet delegation (A/C.5/L.1245), he said that the words "by the Fifth Committee" had been deleted from the revised draft decision before the Committee. As for the proposal to insert the words "at greater length", he said that the objective of the draft decision was to decide when and not how United Nations public information policies and activities should be considered; the members of the Committee could discuss the subject in detail or at greater length if they so wished, and scheduling the item in off-budget years would provide all members with an opportunity to do so. Accordingly, he appealed to the Soviet representative not to insist upon his amendment.

21. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that the Committee had already

* Resumed from the 1740th meeting.

resolved the question raised in draft decision A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2 by adopting draft resolution A/C.5/L.1241/Rev.4. Accordingly, there was no need to vote on the draft decision before the Committee, or on the amendment he had submitted.

22. Although the sponsors had accepted his amendment to delete the words "by the Fifth Committee", the draft decision still implied that the Fifth Committee would be considering the question. His delegation maintained that the question of United Nations public information policies and activities should be a separate item to be allocated by the General Committee at the thirty-first session. Accordingly, if a vote was taken on the draft decision, his delegation would vote against it.

The draft decision (A/C.5/L.1242/Rev.2) was adopted by 45 votes to 9, with 16 abstentions.

23. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to resume its consideration of the draft decision submitted by Pakistan (A/C.5/L.1243).

24. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) supported the draft decision and expressed his confidence that internal management changes would lead to improvements and expedite the publication of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* without an increase in the estimated expenditure. Under the current system, substantive departments prepared the first drafts of the *Yearbook*, and there was considerable delay, as such a task was often assigned low priority by the departments concerned. He suggested that the work of preparing the *Yearbook* should be centralized in the Yearbook Unit, with its 4 Professional and 4 General Service posts, and that the introductions to the various sections should then be reviewed by the substantive departments concerned.

25. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether there were any financial implications, currently or for the future, in the draft decision. He also asked the sponsor of the draft decision why he had singled out the *Yearbook* for special treatment from the many OPI publications.

26. Mr. BENKIRANE (Morocco) welcomed the draft decision, as he considered the *Yearbook* an important reference work.

27. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that draft decision A/C.5/L.1243 had no financial implications. At the thirty-first session, after the Secretary-General had explored ways and means of ensuring more timely publication of the *Yearbook*, recommendations might be submitted, and any financial implications of such recommendations would be considered at that session.

28. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan), responding to the comment by the Soviet representative, said that he had singled out the *Yearbook* precisely because there were so many other documents that foreign offices and delegations felt the need to keep abreast of events by reading the *Yearbook*.

29. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) supported the draft decision.

30. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Director of the Budget Division for his assurance that the draft decision had no financial implications under rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. On that understanding he would vote for the draft decision.

31. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) supported the draft decision, which had no financial implications.

The draft decision (A/C.5/L.1243) was adopted without objection.

32. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the opinion of the Legal Counsel, submitted in response to a request made at the 1740th meeting; the text of that opinion had been circulated as a conference room paper.[2] As there were no comments on it, he announced that the Committee had concluded its consideration of the question of United Nations public information policies and activities.

AGENDA ITEM 101

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General *(continued) (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10299, A/C.5/1670, A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1255, A/C.5/L.1256)**

33. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider a new revised version (A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2) of the draft resolution before it, which incorporated the Yugoslav amendment (A/C.5/L.1256). The Committee also had before it three amendments submitted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (A/C.5/L.1255).

34. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) announced that the Yugoslav amendment had been accepted by the sponsors with a few minor alterations. However, none of the amendments submitted by the Soviet Union had been incorporated in the draft resolution for the following reasons. The first amendment was unacceptable, although the sponsors had reflected it to a certain extent by using the stronger wording "as modified by" in operative paragraph 2. The second Soviet amendment was also unacceptable. The third Soviet amendment seemed superfluous in view of the incorporation of the Yugoslav amendment.

35. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) recalled that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal that subsidiary bodies of subsidiary bodies should cease to be provided with meeting records of any other kind than sound recording (A/C.5/1670, para. 14, criterion 6). It seemed to his delegation that, in formulating that criterion, the Secretary-General had drawn an artificial distinction between, on the one hand, subsidiary bodies of main organs and, on the other, subsidiary bodies of subsidiary bodies. Neither the Secretary-General nor the Advisory Committee had taken into account the possibility that the work of subsidiary bodies in the second category might rightly be considered more important than the work of subsidiary

* Resumed from the 1742nd meeting.

2 Document A/C.5/XXX/CRP.7 of 19 November 1975.

bodies in the first category. The validity of that argument was proved by the fact that the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System had proposed the abolition of eight bodies directly responsible to the Economic and Social Council but not of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, which was responsible only to the Commission on Human Rights. Summary records of the Sub-Commission would assume heightened importance in the future owing to the impending entry into force of the conventions on human rights. The fact that the members of the Sub-Commission were experts also added to that body's authority and weight. Moreover, the application of criterion 6 would compel the Secretariat to draft far more detailed reports, thereby incurring costs that would largely offset the anticipated economies. The Sub-Commission, like all other bodies of the Economic and Social Council, would be required to apply conscientiously decision 65 (ORG-75), adopted by the Council on 15 January 1975, requesting its subsidiary bodies to limit the provision of summary records to items in relation to which summary records were deemed essential.

36. In view of the foregoing, his delegation proposed an amendment to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2 which would add the words "taking into consideration the merits of each particular case" at the end of operative paragraph 4.

37. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) asked whether the delegation of the Soviet Union was prepared to withdraw its amendments in the light of the explanations provided by the representative of the Philippines. As far as the first Soviet amendment was concerned, it went without saying that, if the Secretary-General applied the criteria, any changes in the budget would be reflected in the Secretary-General's performance report. The second Soviet amendment was unacceptable because it would not allow the Secretary-General any flexibility in applying the criteria. As the representative of the Philippines had pointed out, the third Soviet amendment had been made redundant by the acceptance of the Yugoslav amendment.

38. His delegation could not support the oral amendment submitted by the delegation of Greece in that it was substantive and might lead to a prolonged discussion.

39. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation could agree to withdraw the second and third of its amendments (A/C.5/L.1255), even though it did not find the text of operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution altogether satisfactory. However, it maintained its first amendment, which derived from a recommendation by the Advisory Committee and embodied a principle of great significance. He had been astonished to hear certain members of the Fifth Committee who were also members of the Advisory Committee state that the financial implications of the draft resolution could be reflected at some future time instead of in the budget proposals now before the Committee. He proposed that a roll-call vote should be taken on that amendment.

40. Mr. KISEKA (Uganda) commended the sponsors for producing a generally acceptable text. He supported the Greek proposal because indiscriminate application of certain of the Secretary-General's criteria might impair the preparation of reports on the important questions deriving from the proceedings of the seventh special session of the General Assembly, including the comprehensive study of the role of international co-operation in the third world.

41. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that his delegation was unable to support the Greek oral amendment because, on the basis of estimates of savings to be derived from the application of criterion 6, adoption of the Greek amendment would reduce those savings by $181,000.

42. Mr. SETHI (India) noted that paragraph 2 of the draft resolution referred to "the criteria proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 14 of his report, as modified by the comments of the Advisory Committee". His delegation knew of no modifications proposed by the Advisory Committee, which had used the wording in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1670) and made comments on the financial implications of the adoption of the criteria. Paragraph 2 therefore needed to be reworded for the sake of greater clarity.

43. It was also to be noted that some of the hypotheses on which the comments of the Advisory Committee were based were invalid, since the savings envisaged would not be realized during the next biennium. Due account should be taken of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, but they would have to be viewed in conjunction with the statement of probable financial implications prepared by the Secretariat.

44. Mr. HENČIĆ (Yugoslavia) thanked the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2 for incorporating the Yugoslav amendment in the text. His delegation had no objection to the Greek oral amendment.

45. The criteria should be applied with a certain flexibility so as to determine their effects and avoid impairing the functioning of particular committees or sub-committees.

46. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation was in favour of the draft resolution and considered that the financial implications of the application of the criteria could be considered at a subsequent stage. It was also in favour of the first of the Soviet amendments (A/C.5/L.1255).

47. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) announced that the sponsors maintained the revised draft resolution as it had been submitted.

48. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) stated that the adoption of paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2 without the amendment proposed by his delegation would not guarantee that the sum mentioned by the representative of Pakistan would in fact be saved.

49. While it was true that his delegation should have submitted its amendment earlier and that a more felicitous wording was possible, the crucial consideration was not to impair the functioning of United Nations bodies concerned with human rights.

50. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the first of the amendments submitted by the Soviet Union (A/C.5/L.1255).

At the request of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the vote was taken by roll-call.

The United Republic of Cameroon, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen, German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Hungary, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Republic, Madagascar, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Against: Uruguay, Zambia, Canada, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Abstaining: United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Brazil, Burma, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Greece, Guyana, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda.

The amendment was adopted by 18 votes to 16, with 58 abstentions.

51. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the amendment submitted orally by Greece to paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2, calling for the addition at the end of the paragraph of the following words: "taking into consideration the merits of each particular case".

The amendment was adopted by 16 votes to 6, with 50 abstentions.

The revised draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2), as amended, was adopted by 83 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

52. Mr. HART (Australia) said that his delegation had been pleased to vote in favour of the draft resolution as amended, because it was broadly consistent with Australia's views on the need to reduce the flow of United Nations documentation. His delegation took it that the Secretary-General would inform the bodies likely to be affected that the Fifth Committee was anxious to ensure that the effectiveness of the Organization was not impaired. Further, his delegation understood that the Secretary-General would inform those bodies that the Committee on Conferences would review on the basis of appropriate consultations the optimum requirements for records of bodies and organs of the United Nations.

53. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that his delegation had always supported measures to reduce expenditure caused by documentation, but had been unable to support the Soviet amendment because the phrase "to make the appropriate corrections" was ambiguous. It had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution because the text was unclear and did not provide for definite rational savings on documentation.

54. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution as amended and agreed with Australia on the need to preserve the effectiveness of United Nations bodies. Particular attention should be paid to those bodies which were entrusted with the task of elaborating international legal instruments.

55. Mr. SETHI (India) endorsed the remarks made by the representative of Australia. His delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution in spite of its difficulties with the wording. It understood that the criteria referred to in the draft resolution were those proposed by the Secretary-General and that due account would be taken of the comments of the Advisory Committee during their application.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

56. Mr. SETHI (India) proposed that, in order to accelerate the pace of proceedings, the Committee should decide to refrain from holding a general debate on agenda items 104 and 105, concerning personnel questions and the United Nations salary system, and should instead immediately take up the consideration of any proposals relating to those two items.

57. Mr. ONISCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), speaking on a point of order, expressed concern because the Committee's work was proceeding at a very slow pace, yet only three weeks were left until the session was due to close. Quite clearly, the Committee would have to meet on Saturdays and in the evenings in order to carry out its scheduled programme of work. With such a heavy workload, it was essential that the documentation prepared by the Secretariat should be circulated in good time for study by delegations. His delegation had great doubts as to whether it would have sufficient time to study even superficially the enormous pile of documentation which was still being issued by the Secretariat.

58. In that connexion, he drew attention to a decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session and contained in the report of the Committee dated 18 December 1973, in which it was stated, *inter alia:*

> "... Documentation on agenda items before the Fifth Committee, with the exception of revised budget estimates and notes on financial implications of different proposals of the Main Committees of the General Assembly and other bodies, should be distributed not later than six weeks before the closing date of the session for timely consideration by the Advisory Committee, unless the Fifth Committee decides otherwise. At the beginning of each session, the Secretary-General is requested to report to the Fifth Committee on the status of the documentation which is to be produced".[3]

3 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Annexes,* agenda item 79, document A/9450/Add.1, para. 61.

He noted with regret that the decision he had quoted had been violated at the current session by the late submission of a number of documents. To quote but a few examples, document A/10350 concerning the financing of UNEF and UNDOF had been circulated on 17 November, i.e., two weeks after the scheduled date; document A/10035–a bulky document of more than 400 pages on the budget and programme performance of the United Nations during the past biennium–although dated 13 November, had not been circulated until 24 November, i.e., three weeks after the scheduled date; moreover, no Russian version had yet appeared; document A/10348 concerning the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences was dated 17 November and had been circulated on 24 November; and document A/C.5/1716, dated 21 November, had just been circulated. Such late submission of documents was of extreme concern because the decisions of the Fifth Committee had great significance for the work of the United Nations as a whole. The Committee did not have the right to take its decisions in haste without careful study of the relevant documentation.

59. His delegation would therefore like the Secretariat to inform the Committee in writing as soon as possible which documents had been and would be submitted late, in violation of the decision taken at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, and to state the reasons for the delay. He hoped that in future the rule concerning the punctual distribution of documents would be strictly observed.

60. With regard to the proposal by the representative of India, he believed that, if the Committee decided not to hold a general discussion on personnel questions and the United Nations salary system, it should also refrain from taking decisions on the proposals before the Committee concerning those questions.

61. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), speaking on a point of order, said that the Committee was making such slow progress that it was threatened with a veritable plague of night meetings. His delegation was therefore proposing, in accordance with rule 114 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, that all interventions, without exception, should be limited to a maximum of five minutes. That rule should remain in force until the Chairman decided that the Committee had made sufficient progress to justify its relaxation.

62. Further, his delegation was suggesting that delegations should voluntarily limit their interventions to less than five minutes. Since the immediate benefit of that self-denial should be a reduced need for night meetings, his delegation was suggesting, as the corollary of its main proposal, that future night meetings after Wednesday, 26 November should be cancelled. It also suggested that the proposals which it had put forward should be voted on individually.

63. The CHAIRMAN noted that under rule 114 of the rules of procedure, before a decision was taken, two representatives might speak in favour of, and two against, a proposal to set a time-limit on speeches.

64. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) and Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) supported the United Kingdom proposal.

65. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that no adequate argument had been produced to justify a time-limit. A number of important items required clarifications which could not possibly be made in five minutes.

66. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) believed that a five-minute limit would not allow delegations sufficient time to present the positions of their Governments and that some delegations might be tempted to make a series of short interventions. It was not necessary, as matters stood, to set a time-limit; an appeal to the self-discipline of delegations would be wiser.

67. The CHAIRMAN said that, as he understood it, whatever decision was reached by the Committee would be without prejudice to the discretionary power of the Chairman. A situation might arise, for instance, where the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions found that he could not limit himself to five minutes on a particular issue. In such circumstances, the Chairman, at his discretion, could waive the time-limit.

68. Mr. SETHI (India) referred to rule 106 of the rules of procedure, which allowed the Chairman such discretionary power.

69. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) suggested that his original proposal should stand with the proviso that the Chairman had the absolute prerogative to decide, in certain special cases, to waive the time-limit. However, the proposal would become meaningless if it was adopted on the understanding that the time-limit could invariably be waived through the Chairman's prerogative.

70. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), speaking on a point of order, said that in accordance with rule 114 of the rules of procedure, the Committee should have proceeded to a vote without delay.

71. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the proposal by the United Kingdom representative that the length of interventions should be limited until such time as the Chairman felt that the limitation could be relaxed.

The United Kingdom proposal was rejected by 39 votes to 21, with 24 abstentions.

72. The CHAIRMAN said that the rejection of the United Kingdom proposal did not pre-empt the prerogative of the Chairman, in accordance with rule 106 of the rules of procedure, to propose to the Committee the limitation of the time to be allowed to speakers.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

1747th meeting

Monday, 24 November 1975, at 8.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1747

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous A/... and A/C.5/... documents, see the 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6, A/C.5/1682/Add.1, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1229-1233, A/C.5/L.1238-1240, A/C.5/L.1250)

Consideration of the proposals before the Committee (A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1229-1233, A/C.5/L.1238, A/C.5/L.1239, A/C.5/L.1250)

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1238

1. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand), introducing a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1238), said that, over the years, many appeals had been addressed to Member States to pay their contributions earlier; there was no doubt that the progress achieved in that direction would make an important contribution to the difficult cash-flow position in which the United Nations currently found itself. Of course, the legislative and foreign exchange difficulties which prevented many Member States from paying their contributions earlier were not negligible, but the Committee surely would wish to respond to the Secretary-General's latest appeal in his statement before the Committee at its 1700th meeting (A/C.5/1685). The resumption of the Secretary-General's practice of publishing, on a quarterly basis, a document showing the status of the contributions of Member States to the regular budget and continuing operations for which there were special assessments would be of assistance to Member States in monitoring progress towards the desired goal. The adoption of the draft decision he was introducing would be an extremely modest step which in itself would not lead to an immediate improvement in the cash-flow position of the United Nations. However, the adoption of the draft decision would place at the disposal of all Member States an analytical tool by which the progress of each State towards meeting the Secretary-General's appeal could be evaluated, and, in the long run, that step would encourage States to redouble their efforts to respond to that appeal. Many bodies, including the Committee on Contributions, the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies and the Special Committee on the Financial Situation of the United Nations, had stressed the importance to the financial health of the United Nations of the earlier payment of contributions.

2. The CHAIRMAN asked the representative of New Zealand whether, since it was already the end of November, the date of 30 September 1975, from which the document requested in the draft decision was to be published, still applied.

3. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that it did not really matter whether the document requested was published on 30 November or 1 January; what counted was that the practice was resumed. He therefore left it entirely up to the Chairman to decide from what date the document should be published.

4. The CHAIRMAN replied that 1 January 1976 would be a more appropriate date for resuming publication of the document requested in the draft decision.

5. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked the representative of the Secretariat whether the adoption of the draft decision would have financial implications. He also asked the representative of New Zealand to tell him what was contained in document A/5822,[1] which was mentioned in the draft decision; having been published 11 years earlier, that document was no longer available.

6. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) asked why the publication of the document indicating the status of Member States' contributions had been halted; he wished to know whether that decision had been taken by a particular legislative body or whether the Secretariat itself had believed that the document in question was no longer useful.

7. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) whole-heartedly endorsed the draft decision proposed by New Zealand, for the cash-flow situation had been critical for a long time and the publication of the information requested in the draft decision could help remedy the situation by making Member States more aware of their collective financial responsibility.

8. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that if the draft decision was adopted, the publication of the information requested therein would have financial implications; the amount undoubtedly would not be very high, but a precise figure could not be given at the moment.

9. It was difficult to say why the practice of publishing information on the status of contributions of Member States had been halted, since that step had been the result of numerous observations, suggestions and indications; it appeared that Member States had not wished the practice to continue because, given the status of their contributions, they had been hesitant in that regard.

10. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that whenever the Secretariat was asked to provide information, it stated that the publication of the information would have financial implications. The Secretary-General

[1] Mimeographed document, dated 30 November 1964.

knew very well that information would be requested under one item or another, and the appropriations envisaged in the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977, which amounted to some $700 million, appeared substantial enough to cover the cost of compiling and publishing information which was required.

11. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), after thanking the Controller for his explanations, pointed out that under rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Committee could not examine draft decision A/C.5/L.1238 until it knew its exact financial implications. Naturally, every document requested of the Secretariat should not necessarily involve financial implications, given the considerable size of the proposed programme budget; however, as the committee responsible for administrative and budgetary questions, the Fifth Committee, more than any other body, must strictly abide by the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

12. The CHAIRMAN agreed that, while the Fifth Committee could not pronounce on the draft decision until it was aware of its financial implications, nothing prevented it from considering the text while awaiting the relevant information.

13. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) supported the draft decision, but agreed that the Committee could not vote on the text without knowing its financial implications. It was surprising that the Controller could not give an exact indication of those implications, since the draft decision had been issued nearly a month earlier and the Secretariat certainly had had all the time it needed to calculate the expenditure involved. When a draft decision was submitted, the Secretariat should immediately prepare the statement of its financial implications in order not to delay the work of the Committee.

14. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that he shared the view of the representative of the Upper Volta and hoped that the same problems would not arise with other draft decisions. The financial implications of the draft decision in question should be minimal, for the information requested undoubtedly had already been compiled by the Secretariat, and their publication should not require much additional work.

15. He would like the Controller to be more precise when speaking of the Member States which had opposed the continued publication of the information on the status of contributions. The Controller appeared to have been referring to all Member States, whereas only a minority had not wished the practice to continue; the majority of Member States, including the United States, had wished the information to be published.

16. He supported the draft decision and hoped that the information requested would be provided speedily; he proposed that the date of 30 September 1975 mentioned should be replaced by 31 December 1975, since accounts were generally kept on a calendar year basis.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that, since the New Zealand representative had left the decision to him, he could accept the date proposed by the representative of the United States for the publication of the information requested.

18. Mr. OH (Singapore) also expressed surprise that the Secretariat had not prepared in advance the statement of financial implications of the draft decision, which had been issued on 28 October. The date of 31 December 1975 seemed the most appropriate for resuming publication of the information requested in the draft decision.

19. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the document requested might be 10 to 20 pages long, and each page would cost $250. Publication of the document would thus cost between $2,500 and $5,000, and if it was published each quarter the total cost would be $10,000 to $20,000 a year. One reason why the Secretariat had not produced a statement of the financial implications of the draft decision was that the words "on a regular and at least quarterly basis" were rather vague, and the Committee would have to specify exactly what it wanted. The cost of publishing the document could probably be met within the limits of appropriations under the programme budget.

20. In order to avoid any misunderstanding as to why information concerning the status of contributions was no longer published, he said that not all Member States had in fact wished that practice to be ended.

21. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) pointed out that document A/5822, referred to in the draft decision, had been only 3 pages long, and the financial implications might therefore be less than the Controller had indicated. He hoped that the expenditure could be absorbed within the budget appropriations, but he agreed that the Committee should know the exact financial implications of the draft decision before adopting or rejecting it.

22. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said he thought that the Committee could take its decision immediately, since the Controller had indicated that, whatever the financial implications were, they could be absorbed within the budget.

23. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said the statement by the Controller showed that, if the draft decision was adopted, its implementation would involve additional expenses of $10,000 to $20,000 per year. Publication of the document requested was unnecessary and unjustified, because Member States were fully aware of how much they had paid or had to pay. The Committee affirmed that it was necessary to reduce the amount of documentation, but then it requested additional documents. The Secretariat had rightly stopped publishing information on the status of contributions, because such documents were of no interest to the Organization and only involved additional expense and unnecessary work. Thus there seemed to be no reason at all for the draft decision, and even the representative of New Zealand seemed to have some doubts in view of the financial implications of publishing the document requested.

24. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) noted that Greece was one of the sponsors of draft decision A/C.5/L.1238 and said that, as a result of some of the statements he had heard, he was wondering whether it should not perhaps be revised. He therefore agreed with the representative of New Zealand that the decision should be postponed.

25. Mr. SETHI (India) observed that, since some of the sponsors of the draft decision themselves had requested that the Committee should wait before taking a decision on the text, it would be only common courtesy to defer such a decision.

26. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia) said that, if the Committee was to defer its decision, he would like to know when the Controller would be able to indicate the exact cost of publishing the document requested.

27. The CHAIRMAN said he agreed with the representative of the United States of America that, if the financial implications of the draft decision could be absorbed within the budget, the Committee could take its decision immediately. In view of the reservations expressed by some of the sponsors, however, he proposed that the decision should be postponed until the Committee had received more precise information on the financial implications, particularly since some amendments might be made to the text.

It was so decided.

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1232

28. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba), introducing a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1232), said that the expenses resulting from inflation and currency instability should not be included in the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, but should be submitted in supplementary estimates at the end of each year, first, because they constituted extraordinary expenses which should not appear in the regular budget, and, secondly, because it was very difficult to estimate in advance how much they would amount to and thus to include exact figures in the budget. Finally, it was burdensome for many Member States to have to pay for such expenses in advance.

29. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1232).

The draft decision was rejected by 31 votes to 17, with 30 abstentions.

Draft decisions A/C.5/L.1229, A/C.5/L.1230, A/C.5/L.1233

30. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Committee had already voted on the first part of the draft decision submitted by the Soviet Union in document A/C.5/L.1230 when, at its 1725th meeting, it had decided to support the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraphs 22.54, 22.82 and 22.91 of its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2).

31. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) introduced the three draft decisions proposed by his delegation (A/C.5/L.1229, A/C.5/L.1230 and A/C.5/L.1233).

32. In draft decision A/C.5/L.1229, it was proposed that the General Assembly should support the opinion expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 28 of its first report that programme increases should follow rather than precede action by the legislative organs; the General Assembly would also propose that rules 153 and 154 of its rules of procedure should in future be strictly observed. That proposal was very important, as could be seen from the attention which the Advisory Committee had given to the question and from the provisions of rules 153 and 154. He therefore requested a roll-call vote on the proposal.

33. The first part of draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 had already been adopted, as the Chairman had recalled. The second part, under which the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to make the necessary corrections in the United Nations budget for 1976-1977 and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the question of extra-budgetary funds, did not go further than the recommendations of the Advisory Committee referred to in the draft decision, but was designed to make them binding through a decision of the General Assembly.

34. In draft decision A/C.5/L.1233, it was proposed that the General Assembly should support the view of the Advisory Committee set forth in paragraphs 52 and 53 of its first report. Paragraph 52 stated that a proposal to transfer posts from voluntary funds to the regular budget was justified only when the ultimate likelihood of such a transfer had been made known to the General Assembly at the time a particular trust fund was being established and the resultant responsibility had been accepted by the General Assembly. Paragraph 53 stated that the Secretary-General must not use available voluntary contributions to finance new posts whose functions properly fell within the scope of the regular budget. Thus, as in the case of the other decisions, his delegation's intention was to ensure the adoption of the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

35. The CHAIRMAN asked whether, in draft decisions A/C.5/L.1229 and A/C.5/L.1233, the Soviet delegation would agree to replace the beginning by the words: "The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it should support the opinion expressed by the Advisory Committee".

36. Secondly, he would like to know whether the Soviet delegation wanted the Committee to vote on draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 as a whole, or only on the part of the text on which a decision had not yet been taken, namely, the phrase beginning with the words "requests the Secretary-General to take measures . . ." in the first paragraph.

37. Lastly, he suggested that the wording used in draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 should be replaced by the usual wording: "The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly that . . .".

38. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that he would like the three draft decisions submitted by the Soviet Union to be considered one after the other in order to avoid any confusion. He did not see the need for a roll-call vote on draft decision A/C.5/L.1229, and he urged the Soviet delegation to reconsider its request in order to save time.

39. That draft decision was based on part of paragraph 28 of the first report of the Advisory Committee and he proposed that the word "normally", which had been

omitted, should be inserted before the word "follow". He would also like to hear the views of the Controller on the draft decision.

40. The CHAIRMAN said it had always been his intention that the Committee should consider the three draft decisions separately. He asked whether the Soviet delegation would agree to the insertion of the word "normally" in draft decision A/C.5/L.1229.

41. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), replying to the representative of Iran, said he had not intended to request that the Committee should take a single vote on all three draft decisions.

42. He reiterated his request for a roll-call vote on draft decision A/C.5/L.1229, in view of the fact that the Advisory Committee had twice made a recommendation on the question. That would also be in keeping with the letter and the spirit of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

43. He agreed to the insertion in the text of that draft decision of the word "normally", which had been omitted. He also agreed to the Chairman's suggestion that the three draft decisions should begin with the words: "The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly that . . .". As the first part of draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 had already been adopted, only the second part need be put to the vote.

44. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) noted that the Soviet representative continued to discuss all three draft decisions at once, and suggested that the Committee should concentrate first on draft decision A/C.5/L.1229. He again urged the Soviet delegation not to insist on a roll-call vote, and said that his proposal for the insertion of the word "normally" did not constitute an amendment.

45. Mr. KISEKA (Uganda) said he had intended to propose that the exact text of paragraph 28 of the Advisory Committee's report should be quoted in the draft decision, but he believed that the Iranian proposal would suffice. He would like the Secretariat to inform the Committee what services were provided to the United Nations by other agencies–UNDP, for example–and whether the United Nations reimbursed them for the cost of such services.

46. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said he hoped that the Committee would not take a roll-call vote on draft decision A/C.5/L.1229, and he wished to propose some amendments which should enable it to be adopted by consensus. He proposed that the beginning of the draft decision should be replaced by the words: "The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it should support the opinion reaffirmed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 28 . . .", since the Advisory Committee had expressed the opinion in question in its last two reports. He also proposed that the last part of the text, beginning with the words "and proposes", should be deleted, since it amounted to an indictment of the Secretariat, of delegations and of committees; to propose that rules 153 and 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly should be strictly observed implied that they had not been observed in the past.

47. His delegation felt that the second part of draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 constituted a misinterpretation of the Advisory Committee's recommendations. In paragraphs 22.54, 22.82 and 22.91 of its first report, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should study the question or review the volume of the services provided. The paragraphs in question should therefore be quoted exactly. In addition, his delegation did not see what the sponsor of the draft decision meant by "make the necessary corrections in the United Nations budget". It could, therefore, not agree to that draft decision.

48. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that he had no objections of principle to draft decision A/C.5/L.1229. On the other hand, he shared the view of the representative of the United States that the final sentence of draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 needed clarification: if corrections were to be made in the budget, they would have to be spelled out, and then the problem of financial implications would arise.

49. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands), referring to draft decision A/C.5/L.1230, stressed the importance of the relationship between the regular budget and extra-budgetary funds. The Advisory Committee had touched upon the question of the inclusion in the regular budget of posts previously financed from extra-budgetary resources (A/10008 and Corr.2, paras. 49 to 54). In its seventh report (A/10008/Add.6, para. 36), the Advisory Committee had pointed to the need for the General Assembly to give guidance on the principles to be applied in financing from the regular budget regional centres and institutes previously funded from extra-budgetary resources.

50. The prevailing opinion among delegations and within the Advisory Committee seemed to be that no costs relating to activities primarily financed by extra-budgetary resources should appear in the regular budget. In most cases, extra-budgetary funds financed activities in areas which, until then, had not received sufficient attention. The purpose of those funds was to focus the attention of the world on those problems in an attempt to solve them. In the areas of environment, population, drug abuse and, above all, development, those extra-budgetary funds played an extremely useful role, especially for the developing countries.

51. At a later stage, once the usefulness of United Nations involvement in such areas was recognized by General Assembly resolutions, it was normal for a major part of those activities to be financed from the regular budget. At that point, the basis for those activities was no longer the concept of generosity and charity, but that of United Nations commitment and financial responsibility. In refusing to allow such activities to be financed from the regular budget, the membership as a whole would be minimizing the Organization's involvement in areas of recognized importance, thereby downgrading the activities financed from extra-budgetary funds to innocuous international philanthropic institutions.

52. Draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 seemed entirely logical but, as the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management had indicated at the 1715th meeting, the text gave a one-sided picture. The United Nations not only

provided services to extra-budgetary funds, but also received services from those funds. Thus, UNDP resident representatives, for example, acted as United Nations ambassadors throughout the world. His delegation considered that the United Nations was a greater recipient than provider of services to extra-budgetary funds. If those funds were to be required to reimburse to the United Nations budget the full cost of services provided, it was to be expected that extra-budgetary funds would provide services to the United Nations only if they were fully reimbursed. The addendum to the report of the Committee on Contributions, circulated as document A/10011/Add.1[2] showed that some countries paid very substantial amounts to the regular budget and very meagre amounts to extra-budgetary funds. The Soviet Union, for instance, paid 25 times more to the regular budget. If draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 was adopted, voluntary funds would have less money available for operational programmes mainly benefiting the developing countries.

53. If the Soviet delegation maintained its draft decision, his delegation would propose an amendment adding at the end of the first paragraph the words "and vice versa".

54. Draft decision A/C.5/L.1233 suffered from the same one-sidedness as draft decision A/C.5/L.1230. The least that could have been done was to mention in the draft decision the six paragraphs—49 to 54—which the Advisory Committee had devoted to the establishment of posts previously financed from extra-budgetary resources. His delegation would therefore be unable to support the draft decision.

55. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) indicated to the representative of the United States that he would be ready to withdraw his request for a roll-call vote on draft decision A/C.5/L.1229, if it could be adopted by consensus. He would not, however, allow the last phrase in the draft to be deleted, since the text constituted a logical whole: the opinion expressed by the Advisory Committee was first supported, the terms of its recommendation were then recalled and, finally, the need to observe rules 153 and 154 of the rules of procedure was emphasized. No part of the text could be deleted without impairing its structure. Moreover, his delegation could not accept the notion that the last phrase was accusatory; the aim was simply to request that those rules should be observed. His delegation insisted that the draft decision be put to the vote in its existing wording.

56. The CHAIRMAN asked whether the Soviet delegation would accept the substitution of the words "opinion expressed" in draft decision A/C.5/L.1229 by the words "opinion reaffirmed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 28" as the United States delegation had proposed.

57. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) accepted that proposal.

58. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) agreed with the representative of the United States of America that the last part of the sentence in draft decision A/C.5/L.1229 amounted to an indictment. It would be preferable to say that the rules of procedure in question should continue to be strictly observed.

59. Mr. SETHI (India) said that draft decision A/C.5/L.1229 referred to an opinion which had been expressed several times by the Advisory Committee, whose competence was recognized in the matter of financial implications but was less certain in respect of programmes. The basic question was to determine what constituted a programme. In his opinion, a programme was a group of activities defined by decisions of legislative bodies. Every programme, therefore, was necessarily undertaken in response to a decision of a legislative organ, but the Secretary-General was ultimately responsible for the definition of programmes. In the case of many programmes, it was impossible to set dates or times of implementation, owing to their continuous character. They could be made less comprehensive and at the same time be kept within the guidelines. On the other hand, some programme growth represented new activities undertaken in response to important decisions. He believed that the Advisory Committee's opinion should be endorsed, even though the draft decision was of only limited scope. In any event, he refused to accept the assumption that adoption of the decision would be tantamount to advocating the adoption of a zero-growth budget. Nevertheless, his delegation certainly agreed that programme increases should follow rather than precede action by the legislative organs. It was therefore prepared to support the Soviet Union proposal.

60. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that he shared the concern expressed by the delegation of the United States regarding the last part of draft decision A/C.5/L.1229. If the Committee took a decision calling for the strict observance of rules 153 and 154 of the rules of procedure that might mean that the other rules need not be strictly observed. If the delegation of the Soviet Union maintained its draft decision, one might just as well say that "all" the rules of procedure should be observed.

61. Mr. NAUDY (France) asked whether the delegation of the Soviet Union, as a compromise, would agree to delete the words "in future" in order to remove the element of criticism from the last part of the draft decision A/C.5/L.1229.

62. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), citing paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 3199 (XXVIII), said that the first part of the draft decision might be in conflict with that resolution and requested the Secretariat to clarify the point.

63. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) asked whether the delegation of the Soviet Union would agree to replace the end of the text, beginning with the words "proposes that" by the phrase "reiterates the importance it attaches to rules 153 and 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly".

64. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the representative of the Philippines had rightly drawn attention to paragraph 3 of resolution 3199 (XXVIII), in which the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General "to ensure that there is a

2 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 11*, addendum.

meaningful element of real growth in important programmes". Draft decision A/C.5/L.1229 referred to paragraph 28 of the Advisory Committee's first report, which was before the Fifth Committee; in that paragraph, the Advisory Committee cited paragraph 27 of its first report[3] on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975; in the latter passage the Advisory Committee had expressed the view that the practice of inserting an element for programme growth in the initial budget estimates and also presenting revised estimates to meet extra costs attributable to legislative action was open to question. On the basis of a narrow interpretation, it could be said that there was no incompatibility between draft decision A/C.5/L.1229 and resolution 3199 (XXVIII). The Secretary-General, when he submitted requests for appropriations, had to abide by resolutions which had been adopted by the General Assembly and act in a manner which was in keeping with the goals of the Organization. However, it should be added that, if the budget estimates were to be meaningful, they had to reflect the general policy of the Organization. A sense of realism was accordingly required in preparing those estimates. Moreover, in many cases, additional resources were needed in order to implement a programme decided upon by the legislative organs because, once the programme had reached a certain stage in its implementation, it had to be expanded if its objectives were to be attained. If the Secretary-General lost sight of that consideration, he would be failing in his duty, for he had to ensure that any programme adopted by a legislative organ produced the expected results. That was why he had to have some latitude, the need for which, moreover, had never been disputed by the Advisory Committee.

65. As the representative of India had commented, the question at issue was to determine what exactly was meant by "programme". For the purpose of the budget estimates, the definition of a programme was very broad, since it meant a description of the results or objectives to be attained through certain activities. That, moreover, was the purport of the comments made by the Advisory Committee. It was only when a new programme was introduced or there was a substantial element of growth in a programme already under way that the Secretary-General should be careful not to anticipate action by the General Assembly.

66. The CHAIRMAN recalled that two amendments had been submitted to draft decision A/C.5/L.1229. The first, submitted by France, would delete the words "in future"; the second, submitted by Pakistan, would replace the text beginning with the words "proposes that" by the phrase "reiterates the importance it attaches to rules 153 and 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly".

67. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he accepted the amendment proposed by France, which might indeed dispel some doubts and reassure those who saw in the draft decision, as it stood, an implicit indictment of the Secretariat.

68. His delegation also wished to dispel the concern of the representative of the Philippines. The first part of the draft decision in no way jeopardized real programme growth. Its object was to ensure that programme growth would follow, not precede, action by the legislative organs. That object actually complemented the considerations on which General Assembly resolution 3199 (XXVIII) was based.

69. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that he did not think that draft decision A/C.5/L.1229 would do anything to solve a problem which concerned the fundamental procedures of the United Nations. The comment made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 27 of its report at the twenty-eighth session[3] was a rather vague statement, supported by no examples. The disturbing point about the draft decision in question was the device of referring to rules 153 and 154 of the rules of procedure, as if the Fifth Committee had always ignored them. Furthermore, the draft decision was very dangerous in that it might tie the hands of the Secretary-General in future when he prepared the proposed programme budget and might thereby limit the growth implicit in the concept of programme budgeting. Equally, it should not be forgotten that a great many of the activities included in the budget were of the utmost concern to the developing countries. In view of all those considerations, his delegation would be obliged to vote against draft decision A/C.5/L.1229.

70. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that since the draft decision in question did not seem to be fully compatible with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 3199 (XXVIII) and might also be contrary to the interests of the developing countries, his delegation would be unable to vote in favour of it.

71. The CHAIRMAN put draft decision A/C.5/L.1229, as amended, to the vote.

At the request of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a vote was taken by roll-call.

Ireland, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Kuwait, Mongolia, Poland, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary.

Against: Ivory Coast, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, Ghana, Greece, Indonesia, Iran.

Abstaining: Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Madagascar, Morocco, Niger, Romania, Rwanda, Swaziland, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Zambia, Afghanistan, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Chad, China, Congo, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen,

[3] *Ibid., Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8* and corrigendum.

Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Guinea, Guyana, India.

The draft decision was rejected by 33 votes to 13, with 42 abstentions.

72. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider draft decision A/C.5/L.1230, as amended in the manner agreed to by the representative of the Soviet Union.

73. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) asked what exactly was meant by the expression "to make the necessary corrections in the United Nations budget".

74. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that he could not support draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 concerning measures to be taken to ensure that "extra-budgetary funds reimburse to the United Nations budget the full cost of services provided to them".

75. The principle that general operating expenses should be charged to the corresponding programmes could not be disputed. Furthermore, as the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management had observed at the 1715th meeting, there was another aspect to the question of extra-budgetary funds, and it was essential to bear in mind the extremely useful services which UNDP resident representatives, for example, rendered to all United Nations bodies for which no reimbursement had ever been provided in the United Nations budget. Sweden was in the second rank, by size of contributions of countries, contributing to UNDP, UNICEF and other programmes financed by voluntary contributions. His delegation would vote against draft decision A/C.5/L.1230.

76. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that he could not support draft decision A/C.5/L.1230. First of all, the paragraphs of the Advisory Committee's report cited in the document mentioned a more equitable distribution of costs, and the Committee did not state in those paragraphs that extra-budgetary funds should reimburse to the United Nations budget the full cost of services provided to them. Furthermore, the draft decision would be to the advantage of countries which made large contributions to the United Nations regular budget but whose voluntary contributions were much less generous, and that would be to the detriment of countries which made substantial voluntary contributions. Lastly, the decision would bring about a reduction in available funds for development. He supported the comments made by the delegations of the Netherlands and Sweden.

77. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that, during the consideration of section 22 of the proposed programme budget, at the 1715th meeting, his delegation had expressed concern about the volume of reimbursements for services which the United Nations provided to other bodies and had supported the comments made by the Advisory Committee on that subject in the part of its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2) concerning section 22. Nevertheless, he shared the view expressed by the delegations of the United States of America and the Upper Volta, namely, that draft decision A/C.5/L.1230, as it stood, was meaningless, since it was difficult to see what corrections in the United Nations budget were intended.

78. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the second part of the draft decision was a logical consequence of the first part, which had already been approved by the Fifth Committee. Paragraphs 22.54, 22.82 and 22.91 of the Advisory Committee's first report contained specific examples which showed that the extra-budgetary funds did not reimburse the full cost of services provided by the United Nations. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should review the question with the organizations concerned and submit proposals on measures to ensure that the United Nations was more fairly reimbursed for services provided by it. In order to allay the concern of delegations which found the second part of the draft decision too categorical, his delegation was prepared to revise it by adding the words "where appropriate" after the word "make" in the second paragraph. The Swedish delegation and others had raised the question of voluntary contributions. In his opinion, that was an entirely separate matter.

79. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that the comments made by several delegations had convinced him that draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 was not at all clear and that, moreover, there was no way of improving it. He therefore withdrew the amendment which, in a spirit of compromise, he had submitted earlier.

80. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that, while he acknowledged the effort the Soviet delegation had made with regard to the second paragraph of the draft decision, he found that the second clause of the first paragraph, for all practical purposes, contradicted the decision which the Committee had already taken to approve paragraphs 22.54, 22.82 and 22.91 of the Advisory Committee's report. In paragraph 22.54 of its report, for example, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should study the question in consultation with the organizations concerned and submit to the General Assembly, in the context of his progress report on the programme budget, proposals for a more equitable distribution of the related costs, based on the services provided. The second clause of the first paragraph of draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 was therefore unacceptable, since it was contrary to a decision taken earlier.

81. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that it would be hard to vote in favour of the draft decision, since neither its purpose nor the means to achieve the intended objective were clearly stated. In the circumstances, he would abstain in the vote, since he did not wish to vote against the document and thus associate his delegation with those who did want a clear distinction to be maintained between the regular budget and activities financed by voluntary contributions.

82. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that draft decision A/C.5/L.1230 raised serious difficulties. The first paragraph of that text, which listed paragraphs of the Advisory Committee's report which had been approved by the Fifth Committee at its 1725th meeting, seemed to go beyond the matters it had approved; indeed, the Advisory Committee had confined itself to recommending that the Secretary-

General should study the question and submit proposals, and had not gone beyond that. The second paragraph of the draft decision was completely unacceptable, inasmuch as it would open up the possibility of making reductions in the budget which might jeopardize programmes from which the developing countries benefited. For all those reasons, his delegation would be unable to vote in favour of the draft decision.

The meeting rose at 11.20 p.m.

1748th meeting

Tuesday, 25 November 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1748

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS I AND II SUBMITTED BY THE FOURTH COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10358 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 87* (A/10008/ADD.10, A/C.5/1712, A/C.5/1713)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled that, in his statement of the administrative and financial implications (A/C.5/1713) of draft resolution I submitted by the Fourth Committee in its report (A/10358, para. 15), the Secretary-General had indicated that adoption of the draft resolution would entail expenditures estimated at $397,000, of which $265,000 would be related to the programme "United Nations Council for Namibia", $102,000 to the programme "United Nations Commissioner for Namibia", and $30,000 to the Office of Public Information.

2. The Secretary-General had indicated that, of the cost of the programme of work of the United Nations Council for Namibia in 1976, $215,000 could be met from the appropriations requested in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), but that an additional amount of $50,000 might be required in 1976. The Advisory Committee, in its report (A/10008/Add.10, para. 3), had concurred in the proposals by the Secretary-General but trusted that savings would be made by reducing to the minimum the number of substantive officers accompanying the Council on its journeys and that the work programme of the Council could be financed without supplementary appropriations.

3. As for the programme "United Nations Commissioner for Namibia", the Advisory Committee had been informed that, out of the $102,000 requested, $97,000 related to the implementation of Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia and $5,000 to the preparation of a study on a radio station project. The Advisory Committee had approved those amounts, but wished to make a few comments. Out of the amount of $97,000, $40,000 was a provision for litigation. During the biennium 1974-1975 the Secretary-General had already requested authority to enter into commitments in an amount of $66,000 under the provision of the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses, and the Advisory Committee had approved that request at its 1975 spring session. During its consideration of the Secretary-General's estimates for the biennium 1976-1977, the Advisory Committee had been informed that out of the $66,000 in commitments authorized, the $40,000 provision for litigation had not yet been committed. It nevertheless accepted the inclusion in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 of an amount of $40,000 for litigation.

4. The Secretary-General had stated that, if the study of the radio station project indicated that it could begin in 1976, he would seek the concurrence of the Advisory Committee before entering into any commitments to that effect. The Advisory Committee nevertheless trusted that the Secretary-General would follow the procedure which he had outlined the previous year, namely that, once the study had been completed, the political implications of the report of the Secretary-General would be dealt with by the appropriate intergovernmental organ prior to consideration by the Advisory Committee of the financial implications.

5. The Advisory Committee had recommended that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution I of the Fourth Committee, appropriations would be required in the amount of $102,000 for the programme "United Nations Commissioner for Namibia" and $30,000 for the Office of Public Information.

6. Turning to draft resolution II submitted by the Fourth Committee in its report, he recalled that the Secretary-General had indicated in his statement of the financial implications (A/C.5/1712) that, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, an additional appropriation of $200,000 would be required. That amount was

* Question of Namibia:
- *(a)* Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;
- *(b)* Report of the United Nations Council for Namibia;
- *(c)* United Nations Fund for Namibia: reports of the United Nations Council for Namibia and of the Secretary-General;
- *(d)* Appointment of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia.

explicitly indicated in the draft resolution, and in that connexion the Advisory Committee recalled that at the twenty-ninth session it had observed in connexion with a similar draft resolution that it did not favour that procedure, which prevented the Fifth Committee from fully exercising its functions. On that understanding the Advisory Committee recommended that the Committee inform the General Assembly that the adoption of draft resolution II would involve an additional appropriation of $200,000.

7. The CHAIRMAN proposed to the Committee that it request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution I of the Fourth Commitee, an additional appropriation would be required in the amount of $102,000 under section 3C and $30,000 under section 21 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

8. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), recalling the position taken by his delegation in the Fourth Committee and in the United Nations Council for Namibia, expressed the hope that in implementing the provisions of that draft resolution the Secretary-General and the Council for Namibia would ensure that the resources were used as rationally as possible, with a view to making savings in the amount approved.

9. The CHAIRMAN proposed to the Committee that it should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution II of the Fourth Committee, an additional appropriation would be required in the amount of $200,000 under section 3C of the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

10. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation, while it supported Namibia and the assumption by that country of its rightful place in the world, did have reservations on the draft resolutions whose financial implications had been submitted to the Fifth Committee. In particular, he had serious reservations concerning the use of United Nations funds to set up a radio transmitter to be controlled by a non-United Nations entity and concerning the use of OPI for what he believed to be improper purposes. His delegation also maintained the same reservations it had expressed on previous occasions concerning payment by the United Nations of travel and subsistence expenses for representatives of liberation movements. He believed that such payments should adhere as closely as possible to the general principles set forth in General Assembly resolution 1798 (XVII) of 11 December 1962. As a matter of principle, his delegation could not approve the allocation from the United Nations regular budget of $200,000 to the United Nations Fund for Namibia. He drew attention to the fact that the United States Government had made a contribution, which was specially earmarked for Namibians, to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa. If a vote had been taken on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolutions, his delegation would have been obliged to oppose them.

11. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation, while supporting Namibia and its assumption of its legitimate place, had reservations with regard to draft resolution I, particularly the expenses concerning the implementation of Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia and concerning the establishment of a radio station, for the same reasons as those stated by the United States representative. If a vote had been taken, his delegation would have opposed the proposals.

12. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that, if the implications of the draft resolutions had been put to the vote, his delegation would have abstained.

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(continued) (A/10350 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/10378)**

13. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (A/10350 and Corr.1) had been submitted less than three weeks before the expiry of the authority vested in the Secretary-General by General Assembly resolution 3374 A (XXX) of 30 October 1975 to enter into commitments for UNEF and UNDOF. Thus, once more, the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee would not have enough time to consider properly the proposals submitted by the Secretary-General on the financing of the Force. The Advisory Committee was aware of the difficulties facing the Secretary-General in preparing the estimates for UNEF and UNDOF. In the first place, the Secretary-General must await the decision of the Security Council, which in turn was subject to the delicate political considerations that had always to be taken into account before the mandate of the Force was renewed. Indeed, the mandate of UNDOF had not yet been renewed. In the second place, the estimates had to be prepared on the basis of information gathered from the field. Those difficulties were real and at times formidable. However, in view of the rate at which the cost of the Force was increasing, it was essential that, once the Security Council had taken a decision, the Secretary-General should ensure prompt submission of the estimates to the General Assembly, together with supporting information, in order to avoid delay in their consideration by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee.

14. Turning to the estimates themselves, he reminded members that the Secretary-General had submitted a request for $112.5 million, which represented an increase of $32.5 million—40.6 per cent—over the authorized expenditure for the year ended 24 October 1975. The estimates for UNDOF—$16 million—were conditional upon the Security Council's extending the mandate of the Force. For UNEF alone, the Secretary-General was asking $96.5 million for the present. Of that amount, $17.4 million represented one-time costs for various items required as a consequence of the new mandate entrusted to UNEF,

* Resumed from the 1725th meeting.

details of which were given in annex III to the Secretary-General's report. In paragraph 14 of that report, the Secretary-General stated that the estimates did not provide for the costs of operation and maintenance of the additional aircraft and naval vessels which would be required. The representatives of the Secretary-General might wish to shed more light on how to proceed in view of the fact that no positive response had so far been received from Member States to the Secretary-General's request that they should furnish the matériel in question. As the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 19 of its report (A/10378), the amount involved in the use of those aircraft and vessels amounted to $10 million for 1975-1976.

15. The primary cause for the increase in the estimates for UNEF was that the area of operation in which its troops were to be deployed had increased nearly fourfold and the strength of the Force was also expected to increase. As the annex to the Advisory Committee's report indicated, those changes had had a considerable impact on the estimates for rental, maintenance and construction of premises and for certain of the equipment and supplies for the Force.

16. The Advisory Committee, in paragraph 25 of its report, had recommended a reduction in the non-military manning table of the Force, with consequential savings of $150,000. It had recommended a total reduction of $2.3 million in the rest of the estimates. The Advisory Committee was aware that it was impossible, in an operation of that kind, to achieve a high degree of accuracy when forecasting estimates of expenditure and that the reductions proposed were therefore somewhat arbitrary. However, it had been guided by the confidence expressed by the Security Council and by the request addressed to the Secretary-General by the General Assembly that all necessary action should be taken to ensure that the operations were conducted as economically as possible. It believed that the reductions recommended were reasonable. The Secretary-General had a degree of flexibility in managing the funds authorized for the various items of expenditure and, if the Assembly approved the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Force should be administered as a unit (*ibid.*, para. 49), that flexibility would be enhanced. The reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee—except for the $150,000 reduction for non-military staff—could therefore be allocated to the items indicated by the Advisory Committee in its report and to other items should the need arise.

17. The question of out-turn in expenditure and obligations for UNEF and UNDOF during the two years from 25 October 1973 to 24 October 1975, inclusive, was dealt with in paragraphs 6 to 13 of the Advisory Committee's report. From the table mentioned in paragraph 8 it would be seen that the disbursements and obligations for UNEF and UNDOF were given as $79.8 million in 1973-1974 and $80 million in 1974-1975. Both figures correspond exactly to the amounts authorized by the General Assembly. However, during the two years in question considerable variations in expenditure and obligations had arisen for the various items of expenditure. Savings under some items had exceeded over-expenditure in other areas by $1.8 million in 1973-1974 and $4.7 million in 1974-1975 (*ibid.*, paras. 8 and 9). For the two years, therefore, the amount of the unencumbered balance was $6.5 million. In paragraph 11 of his report, the Secretary-General indicated that the $6.5 million had been maintained in the accounts as contingency obligations. Of that amount the Secretary-General estimated that $1.3 million would be required to meet outstanding claims still under negotiation in respect of additional costs of depreciation for contingent-owned heavy equipment. The balance would be applied to meeting, on the one hand, the cost of compensating a Member State for the loss of a rented aircraft (*ibid.*, para. 12) and, on the other hand, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, for meeting claims related to the application of a usage factor for personal clothing, personal gear and equipment provided by Governments to their troops serving with the Force. Consequently, the amount of $6.5 million was not a saving that could be credited to Member States against future contributions unless the General Assembly were to decide to disallow all claims against that amount.

18. The payment of a usage factor for personal clothing, personal gear and equipment required a policy decision by the General Assembly. Whereas the Secretary-General, in paragraph 19 of his report to the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session,[1] had assumed that the $500 per man per month for pay and allowances and the additional $150 per specialist per month were meant to cover also the usage factor in question, the decision adopted by the Assembly on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee had not specified that that factor should be covered in those standard rates of payment. In the cost estimates for 1975-1976, the estimate of $2.8 million for "other troop-related costs" was largely intended for that type of expenditure. The Advisory Committee in paragraph 48 of its report recommended that the General Assembly should decide on that question. If the Assembly, on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee, decided that the usage factor for personal effects, personal gear and equipment of the members of the Force should be paid over and above the standard pay and allowances, it would also have to indicate whether its decision was to be applied retroactively to the 1973-1974 and 1974-1975 financial periods of UNEF and UNDOF. He pointed out, in order to avoid any confusion, that, for the two years UNEF and UNDOF had been in existence, the obligations for the usage factor for personal effects, personal gear and equipment of the troops, together with other claims against the $6.5 million, were shown under "contingency obligations or provisions" (*ibid.*, para. 16). For 1975-1976, however, the contingency provisions were meant to cover possible price increases, exchange rate fluctuations, and other unforeseen and extraordinary items.

19. He drew the attention of the Committee to paragraph 13 of the report of the Advisory Committee: of the $159.8 million authorized for the first two years, $10.2 million was deemed to be uncollectible; the General Assembly would need to make a policy decision on that point.

20. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that he wanted to explain why the Secretary-General had been unable to submit the report (A/10350 and Corr.1) containing his appropriations for UNEF and UNDOF until 12 November 1975.

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1 Document A/9822 of 30 October 1974.

21. The Committee was aware that, by virtue of the Agreement between Egypt and Israel signed on 4 September 1975,[2] UNEF was to deploy its troops over a much more extensive area, to assume increased responsibilities and to perform additional tasks. It was not until 22 September 1975, however, that those new responsibilities and tasks had been specified in detail in the Protocol[3] which was an integral part of the Israeli-Egyptian Agreement. Consequently, until 22 September 1975 the UNEF Command had not been in a position to put together the plan of operations for implementing the decisions in the Agreement and the Protocol.

22. The Chief Co-ordinator of Operations of UNTSO, UNEF and UNDOF, mindful of the urgency attendant on such planning, had suggested that 2 senior aides from Headquarters should visit UNEF in the field for a week of consultations with him, the Force Commander and their staffs with a view to determining the resource requirements of UNEF; that had been done. On 10 October 1975 UNEF had transmitted a preliminary list of its requirements which had been reviewed immediately at Headquarters; that list had been followed by further submissions which had also been reviewed at Headquarters immediately on receipt.

23. On 17 October 1975 the Secretary-General was able to report to the Security Council on the financial aspects of maintaining UNEF until 24 October 1976.[4] On 23 October 1975 the Council, in resolution 378 (1975), had renewed the mandate of UNEF for one year—until 24 October 1976—thus enabling the Secretary-General to prepare his report to the General Assembly on the financing of the Force. That report (A/10350) had been submitted on 12 November 1975, once the essential basic information received from UNEF had been finalized and evaluated. A report based on full information and duly evaluated could not have been submitted earlier.

24. He (Mr. Debatin) emphasized that peace-keeping operations did not lend themselves to the kind of programming that was possible for activities financed by the regular budget, especially in the case under consideration, in which not only did provision have to be made for the extension of the existing activities of the Force, but new operations had to be planned which gave rise to new expenditure. Time was usually short for all concerned: for the Secretariat and the UNEF Command, which between them had to produce the budget estimates, and for the legislative organs which had to decide on them—the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly. The Secretariat at Headquarters and UNEF in the field had spared no effort to produce the budget estimates for UNEF and UNDOF as soon as circumstances permitted.

25. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Secretary-General, in his report, gave total figures for previous and projected expenditure for UNEF and UNDOF without giving sufficient detail. The Advisory Committee, in its report, gave additional information, but again in insufficient detail. Moreover, the Committee had before it no report from the Board of Auditors on the operations of UNEF. The Controller likewise had given no additional information on the cost estimates for the Force. He was therefore asking the Secretariat to supply certain information which would enable the Committee to make its decision on the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General in full knowledge of the facts.

26. Specifically, he wanted the Committee to be given the financial report and accounts for UNEF for 1974 and the report of the Board of Auditors on the audit of those accounts. Fairly detailed information on the conclusions of the group of internal auditors which had worked in the UNEF area of operations in late 1974, as mentioned in paragraph 23 of the previous report of the Advisory Committee,[5] should also be supplied.

27. He wanted detailed information on the status of the transport and other equipment which the military contingents had brought with them and on the method of calculating their depreciation.

28. He also wanted to know the amount of the deductions made, for the reasons explained in paragraph 20 of the previous report of the Secretary-General[6] in determining payments to countries which had supplied contingents. He also asked for a detailed explanation of the over-expenditures incurred from 25 October 1974 to 24 October 1975 under items 1 *(b)* and 2 *(b), (c)* and *(d)* of the table in annex I of the Secretary-General's current report.

29. He asked what the average numerical strength of UNEF and UNDOF had been in each month of their activity. He also wanted to have a list, showing names and quantities of all the available transport of UNEF and UNDOF, with an indication of which items had been purchased by the United Nations and which brought with them by the contingents. He asked which and how many items of transport equipment purchased by the United Nations were not in working order.

30. The information that he considered necessary for evaluating the appropriations requested for the period from 25 October 1975 to 24 October 1976 was: a detailed breakdown of planned purchases of equipment under item 2 *(b)* and information on the quantity of such equipment already available to UNEF and UNDOF; and a detailed breakdown of the expenditure proposed under items 2 *(c), (d)* and *(e),* together with information on the expenditure, broken down according to appropriate nomenclature, for the first and second year of UNEF activities.

31. In conclusion, he asked whether the Secretariat was preparing a standard agreement between the United Nations and States that were supplying contingents under Article 43 of the Charter and, if so, at what stage the preparations were.

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2 *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirtieth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1975,* document S/11818/Add.1, annex.

3 *Ibid., Supplement for October, November and December 1975,* document S/11818/Add.5, annex.

4 *Ibid.,* document S/11849, para. 24.

5 Document A/9870 and Corr.1 of 21 November 1974.

6 Document A/9822 of 30 October 1974.

32. The CHAIRMAN announced that the representative of the Soviet Union had asked that the list of his questions to the Secretariat on the financing of UNEF and UNDOF should be distributed as a conference room paper of the Committee.

33. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) asked whether that proposal had financial implications.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that the cost of distributing the list of questions would be covered by the appropriation for the work of the Committee for the thirtieth session.

35. The representative of the Soviet Union was also requesting that other questions which he had asked at the 1743rd meeting of the Committee on the United Nations pension system (agenda item 106) should also be the subject of a conference room paper. That proposal would likewise have no financial implications.

Both requests of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics were approved.[7]

36. Mr. KARHILO (Finland) said that the establishment and operations of all United Nations forces were based on the fundamental obligation of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security and that Finland's obligation to pay its share of the resulting expenses was part of the responsibilities it had assumed when accepting the Charter of the United Nations. On the other hand, his country held that the principle of collective responsibility of all Member States for operations jointly undertaken required that all Member States of the Organization should participate in the financing of those operations. Justice therefore required that the expenses of UNEF should be charged to the United Nations budget and be apportioned equitably among Member States–in the same way, in principle, as all other expenditures of the United Nations.

37. With regard to the reimbursement payments to countries which supplied contingents to United Nations forces, the General Assembly had at its twenty-ninth session taken a decision[8] to apply a standardized rate of reimbursement for UNEF and UNDOF, and his delegation noted that that decision had been applied satisfactorily. It was important that the pending questions regarding reimbursements, particularly with regard to the depreciation of the personal equipment of members of contingents, should be settled in such a way as to encourage Governments to offer to participate in the constitution of United Nations forces when the need arose.

38. Unfortunately, the cash situation with regard to United Nations peace-keeping operations was in a continuously critical phase, a state of affairs to which no real remedy had yet been found. The deficit in the budgets of UNEF and UNDOF was for a considerable part shouldered by the troop-contributing countries and reimbursements due to those countries were very much behind schedule. For example, the dues owed by the United Nations to Finland in respect of UNEF were currently some $6.3 million. Such a situation could endanger the very political basis of UNEF and UNDOF, i.e., the equitable geographical distribution in the selection of troops. It was therefore necessary to reinforce the political and financial basis of peace-keeping operations and to strengthen the positive potential in favour of peace-keeping in all countries, including the small States from which the troops obviously had to be recruited even in possible future emergencies. His delegation fully supported the efforts of the Secretary-General in that respect. It was particularly important not to create conditions where the burden of the small countries–whose role in peace-keeping was indispensable–became materially, and therefore politically, unbearable.

39. He hoped that the cost estimates presented by the Secretary-General were realistic enough to cover all the costs of both Forces. He agreed that the Secretary-General should try to realize savings, but the more the estimates fell below the actual costs, the more the burden of financing UNEF and UNDOF was carried by the troop-contributing countries. With those general reservations, his delegation gave its approval to the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee.

Mr. Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

40. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said he was compelled to put forward comments only of a very general nature: the Secretary-General's report contained so few details on the estimates that he was unable to make any value judgement on the proposals. It was, moreover, revealing that the Advisory Committee, in its report, had cited certain additional facts for the benefit of the Fifth Committee instead of merely analysing the estimates, although the Advisory Committee itself must have found it impossible to take a stand, judging from the timid hopes it had expressed about the desirability of achieving economies. It was to be hoped that when it visited the Middle East the Advisory Committee would be able to consult with members of UNEF on the spot and gain a clearer idea of the situation.

41. He noted that the Secretary-General planned to increase the rescources available to UNEF by providing additional air and naval units (A/10350 and Corr.1, annex III, para. 3). The Advisory Committee had pointed out that the Secretary-General's estimates did not include the cost of operating and maintaining the new equipment and that the Secretary-General would approach several Member States with the request that they furnish the aircraft and ships without charge. He (Mr. Schmidt) did not understand why those expenses in particular–amounting to about $10 million–were excluded from the estimates or why the Secretary-General had decided to request voluntary contributions for them. If the equipment in question was really essential, he would hope that the corresponding appropriation would be included in the total estimates.

42. Moreover, the Advisory Committee had pointed out, in paragraph 45 of its report, that the usage factor for personal effects and equipment of troops and other similar

7 The questions concerning the pension system were circulated as conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.8, and the questions on the financing of UNEF and UNDOF as conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.9.

8 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 31* and corrigendum, p. 140, item 84.

expenditure would be covered by the "contingency obligations" for 1973-1974 and 1974-1975. He recalled that, with regard to reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, Member States had originally accepted an excellent compromise formula whereby the Organization would not include an estimate in its budget for the usage factor with regard to the personal equipment of troops. He would therefore be very hesitant to accept in the future an estimate for that item. The contingency obligations for 1975-1976 were designed to offset inflation, price increases and the effects of currency fluctuations and also to finance other unexpected and extraordinary expenditure, a procedure which was much more in keeping with the normal purpose of such a provision. However, as a matter of principle, he would have difficulty in agreeing to that type of request.

43. Generally speaking, the Federal Republic of Germany would do its utmost to support peace-keeping operations and, as it had done so far, would promptly defray its share in the expenses of peace-keeping up to the amount payable in accordance with the scale of contributions to the regular budget. The Federal Republic of Germany had always held the firm opinion that the expenses of peace-keeping operations should be divided among Member States according to the normal procedure. It had agreed to the compromise reached by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session only because it facilitated the adoption of the formula for reimbursing troop-contributing countries. The Federal Republic of Germany felt that the United Nations should maintain that special scale whereby certain groups of countries paid the share of the expenses of UNEF and UNDOF normally incumbent on them, while other countries were given a reduction in their share of those expenses, the amount of the reduction being chargeable to the permanent members of the Security Council. He would oppose any further violation of the principle of the collective responsibility of Member States and any more substantial reductions in the payments of certain countries.

44. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) thought that many delegations, like the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, would like to know why the Secretary-General had not included in his estimates the amount of $10 million necessary to equip UNEF with the additional air and naval units he felt were needed. The countries that the Secretary-General had asked to provide the equipment free of charge had apparently not yet given a favourable reply. He (Mr. Talieh) wished to know what the Secretary-General's intentions were in that respect before his delegation took a stand on the total estimate.

45. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) confirmed that the Secretary-General, in preparing the estimates for UNEF and UNDOF, had decided to omit the amount necessary to equip UNEF with a certain number of air and naval units, because he had hoped—and still hoped—to obtain from certain Governments either the equipment in question or the funds necessary to obtain it. The Secretary-General had contacted six or seven Governments on the question; he was not yet in a position to make a firm statement, but he was reasonably confident of obtaining either the equipment itself or voluntary contributions to obtain it, apart from the appropriations for UNEF and UNDOF. In case neither of those possibilities materialized, the Secretary-General would have to decide whether to ask the General Assembly for an additional appropriation of some $10 million for 1975-1976 or to request UNEF and UNDOF to do without the equipment in question.

46. Apparently, the Committee had difficulty in understanding how short the time-limits imposed on the Secretary-General for drawing up the estimates had been. The Committee should take into account the fact that, at the national level, legislative bodies, when they had to approve a military budget, did not have before them extremely detailed estimates, the military budget always being considered very different from the rest of the budget. In the case of UNEF, the Committee was called upon to approve the budget for a military operation. He hoped that not only the members of the Advisory Committee but also certain members of the Committee would be able to visit the Middle East and appreciate for themselves the difficulties the Secretary-General had to face, particularly because of the distance from Headquarters.

47. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) wished to point out that the activities of UNEF did not constitute a military operation but a peace-keeping operation.

48. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his Government would continue to support UNEF and UNDOF and to participate in their financing, since those operations were conducted in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations. The Security Council and the General Assembly had already stressed the need to carry out those operations "with a maximum of efficiency and economy" and for that reason his delegation was glad that the Advisory Committee had requested the Secretariat to give further information on the estimates for 1975-1976; such information was all the more essential because the estimates for 1975-1976 showed an increase of 40.6 per cent as compared with the figures for 1974-1975. His delegation regretted that the Secretariat had not supplied information—as the Advisory Committee had requested in paragraph 5 of its current report and in paragraph 23 of its previous report—on possible improvements in the management of the forces through the use of internal and external auditors. He agreed with the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management that it was desirable to carry out on-the-spot checks to ensure the proper management of operations. He had also taken note, as had the representative of Iran, of paragraph 19 of the Advisory Committee's report concerning the cost of operating and maintaining a certain number of air and naval units.

49. His delegation hoped that the Committee would reach an agreement on a method of financing those operations and it reserved the right to speak again, especially if a draft resolution was submitted on the subject.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) resumed the Chair.

50. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) recalled that his delegation had already had occasion to state its position in the Fifth Committee with regard to the financing of UNEF and UNDOF. Its position with regard to the report of the Secretary-General and to the report of the Advisory Committee on that question was the same. His delegation

was convinced that the very existence of UNEF and UNDOF meant that Israel would be authorized to keep the positions which it currently occupied, setting up installations and establishing settlements. His delegation had very serious reservations, therefore, with regard to the mandates of UNEF and UNDOF and would not contribute to their financing.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous A/... and A/C.5/... documents, see the 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6 and 11, A/C.5/1682/Add.1, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/1714, A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1230/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1231, A/C.5/L.1233, A/C.5/L.1238/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1239, A/C.5/L.1240, A/C.5/L.1250)

Consideration of the proposals before the Committee* (continued) *(A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1230/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1231, A/C.5/L.1233, A/C.5/L.1238/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1239, A/C.5/L.1250)

Revised draft decision A/C.5/L.1238/Rev.1

51. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), speaking in connexion with draft decision A/C.5/L.1238/Rev.1, said that quarterly publication, in a normal format and over a two-year period, of a document similar to document A/5822, which had last been published in 1964, would involve expenditures of $28,000 for the biennium 1976-1977. That cost was theoretical, which meant that a corresponding appropriation would not necessarily be requested. Nevertheless, that figure might be reduced by half if the information contained in the document in question was presented in a simplified form.

52. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) announced that Greece was no longer a sponsor of the draft decision.

53. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) thanked the Director of the Budget Division for the information which he had provided. Even if it was possible to absorb that expenditure within the budget framework, the sum in question was still very considerable. Consequently, his delegation proposed that the world "quarterly" in the draft decision should be replaced by the word "biannual" which would enable the estimated expenditures incurred in publication of the document to be reduced by half, irrespective of whether it appeared in its abridged or complete form.

54. Mr. NAUDY (France) and Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) supported the amendment proposed by the representative of Pakistan.

55. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that the sponsors of the draft decision preferred to retain the existing wording, since they were convinced that the document in question, if it was to be an effective instrument for analysis, should be published quarterly.

56. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) supported the amendment proposed by the representative of Pakistan. In view of the considerable volume of documentation submitted to delegations, it was preferable to publish such a document only twice a year. It was therefore in the interest of economy and efficiency that his delegation supported that amendment which, moreover, seemed to reflect the wishes of the Committee.

57. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to a question asked by Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba), said that the United Nations did in fact publish a report on the contributions of Member States at the end of each biennium.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that, after putting to a vote the amendment submitted by Pakistan to draft decision A/C.5/L.1238/Rev.1, he would invite the Committee to vote on the decision.

The Pakistani amendment was adopted by 46 votes to 13, with 28 abstentions.

The revised draft decision (A/C.5/L.1238/Rev.1), as amended, was adopted by 72 votes to none, with 14 abstentions.

Revised draft decision A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1

59. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) announced that Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand had become sponsors of revised draft decision A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1. He said that the draft responded to the wishes expressed by a number of delegations and that the need to develop a common methodology had been emphasized by such bodies as the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies and the Working Group on Currency Instability. The consultations held with ACC in March 1975 had still not produced a new methodology.

60. For the biennium 1974-1975, the year 1971 had been taken as the base year. The Secretary-General now suggested that a common methodology should be found for estimating the cost of inflation on proposed programme budgets and for including such costs in proposed programme budgets. It was therefore necessary to find a common system applicable to all United Nations organizations which, with the exception of UNESCO, had thus far been covering the costs attributable to inflation by requesting supplementary appropriations.

61. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation, while basically in agreement with draft decision A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1, did not see the advantage of requesting the Secretary-General to submit a separate report on the matter. It would be preferable, for example, to include the relevant information in the Secretary-General's interim report on the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. Consequently, his delegation proposed that the words "to submit a report on this matter" should be replaced by the words "to report, as appropriate".

62. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation had a number of questions with regard to draft decision A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1. He wondered first what was meant exactly by the words "the impact of

inflation on the budgets of the organizations of the United Nations system". Should ACC consider the extent of inflation as such, or should it determine whether and to what extent it was necessary to keep the budget within the limits of inflation? Furthermore, the draft decision implied that it was desirable to adopt a common methodology. However, since items of expenditure were presented differently, it was debatable whether that was really the best solution. Lastly, his delegation did not see how it was possible to contemplate not including a portion of the costs in the budget while at the same time financing those costs. Although the principle of a single methodology was interesting from a theoretical point of view for the purpose of knowing how the Secretariat arrived at its estimates, it was nevertheless too rigid a system. Consequently, his delegation had reservations with regard to revised draft decision A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1.

63. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that, in his view, the problem was a technical one which should be resolved by the Advisory Committee in conjunction with the organizations of the United Nations system. The adoption of a common methodology which could be applied to the whole United Nations system, through the Advisory Committee, would permit a better understanding of how the estimates of the costs of the organizations in the United Nations system were arrived at. His delegation therefore supported the revised draft decision.

64. Mr. SETHI (India) said that he, too, supported the draft decision. He proposed, however, that, since it would not be for the Secretary-General to devise a common methodology himself, the words "considering the possibility of" should be inserted after the word "towards".

65. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that, as the United Kingdom representative had pointed out, all that the draft decision called for was that consideration should be given to the idea of applying a common methodology for estimating the cost of inflation. The Philippine delegation, on behalf of the sponsors, accepted the amendments proposed by the representatives of the United States of America and India.

66. The CHAIRMAN put to a vote the revised draft decision (A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1), as amended.

The draft decision, as amended, was adopted by 70 votes to 8, with 4 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

1749th meeting

Tuesday, 25 November 1975, at 8.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1749

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10350 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/10378)

1. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that it was impossible to judge from the approximate estimates in annex II to the Secretary-General's report (A/10350 and Corr.1) to what extent the cost estimates for UNEF and UNDOF were really useful or necessary. That document proposed the expenditure of over $110 million. The Secretary-General was thereby inviting the members of the Committee to take on trust the quality of an evaluation without saying what had gone into it. The Committee was being asked to consider and approve the Secretary-General's estimates in two or three days, and it could not discharge its responsibilities properly without detailed justifications of the proposed amounts. The report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10378) was more substantial and gave food for thought. Had all the necessary steps been taken to ensure that the UNEF and UNDOF operations were conducted with a maximum of efficiency and economy? Undoubtedly the considerable enlargement of the area of the buffer zone, which made it necessary to increase the mobility of the Force and strengthen its capability, partly explained the considerable increase in costs, approximately 40 per cent, over those of the previous year. If, as would probably be necessary, the sum of $10 million for the use and maintenance of various aircraft and ships was added to that figure, the estimates exceeded the previous year's expenditure by more than 50 per cent. The UNEF and UNDOF contingents would number approximately 5,770 men. United Nations personnel would include 253 international staff and 523 local staff. More detailed information about the figure of 253 international staff members, especially their distribution among the various services and posts, would be desirable. The table following paragraph 22 of the Advisory Committee's report was not quite clear and did not give those details.

2. In paragraph 33 of the Advisory Committee's report, it was stated that the UNEF and UNDOF fleets of motor vehicles numbered 1,431, of which 571 were United Nations-owned. There were also plans to purchase nearly 400 more in 1976—which seemed a lot. His delegation endorsed the observations and suggestions made by the Advisory Committee on all those items, especially those in paragraphs 34-36 of its report. In short, the appropriation of $107,210,000 recommended by the Advisory Com-

mittee seemed a rather generous estimate. The Secretary-General should be urged to reduce costs as much as possible, to observe maximum efficiency and economy in the upkeep of the Force, as the Security Council desired, and to draw up a detailed report in 1976 on the use of the appropriation.

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:*

***(a)* Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued)** (A/10009, A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1258, A/C.5/L.1259);**

***(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/10335, A/10374, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1697, A/C.5/L.1261)**

3. Mr. MATSEIKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that he was pleased that the Secretary-General had for the first time submitted detailed data in a separate report (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1) on the question of the investments of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. However, it could not be said that the over-all picture was very encouraging. As annex I, schedule 3, to the report of the Joint Staff Pension Board (A/10009) showed, the market value of the investment portfolio of the Fund on 31 December 1974 was $775,936,777, i.e., only 86 per cent approximately of the original value. Losses on sales of securities had amounted to the considerable sum of approximately $26 million in 1974. That trend was continuing year after year, but there had never yet been a detailed study of the reasons for those losses. The reasons set forth in paragraphs 23 and 24 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1) were not satisfactory. It was essential to know why sales of securities had produced only losses for many years. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report (A/10335, para. 21) had been over-cautious on that issue and had said that a true evaluation could not be made on the basis of one or two years, but had to be looked at over the long term. That was true, but then one had to ask why there still had been no evaluation of the situation.

4. As indicated in document A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, inflation and monetary instability affected not only the United Nations budget but also the real situation of the Pension Fund. The losses incurred on the sale of securities were largely the result of the Fund's unilateral investment policy. As the Board pointed out in paragraph 32 of its report, of $849 million in long-term investments, $312 million, or 37 per cent, had been placed outside the United States, which meant that 63 per cent of the Fund's investments were in the United States, in other words, in a country whose currency was continuously subject to inflationary pressures. The Board nevertheless pointed out, in paragraph 33 of the report, that in the 10-year period ended 31 March 1975 the United States equity component of the portfolio had shown an average annual return of 3.5 per cent and the non-United States equity component a return of approximately 8.6 per cent. Of course his delegation had to agree with the Advisory Committee's comment in paragraph 21 of its report that recent experience in the traditional securities markets should provide further impetus for the Secretary-General and his investment advisers to explore more than ever the possibilities of diversification of the Fund's investments. However, paragraph 21 of the Secretary-General's report showed that that diversification was extremely limited geographically. The Secretary-General should take steps to set a more rational investment policy for the Fund, and the Fund should purchase securites in a larger number of member countries so as to reduce the risk of loss.

5. Mr. KUTTNER (United States of America) said that he continued to be concerned over the problem of the adjustment of pensions and was extremely grateful for the interim report (A/10009, annex V), which was comprehensive and useful, submitted by the Board on that question. His delegation looked forward to receiving the proposals which the Board was to submit on that matter at the thirty-first session.

6. His delegation had been in the forefront in fighting against discrimination based on sex; it was obviously in favour of changing article 36 of the Fund's regulations in order to provide benefits to widowers identical with those payable to widows and to remove all the differences stemming from the sex of the participant in the amounts payable under the Fund's regulations, differences which resulted from the application of different actuarial factors in their calculation. The cost of the proposed change in article 36 would amount to an actuarial lump sum of about $17.2 million, but the Board of Actuaries had said that that expenditure would not materially affect the actuarial balance of the Fund.

7. With regard to the maximum service credit, his delegation accepted the Board's recommendation that it would be reasonable and justifiable as an interim measure to extend that period to 32 years at a rate of accumulation in respect of the last two years of 1/100th of the final average annual remuneration—instead of the standard 1/50th. However, in view of the actuarial deficit of some $116 million, any liberalization of benefits in 1977 would need to be studied very carefully, with full regard for information on the actuarial import of such changes.

8. The management of the investments of the Fund had been ably handled. A study of the cumulative annual rates of return on funds invested in the 10-year period ended 31 March 1975 bore out that view. In almost every area of investment it had achieved a greater return than other funds.

9. The net loss on the sale of securities during the year ending 31 December 1974 certainly gave cause for concern, but it was attributable to a very bad market and to the fact that the Fund had had to sell certain holdings in order to buy more valuable ones. That was a very normal way of doing business, and those losses could in no way be considered as indicative of the over-all performance of the Fund.

10. The Board's request, in paragraph 39 of its report, that the Secretary-General should examine, in consultation with the Investments Committee, all markets through which the Fund might assist developing countries and in which it might invest in high-quality securities with suitable invest-

* Resumed from the 1743rd meeting.

ment return was not fully consistent with its earlier recommendation which had been endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 3354 (XXIX), that special attention should be paid to suitable investment opportunities in developing countries. In the latter case diversification of investments had been called for so as to take advantage of sound investment opportunities not previously explored, whereas in the more recent instance the Board seemed to be offering the view that investments in developing countries were to be made, at least in part, for the purpose of rendering assistance to those countries. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the basis for the Fund's investments should continue to be the soundness of the investment and its attractiveness to the Fund.

11. Continued efforts to diversify the Fund's holdings were certainly important, but it should pursue a relatively conservative policy, since it was responsible for providing the means to support its pensioners. It should invest its money only in securities which it could buy and sell quickly and easily.

12. Since the most recent actuarial valuation of the Pension Fund had, unfortunately, projected an imbalance of $116.6 million, it was clear that no important changes in benefits should be made unless additional money was made available to finance those changes. Even minor increases in benefits should be granted only with forethought and after consideration of all risks involved.

13. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that the results of the investments of the Pension Fund did not seem to be in conformity with the policy objectives outlined in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1), namely, the diversification and safety of investments and the necessity to obtain maximum long-term returns.

14. Investments denominated in currencies other than United States dollars had declined from 20.5 per cent as at 31 December 1973 to 16.9 per cent as at 31 December 1974 (A/10009, annex IV, para. 10). During the previous three years sales of securities had resulted in a considerable net loss, and there were grounds for asking what was meant by safe investments.

15. United States securities had shown a loss of 11 per cent in 1974, mostly on account of the unfavourable stock market situation during the first half of the year, whereas the non-United States equity stocks had shown an increase of 11 per cent, largely because of the revaluation of other currencies against the United States dollar (A/10009, para. 33).

16. Most of the assets of the Fund had been invested in the securities of United States companies. Safety, then, had not been lost for everyone, even if the stock market value of Pension Fund investments had fallen to $776 million as at 31 December 1974 or 86.1 per cent of cost (A/10009, annex IV, para. 9). There was a principle which should not be forgotten, namely, that one should not invest in currencies which were undergoing a crisis, as such a step jeopardized the safety of investments. The Working Group on Currency Instability had studied the question and had expressed the view that the bank deposits and investments of the United Nations should be effected in sound currencies.[1] That principle had not been implemented, and considerable losses had consequently been incurred through the devaluation and depreciation of unstable currencies.

17. Over the 10-year period ended 31 March 1975 the United States equity stocks had shown an average annual return of 3.5 per cent and the non-United States equities a return of about 8.6 per cent (A/10009, para. 33). To invest the greater portion of the assets of the Pension Fund in United States securities was certainly not in conformity with the goal of obtaining a maximum return on investment.

18. The two institutional investment firms which made recommendations as to the sectors and securities which could be most valuable to the Pension Fund were also engaged in the purchase and sale of securities (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, para. 14). The two firms in question, whose names were not mentioned in the report, were the Fiduciary Trust Company of New York and the First National City Bank. Moreover, of the 6 members of the Investments Committee, 2 were United States nationals. It was therefore easy to understand why more than 80 per cent of the Fund's investments were in United States securities and why the investments had resulted in considerable losses.

19. His delegation wanted more detailed information on the composition of the portfolio as at 31 March 1975, a "profile" of which was provided in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1), with particular reference to the following points: the volume of funds invested in transnational corporations; whether investments had been made in the stock of companies operating in countries declared to be racist by the United Nations; whether the Fund held real estate equities of religious establishments; whether it had bought New York City bonds and, if so, what amount; and how much had been invested in bonds of the United States Government or government agencies, since such investment would cause the United Nations to contribute to increasing inflation in that country.

20. The currencies and countries in which investments had been made were shown in the table in paragraph 21 of the Secretary-General's report, a very revealing table which clearly demonstrated the risks to which the Pension Fund's investments were exposed by reason of the countries in which funds had been invested. According to that table, out of the total long-term investments of the Fund of some $848.7 million as at 31 March 1975, $653.8 million consisted of issues denominated in United States dollars and $194.9 million of securites denominated in currencies of other countries; in other words, 77 per cent of the long-term investments were denominated in dollars and necessarily shared the fate of that currency. Moreover, of all the long-term investments denominated in other currencies, which amounted to $194.9 million, some were in currencies which were likewise undergoing a crisis. The currencies in which the short-term investments of about $87 million had been made was not stated. In short, about 82 per cent of the short-term and long-term investments of

[1] See document A/9773, of 26 September 1974, para. 50.

the Fund were vested in unstable currencies and as a result were subject to considerable risk.

21. Gains on securities in 1974 had amounted to about $3.3 million, and losses to $26 million (*ibid.*, para. 22), so that the net loss amounted to around $22.7 million. Nearly all of the losses on sales involved shares listed in United States dollars (A/10009, annex I, schedule 2). Besides the loss of $26 million in 1974, the Pension Fund had had losses of $35.6 million and $16 million in 1973 and 1972. For the previous three years, therefore, gross losses amounted to more than $77 million. In 1970 and 1971 the losses had been much smaller, which showed that the losses were increasing because of devaluations, the depreciation of the United States dollar and accelerated inflation.

22. With regard to the reasons for the loss resulting from the sale of securities, dealt with in paragraphs 23 and 24 of the report of the Secretary-General, his delegation endorsed in principle the conclusions in paragraph 23, which were, however, much too theoretical and did not go to the heart of the matter. Obviously, specific investments did not always yield the expected results and it was occasionally necessary to sell, even at a loss, in order to buy better securities. When, however, a large block of securities had to be sold in such circumstances, that seemed to show that bad investments had been made. His delegation asked what amount had been involved in the sale of securities that had resulted in such heavy losses. It was essential to know which investments had given rise to those losses and the reasons why a large volume of securities had become undesirable and finally been sold at a loss.

23. Paragraphs 25 to 29 of the Secretary-General's report, on the effects of inflation and monetary instability on the real situation of the Fund, were confined to theoretical considerations, namely, that during inflation the true rate of return was necessarily less than the nominal return, without giving a quantified statement of the return on investments in recent years. Moreover, no mention was made of the true value of the assets of the Fund as a result of those two phenomena, which must have led to a decline in the assets in real terms.

24. The report did say that it was sensible and desirable to choose investments which would be least affected by inflation, but that rule had not been applied. In that respect, two points were particularly revealing. First, the return on investments in currencies other than the dollar increased when those other currencies underwent upward revaluations against the dollar, which, during the last few years, had been happening most of the time, and secondly, the favourable showing of equity investments outside the United States was in most cases directly attributable to the revaluation of other currencies against the dollar. However, no figures had been given for the return from and value of the Fund's assets. The only possible conclusion, as the Cuban delegation had been saying for three years, was that funds should not be invested in currencies in a state of crisis.

25. While the report of the Secretary-General had been limited to theoretical considerations on that matter, the Board's report was more explicit, pointing as it did to the fact that the actuarial valuation of the Fund had brought to light an imbalance of $116.6 million as at 31 December 1974 (A/10009, para. 42), the result of inflation and monetary instability.

26. In paragraphs 30 to 32 of the Secretary-General's report, too much emphasis had been laid on the fact that investments in developing countries must be sound, and that implied that they were generally not sound. If it was true that investments in all countries must be sound and yield the best return, it was unacceptable to insinuate that investments in developing countries were not sound, if indeed they were in the developed countries. As far as that was concerned, one only had to look at the losses incurred in those countries.

27. The table in the annex to the Secretary-General's report showed that investments had been made with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Asian Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, but not with the African Development Bank or other regional banks. Papua New Guinea was the only country to benefit from investments from the Fund, and that required the guarantee of Australia. Was it therefore the case that investments could only be made in a developing country with the guarantee of a developed country? The interest on investments in Papua New Guinea had been 9.5 per cent, the highest rate shown in the table.

28. The investments made from the Pension Fund to finance development had been greatly reduced and amounted to only $40 million, out of a total of more than $900 million. Greater efforts must be made to substantially increase development-oriented investments by investing not only in international and regional financial bodies but also directly in the developing countries.

29. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) introduced a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1259) on behalf of his own delegation and that of Austria. The first reason behind the proposal was the fact that the guidelines given to the Board in 1974 appeared to have been so restrictive as to cast doubt on whether the Board could develop an equitable and adequate pension adjustment scheme, the costs of which could continue to be absorbed within the current 21 per cent total rate of contribution to the Fund. The second reason for the proposal was the need to establish a unified pension adjustment scheme. While it was perhaps an illusion to expect a genuinely and fully equitable scheme to emerge from further studies, the provisional dual WAPA/CPI system currently in force had too many characteristics that appeared inequitable from the viewpoint of both the pensioners and the Member States. As that system had been introduced less than a year before, such conclusions were preliminary, but the Board's comments also suggested that the system was very costly and might be giving rise to more unhappiness than it was overcoming. Finally, many countries had introduced a pension adjustment scheme. In at least one country—Canada, for example—the principle of setting up a special contributory fund to provide for economic adjustments to pensions had already been established and it merited serious consideration in the case of international civil servants.

30. For the Board to study the advisability of a rate increase, a formal decision by the Committee was neces-

sary. Other ideas had been presented by delegations and they would no doubt be given careful consideration by the Board; they fell within the guidelines set out at the twenty-ninth session, and therefore did not have to be formally approved for the Board to examine them, whereas the new proposal departed from the guidelines and would involve additional costs to Member States. The draft decision and the observations made by several other delegations would allow the Board to study several possible pension adjustment schemes, and it was to be hoped that, as a result of its studies, it would be able to make a recommendation to the General Assembly, at the thirty-first session, which would take account of the interests of the participants and Member States.

31. Mrs. ABELE-EMICH (Austria) said that it was extremely difficult, in the current period of inflation and unstable foreign exchange relationships, to develop a new pension adjustment scheme which could be financed without adding to the current or potential liability of the Member States, as pointed out in paragraphs 34 and 35 of the Board's interim report on the subject (A/10009, annex V). A study on the feasibility of setting up a special account, financed by means of increased contributions to the Fund, could facilitate the creation of a unified system.

32. The Austrian delegation was pleased to note that the Advisory Committee had approved the recommendation of the Board for the further alignment of the entitlements of male and female participants, and would therefore vote in favour of a recommendation aimed at ensuring completely equal benefits for widows and widowers. It would also vote in favour of the recommended extension of the maximum length of contributory service to 32 years. Nevertheless, it felt that the Board should be particularly concerned with the situation of certain small groups of pensioners who tended not to be favoured by provisions of the current system. For example, while retirement benefits after 25 or 30 years of service stood at a reasonable level, the survivorship provisions, relating to those who died in service after a much shorter period of time, were woefully inadequate. In the case of a participant stationed in New York, the survivorship benefit was not much more than 12 to 13 per cent of the last salary payment. For a participant stationed at Geneva, it would probably be less than 10 per cent of that sum. Such a benefit was completely inadequate to meet the most pressing needs, particularly since in the vast majority of cases the survivors were women who were left in a catastrophic financial position. Her delegation wished to express its serious concern about those widows, widowers and children, for whom the system had not made adequate provision. In that respect, the United Nations pension system was far below the most advanced national civil service retirement systems. The number of deaths in service was very limited and the actuarial costs of such improved benefits would be rather limited. The Board ought therefore to give serious consideration to such an urgent problem at its next session.

33. As far as the investment policy was concerned, the overriding objective should continue to be to obtain the best results for the benefits of the participants. The table contained in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10335) showed that geographical diversity in investment had not been to the detriment of the Fund, but, as the Advisory Committee had said in paragraph 22 of its report, the Secretary-General should continue to be guided exclusively by the soundness of investments, and the placement of the assets of the Fund in individual countries should derive solely from the belief that those markets presented the best potential investment opportunity for the Fund.

34. With reference to paragraph 23 of the Board's interim report, she recalled that, at the twenty-ninth session (1682nd meeting), her delegation had pointed out that the systems for the adjustment of pensions in payment, whether the CPI system or the WAPA system, were based on changes in the cost of living and the relationship between the currency of the country of the duty station or the country of residence and the United States dollar, whereas other factors resulting in salary increases were disregarded. In a number of countries, including Austria, a link had been established between the pensions of former employees and the salary movements of employees occupying the same type of position. Thus, government and social security pensions were adjusted to allow not only for the cost of living but also for other increases in wage and salary levels. Her delegation favoured such a system for international civil servants, and asked the Advisory Committee to study the implications at its next session and draw up a report.

35. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) reiterated his delegation's position that the integrity of the Pension Fund and its continued ability to meet its commitments were inviolable principles. His delegation fully endorsed the Board's proposals, as amended by the Advisory Committee, to align the entitlements of male and female participants, and supported the comments by the representative of Austria concerning survivor benefits. It also supported the proposal that the maximum contributory service be extended to 32 years as an interim measure. Noting that the rate of accumulation for the last two years was to be 1/100th of final average remuneration—and not the standard 1/50th—he expressed the view that such a distinction might be prudent in that it helped to conserve the Fund's resources. However, he wondered if it was entirely fair that just because an employee had completed 30 years' service, he should suffer a diminished return on his contribution. His delegation also wondered why there was no provision for the participant and the employing organization to terminate their contributions to the Fund upon completion of the maximum length of contributory service, and why such a provision would cause difficulties. It was hard to understand how loss of income would have a negative actuarial effect on the Fund if no additional payments had to be made when pensions became due. It seemed that the Fund was receiving a bonus at the expense of the employee once an employee completed his 30 years of service.

36. As to investment, the paramount consideration should be security, since the security of people's lives was involved; every attempt should also be made to seek the best return possible consistent with the need to avoid risk; lastly, efforts should be made to diversify holdings by seeking further opportunities to invest in developing countries, provided that the principle of security was adhered to.

37. In view of the difficulties involved in formulating a unified pension adjustment scheme that was entirely equitable, he felt that the Board was virtually being asked to achieve the impossible. Nevertheless, the search must go on in the interests of both sound financial management and equity. His delegation supported the continuance of the CPI scheme until a unified scheme could be devised, in the belief that it was better that some people should profit than that some people should lose.

38. With regard to the draft decision submitted by Austria and Canada (A/C.5/L.1259), his delegation felt that it was well worth studying a scheme involving a 3 per cent increase in total contributions to the Fund to compensate for currency instability and inflation, and would fully support that proposal.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous A/... and A/C.5/... documents, see the 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6 and 11, A/C.5/1682/Add.1, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/1714, A/C.5/L.1230/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1231, A/C.5/L.1233, A/C.5/L.1239, A/C.5/L.1240, A/C.5/L.1250)

Consideration of the proposals before the Committee* (continued) *(A/C.5/L.1230/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1231, A/C.5/L.1233, A/C.5/L.1239, A/C.5/L.1250)

Revised draft decision A/C.5/L.1230/Rev.1

39. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had done its best to take account of the wishes expressed by delegations by bringing the text of its draft decision into line with that of the relevant paragraphs in the first report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008 and Corr.2), which the Committee had already approved, so that the draft decision might receive the widest possible support.

40. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) thanked the Soviet delegation for the understanding it had shown and said that the revised text was acceptable to his delegation.

41. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that, having had serious reservations with regard to the initial proposal by the Soviet delegation, he wished to thank that delegation for the spirit of conciliation it had shown. He was now able to endorse the draft decision.

42. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that draft decision A/C.5/L.1230/Rev.1 was adopted without objection.

It was so decided.

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1233

43. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia) asked why, in draft decision A/C.5/L.1233, attention was drawn to two particular paragraphs of the Advisory Committee's first report rather than to others.

44. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) replied that a large number of delegations attached particular importance to paragraphs 52 and 53 because they contained the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning more rational use of budgetary and extra-budgetary funds to cover the cost of posts in the Secretariat. In those paragraphs, the Advisory Committee recommended that, in accordance with regulation 7.2 of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations, the Secretary-General should not use available voluntary funds without the consent of the appropriate authority to finance new posts whose functions properly fell within the scope of the regular budget. That recommendation did not prevent the Secretary-General from including in the regular budget posts formerly financed from extra-budgetary funds, but he must, before doing so, consult the policy-making organs and have the approval of the General Assembly.

45. Mr. LOUDON (Netherlands) said he was not entirely satisfied with draft decision A/C.5/L.1233 and would have preferred it to mention paragraphs 49 to 54, since the Advisory Committee's opinion on the question was set out in all those paragraphs. He therefore proposed that the text should be amended accordingly.

46. Mr. MARTIN (Spain) pointed out that the draft decision would be clearer if the Soviet delegation specified which elements in paragraphs 52 and 53 it wished the General Assembly to approve, since it was inconvenient to have to refer to another document in order to ascertain what the Assembly was supposed to approve, and paragraphs 52 and 53 contained a number of elements of varying importance.

47. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he had no objection to the inclusion in the draft decision of a reference to the other paragraphs relating to the financing of Secretariat posts, but pointed out that the actual recommendation of the Advisory Committee appeared in paragraphs 52 and 53; the other paragraphs were merely explanatory and there was no special need to mention them. If the Netherlands delegation insisted that those other paragraphs should be mentioned, they should be enumerated separately in the text: "paragraphs 49, 50, 51, 52, 53 and 54 of its first report".

48. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that draft decision A/C.5/L.1233, as amended, was adopted without objection.

It was so decided.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1231

49. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) announced that Afghanistan and Argentina had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1231.

50. Introducing that text, he pointed out that the general discussion had revealed that an increasing number of Member States wished the Secretariat to submit information on programmes, projects or activities within the United Nations which were already completed, nearly completed, obsolete, of marginal usefulness, or ineffective. His delega-

tion had therefore put questions to the Secretariat[2] about the steps taken towards reorganizing, merging or eliminating units which handled programmes or projects that were completed or nearly completed, and the Secretariat had provided answers,[3] which, no doubt for lack of time, could not be considered satisfactory. His delegation had therefore taken the initiative of drafting a text reflecting the comments made by members of the Committee in order to convey the general feeling on the matter in a draft resolution which he hoped would not prove controversial.

51. There were some minor changes to be made in the text. In operative paragraph 1, the phrase " , through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions" should be inserted after the words "to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session" and the phrase "including the relevant authorization" should be inserted after the word "information". In paragraph 2 of the English text, the word "taken" should be added after the word "steps". In the second part of paragraph 1, the phrase "or which are considered obsolete, of marginal usefulness, or ineffective" was not intended to give the Secretary-General the power to judge the usefulness of programmes and activities but to obtain the views of intergovernmental bodies on the subject, which already appeared in United Nations documents. The deletion of those words would limit the information that the Member States sought to obtain. He hoped that the draft resolution would receive the support of all the members of the Fifth Committee.

52. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution caused him some difficulty because, despite the explanations provided by the representative of Poland, he could not quite see who would decide that certain programmes were considered obsolete, of marginal usefulness, or ineffective. By the close of the current session, the Committee would have voted on the programme budget for 1976-1977 and would therefore have approved all its components. It would therefore be difficult to ask the Secretary-General to revert to the question of the thirty-first session and indicate which programmes were obsolete or ineffective. The Committee should take a decision on the matter at the current juncture, and if certain delegations had information indicating that intergovernmental bodies had considered certain programmes to be obsolete or ineffective they should so inform the Committee. When certain programmes, such as the statistical programme, had been considered, some representatives had voiced doubts about the effectiveness of several activities. The Committee should decide as to the effectiveness of the individual components before approving the programme as a whole. If the Secretary-General was asked to submit a report on the question, the only logical course would be for him to approach Member States and ask them which programmes they considered to be obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective, unless the question was referred to the Advisory Committee for re-examination of the programme budget that was approved. It might be useful to follow the proposed procedure—as was the case with UNESCO—whereby Member States were asked to indicate, before the final document was adopted, which programmes they considered neither useful nor effective.

53. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said he agreed with the aims of the Polish draft resolution but had the same misgivings as the representative of the Upper Volta concerning operative paragraph 1. The Secretary-General would be placed in a difficult position if he were asked to evaluate programmes and the like. Only the competent intergovernmental organs could express a view on the matter. One solution would be to delete the last part of the paragraph, but that would diminish the scope of the resolution and it would be better to change the wording following the word "completed" to read: "or which the appropriate intergovernmental bodies consider to be obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective". He proposed the addition of the word "anticipated" before the word "duration" in operative paragraph 3.

54. Mr. OH (Singapore), on behalf of the delegations of the Asian countries, wished to congratulate the Polish delegation on its draft and said he would like to hear the Controller's views on the document. He had no objection to including the word "anticipated" in operative paragraph 3.

55. Mr. SETHI (India) said he had been preparing to propose an amendment similar to that proposed by Pakistan to meet the objections of the representative of the Upper Volta. Although the Secretary-General could provide information on completed programmes, the same was not true of obsolete, marginally useful or ineffective programmes. He felt that the words "by intergovernmental bodies" should appear after the word "considered".

56. In operative paragraph 3 he would be inclined to delete the word "programmes" in order to avoid ambiguity. In the programme budget that word was synonymous with "administrative unit", whereas in the medium-term plan it signified a field of activity. He therefore thought that the phrase should read: "information on the time-limit for the completion of the projects and activities included therein".

57. The CHAIRMAN, speaking as representative of TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, said he assumed that when the Polish delegation spoke of "existing budgetary expenses" in operative paragraph 1 it was referring to existing appropriations. He would like the Polish representative to indicate, when he replied to the questions raised, how he reconciled the notion of existing appropriations with that of "completed programmes".

58. Mrs. DERRE (France) said she agreed with the intent of the Polish draft resolution and shared the concerns voiced by the representatives of the Upper Volta, Pakistan and India. It was the Fifth Committee's responsibility to criticize completed or obsolete programmes, and that was the reason why her delegation had asked that section 5 of the programme budget should be considered on a project-by-project basis. However, that suggestion had not been followed.

59. She did not share the belief of the representative of Pakistan that an intergovernmental agency would one day decide that a programme was obsolete, marginal or ineffec-

2 Circulated in conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.1 of 1 October 1975.

3 See conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.4, of 16 October 1975.

tive. The only organ which could perform that task would be the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. She supported the Indian proposal regarding operative paragraph 3 but thought that it would be better to postpone consideration of the draft resolution until a later date.

60. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation particularly appreciated the idea expressed in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, since it had brought up that question during the general discussion (1711th meeting).

61. With regard to the Indian proposal to delete the word "programmes" from operative paragraph 3, he had the impression that the last two proposed programme budgets mentioned "programmes, projects and activities". That wording should be kept in the draft resolution.

62. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said he agreed with the representative of the Upper Volta that it would be difficult for the Secretary-General to say which programmes were obsolete. The proposal by the French delegation that the task should be entrusted to CPC would be acceptable, but the amendment should be worded more precisely. His delegation approved of the idea of including the word "anticipated" in operative paragraph 3, and thought that the word "programmes" was appropriate in that paragraph.

63. Mr. SETHI (India), replying to the representative of the United States of America, pointed out that the programme budget included 25 programmes, which there was clearly no question of discontinuing. A distinction therefore needed to be made between the word "programme", in the sense of a field of activity or administrative unit, and the objectives covered by that programme, or the activities which came to an end when those objectives were attained. In any event, he would like the Controller to settle the question.

64. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said he did not think he could settle the question since even within the context of the budget the word "programme" could have different meanings. It sometimes coincided with the definition given by the representative of India–as in the case of economic and social activities–whereas in other cases it did not convey the notion of objectives so much as of services provided–as in the case of political activities. In the latter case it referred to activities carried out by the United Nations, such as the peace-keeping programme. One therefore had to accept the fact that the word "programme" could not really be defined with any precision.

65. Mr. SETHI (India) said he was sorry that that word did not have a more exact meaning for the competent United Nations organs. It had different meanings in the programme budget and in the medium-term plan. However, if it was understood to mean any activity or any project, whatever its nature, he saw no reason why it should not be kept in the draft resolution and, although he remained unconvinced, he agreed to withdraw his amendment.

66. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) observed that the medium-term plan described 25 programmes, that is, covered 25 broad fields of activity. However, the term "programme component" might be used in the draft resolution. While he supported the sponsors of the proposal, he advised them to revise operative paragraph 1 so as to mention CPC, whose intervention was essential in determining which programmes were obsolete.

67. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that the French delegation's proposal to include a reference to CPC in operative paragraph 1 could give rise to some difficulties inasmuch as CPC, as a consultative body, reported to the Economic and Social Council, which in turn reported to the General Assembly. Moreover, some bodies were responsible for activities which had nothing to do with CPC or the Economic and Social Council but came within the purview of the Security Council. It would therefore be better not to mention a particular intergovernmental body.

68. Mrs. DERRE (France) proposed that the last part of operative paragraph 1, coming after the word "completed", should be amended to read: "or which are considered by the intergovernmental bodies concerned and particularly the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination, to be obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective".

69. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) thanked all the delegations which had endeavoured to improve draft resolution A/C.5/L.1231 and said he intended to review the entire text of that document.

The meeting rose at 11 p.m.

1750th meeting

Wednesday, 26 November 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1750

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10350 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/10378, A/C.5/L.1262, A/C.5/L.1265)

1. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that peace-keeping operations were an essential function of the United Nations. His Government paid its share of the costs of such operations, on the ground that they were the collective responsibility of all Members.

2. He expressed regret that in his report (A/10350 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General did not provide adequate justification for the estimates submitted; paragraph 14 and annex II, in particular, were somewhat cryptic. The Security Council in its resolutions 362 (1974) and 378 (1975) and the General Assembly in its resolution 3211 B (XXIX) had requested the Secretary-General to ensure that UNEF and UNDOF were conducted with the maximum of efficiency and economy. The current report of the Secretary-General, however, gave little information on where savings could be made. His delegation had strong reservations over the estimate for "other troop-related costs" listed in annex II to that report. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had noted in paragraph 45 of its report (A/10378) that the costs were intended to cover the usage factor for personal clothing, personal gear and personal equipment; his delegation's reservations derived from the fact that the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session had decided[1] that the rate of payment to troop-contributing countries should be standardized at $500 per man per month, with an additional $150 per man per month for a limited number of specialists. The new estimate for a usage factor would considerably increase the costs of the peace-keeping operations, as would the new proposal for about $2 million for welfare. Accordingly, his delegation firmly supported the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. The reduction of $600,000 in the $9.4 million estimate for the construction of new camps and observation posts seemed very reasonable, as did the $500,000 reduction in the $6.6 million estimate for the maintenance and operation of motor transport. He drew attention to the manning table for civilian personnel in the report of the Advisory Committee, which listed 776 posts, and also noted that, according to paragraph 2.18 of the Advisory Committee's first report[2] on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, some posts were currently on loan from UNTSO.

3. Referring to the amount of $10 million which the Secretary-General considered uncollectible, he said that peace-keeping operations were in the interests of all Member States and provided for under the Charter; accordingly, the principle of collective responsibility for such operations should not be thwarted.

4. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation firmly supported the maintenance and enlargement of UNEF and UNDOF as instruments to be used in the search for peace in the Middle East, endorsed the special scale of assessments approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 3101 (XXVIII), and was in favour of the joint draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.5/L.1262), which called for the maintenance of that scale of assessments and changed the status of Portugal for the purposes of contributions to UNEF and UNDOF.

5. The main problems arose in connexion with the expenditure of UNEF and UNDOF. While it had been said that the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee did not provide justification for the level of expenditure envisaged, he believed that the estimates were not excessive. Monitoring and supervision would cover an area four times larger than in the past, and new base camps and access roads were needed because of the remoteness of the area. While the estimates had risen by approximately 50 per cent, the number of troops was to rise by approximately 21 per cent, and the tasks to be carried out by UNEF were much greater. As the improvement in the cost effectiveness ratio was due to increased mobility, the estimates for transport should be approved. The oldest and most unreliable vehicles should be disposed of so as to avoid high servicing costs.

6. The Advisory Committee had shown prudence in its suggestions for redeployment of resources. Some of the $10 million required for aircraft and naval vessels might have to be met from UNEF funds, as the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 19 of its report.

7. It was for the General Assembly to decide whether the United Nations should approve claims from Governments to cover the usage factor for personal clothing, gear and equipment. He believed that justified costs incurred by troop-contributing countries should be repaid, but that the $2.8 million estimated for the usage factor should be a contingency provision which he hoped would not have to be spent.

8. Mr. SOKALSKI (Poland) noted that there were two aspects to the item under discussion, a political and a financial one. On the political side, the operation, which was based on equitable geographical representation, was a success. However, UNEF and UNDOF had been established on an emergency basis and were not intended to replace a

1 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 31* and corrigendum, p. 140, item 84.

2 *Ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 8* and corrigendum.

comprehensive settlement that would completely efface the effects of Israeli aggression against the Arab countries. Indeed, the fact that contributions from over 100 Member States for the period of 25 April to 24 October 1975 were still due seemed to denote a growing impatience at the lack of a solution, despite the urgent appeals expressed in a number of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

9. On the financial side, the budget for peace-keeping operations was growing much faster than even the regular budget of the Organization. In order to restrict further growth of the budget of the peace-keeping forces without impairing their efficiency or penalizing the soldiers in the field, there must be good management, the various contingents must function as an integral unit without differentiation regarding their United Nations status, the parties directly concerned with the mission of UNEF and UNDOF must provide assistance, individual troop-contributing countries and their contingents must make special efforts and States must make voluntary contributions.

10. With regard to good management, his delegation would welcome information on the results of measures to control the equipment received by the Forces and the rate of losses and spoilage and on the auditing of the UNEF and UNDOF accounts by the Board of Auditors. It welcomed the news that ration losses had already been reduced to 1.5 per cent and that there had been improvements in other areas. In that connexion, he cited the recent exchange of letters between the Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations and the Secretary-General constituting an agreement on the principles of financing the participation of the Polish contingent in UNEF and UNDOF. In addition, the number of United Nations staff could be reduced. The figure of 776 referred to in paragraph 22 of the Advisory Committee's report seemed somewhat excessive. His delegation would welcome information concerning the geographical distribution of the 170 persons in the Professional and field service category so far attached to the Forces. Further economies could be effected: for instance, his delegation did not believe that, in the new circumstances, it was necessary to establish water purification stations on the left bank of the Suez Canal, and it felt that a bus shuttle between the Forces' headquarters and Cairo might be a cheaper form of transportation than automobiles.

11. With regard to the need for the various contingents to operate as an integral unit, he recalled that his delegation had cited instances of non-compliance by Israel with Security Council resolutions and with the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces. Those incidents increased the costs of the peace-keeping forces, reduced their effectiveness and hampered reductions in the total number of troops. With regard to the assistance of the parties directly concerned, reference was made in the Protocol[3] to the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces to the need for UNEF to enjoy freedom of movement and communication and other facilities necessary for its mission. That was particularly important in view of the request for $10.3 million for rental, maintenance and construction of premises. As to the efforts of individual troop-contributing countries, he pointed out that in the last year Poland had reduced its over-all troop strength by 15 per cent without in any way diminishing its efficiency. To the best of his knowledge the statement in paragraph 36 of the Advisory Committee's report that, on the average, one fifth to one quarter of the vehicles were out of service at any one time did not apply to the Polish contingent. Finally the expenditure of the peace-keeping forces could also be reduced by voluntary contributions which could take the form of services and supplies. However, such contributions should be left to the discretion of individual Governments, particularly since troop-contributing countries incurred substantial material and invisible costs that would not be reimbursed. For instance, while as much as 46 per cent of the Polish contingent qualified for additional payments for specialists according to the definition in paragraph 44 of the Advisory Committee's report, Poland was paid for only 25 per cent of its specialists.

12. His delegation fully shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee, both concerning the fact that the Secretary-General's report had been submitted less than three weeks before the expiry of the authority vested in him to enter into commitments for UNEF and the fact that the report contained few detailed justifications in support of the estimates submitted. The Secretariat should be more specific in future reports on the subject, for Member States were entitled to full access to all available information.

13. Such peace-keeping operations could only contribute to the relaxation of tension and it was the duty of all to continue unfalteringly to support them. His delegation would act in accordance with those convictions both in the Fifth Committee and in the field.

14. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation supported the continued existence of UNEF and UNDOF, which fulfilled an indispensable fuction in maintaining peace in the Middle East while continuing efforts were made to find a more permanent and comprehensive solution. He expressed great appreciation to the troop-contributing countries. The size of UNEF had been increased and its area of operations widened considerably by the Security Council on 23 October 1975 (see A/10350 and Corr.1, annex III). The Secretary-General had accordingly, in his report, estimated the cost of UNEF and UNDOF for the coming 12 months at $112.5 million, excluding aircraft and naval vessels which he hoped would be financed from voluntary contributions. His delegation accepted the reduction of $2.3 million recommended by the Advisory Committee in its report.

15. Recalling the request made by the Security Council and the General Assembly for maximum economy in the conduct of UNEF and UNDOF and the reference by the Advisory Committee in its previous report[4] to the activities of internal auditors and the Board of Auditors, he said that he would have liked information on the findings of the auditors as to whether the operations were being conducted as economically as possible. The Secretary-General should

[3] *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-ninth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1974*, document S/11302/Add.1, annex II.

[4] Document A/9870 and Corr.1, for 21 November 1974.

publish a full accounting of expenditures involved and information on the management of the operations.

16. It was for the General Assembly to determine whether the United Nations could entertain claims from troop-contributing Governments in respect of the usage factor for personal clothing, gear and equipment, or whether the Secretary-General's assumption that usage was covered by the standard rate of reimbursement should stand. In paragraph 19 of the previous report of the Secretary-General,[5] the latter had indicated that the reimbursement formulae were intended to cover normal pay and allowances and the usage factor. That led one to the conclusion that the standard formula for reimbursement agreed upon by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session did cover the usage factor for personal clothing, gear and equipment. The Japanese delegation, however, would decide what its final position on the matter would be when it had weighed the views of other delegations in the Committee.

17. Referring to the amount of $10.2 million which the Secretary-General considered uncollectible, he stressed the overriding importance of the principle of collective financial responsibility as the foundation of all the endeavours of the United Nations, particularly its peace-keeping activities. The special scale of assessments approved at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly should be retained, as it was fair and equitable to all countries concerned.

18. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) noted that his delegation did not have any difficulty recognizing the legitimacy of the use of armed forces in the Middle East, which was based upon decisions taken by the Security Council in accordance with the Charter. His delegation, moreover, had no objection to the competence of the Assembly to adopt resolutions concerning the financing of United Nations operations in the Middle East. Implementation of the resolutions would depend upon the speedy and peaceful settlement of the problem in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). If the mandate of the emergency forces continued to be extended, the developing countries should be asked to make only a token contribution to the financing in order to safeguard the principle of the collective responsibility of all Members for the maintenance of peace.

19. He regretted that the suggestion made at the previous session that the Fifth Committee should consider and review the existing arrangements for the financing of UNEF and UNDOF at the thirtieth session had not been put to the vote,[6] for reasons which had not convinced his delegation. That was particularly regrettable since, as usual, the Committee would not have time to consider the problem in depth. In view of the increase in costs which would have to be apportioned, he pointed out that Article 43 of the Charter was the only one which made provision for the use of armed forces. In that connexion, he referred to the consensus of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations brought to the attention of the Assembly at the nineteenth session,[7] according to which the question of the applicability of Article 19 of the Charter would not be raised with regard to the United Nations Emergency Force and the United Nations Operation in the Congo and the financial difficulties of the Organization should be solved through voluntary contributions by Member States, with the highly developed countries making substantial contributions. That consensus provided an additional argument in favour of the revision of the system of financing UNEF.

20. Mr. OCOKOLJIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that, in lending its full support to the Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on the subject of UNEF, his delegation was proceeding from its position of principle, namely, that a just and lasting solution to the Middle East crisis could be achieved only on the basis of strict implementation of the relevant United Nations decisions, calling for the withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied Arab territories and the realization by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination and its own State, while guaranteeing the existence of all the States in the region. In that connexion, his delegation had drawn attention to the fact that it was not possible to deny the right of any people to fight for its freedom, for the preservation of its territorial integrity and national identity. Yugoslavia was aware that a struggle of that nature in that part of the world would last as long as the situation created by aggression persisted.

21. His delegation felt that, following new developments in the Middle East situation as a result of the conclusion and implementation of the Egyptian-Israeli Agreement of 4 September 1975,[8] the role of UNEF and UNDOF was in no way diminished, as had been reaffirmed by the Security Council which decided, by its resolution 378 (1975), to extend the mandate of UNEF until 24 October 1976. Since the territory under the control of UNEF had been extended and since it was necessary to increase the military personnel, relocate the military camps and observation posts and procure new and special equipment, it was imperative to increase the financial resources for the forthcoming period. Yugoslavia supported the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General in his report (A/10350 and Corr.1) concerning the financing of UNEF for the period 25 October 1975 to 24 October 1976, and of UNDOF for the period 25 October 1975 to 30 November 1975 and beyond, if the Security Council extended the mandate of the two Forces.

22. The financing of United Nations peace-keeping forces in the Middle East was the collective responsibility of all Member States. One should bear in mind, however, the special responsibilities of the permanent members of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, the capacity of the developed countries to make larger contributions and the limited capacity of the developing countries, especially the least developed among them, to contribute towards peace-keeping operations.

5 Document A/9822 of 30 October 1974.

6 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 84, document A/9825/Add.2, paras. 36 and 38.

7 *Ibid., Nineteenth Session, Annexes*, annex No. 21, document A/5916, para. 2; and *ibid., Nineteenth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1331st meeting, paras. 3 and 4.

8 *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirtieth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1975*, document S/11818/Add.1, annex.

23. His delegation would support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262, since it provided for the implementation of the above-mentioned principles, and proposed that Portugal should be transferred from the group of countries referred to in paragraph 2 *(b)* of General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII) to the group referred to in paragraph 2 *(c)* for the purpose of the scale of assessments for the financing of UNEF.

24. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) noted that, in connexion with the provision of contingents, his Government had incurred costs of approximately $60 million for which it had not requested reimbursement. In order to reach a solution acceptable to the troop-contributing countries and Member States, it had agreed to the principle of a flat rate of reimbursement for pay and allowances to all troop-contributing Governments on an equal basis, even though the rates agreed on covered only 50 per cent of its own expenses. Remuneration for troop contingents was one of the few costs in the budget for which no allowance for inflation had been calculated. Although many developing countries had expressed a willingness at the outset to participate in the Emergency Force, numerous difficulties had been encountered. The magnitude of the problems facing countries that were prepared to provide troops was demonstrated by the fact that some developing troop-contributing countries had even had to withdraw their forces. It fact, those problems were jeopardizing the geographical balance of the Forces. Efforts should be made to strengthen the potential in favour of peace-keeping in all countries, including the small States which contributed troops. That could not be done unless all Members were assured of understanding and support. Governments must be given fair compensation and support in cash and in kind that non-troop-contributing countries could give, and they must be assured that there would be no unreasonable delay in remuneration. He emphasized the collective responsibility of all Member States in the peace-keeping operations, a responsibility which should be reflected in a meaningful contribution.

25. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) reaffirmed the Soviet Union's position of principle, which had been consistently in favour of the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and a comprehensive political settlement in that area, the prerequisites for which were the complete withdrawal of all Israeli troops from the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and ensuring the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to statehood. His delegation had not opposed the extension of UNEF to 24 October 1976 on the understanding that the time was to be used for real progress towards a political settlement, which could be promoted by a resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East in which all interested parties would be represented, including the Arab people of Palestine through the Palestine Liberation Organization. His Government, on 9 November 1975, had proposed to the United States Government that, as co-chairmen of the Geneva Conference, they should take the initiative jointly in that direction.

26. The report of the Secretary-General showed that the estimates for UNEF for the 12 months from October 1975 to October 1976 were approximately 43 per cent higher than the appropriations for the previous year. The Security Council, in its resolution 378 (1975), had called for maximum economy in the conduct of UNEF. His delegation believed that any increase in the size and expenditure of UNEF should be kept to a minimum, as any increased expenditure placed an additional burden on Member States. Indeed, it would be more just to make the aggressor State, Israel, responsible for all costs, since the continuation of Israeli aggression and the occupation of the Arab lands made the presence of the United Nations forces necessary.

27. The estimates of the Secretary-General were not properly justified, particularly in respect of the purchase of new equipment, the maintenance of motor transport and the cost of reimbursement for depreciation of heavy equipment. Moreover, it was difficult to assess estimates for the coming year when not enough information was available on costs incurred during the previous year. That was why his delegation had requested a report by the Board of Auditors on the 1974 UNEF and UNDOF expenditures, and other relevant information; his delegation was still awaiting that information. For example, the size of UNEF and UNDOF had been reduced during their second year of operations and yet there had been a sharp increase in expenditures on salaries and related costs of staff, purchase of equipment, supplies and services, and maintenance of motor transport. The increase from $2 million to $5.5 million for motor transport seemed excessive, even when the difficult terrain and climatic factors were taken into consideration. There was clearly a need for further explanation of the large discrepancies between the original estimates and the actual disbursements for the second year of UNEF and UNDOF operations. The Security Council had urged careful consideration of the expenditures, and such information was necessary in order to assess estimates for the third year of operations. Neither the report of the Secretary-General (A/10350 and Corr.1) nor the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10378) provided adequate explanations. Before approving the estimates, the Fifth Committee should have a clear understanding of the basis for the estimates.

28. Referring to the question of the usage factor for personal clothing, gear and equipment, mentioned in paragraph 11 of the Advisory Committee's report, he said his delegation considered that such costs were covered by the standard reimbursement formula approved by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session. Like the Advisory Committee, his delegation could not accept the estimate of some $2.8 million for "other troop-related costs". His delegation also supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 34, 36, 37 and 42 of its report, which would lead to savings of $2.5 million. He agreed with the Advisory Committee that revenue from the sale of obsolete equipment should be applied towards the savings.

29. Since many of the disbursements and estimates for UNEF were not justified adequately, his delegation was not in a position to state its views on the estimates for UNEF until it had received and studied the information it had requested.

30. Referring to the aircraft, helicopters and naval vessels required by UNEF, he recalled that in the Security Council

the view had been expressed that those items should be provided by the parties directly concerned in ensuring that UNEF carried out its functions. He suggested, accordingly, that the Secretary-General should consult with the parties concerned to that effect.

31. Under Article 43 of the Charter of the United Nations, special agreements were to be concluded between the United Nations and Member States that provided contingents for peace-keeping operations. Yet a model agreement had never been drafted. Whenever a United Nations force had to be established and Members had to provide contingents, hasty, improvised arrangements were made. He suggested that the Fifth Committee might request the Security Council to expedite its work on drafting a model agreement.

32. Mr. LADOR (Israel) quoted from the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel to the General Assembly at its 2368th plenary meeting, on 30 September 1975, in which he had said that Israel recognized the essential role of the United Nations Emergency Force and paid a tribute to all the members of that Force, to Lieutenant-General Siilasvuo and to the Secretary-General, who was ultimately responsible for that United Nations enterprise as well as to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization and other United Nations forces.

33. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, introduced draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262, by the terms of which the General Assembly would decide to appropriate to the Special Account an amount of $94,275,000 for the operation of UNEF, which was the amount requested by the Secretary-General taking into account the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. He drew attention to paragraph 2 of section II, which set forth the manner in which the amount was to be apportioned in accordance with the recommendations contained in General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII), with the exception that Portugal had been transferred from the category of countries referred to in paragraph 2 *(b)* to that of the countries referred to in paragraph 2 *(c)* of the resolution, the difference in funds being absorbed by the permanent members of the Security Council. Section IV of the draft resolution included the new Members of the Organization, namely, Bangladesh, Grenada and Guinea-Bissau among those States referred to in paragraph 2 *(d)* of General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII). He recommended that the Committee should adopt the resolution and paid a tribute to all Members which had contributed troops to the peace-keeping forces.

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(continued) (A/10184, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257):**
***(a)* Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/10184, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257)**

34. Mr. RUCKTESCHELL (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his Government had a special interest in the personnel policy of the United Nations and, in particular, the recruitment of German staff. As a major contributor, the Federal Republic of Germany had been allocated a desirable range of 105 to 148 posts. In order to reach the minimum target within that range, it would have to fill 58 more vacancies financed under the United Nations budget. Accordingly, it lagged far behind other Member States as far as representation in the United Nations Secretariat was concerned. He wished to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and to the Office of Personnel Services for their understanding and co-operation. However, their joint efforts to find suitable vacancies and qualified candidates were far from successful. An equitable representation was still a long way off and would not be reached during the next few years if the current obstacles persisted.

35. Those obstacles were an exceedingly slow recruitment procedure and the fact that United Nations departments were often guided in their decisions by considerations other than those set forth in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter. His delegation suggested, therefore, that candidates from Member States which were over-represented or which had attained the desirable range of posts should in future be considered only if equally qualified candidates from under-represented Member States were not available. Only if that procedure was strictly followed would there be a change in the recruitment situation. It would be wrong to assume that under-represented Member States were not in a position to provide qualified candidates.

36. In addition, wherever possible, promotion should be given without regard to the principle of geographical distribution, since the resultant vacancy could then be filled by a national from an under-represented country. The report of the Secretary-General (A/10184) indicated that many Member States had obtained a considerable increase in posts although they were not under-represented. That should be avoided.

37. The Fifth Committee had rightly criticized the conversion of short-term appointments into long-term appointments for budgetary reasons, as a means of introducing additional personnel through the back door. That procedure was questionable also in so far as it disregarded the geographical aspect. Whenever short-term appointments were converted into long-term appointments, preference should be given to candidates from under-represented countries over candidates who already held a short-term appointment, unless the latter also came from under-represented countries.

38. The Federal Republic of Germany, as was consistent with its policy of paying particular attention to its representation in international bodies, was trying its best to provide qualified candidates. As a result, many of its nationals, who had been termed qualified candidates by the United Nations Secretariat, but for whom no vacancies were available, were on the roster. In that context, he would caution against attaching too much importance to the distribution of posts according to regions or regional groups, since that tended to dilute the principle of equitable geographical distribution. National contributions and population figures were not sufficiently taken into account. Above all, under-represented countries were hampered in their efforts to obtain adequate representation,

* Resumed from the 1745th meeting.

while the over-representation of some Member States was unjustly maintained. Regional representation should, therefore, not be the standard rule, but should be viewed with mistrust as an instrument to maintain privileged positions.

39. The tedious and protracted recruitment procedure was to the disadvantage of the United Nations recruitment policy and tended to discourage qualified applicants. The various departments often had to interview, evaluate and select the candidates, frequently denying them due consideration, and in many instances the departments developed a personnel policy of their own, independently of the policy of the Office of Personnel Services. If, in addition, applicants did not even receive an interim reply, or, on their arrival, found their superiors had not been informed, or if they had to complain about being inadequately graded, many qualified applicants would naturally be discouraged from considering an appointment in the United Nations.

40. The results of the competitive examination held in the Federal Republic of Germany over a year earlier provided an example of that procedure and its consequences. Less than half of the candidates selected had so far been appointed. Many of those remaining on the roster had taken up other jobs. The situation was all the more regrettable since a large sum had been spent for the purpose and an exceptionally good selection made. His delegation appreciated the fact that the Office of Personnel Services was still doing its best to find vacancies for the remaining candidates.

41. Although unable to offer a ready solution for a more expeditious recruitment procedure, his delegation suggested that the Secretary-General's next report to the Fifth Committee should contain information on the average lapse of time between the announcement of vacancies and the actual date of recruitment. In any case, the Office of Personnel Services should fix a deadline for the decisions to be taken by the other departments.

42. A matter of general concern was the appointment of a larger number of women to Professional and higher-level posts. His Government was in favour of any move by the Secretariat in that direction and supported those endeavours by nominating female applicants. However, as long as there was a roster of female candidates whom the Secretariat had found to be qualified, it was primarily for the Secretariat to find appointments for them. The need to appoint a growing number of women must not lead to a change in the desirable ranges for Member States according to the principle of geographical distribution. The first priority must be to abolish under-representation. His delegation suggested that more women should be appointed to leading positions within the Office of Personnel Services.

43. With regard to the proposals for a change in the system of desirable ranges set out in the report of the Secretary-General, his delegation considered that a change in the minimum range of 1 to 6 posts could be brought about in various ways. It seemed plausible to raise the mid-point or rather the minimum range for the smaller countries, the majority of which were developing countries. At the same time, the reasons for such an increase should be more closely examined. In any case, he wished to warn against effecting that change at once and on a scale which would entitle many countries to the recruitment of additional personnel. It would be dangerous to create a host of new claims for posts, which could not be met overnight. That would cause even more widespread dissatisfaction, which should be avoided so as to maintain the smooth functioning of the United Nations system.

44. A similar situation might arise if, apart from the factor of contributions, greater weight was given to the membership factor. The idea of a possible inclusion of language and other posts in the calculation of desirable ranges was worth considering more closely, particularly with a view to the changes it would entail, and should be studied further after contributions had been reassessed.

45. Mr. DJEKILAMBERT (Chad) said that, according to table 8 of the annex to document A/10184, Chad did not have a single national in posts subject to geographical distribution as at 30 June 1975. The representative of Japan had complained that his country was under-represented. However, the same table revealed that, as at 30 June 1974, Japan had had 74 staff members and, as at 30 June 1975, 65 staff members. Japan was speaking of under-representation, whereas Chad was speaking of non-representation. They shared the same concern, but in varying degrees. The same table showed that certain States in the North American and Caribbean regions were over-represented and had twice as many staff members as all the countries of Africa combined. Yet paragraph 18 of the report stated, with reference to the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution: "The existing system of desirable ranges of posts expresses in numerical terms the principle of the Charter under which the staff is to be recruited on as wide a geographical basis as possible."

46. Chad had a number of young university graduates, jurists, economists, teachers, administrators and doctors who were ready to make their contribution to the international community in its efforts to maintain peace and strengthen international co-operation. They needed, however, to be afforded the opportunity to do so by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. They had practical experience and a good knowledge of their country. Chad had made several job applications to the Division of Recruitment, the latest as recently as 14 November 1975. Information had been received that the Division was giving favourable consideration to those applications. That was a first step towards redressing a situation which was contrary to the principle of equality of all States enshrined in the Charter. Chad would continue to file job applications for its nationals and would see to it that they received due consideration.

47. His delegation urged the Secretary-General to intensify the search for qualified personnel in those countries which were clearly under-represented or unrepresented, and to send recruiting missions to Chad to interview candidates and evaluate their qualifications for particular posts, as had been done in Moscow, Kiev and Minsk.

48. The neighbouring African countries shared Chad's concern and supported its request for equitable representation within the Secretariat.

49. If his delegation had not dealt with the question of the recruitment of women, it was not out of neglect or discrimination, but simply because it wanted to stress the crucial problem of non-representation. It would take up the other aspect of the personnel question when the Secretariat had considered the job applications filed by his Government.

50. Miss FORCIGNANÒ (Italy) welcomed the new trend established in the Secretariat's recruitment policy. The positive approach could be attributed mainly to the use of the competitive examination, which Italy had supported for several years, as well as to the use of numerous channels of communication through which the Secretariat could reach potential candidates. Her delegation supported the view that the search for talent should be extended to academic and scientific communities, State enterprises and private corporations. Recruitment from among a large number of qualified young men and women would help to meet the requirements set forth in Article 101 of the Charter.

51. The application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution was still unsatisfactory. The fact, however, that more candidates from under-represented countries were being considered was welcome. Her delegation did not think that the problem of the under-represented countries, such as Italy, could be solved on the basis of the recommendation made by the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System, according to which countries in a region or subregion should agree among themselves to pool the number of Secretariat posts allocated to them for the purpose of satisfying the requirement of equitable geographical distribution. The implementation of that recommendation was likely to cause undesirable discussions among States of the same area and unlikely to improve the situation.

52. With regard to paragraph 14 of document A/10184, she wished to know the breakdown by nationality of the 4,000 candidates included in the roster and the positions for which they were eligible.

53. Although there had been a slight increase in the number of Italians employed by the Secretariat, as a result of the selection of young people through the competitive examination, the picture could hardly be gloomier with regard to the problem of senior staff, in spite of the universally admitted under-representation of Italy. The responsible organ of the United Nations should examine that problem with the greatest attention with a view to obtaining better ideas and suggestions.

54. The statistics concerning the employment of women were disappointing. If the situation regarding lower-level posts was unsatisfactory, the position at the policy-making level was even worse. It could not be questioned that women had shown themselves capable of doing their jobs as well as men with equal intelligence, education and qualifications. The position of women in modern society had changed, and appropriate conclusions must be drawn from that fact in assessing the assignment of jobs and posts everywhere, including, of course, the United Nations.

55. She deeply appreciated the pertinent statements made by the representative of Australia at the 1742nd meeting. Her delegation would study with great interest his concrete proposals. As a first reaction, it would be more inclined to indicate a percentage based on the total number of the posts available for a given biennium, rather than on a regional distribution for the same period.

56. Mr. EDWARDSEN (Norway) said that it appeared from document A/10184 that the results of the efforts made in compliance with the request in General Assembly resolution 3352 (XXIX) had been disappointing. Therefore, the essential task of intensifying the recruitment effort should be given the highest priority.

57. His delegation endorsed the Australian proposal that the Organization should set definite goals with a view to reaching an equitable balance between male and female staff members, particularly in senior positions, and that certain concessions should be made to female candidates in order to achieve that balance. A valuable step towards a solution might be the establishment of an initial target, together with an intensified recruitment drive actively encouraging and helping women to educate and qualify themselves for non-traditional female professions, and to apply for positions within the United Nations system. His delegation realized that increasing the number of female recruits was no easy task, but wished to re-emphasize the need for determination and imagination in efforts to redress the existing situation. It was also pleased to note that all differential treatment based on sex had been removed from the Staff Rules and Regulations of the United Nations, and that the last remaining distinctions under the Regulations of the Joint Staff Pension Fund would be eliminated at the current session.

58. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that, although his delegation would concentrate on the question of the employment of women, its silence on other matters raised in document A/10184 should not be construed as an endorsement of the recommendations contained therein.

59. Men and women alike had come to realize more than ever before that it was impossible to find a lasting solution to current problems without involvement and support from women. His delegation shared much of the concern voiced by the representative of Australia on the employment of women in the Secretariat. A solution should be found to the problem of the declining percentage of Professional women staff members. His delegation supported the Australian view that greater efforts should be made to eliminate discrimination against women and to enable them to fill Professional posts. It was important, however, also to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

60. His delegation supported the view expressed in the report of the Secretary-General that the search for talent should not be limited to foreign ministries and United Nations missions, but should also be extended to academic and scientific communities, to State enterprises, private corporations and non-governmental organizations. If the status of women within the Secretariat still left much to be desired, if the role of women was still insufficiently recognized, the blame lay not only with the Secretary-General but also with Member States. The fact was that Governments, as a general rule, put forward very few female candidates. His delegation therefore fully endorsed

appeals to Governments of Member States to motivate, train and encourage women candidates to compete for responsible positions in the Secretariat, particularly at the senior level. It welcomed appropriate measures already taken to publicize the right of individuals to apply personally for vacant positions. As long as there was a numerical imbalance between men and women staff members at the Professional level, some preference should be given to female applicants, provided that they met the required qualifications. Such positive discrimination was warranted. When considering female applicants, due weight should be attached to their previous job experience, even if it was gained in a non-paid volunteer capacity. Furthermore, it was important that the application forms should be free of any discriminatory questions. The time had come for the Secretary-General and Member States to face the problem squarely. The United Nations must seek promptly to recruit and promote more women to senior and policy-making positions.

61. His delegation would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

1751st meeting

Wednesday, 26 November 1975, at 9.15 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1751

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10350 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/10378, A/C.5/L.1262, A/C.5/L.1265)

1. Mr. FRASER (United States of America) said that it was a source of satisfaction to his delegation, as it must be to other delegations, to be associated so closely with a tangible success of the United Nations–the keeping of the peace in the Middle East during a period of tension and danger, while more enduring arrangements for a just peace in the region were being worked out. The Fifth Committee could take pride in having established and continued a method of financing those peace-keeping operations, particularly a complex formula of apportionment which was acceptable to almost all Member States. Thanks to that formula, UNEF and UNDOF had been better supported than any previous peace-keeping operations. The collective deterrent to the resumption of hostilities and the collective financial responsibility of Members were what the United Nations was all about. For if the Organization could not preserve the peace, its achievements in other realms of activity were imperilled. It was now incumbent upon the Committee to continue its good work.

2. It had before it a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1262) which maintained the compromise formula of 1973 and would continue the Special Account for the funding of United Nations peace-keeping operations in the Middle East for the period from 25 October 1975 to 24 October 1976 inclusive. His delegation would support that draft resolution and would endeavour to meet its commitments under it as promptly as it had in the past.

3. Mr. KHOKHAR (Pakistan) commended the role played by the Secretary-General in implementing the decisions of the Security Council concerning the establishment and functioning of UNEF and UNDOF. Pakistan had paid its contribution to the Force up to 24 October 1975, but it noted with deep concern that Israeli occupation of the bulk of territories seized in 1967 was currently placing a serious burden on Member States.

4. According to the Secretary-General's estimates, set out in his report (A/10350 and Corr.1, annex II), the anticipated expenditure for the financing of UNEF and UNDOF for the period from October 1975 to October 1976 would amount to $112.5 million. In its report, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had indicated that it should be possible to make savings totalling $2.3 million (A/10378, paras. 29, 34, 36, 37 and 42). His delegation supported the comments of the Advisory Committee, taking into account the need to give the necessary flexibility to the Secretary-General.

5. With regard to the reimbursement to troop-contributing countries of an amount of $2,840,000 for troop-related costs, his delegation was of the opinion that the question should be decided in the light of two principles: firstly, the expenses of UNEF and UNDOF were the collective responsibility of Member States; secondly, the burden on troop-contributing countries should not be allowed to become too heavy. The troops were already rendering an invaluable service to the cause of peace, facing hardship and danger. His delegation therefore supported the reimbursement of $2,840,000 over and above the standard rate of reimbursement per man per month, including specialists.

6. The Pakistan delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262, which was based on the same fundamental principles as General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII). That resolution had recognized that the economically more developed countries were in a position to make relatively larger contributions than the economically less developed countries; that idea was repeated in the draft resolution,

which also took into account the special responsibility of certain categories of States.

7. Bangladesh, Grenada and Guinea-Bissau had been included in the group of countries referred to in paragraph 2 *(d)* of resolution 3101 (XXVIII)–Bangladesh because its economy had been disrupted by natural disasters, and the other two countries because their share of the United Nations regular budget under the scale of assessment was 0.02 per cent. His delegation therefore supported the provisions of section IV, paragraph 1, of the draft resolution.

8. It was to be hoped that in the near future the international community would be able to eradicate the consequences of the Israeli occupation of vast Arab territories; so long as that objective had not been achieved, and so long as the people of Palestine were denied their right to self-determination, there would be a threat to peace in the Middle East. The international community should not be prepared to accept indefinitely the existing situation, which placed a heavy financial burden on it–a burden which his country was sharing in the interests of peace. The Pakistan delegation again joined all those who had called upon Israel to withdraw from all occupied Arab territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem. UNEF and UNDOF would then no longer be necessary, and a heavy burden would be lifted from the international community.

9. Mrs. ABELE-EMICH (Austria) recalled that Austria regarded UNEF and UNDOF as one of the most efficient and successful United Nations peace-keeping operations. Austria had participated by making voluntary contributions, by placing military personnel at the disposal of the United Nations, or by both. Her country considered its share in those expenses as part of the responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security which it had accepted by becoming a Member of the Organization. It was convinced that peace-keeping operations needed the political and financial support of all Member States, and considered that the principle of collective responsibility in that regard was particularly important.

10. As a troop-contributing country, Austria was particularly concerned with questions of reimbursement, depreciation and personal equipment. It had supported the decision taken at the twenty-ninth session by the General Assembly on the subject of a standard rate of reimbursement based on the principle of equal treatment without distinction as to nationality or rank. That decision had been satisfactorily implemented, but some questions were still pending, particularly the question of depreciation. Only when those problems had been favourably resolved would all Governments be willing to participate in United Nations forces.

11. Like several other troop-contributing countries, Austria was concerned about the deficit in the budget of UNEF and UNDOF, which was borne to a considerable extent by those same countries. All Member States should do their utmost to pay their contributions in time, unless they wanted to endanger the participation of the small countries. As the Austrian representative had stated in the Security Council, on 23 October 1974,[1] all countries should ensure that the share of the small countries did not become materially and thus politically unbearable for them.

12. Her delegation was glad to be one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262, thus demonstrating its continuing support of UNEF and of the principles laid down in General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII).

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(continued)* (A/10184, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1):

***(a)* Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10184, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1)**

13. Mr. HUCKE (German Democratic Republic) noted with satisfaction that, according to the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/10184, para. 6), the application of the principles governing the recruitment policy of the Secretariat, as reaffirmed by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session, required a careful balancing at all stages of the recruitment process. Unfortunately, the efforts made by the Secretariat had not brought about the comprehensive success expected. Indeed, the tables in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General showed that the geographical distribution of posts among Member States had hardly changed since the previous report.

14. Table 8 of the report under consideration showed that the Member States and regions which for years had been over-represented were even more so currently, whereas there were regional groups which still had far from the desirable minimum number of posts, for example, the regional group of socialist States of Eastern Europe, and the German Democratic Republic in particular. The equitable geographical distribution of posts was an important prerequisite for the efficient functioning of the Secretariat under Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and it was to be hoped that in the future the imbalance could be largely eliminated.

15. The slightly reduced but still high share of permanent posts, which according to table 9 amounted to some 60 per cent, contributed to the imbalance in the distribution by limiting the number of posts available for replacements after a certain period of time. So long as such a large number of Member States were under-represented in the Secretariat, priority should be given to candidates from those countries, and vacant posts which had been occupied by staff members with permanent contracts from over-represented countries or groups of countries should be given to candidates with fixed-term contracts. Furthermore, the recruitment of candidates from over-represented countries for posts which were subject to geographical distribution should be stopped completely until the disproportion had been eliminated.

[1] *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-ninth Year*, 1799th meeting.

16. Furthermore, his delegation felt, as it had pointed out at the twenty-ninth session, that despite the statements by the Secretary-General, the statistics would be more precise if the Secretariat, when dealing with personnel questions and the composition of the Secretariat, would take into account the five regional groups which actually existed, instead of seven regional groups.

17. His delegation had noted with interest the chapter of the report dealing with the employment and the greater participation of women in the work of the Secretariat, and welcomed the fact that the efforts made in that field had led to an increase in the number of women employed in Professional and higher categories in comparison with the preceding years. In that connexion, he emphasized that women candidates must be recruited on terms of full equality with men candidates, in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, in application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution. That basic principle should be more precisely reflected in the draft resolution before the Committee on the question (A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1). It was to be hoped that the progess made in the recruitment of women would soon be reflected in the proportional composition of the Secretariat.

18. Mr. MURG (Romania) noted with satisfaction that, according to the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat, specific recruitment measures had been applied and a new vacancy announcement system had been adopted. Recruitment through national institutions was entirely appropriate.

19. The primary concern with regard to recruitment remained the manner in which the principle of equitable geographical distribution was applied, a principle which was enshrined in the charter and reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 1852 (XVIII) and in a decision adopted by the General Assembly at the twenty-ninth session. He deplored the fact that 72 Member States, including Romania, had no nationals in the 277 Principal Officer (D-1) and higher posts and he insisted that a spirit of equity and equality should be reflected in the composition of the Secretariat.

20. The current system of desirable ranges, based on the membership factor, population and contribution to the budget, should be a more flexible tool of management which would enable every State to have some of its nationals in high-level posts. The idea that the normal distribution of posts by States should be replaced by a regional or subregional distribution (A/10184, paras. 22 and 30) was unacceptable. That solution could not meet the concern of States which wished to be better represented in the United Nations in high-level as well as lower-level posts. It would be difficult to speak of equity so long as the management of the Secretariat remained the privilege of a small traditional group of countries. In that connexion, an urgent re-examination of the recruitment system and the criteria for determining the ranges was required. The idea of making one criterion, namely, contribution to the budget, an absolute would perpetuate the existing inequalities, with possible repercussions on the activities of the Secretariat and its ability to carry out the major tasks entrusted to it.

21. Mr. TALIEH (Iran), introducing a revised text (A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1) of the draft resolution before the Committee, concerning the employment of women in the Secretariat, drew attention to the changes made in the text on the initiative of the Group of 77 and with the agreement of the sponsors. The latter, who had consulted the great majority of the Committee's members, hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

22. In order to clarify the meaning of operative paragraph 3, he explained that 5 per cent of the 2,600 Professional posts subject to geographical distribution represented 130 posts. In view of the fact that during the next biennium, 580 to 600 Professional posts would be filled, 130 posts represented less than 25 per cent of that figure. Moreover, since during the preceding biennium, the number of women recruited for Professional posts had represented 19 per cent of the number of men, paragraph 3 in effect requested the Secretary-General to recruit 6 to 8 per cent more women, a modest figure which should not give rise to any difficulties.

23. Furthermore, the sponsors stressed the need to recruit those women candidates in countries which were not represented or were under-represented in the Secretariat and recognized that the recruitment and employment of women must proceed in accordance with the principles laid down in Article 101 of the Charter. Lastly, the draft resolution was designed to allow the Secretary-General some latitude, so that, for example, if in a given region a country was unable to supply a qualified woman candidate, the Secretary-General could recruit two women in another country of the same region which was not represented or was under-represented.

24. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) thanked the sponsors of the draft resolution for having given full attention to the suggestions of the Group of 77. On behalf of the group of African countries, he requested the Secretary-General, when applying the provisions of operative paragraph 5, not to lose sight of the fact that the African countries were under-represented, a situation which had already been pointed out the preceding year and which it had not yet been possible to rectify. He hoped that women would not be affected by the same injustice.

25. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) expressed appreciation to the sponsors of the draft resolution for having substantially improved the initial wording of the text and for having taken into account in particular the suggestions and concern of the developing countries. Colombia would be prepared to become a sponsor of the draft resolution if the other sponsors agreed to amend the last preambular paragraph by replacing the word *"Regretting"* with the word *"Noting"* before the words "the lack of progress".

26. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that, while he was favourably inclined towards the draft resolution, he wished to put certain questions to the sponsors. First, in operative paragraph 3, he wondered whether the sponsors were referring to distribution among regions or within each region. Furthermore, he wished to know the meaning of the words "5 per cent of the mid-point of the desirable range of each region"; if the phrase "mid-point of the desirable range" meant half of the total national quotas for each region, he wondered why the text did not refer to 2.5 per cent of the total quota for each region.

27. He also pointed out that, in the English text, the closing words of paragraph 3, "candidates from countries which are not represented and under-represented countries" referred to all candidates and not only to women.

28. Lastly, he said that certain Western European countries, including Greece, feared that their women candidates would be discriminated against if that wording was retained. He pointed out to the sponsors that that was the first time a system of distribution on a regional basis was proposed for the Professional category.

29. Mr. BAMBA (Upper Volta) thanked the sponsors for the understanding they had demonstrated, as well as the members of the Group of 77 who had helped with the final preparation of the text, which, in its current form, was acceptable to his delegation.

30. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) expressed his gratitude to the sponsors of the draft resolution for having taken into account the observations of various delegations and for having improved the text accordingly. Nevertheless, his delegation still had some difficulties with the text and wished to propose two amendments. Firstly, contrary to what was stated in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, there were, first and last, only two principles governing the recruitment policy of the United Nations, namely, those laid down in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter. Therefore, there was no such thing as a third principle concerning equitable distribution of the positions between men and women. However, his delegation, which favoured the establishment of equality between the two sexes, proposed to replace the words "a major principle" in paragraph 1 with the words "a major consideration". In paragraph 3, it would be preferable not to mention any mathematical formula at all. Moreover, the idea of giving priority to women would modify the highly important principle of equitable geographical distribution. His delegation therefore proposed to delete the words "with priority being given to candidates" and the comma preceding them.

31. Mr. SADOU (United Republic of Cameroon) said that considerable efforts had been made to improve the initial text of the draft resolution and that the new formula proposed by the Iranian delegation for operative paragraph 3 was now perfectly acceptable to his delegation. However, the amendment just submitted by the Japanese delegation was unacceptable, and he saw no need to delete the words in question.

32. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1, which reflected the spirit of the International Women's Year particularly well.

33. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) congratulated the sponsors of the revised draft resolution, who had considerably improved the original text. However, he would like to know exactly what was meant by operative paragraph 3; in order to understand its meaning, specific examples must be taken: table 8 of the annex to the Secretary-General's report (A/10184) showed that, for Western Europe, the desirable range varied between 520 and 631. The text of paragraph 3 must therefore mean that the Secretary-General would be requested to set aside 58 posts for women candidates during the next four years out of a total of 591 staff members as at 30 June 1975. His delegation would like to know whether its interpretation was in accordance with paragraph 3. It would also like the Secretariat to give an indication of the average rotation of staff over a four-year period.

34. Mr. SETHI (India) supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1 without reservation and expressed appreciation for the perseverence of the sponsors in their efforts to arrive at a text which could be adopted unanimously. The improvements made in the original text were excellent. However, the amendments just proposed by the Japanese delegation might destroy the consensus which had seemed to be emerging on the question of the employment of women in the Secretariat, since they called into question an important part of the draft resolution.

35. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), speaking on a point of order, invoked rule 117 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to move the closure of the debate on the item. A large majority of delegations had already stated that they supported the revised draft resolution and the Group of 77 had virtually endorsed it. Consequently, the Committee should take a vote at once.

36. The CHAIRMAN said that there were still a dozen speakers on his list for the item and that he would like the representative of Algeria to reconsider his request.

37. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) accepted the Chairman's view.

38. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his country could not be suspected of not giving the question of equality of men and women all the attention it deserved. The French civil service was one of those which had the highest proportion of female employees. His delegation had therefore studied the draft resolution introduced by the Iranian delegation with the greatest care and wished to congratulate its sponsors. However, the new idea of regional quotas for the employment of women seemed to be a rather dangerous innovation that would be difficult to implement. It would therefore be better if that idea did not appear in operative paragraph 3 of the text. It would not be appropriate to reserve a certain number of Secretariat posts for women and thus give the impression that they were obtaining them not because of personal merit but because some sort of quota system had to be observed. What was important was to abolish all discrimination which would prevent women from taking full advantage of their potential, and to eliminate the obstacles of all kinds which they might encounter in achieving that aim. That was how his delegation interpreted the draft resolution under consideration. He wished to propose two amendments to the text. The first concerned paragraph 3; although the sponsors had been unable to accept the Japanese delegation's amendment, they might at least be able to accept the addition of the word "equal" before the word "priority". The second amendment was a drafting change whereby the text of paragraph 5 as it stood would be replaced by the following:

> "*Recommends* that, in the staff development programmes, special attention should be given to women and particularly to women from developing countries in order to increase their career opportunities."

That amendment would give the Secretary-General greater latitude in administering the staff development programmes, in which special attention would be given to women. There, again, it was important to deal with men and women on an equal footing.

39. Mr. McDONNOUGH (Jamaica) said that his delegation, which attached the greatest importance to the question of the status of women, thanked the sponsors of the revised draft resolution. There could be no question of defining a purely national solution to the problem of the exploitation of women, which was an international issue.

40. Mr. WOLDE-AREGAY (Ethiopia) said that Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, which governed the Organization's recruitment policy, was frequently interpreted in such a way as to serve specific purposes. Doubts on that matter could be removed if a precise definition of what was meant by "the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity" could be arrived at.

41. Miss FORCIGNANÒ (Italy) thanked the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1 for their efforts to amend the original text in the light of the observations made by various delegations. However, it was not correct to say, as the representative of Algeria had done, that there was already a consensus on the text. Her delegation could not support the text as it stood, particularly in so far as operative paragraph 3 was concerned; it endorsed the amendment proposed to that paragraph by the Japanese delegation.

42. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) welcomed the fact that Colombia had joined the sponsors of the revised draft resolution. The Colombian amendment under which the word *"Regretting"* in the last preambular paragraph would be replaced by the word *"Noting"* was acceptable to the sponsors. However, they could not support the Japanese delegation's amendment, because one of the most important elements of paragraph 3 was the idea that priority should indeed be given to women candidates from countries which were not represented or were under-represented. There could be no doubt on that point. His delegation could not give its views on the other amendments before consulting the other sponsors of the draft resolution.

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:*

(a) **Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued)**** **(A/10009, A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1258, A/C.5/L.1259);**

(b) **Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)**** **(A/10335, A/10374, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1697, A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.1)**

43. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) recalled that, at the 1741st meeting, the representative of Saudi Arabia had stressed the seriousness of the problems faced by pensioners as a result of inflation. Indeed, inflation affected them in two ways because it affected the real value of the pensions they received and the real value of the capital of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. In looking towards the future, one basic figure must be kept in mind, namely the actuarial imbalance of $116.6 million, which called for the greatest prudence.

44. As far as the entitlements of male and female participants were concerned, his delegation favoured equal treatment of men and women, although the proposal of the Joint Staff Pension Board, as indicated in its report (A/10009, para. 16), would add a further actuarial burden of $17.2 million.

45. Since, in the Italian civil service, the retirement age was 65 and the maximum length of service beyond which a pension would not increase was 40 years, he had no objection to the amendment proposed by the Board to article 29 of the Regulations of the Fund as an interim measure. There, too, the cost of the change would be $17 million in actuarial terms. The proposal should be reconsidered in 1976, taking into account the state of the Fund's resources.

46. In view of the highly humanitarian goals of the Emergency Fund, his delegation felt inclined to agree that the Board should continue to supplement voluntary contributions by an amount of up to $100,000. However, the extent to which the Emergency Fund was necessary must be determined, because, during the first six months of the experimental period, the total payments made had amounted to only $2,277 (*ibid.*, para. 23).

47. The greater part of the administrative expenses was accounted for by the fees payable to the two institutions providing advisory and custodial services for the Fund's portfolio. Those contractual arrangements might have to be reviewed.

48. With reference to the report of the Secretary-General on investments (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1), it was wrong to be excessively worried by the net loss of $22,698,000 resulting from the sale of securities. Their loss was no doubt due to the culling out of securities which would have depreciated further or were no longer attractive investments and it was therefore sound practice to get rid of such securities. Selling good stock to ensure the realization of capital gains could have been a very bad way of administering the Fund. Greater cause for concern was to be found in the totals appearing in schedule 3 of annex I to the Board's report, which compared the cost value and the market value of the securities held by the Fund as at 31 December 1973 and 31 December 1974. However, paragraph 32 of the Board's report gave a more comforting picture, since it showed that, as at 31 March 1975, while total contributions received and income earned from investments had stood at $934 million, the market value of the total Fund had been $936 million. On the other hand, taking into account the real value of the dollar when the Fund had been established and the current value of the dollar, the real picture was still depressing. It would be interesting to know in constant dollars the current ratio of cost to market value.

49. His delegation, which agreed with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the

* Resumed from the 1749th meeting.

need for the greatest possible caution concerning any further liberalization of benefits, was prepared to agree that the current contribution rate of 21 per cent should be maintained.

50. In the light of the Board's interim report on pension adjustment (A/10009, annex V), his delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee's statement that a way should be found to allow a unified scheme to be financed without increasing the liabilities of the membership.

51. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), introducing, on behalf of the sponsors, a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.1), said that the primary aim of the text was to secure a just recompense for the high standard of work maintained for many years by the members of the Joint Inspection Unit, whose reports had nearly always enabled the Fifth Committee to make important decisions in the interests of the Organization and for the improvement of the whole system. The Inspectors were full-time staff members whose difficult and praiseworthy task consisted of correcting recurring mistakes, introducing improvements and working out new policies in all spheres of United Nations activity. Their candidacy was proposed by their Governments, and they were appointed by the General Assembly. They had been working on an experimental basis for nearly eight years, and some thought that consideration of the possible extension of pension rights to the Inspectors should be deferred until the thirty-first session, when their permanent status would be examined; however, that would mean taking no account of the pioneering spirit which motivated them. Furthermore, they were paid according to the salary scale of United Nations staff members, and their duties were defined by the deliberative bodies. They were not permitted to work for any United Nations body for a period of three years after they had stopped working in the Joint Inspection Unit and were therefore the victims of discrimination. Paying the Inspectors a pension would not affect their independence or integrity any more than paying a salary did.

52. In the preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution, the sponsors had refrained from stressing the quality of the Inspectors' work, since the question in hand involved neither an evaluation of their merit nor a renewal of their mandate but simply their retirement and pension. Operative paragraph 1 showed that the sponsors had adopted alternative B, as set out by the Secretary-General in paragraph 7 of his report (A/C.5/1697); the formula contained in paragraph 1 *(a)* seemed the most appropriate, as contributions could be extended over a two-year period, which would not be excessively burdensome for the Inspectors; paragraph 1 *(b)* ensured that an independent system would not place a greater burden on the Inspectors than participation in the Joint Staff Pension Fund; paragraph 1 *(c)* was based on the relevant parts of the existing system of the Joint Staff Pension Fund and would therefore obviate the need to draw up detailed statutes or rules; paragraph 1 *(d)* allowed for an arrangement similar to one of those in section 29 of the Regulations of the Fund. Finally, under operative paragraph 2, the Secretary-General would be requested to complete the system thus described by making use of the administrative provisions already in force for the management of the Fund.

AGENDA ITEM 105

United Nations salary system *(continued)*:*

***(a)* Report of the International Civil Service Commission *(continued)** (A/10008/Add.9, A/10030, A/C.5/1700, A/C.5/1703, A/C.5/L.1260);**

(b)* Report of the Secretary-General *(continued)*

53. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said he thought that the establishment of the International Civil Service Commission in 1974 had been an important stage on the road towards developing a unified international civil service based on common personnel standards, methods and arrangements. His delegation had consistently supported the creation of the Commission because of its conviction that such a body would be of immeasurable value to the General Assembly through its independent and impartial advice on the conditions of service of the staff in the United Nations system. Indeed, the Commission was the first body with a broad system-wide mandate in those domains.

54. His delegation was pleased to note that the quality of the Commission's report (A/10030), describing its initial activities, augured well for its contribution to the United Nations system in the years to come. It was encouraging to know that the organizations in the common system had either already accepted the statute of the Commission or were well on the way to doing so.

55. Noting the Commission's progress report on the review of the United Nations salary system (*ibid.*, chap. V), his delegation wished to endorse the tentative conclusions reached in paragraph 29, in which the principle of a global salary system which would enable the organizations to recruit and retain staff from all Member States was reaffirmed. Applying such a principle would certainly create difficult technical problems owing to such elusive factors as expatriation and equivalence of grades. He was encouraged to note that the Commission hoped to be able to make a full report covering major aspects of the salary system in ample time for consideration at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

56. His delegation approved the establishment of a subsidiary body of the Commission to consider post adjustments and recalled in that connexion the very useful work carried out by the Expert Committee on Post Adjustments for the benefit of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. The problems of post adjustment in a number of major cities, including Tokyo, required expert attention, free from transitory or political considerations. As the Commission's report pointed out, there was an intimate interrelationship among various elements of the conditions of work of the international civil servant. The Commission was correct in emphasizing recruitment, career development and staff training and evaluation. Common job-classification standards were also crucial, but extremely hard to define. They would be an indispensable element in a uniform salary system and in facilitating transfers between the agencies.

57. The Commission was right to assume its new responsibilities gradually, in order not to be saddled prematurely

* Resumed from the 1744th meeting.

with unbearable burdens. The holding of two sessions annually, one in New York and the other at the headquarters of one of the other participating organizations, was a beneficial arrangement for the Commission and the organizations concerned.

58. His delegation endorsed the Commission's proposal (*ibid.*, para. 43) for a temporary supplement to the post adjustment rate for staff members without dependants at duty stations in higher post adjustment classes. That proposal fell short of the ACC recommendations and did not fully compensate the staff concerned for the loss of their real income, but the proposal was a temporary measure which did not prejudge a long-term solution. No convincing argument could be made for preserving the existing post adjustment system, which established a disparity between staff members with dependants and those without them, since post adjustment was aimed essentially at equalizing real income between staff members having the same responsibility but serving in different duty stations. It would be absurd, therefore, to afford staff members differential treatment on the basis of their family status, since it could not be claimed that the purchasing power of staff members without dependants suffered less from inflation and the higher cost of living than that of staff members with dependants. The Commission should consider the possibility of taking the social or family element out of the post adjustment system and incorporating it either into the staff assessment scheme or into the system of dependency allowances.

59. His delegation also felt that there should be no increase in the education grant and hoped that the Commission would also have considered that question when it submitted its proposals on the salary system in 1976.

60. Finally, his delegation supported the Commission's proposed work programme and accepted its financial implications, with the proviso that the Secretary-General and the other members of ACC bore in mind the observations in paragraph 15 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.9) on the need to redeploy existing posts to the Commission from agencies in the common system and reported to the Assembly at its thirty-first session on the steps taken to give effect to such redeployment.

61. Introducing a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1260), he explained that the text might be amended following consultations. He pointed out that the financial implications of the Commission's programme of work would be considered under agenda item 96 (Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977) and those of its sessions under item 100 (Pattern of conferences). A separate draft resolution would be submitted in connexion with the temporary supplement to post adjustment under item 105 (United Nations salary system).

62. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) congratulated the Commission on the excellent start it had made with the work entrusted to it by its statute; it was important for the Commission to begin work at the earliest possible date on the full range of functions assigned to it, subject to completion of its priority task of reviewing the salary system. His delegation supported the financial implications set out in the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/1700), subject to the comments on the matter made by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10008/Add.9); that would enable the Commission progressively to assume its other functions not covered by the 1975 budget.

63. His delegation agreed with the Commission that the lot of staff members without dependants at duty stations with high classes of post adjustment was a real problem. The system under which staff without dependants were compensated for inflation at two thirds of the rate for staff with dependants had been conceived at a time of moderate inflation, when it had seemed right that staff without dependants should be required to tolerate small losses of purchasing power for limited periods. In recent years, however, the losses suffered by staff without dependants had been far more severe. As the representative of Japan had indicated, the "social" element should be removed from post adjustment and might perhaps be incorporated into the staff assessment system. What was now required, however, was an immediate temporary scheme of relief which did not prejudge the decisions which the Commission might later reach when it had completed its review of the salary system. The Commission's proposal that, with effect from 1 January 1976, the rate of post adjustment for staff without dependants should be raised from 67 per cent to 85 per cent of the rate for staff with dependants for post adjustment classes 8 and above was not a generous proposal. The total cost of $2.7 million for the United Nations system, and of $1.1 million for the United Nations itself, was moderate and reasonable. His delegation understood the disappointment of the staff, but the Commission's proposal was extremely well conceived and deserved the Committee's unreserved support. It had the merits indicated in paragraph 46 of the Commission's report and brought immediate relief to the staff most severely affected, while avoiding a commitment to a particular solution within the framework of the long-term reform of the salary system.

64. As the Commission had said, it did not seem urgent to increase the education grant. To be sure, 11.3 per cent of the affected staff were suffering a loss, but the level of reimbursement of educational costs had not been arrived at by reference to the highest education costs throughout the world. Those costs varied from one duty station to another, and it had always been accepted that some staff were more completely compensated than others. It could not be said that many staff were suffering intolerable hardship. That problem was less serious than that of staff without dependants in duty stations with high classes of post adjustment, both from the point of view of the losses entailed and of the number of staff affected.

65. His delegation approved the estimates for the Commission's work programme, subject to the Advisory Committee's comments; it also approved the interim modification of the post adjustment system recommended by the Commission and its conclusion that the education grant should not be increased currently. His delegation therefore intended to propose that a new paragraph should be added to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1260 providing for endorsement by the General Assembly of the Commission's recommendations relating to post adjustment and the education grant. He had, however, noted the statement by

the representative of Japan that there would be a separate resolution on that subject.

66. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that, since he endorsed almost all the comments made by the representatives of Japan and the United Kingdom, he would merely draw attention to some points to which he attached particular importance. He was very satisfied with the clear, well-balanced report of the International Civil Service Commission, but suggested that the Commission should submit its proposals to the General Assembly in the form of draft decisions or draft resolutions in order to facilitate the work of the Fifth Committee.

67. With regard to the interim measures proposed, his delegation supported the Commission's recommendation that the ratio of remuneration of staff members without dependants to that of staff members with dependants in duty stations classified in class 8 and above should be increased to 85 per cent. His delegation had never seen any reason why the post adjustment should take account of the "social" element. Moreover, like the Commission, it felt that the education grant should not be increased at the current stage.

68. With regard to the revision of the salary system in general, his delegation was not opposed to the maintenance of the Noblemaire principle but thought that the difficulties arose in its interpretation. A comparision between the salaries paid in the different countries should not be based solely on the base salary of civil servants, because, in both the private and the public sector, it was the social advantages much more than the base salary that determined whether a post was attractive or not. As the Commission had suggested in its report, account should also be taken of the expatriation element, because the situation of an official living in his own country could not be compared with that of one who lived abroad under conditions which entailed supplementary expense. Finally, the Commission should not confine itself to an examination of existing allocations but should also consider the possibility of introducing others, taking into account, for example, high rents in certain duty stations.

69. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that he attached great importance to staff matters in the United Nations system and was pleased that the International Civil Service Commission, which had just been established, was proving to be dynamic, serious-minded and conscious of its responsibilities. Its task was vast, because the General Assembly had given absolute priority to revision of the salary system.

70. The Commission's report was encouraging: it showed that the Commission's activities responded to the concern of the General Assembly; he approved of its organization and of the programme of work indicated in its report. He welcomed the close relations between the Commission, the heads of secretariats and staff representatives. He endorsed the comments made by the Advisory Committee in its report concerning the Commission's budget for 1976-1977. With regard to the establishment of a subsidiary body on post adjustment, referred to in paragraph 18 of the Commission's report, his delegation would like additional information on the composition of that committee, the payment of its members and the size of its secretariat, and would like to be sure that it would be the only one of its kind in order to avoid duplication. His delegation also supported the proposed change in the post adjustment system because the interim supplement might partly improve the difficult situation, caused by currency instability, of staff without dependants. Recourse to that measure showed how urgent it was to revise the salary system in general and the post adjustment system in particular.

71. His delegation particularly supported the recommendation in paragraph 15 of the report of the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General should ascertain, in co-operation with his colleagues in the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the extent to which the additional manpower requirements of the Commission's secretariat could be met by redeployment of existing posts. That recommendation was important because, as the Commission's activities were a programme like any other, it was necessary to see whether the necessary resources could not be obtained from the resources of bodies which it had replaced, either in whole or in part, whereas the Secretary-General had once more resorted to an incremental approach in his request for supplementary resources. Without a detailed study of the question by the Secretary-General and ACC, there might still be duplication to the detriment of healthy management of resources.

72. His delegation would not comment on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1260 until it had been circulated in its final form, but did not think it would have any particular difficulty in supporting it.

The meeting rose at 11.50 p.m.

1752nd meeting

Thursday, 27 November 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1752

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10350 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/10378, A/C.5/L.1262, A/C.5/L.1265)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the document that contained the Secretariat's replies[1] to the questions asked by the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at the 1748th meeting.[2]

2. Mr. AGYEMAN (Ghana) said that his Government had always attached importance to the maintenance of peace, as had been shown by its participation in United Nations operations, whether in the past, in the Congo, or currently, in the Middle East.

3. The United Nations Emergency Force and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force were undoubtedly contributing to the maintenance of peace in the Middle East and were considered the most successful operations in the history of the Organization. Although initially established on a temporary basis, it seemed that they would have to continue their mission indefinitely, and his delegation was concerned about the resulting increase in costs. In view of the current stage of negotiations, there was little hope of completing the operations in the near future. On the contrary, their scope was going to broaden, and the contributions of Member States would no doubt become increasingly high. The success of the two Forces ought not to be seen by the parties concerned as a reason for slowing down negotiations aimed at finding a solution which would put an end to United Nations intervention in the region.

4. Given that peace-keeping operations in the Middle East were in progress, nothing should be done to reduce their effectiveness. In compliance with the provisions of resolution 362 (1974), in which the Security Council had expressed its confidence that the Emergency Force would be maintained with maximum efficiency and economy, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report (A/10378), recommended a reduction in the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General. His delegation approved the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, and shared the view it expressed in paragraph 47 that the Secretary-General must be allowed the necessary flexibility to reallocate savings among other areas, including those designated by the Committee itself.

5. One factor in particular, namely the Special Account deficit, had a direct influence on the efficiency of the two Forces. It meant that back pay was owing to the members of the military contingents. If those countries which provided the contingents were not reimbursed as soon as possible, their goodwill might well be exhausted. The principle of collective responsibility required that Member States pay all outstanding contributions in their entirety.

6. Mr. NASON (Ireland) said that his country had participated in most of the peace-keeping operations mounted by the United Nations since it had become a Member. The Irish Government particularly regretted that, for domestic reasons, it had had to withdraw the Irish contingent from UNEF in May 1974, but it regarded its commitment to UNEF as a continuing one even though it was not currently in a position to supply a full contingent.

7. His delegation welcomed the administrative improvements outlined by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 5 of its report. It hoped that the Secretary-General would continue to conduct peace-keeping operations with a maximum of efficiency and economy, as had been called for by the Security Council and the General Assembly, by administering them with the flexibility recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 47 of its report.

8. The estimates submitted by the Secretary-General were reasonable, and his delegation had noted carefully the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. Nevertheless, it wished to point out that savings must not be made at the expense of the troop-contributing countries. The effectiveness of both peace-keeping Forces depended on the facilities and equipment at their disposal. The projected growth of the Forces, to enable them to carry out their new functions, and other factors mentioned by some delegations–the quadrupling in size of the buffer zone and its relocation away from inhabited localities–justified the increased expenditure evisaged by the Secretary-General.

9. His delegation wished to express its satisfaction with the basic method of financing UNEF and UNDOF and to reiterate its firm support for the principle of collective responsibility. At the twenty-ninth session (1677th meeting), it had expressed regret that a number of Member States had refused to bear their assessed share of the costs; it noted with alarm that the so-called "uncollectable" sum had risen from $3.8 million to its current level of $10.2 million. Such a situation jeopardized the political basis of the Forces; in particular, by delaying reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, it endangered the broad geographical base of the Forces and especially jeopardized the future participation of smaller countries in peace-keeping operations.

10. His delegation wished to compliment the Secretariat on the progress which had been made in the implementation of previous decisions on reimbursement of pay and

1 Conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.9/Add.1 of 26 November 1975.

2 Conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.9 of 25 November 1975.

allowances to members of the military contingents. The question ought to be dealt with in the same way in 1975. Furthermore, the countries concerned should be reimbursed for the depreciation costs of the equipment they provided, and their claims relating to the usage factor for personal clothing, gear and equipment of contingent members should be met.

11. In conclusion, he informed the Committee that Ireland was a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262.

12. The CHAIRMAN pointed out an omission in the wording of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262. The list of Security Council resolutions cited in the second preambular paragraph ought to include resolutions 368 (1975) of 17 April 1975 and 371 (1975) of 24 July 1975.

13. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he appreciated the difficulties which the Secretariat had had to overcome in order to provide, in such a short time, the information contained in the conference room paper mentioned by the Chairman,[1] difficulties which could have been avoided if the necessary documents had been produced at the proper time. When the regular budget of the United Nations had risen from $100 million to $126 million, the report in which the Secretary-General had provided the necessary explanations had been more than 100 pages long. Financing UNEF and UNDOF involved the sum of almost $100 million, yet the Committee had only been provided with a meagre document of some 20 pages, from which it emerged that there was insufficient justification for the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General.

14. In the conference room paper, the Secretariat replied to questions put by his delegation at the 1748th meeting.[2] The reply to the question primarily concerned with the formula used for calculating the amortization of equipment, showed that the consultations between the Secretary-General and the Governments concerned about the rate of depreciation of equipment had not been successful, although they had been going on for three years. Since it was a question which directly affected the financing of the two Forces, it should be settled as quickly as possible. With reference to the question concerning over-expenditures, the Secretariat was apparently unwilling to provide the Committee with the relevant report of the Board of Auditors. However, the Advisory Committee had studied the report and his delegation insisted that it should be seen by the Fifth Committee before draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 was put to the vote. Finally, the Secretary-General had not replied to the fundamental point made in the question concerning the amount of deductions made in determining payments to countries which had sent military contingents.

15. Moreover, in view of the fact that in various parts of the document the Secretariat promised to provide information later—information which the Committee still did not have—it could be concluded that the replies given were sketchy or too vague on a number of points. For example, the Secretariat had nothing to say on the question of the discrimination against certain contingents on the part of the Israeli authorities, a problem already referred to by the Polish delegation at the twenty-ninth session (1672nd meeting). His own delegation requested that action should be taken to eliminate any discrimination against any of the troop contingents.

16. Recalling that, in its resolution 362 (1974), the Security Council had expressed its confidence that the Force would be maintained with maximum efficiency and economy, he said that the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General were not sufficiently justified, even if account was taken of the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. He requested that section I and paragraphs 1 and 2 of section II of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 should be voted on separately and stated that his delegation intended to abstain in the various votes. It wished to stress that it was not opposed to Portugal's being transferred to another group of countries for the purposes of the scale of contributions to the Special Account, as provided for in section II, paragraph 2, of the draft resolution, on condition that that did not constitute a precedent.

17. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that he would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 because Portugal's change of category, which was a response to special circumstances, was fully justified and the sponsors of the draft had taken the Advisory Committee's comments into consideration, especially the recommendations made in paragraphs 46 and 47 of its report.

18. However, his delegation had a reservation to make: the Advisory Committee stated clearly in paragraph 45 of its report that the sum of $2,840,000 requested by the Secretary-General for "other troop-related costs" without any other explanation, remained subject to a decision of principle by the General Assembly which would determine whether the envisaged costs, i.e., the usage factor for personal clothing, gear and equipment of the members of the contingents and other similar costs, were payable. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 seemed to be anticipating a positive decision by the General Assembly.

19. It was to be hoped that the Secretary-General would be able to maintain the two Forces with maximum economy, in accordance with the wishes of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

20. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) thought that the Committee should give the two Forces the means of carrying out effectively a mission to which all Member States ought to be able to be proud to contribute. The estimates submitted by the Secretary-General were certainly high, but such an operation demanded more than kind words. Thus his delegation approved the Secretary-General's estimates, including the sum of $2,840,000 requested for "other troop-related costs", subject to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

21. With regard to the question of the proportion of contributions, he thought that the scale established in 1973 on the basis of the principle of collective responsibility and the capacity of each State was fair and did not need to be changed, unless to take account of the special case of Portugal. Although the price of peace might seem high, that of war was even higher.

22. He announced that Australia had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262.

23. The CHAIRMAN announced that Ethiopia, Kenya and Senegal had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262.

24. Mr. SETHI (India) said that the Committee did not always have the time to study in all its details the question of the financing of UNEF and UNDOF, since its financial decisions were subject to the political decisions taken by the Security Council. That was why some delegations complained of being inadequately informed–despite the ever scrupulous work of the Advisory Committee–and requested additional information or even announced that they would abstain in the vote on the item. In order to prevent a recurrence of the situation, it might be useful to opt for a special budget cycle adapted to the operational cycle ordinarily chosen by the Security Council in fixing the mandate of the Forces. A budget period running from July to June of the following year would enable the Committee to have sufficient time and information for taking an informed financial decision.

25. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia) said that his Government had always done its utmost to contribute to the efforts made by the United Nations for the maintenance of peace and security. The maintenance of a peace-keeping force was a joint undertaking which involved heavy costs and was the responsibility of all Member States. His country, which was contributing troops to UNEF, was also interested in the question of financing. In particular, it was very concerned about the question of reimbursements to troop-contributing countries and thought that a lag of six months constituted an intolerable burden for a developing country.

26. The Indonesian contingent was currently experiencing transport difficulties because the vehicles which it had taken with it to the Middle East two years earlier were currently in very bad condition. The lack of transport was prejudicial to the efficiency of the Force. Accordingly, his delegation supported without reservation the Secretary-General's proposal concerning the supply of matériel and equipment for the Force. It also thought that the Force should be managed with maximum efficiency and economy. The data which the Secretariat had just supplied in reply to the questions put by the representative of the Soviet Union would enable the Committee to assess the efficiency of the management of the Force. In fact, there ought to have been no need to request the data, for it should have been annexed to the report of the Secretary-General (A/10350 and Corr.1). If it had been supplied earlier, the Soviet delegation might perhaps have been able to support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262. Its support was important.

27. His delegation was also worried about the welfare of its contingent: a member of the contingent had to wait several weeks before being transferred from one hospital to another. More attention should also be given to recreation.

28. The problem of payments to cover the usage factor for gear and equipment which Governments were supplying to their contingents should also be settled in a fair manner; it would be wrong for the Governments concerned to have to bear any costs over and above their contributions. Accordingly, his delegation supported without reservation the recommendations of the Secretary-General, as amended by the Advisory Committee, and in particular the proposals concerning the contingency fund, welfare and troop-related costs.

29. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to the delegations which had commented that the documentation was incomplete, said that the drawing-up of budget estimates for peace-keeping operations raised quite exceptional difficulties. First, time was needed to receive from the field of operations the information needed for drawing up complete documentation. Moreover, every day brought something new; in the circumstances the Secretariat could only undertake to continue to do its utmost to cope with the exceptional situation resulting from the changes made in the mandate of the Force and the corresponding financial changes those entailed. In addition, while the regular programme budget was structured by programme components and working objectives, which made it possible, in particular, to submit detailed estimates broken down by components, the same was by no means true of peace-keeping operations which constituted a single comprehensive programme that could not be broken down. It was necessary to adopt the form of presentation formerly used for the budget, i.e., by item of expenditure. Moreover, whereas in the case of the regular budget the estimates primarily concerned salaries and wages and the distribution of manpower and resources within programmes, in the case of peace-keeping operations they concerned, for example, purchases of matériel and equipment, which would be made in foreign markets, and the element of uncertainty was indisputably much greater.

30. The representative of the Soviet Union had criticized the Secretary-General for not having made public the reports of the Board of Auditors concerning the auditing of the accounts of the Force. The Board of Auditors had submitted only one report so far, which dealt with the last months of 1973 and had been published in document A/9607.[3] No other official report had been submitted subsequently, the General Assembly having decided, on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, that the Board of Auditors would no longer have to submit any official reports on the auditing of accounts for the first year of the biennium. It would be necessary to wait until the end of the current year for the Board of Auditors to submit a report on the past two years of the Force's operation or, more exactly, on the period from 1 January 1974 to 24 October 1974, then on the period from 25 October 1974 to 24 October 1975. Meanwhile the Board of Auditors had submitted some informal comments and recommendations on a number of questions relating to UNEF and UNDOF, and the Secretariat had described, in annex I to the conference room paper it had prepared, the measures which the Administration had taken in the light of those comments. It would be awkward to reproduce for the Committee the informal comments of the Board of Auditors, and he would first have to obtain the Board's consent. If the Committee thought that it should have a report of the Board of Auditors at the end of each year of operation of the Force, a specific resolution to that effect would be needed. Annex I to the conference room paper

3 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 7*, chap. IV, paras. 107-112.

had been submitted to the Advisory Committee, which had concluded that it described the situation adequately.

31. The representative of India had asked whether it would be possible to adapt the budget cycle to the operational cycle of the Force. That was unfortunately not possible since the estimates could not be made independently of the decisions of the Security Council concerning the manpower of the Force, the duration of its mandate and so on. All that the Secretariat could do was to make a firm commitment to supply as quickly as possible in future the information which the Committee would need.

32. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he still did not understand why the Secretariat had failed to provide the Committee with the report of the Board of Auditors which had been transmitted to the Advisory Committee. The fact that it was an "informal" report was not an adequate reason. The decision that the Board of Auditors should submit a report only every two years applied to the regular budget; it could not apply to the accounts of the Force, since the budget cycle of the Special Account for the Force did not coincide with that of the Organization. It would be logical to conduct an audit of UNEF at least once during the budget cycle of the Special Account, namely, once a year at the current stage.

33. The Secretariat's reticence merely added to his doubts. He requested the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to indicate what was in the reports—formal or informal—submitted by the External Auditors to the Advisory Committee.

34. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said he did not think that he could add anything to the explanations provided by the Controller. The Advisory Committee, at its spring session, had spoken to the External Auditors and had discussed their comments on the accounts of the Force. The "informal" report of the External Auditors was only two pages in length and contained nothing which, in the view of the Advisory Committee, deserved to be brought to the attention of the Fifth Committee. However, if the representative of the Soviet Union so wished, that report could be provided to him.

35. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, since the report existed and since some delegations had asked to see it, the Secretariat should have circulated it to members of the Committee, especially as it consisted of only two pages.

36. It was surprising, nevertheless, that the comments of the External Auditors on accounts totalling almost $80 million could be contained in so slim a document. It could well be that the Committee had a number of questions to put to the External Auditors on how they had conducted the audit, and he insisted that the document should be made available to the Committee, even if that was done after the Committee had taken a decision on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262.

37. Mr. SETHI (India) said that he had noted the reply of the Controller to his question concerning the possibility of bringing the budget cycle of the Force into line with its operational cycle. The replies to the questions put by the representative of the Soviet Union suggested that the audit of the Force's accounts had been somewhat perfunctory, and that gave rise to concern. He saw no reason why the Secretariat should not transmit to the Committee the comments of the Board of Auditors on the audit of the accounts of the Force.

38. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should approve the suggestion made by the representative of the Soviet Union, which had been supported by the representative of India, to the effect that the report of the Board of Auditors on the audit of UNEF should be circulated as a conference room paper, on the understanding that the Committee would not be prevented thereby from taking a decision forthwith on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262.

It was so decided.

39. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that an additional change, of a technical nature, should be made in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 as a consequence of the proposal that in future Portugal should be included among the economically less developed Member States for the purpose of the apportionment of the costs of UNEF and UNDOF. The phrase "notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 2 of Assembly resolution 3374 A (XXX) of 30 October 1975" should be added at the end of section II, paragraph 2.

40. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) observed that draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 took account of the changing conditions in some countries and noted that the sponsors of the draft wanted to lighten the burden falling on those countries for the financing of UNEF and UNDOF. However, the sponsors of the draft made no distinction between, on the one hand, the State which had committed aggression, was illegally occupying territories and continued to refuse to withdraw from them notwithstanding the resolutions adopted by the United Nations and, on the other, the States which were victims of that aggression and, moreover, all the other Member States for which the financing of the Emergency Force represented a heavy collective burden. Israel, the aggressor State, should bear the full cost of UNEF and UNDOF itself. The failure to draw any distinction between the aggressor State and the States against which aggression had been committed would simply strengthen and prolong the aggression. His delegation would therefore vote against draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262, not because of the amount requested but as a matter of principle.

41. Mr. ALKAFF (Democratic Yemen) recalled that his delegation had already explained its position on 30 October 1975, at the 2389th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, when the Assembly had considered the draft resolution submitted by the Fifth Committee (A/10324, para. 10), which authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for UNEF for the period from 1 to 30 November 1975. He added that UNEF and UNDOF were of a purely temporary nature; yet the Zionists' exploitation of the presence of the peace-keeping force and their refusal to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories were giving to that force a semi-permanent character which placed a

heavy burden on the United Nations. Democratic Yemen's decision to participate in the financing of UNEF should not be interpreted as meaning that it endorsed Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). His delegation would not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262.

42. Mr. WANG Lien-sheng (China) said that his delegation had stated its position on the question of UNEF and UNDOF at the 2389th plenary meeting of the General Assembly. In accordance with that position, his delegation would not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262.

43. Mr. BENKHAYAL (Libyan Arab Republic) recalled that, at the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth sessions, his delegation had voted against the estimates for UNEF and UNDOF because it believed that the presence of the Forces in Arab territory was unjustified and because it was against the protection afforded to the Zionist aggressor by that presence. On 30 October 1975, in the General Assembly, his delegation had already voted against the draft resolution submitted by the Fifth Committee, which had dealt with one aspect of the question of financing UNEF and UNDOF. It would, again, vote against draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 out of respect for a principle to which the Libyan Arab Republic was firmly attached.

44. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that Iraq was opposed in principle to the idea of an emergency force in the Middle East and had refrained from participating in the financing of UNEF and would do so again. Furthermore, his delegation would not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262.

45. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) said that his delegation was convinced that UNEF and UNDOF were needed in the Middle East, for they actively contributed to peace-keeping in the region, and it would vote for the funds required to finance the two Forces.

46. Nevertheless, he very much hoped that the presence of UNEF and UNDOF would soon become unnecessary, because every extension of their mandates enabled the Zionist aggressor to strengthen its hold on the Arab territories. It was imperative that the international community and international organizations should prevail as soon as possible upon the aggressor to withdraw from Palestinian territory. It was only when that condition was fulfilled that peace and security would return to the Middle East and the Organization would no longer be required to bear the extremely heavy burden of financing UNEF and UNDOF.

47. Mr. MOJA (Albania) said that he would vote against draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 in accordance with Albania's long-standing position of principle.

48. Mr. SETHI (India) recalled that, at the twenty-ninth session, both in the Fifth Committee (1680th meeting) and in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly, his delegation had stated its position on the general question of financing peace-keeping operations and on the specific question of financing UNEF and UNDOF. Peace-keeping operations in the Middle East were of a special nature and should be kept as brief as possible. The United Nations should do nothing that might reflect the slightest complacency with respect to the situation in that area or the slightest inclination to see that situation perpetuated.

49. That being so, he would support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262. He was pleased that Portugal came under the provision in section II, paragraph 2 *(c)* of the draft resolution.

50. Mr. NKIELE-ATYPO (Congo) observed that, notwithstanding the decisions of the international community, the Palestinian people continued to rot in wretched conditions in refugee camps, while the Zionists continued to occupy the Arab Territories and to oppose any move towards peace. Although he favoured the presence of the Emergency Force in the Middle East, he would not be able to vote for draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 because it requested the economically less developed countries to carry the financial burden of operations whose purpose was, in short, to encourage genocide in occupied Palestine.

51. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that he was unable to support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 because the estimates were too high and were insufficiently substantiated. It was regrettable that the Committee, which had received the estimates at a very late stage and had not received sufficient information concerning them, was therefore unable to take an informed decision regarding such an important matter.

52. The CHAIRMAN, in accordance with the request of the Soviet Union, before putting draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262, as orally amended, to the vote, invited the Committee to vote separately on section I and on paragraphs 1 and 2 of section II of the draft resolution.

Section I was adopted by 77 votes to 3, with 11 abstentions.

Section II, paragraph 1 was adopted by 79 votes to 4, with 13 abstentions.

Section II, paragraph 2, as orally amended, was adopted by 81 votes to 4, with 11 abstentions.

The draft resolution as a whole, as orally amended, was adopted by 82 votes to 5, with 10 abstentions.

53. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said he was profoundly astonished at the way certain delegations tried to use the Fifth Committee, which should deal exclusively with budgetary and administrative matters, as a forum for political warfare against Israel at a time when the Middle East conflict was being discussed in the appropriate committees of the General Assembly. It was almost grotesque to demand that Israel should defray the additional costs arising from the new agreement between the Governments of Israel and Egypt. It was not the Israeli Government which had brought the Middle East conflict to the United Nations. Moreover, it had always been the belief of his Government that that conflict could best be solved by bilateral and direct contacts between the parties concerned. It was the Arab countries which for 27 years had involved the United Nations in that conflict.

54. Ever since 1973, Arab leaders had proudly and openly boasted of how they had surprised Israel by launching their co-ordinated attack in the south and in the north on 6 October of that year. Yet Arab delegations continued to brand Israel as the aggressor and to demand that Israel should pay all the costs arising from UNEF, which had been established as a result of the interim agreement between the Governments of Israel and Egypt.

55. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq), speaking on a point of order, said that the Committee was a technical body and that the attacks made by the representative of Israel against the Arab delegations were out of order.

56. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Committee had just taken a decision on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 and urgently appealed to the members of the Committee to exercise restraint in explaining their votes.

57. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that as long as the United Nations had a responsibility with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, all Member States would have to bear the full share of the decisions of the Security Council. Any Member State that did not violated the Charter and was acting contrary to the will of the Organization. Instead of engaging in futile discussions, the Member States should all share in the peace-keeping operations, taking into consideration the interests of all parties concerned, until the conflict was resolved. He assured the Committee that his Government would continuously try to comply to the fullest extent with the arrangements made by countries providing contingents and that it would spare no effort to eliminate any misunderstandings which might arise with the field commanders and the Secretary-General.

58. Mr. GHAFOURZAI (Afghanistan) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262 despite a number of reservations. His delegation was concerned by the increasing expenditures for UNEF and UNDOF and had intended to request the sponsors of the draft resolution to include in it a separate paragraph which would have expressed the General Assembly's concern over the continuous extension of the Force. He had not, however, made that request because he had not had the time to consult with the sponsors and because such a proposal might have led to a protracted debate when only limited time remained. He hoped, however, that a just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict would be found in 1976.

59. Mrs. BASTOS-SANDIFER (Portugal) said that her delegation was pleased to have been able to vote for draft resolution A/C.5/L.1262. The Portuguese Government had always been concerned at the military situation in the Middle East and shared the interest of all Member States in the establishment of a just and lasting peace. It had always supported United Nations efforts aimed at maintaining stability and bringing about conciliation between the parties in conflict. The reason for Portugal's abstention in previous votes on the matter no longer existed, and there was no further cause for her Government either to abstain or to withhold its contributions. Portugal believed in the United Nations and in the principle of collective responsibility and was fully aware of the serious cash situation affecting the UNEF Special Account. Her Government intended to pay at least a portion of its arrears and her delegation hoped it would be possible to make that payment very shortly.

60. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of Israel had accused Egypt of aggression against Israel in October 1973. He asked the representative of Israel which country was currently occupying Arab territory. Did Egypt occupy territory in Israel? Who was occupying Arab territory in the Golan Heights, the Sinai, Jerusalem and the West Bank and who was building settlements in those Arab territories? Who had expelled the original inhabitants and who stood condemned by the United Nations? Everyone knew the truth. Lies were of no avail.

61. Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark) said that his delegation had voted for the draft resolution. He expressed appreciation for the Committee's overwhelming support for the continuation of UNEF and UNDOF and for the constructive debate which had preceded the adoption of the draft resolution.

62. Mr. EL-AGIB (Sudan) endorsed the view that the Arab States whose territory was occupied by Israel should not participate in the financing of the United Nations forces which enabled Israel to persist in its occupation of Arab territories and repression of Arab peoples. It was just that the aggressor State should pay all the costs, and Israel could reduce those costs by withdrawing from the Arab territories. For those reasons his delegation had voted against the draft resolution.

63. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) endorsed the statements made by the representatives of Iraq and Egypt. Everyone knew who the aggressor was and who was occupying the territory of other countries. Israel vainly asserted that it respected United Nations resolutions, but it complied with none of them.

64. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that the reasons why his delegation had voted for the draft resolution had been explained in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and in other Committees. He noted that the Secretary-General's authority with regard to the financing of UNDOF expired at midnight on 30 November and that the Security Council might take a decision on UNDOF before then. He asked the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management what arrangements were being made about meetings.

65. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that there were two unresolved questions with regard to UNDOF. First, the draft resolution which had just been adopted authorized an appropriation for UNDOF for the period up to 24 October, but the Committee had yet to authorize an appropriation for the period from 25 October to 30 November. Existing resolutions merely authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for that period. The amount involved was approximately $1.6 million. Secondly, it was not yet known what would happen with regard to the expiry on 30 November of the mandate of UNDOF, authorizing it to remain on the Golan Heights. The Security Council was to meet on the afternoon of 28 November,

while the Committee had scheduled an evening meeting for that date. If the Security Council took a decision to extend the mandate, the Committee would be able to make an appropriate recommendation to the General Assembly. On the other hand, the Security Council might not be able to take a decision on 28 November and might meet on 29 or 30 November. In either case, unless the General Assembly held a plenary meeting on the morning of 29 November, and he had no information that it intended to do so, the Secretary-General would have no authority, after midnight on 30 November, to enter into commitments of any kind.

66. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) suggested that the Committee should concentrate on the possibility of an interim extension of the Secretary-General's authority to enter into commitments with regard to UNDOF. Perhaps the representative of the Secretary-General could submit a draft resolution to that effect.

67. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) introduced draft decision A/C.5/L.1265.

68. The CHAIRMAN said that if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted the draft decision.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

1753rd meeting

Friday, 28 November 1975, at 11.20 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1753

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 105

United Nations salary system *(continued)*:*

***(a)* Report of the International Civil Service Commission *(continued)** (A/10008/Add.9, A/10030, A/C.5/1700, A/C.5/1703, A/C.5/L.1260);**

(b)* Report of the Secretary-General *(continued)*

1. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed with the International Civil Service Commission that a revision of the United Nations salary system had to be considered as a whole. That was why he was surprised to find that the Commission, although it had by no means examined all the aspects of the salary system, was recommending an increase as of 1 January 1976 in the post adjustment paid to staff members without dependants at certain duty stations (A/10030, para. 64 *(b)*). United Nations salaries were not so low in comparison with the remuneration of civil servants in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France, for example, that that question deserved to be examined on a priority basis. His delegation opposed the interim measure recommended by the Commission and would vote against the relevant supplementary estimates. The Commission should complete its work before submitting a final recommendation to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

2. Furthermore, his delegation could not approve requests to increase the present staff of the Commission's secretariat by 13 posts. It could, however, approve with certain reservations the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraph 15 of its report (A/10008/Add.9) with respect to the redeployment to that secretariat of existing posts from agencies in the common system.

3. Finally, his delegation could not approve the revised estimate for the Commission because, in accordance with its position of principle, it was opposed to estimates to cover expenses caused by inflation and the recruitment of additional staff.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous A/ . . . and A/C.5/ . . . documents, see the 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6 and 11, A/C.5/1682/Add.1 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/1714, A/C.5/1722, A/C.5/1723, A/C.5/L.1231/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1239, A/C.5/L.1240, A/C.5/L.1250, A/C.5/L.1266)**

Consideration of the proposals before the Committee* (concluded)** *(A/C.5/L.1231/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1239, A/C.5/L.1250, A/C.5/L.1266)

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1250

4. Mr. AKASHI (Japan), introducing on behalf of the sponsors a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1250), said that the sponsors were motivated by a concern to bring some order into the chaos which characterized the structure of the Secretariat, where departments, divisions, services, centres, offices and others, whose names did not necessarily correspond to their size, resources, functions and mutual relations, existed side by side. Already in 1968, the

* Resumed from the 1751st meeting.

** Resumed from the 1749th meeting.

Committee on the Reorganization of the Secretariat had, in its report,[1] emphasized the need to establish a standardized and uniform nomenclature in the Secretariat. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions took up that recommendation in its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 70) on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. That was why the sponsors of the draft decision recommended that the Secretary-General should make a maximum effort towards adopting standardized nomenclature and submit a progress report on the matter to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. Furthermore, the fact that there was no authoritative organization manual for the Secretariat outlining the functions and responsibilities of the various units could give rise to incorrect practices, as the Advisory Committee had also emphasized in its report. That was why the sponsors of the draft decision requested that an up-to-date manual on the organization of the Secretariat be issued.

5. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq), supported by Mr. TALIEH (Iran), welcomed draft decision A/C.5/L.1250 and said it should help to increase the efficiency of the administration of the Secretariat and thereby make it possible to save money. He would like, however, to propose two amendments. The phrase "covering all organizational units financed in full or in part under the regular budget" should be added after the words "an organization manual" in subparagraph *(c)*, and the words "the end of 1976" should be replaced by the words "the thirty-first session of the General Assembly". It would be better for the Fifth Committee to study the organization manual together with the progress report of the Secretary-General on that matter, scheduled to be submitted at the thirty-first session.

6. Mrs. DERRE (France), while in full agreement with the representative of Japan, wished to know exactly what he meant by "an organization manual". She also wondered whether that manual might not become outdated very quickly following decisions which might be taken by the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. Finally, she wished to know how much it would cost to produce such a manual.

7. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) supported draft decision A/C.5/L.1250. Since that draft was not accompanied by a statement of financial implications, it might be assumed that the cost of producing the organization manual could be absorbed in the programme budget for 1976-1977, but he would like that to be confirmed.

8. Publication of an up-to-date organization manual could only help the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Restructuring in its efforts. It would certainly fill a need, since the only up-to-date manual at the current stage was the telephone directory.

9. He wished to know whether the sponsors of the draft decision thought that the manual should include a section on the structure of UNDP, which in his view would be very useful. The amendment proposed by the Iraqi delegation would be restrictive in that respect and he hoped that the representative of Iraq and the sponsors would be able to agree on a wording under which UNDP would not be excluded.

10. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that an estimate of $25,000 for the publication of a manual entitled *Organization of the Secretariat* had been included in the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 and had been approved in first reading on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee (*ibid.*, para. 22.22). In so far as that manual would deal only with organizational units of the Secretariat to the exclusion of those of UNDP, neither the draft decision nor the amendments proposed by the Iraqi delegation would have additional financial implications.

11. Mr. SETHI (India) pointed out that by speaking of "additional financial implications", the Director of the Budget Division had confused two distinct concepts, that of "additional appropriations" and that of "financial implications"; the Committee, which seemed to be doing its best to make things more complicated than they were, had not succeeded in drawing a clear dividing line between the two concepts, although it had discussed the question many times.

12. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that the sponsors of the draft decision accepted the amendments proposed by the Iraqi delegation. For the benefit of the French delegation, he wished to make clear that the proposed organization manual would simply be an up-to-date version of the document entitled *Organization of the Secretariat.* If, as a result of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, the structure of the Secretariat was again modified, a revised version of the manual would be issued. The sponsors wished to include in the organization manual only the structure of the United Nations Secretariat, and felt that if a similar manual had to be compiled for the departments of UNDP, it ought to be done separately.

13. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the Secretary-General welcomed draft decision A/C.5/L.1250. The Administrative Management Service had begun work on the re-issue of the document entitled *Organization of the Secretariat,* and had already completed 60 per cent of the work. The manual should be ready for the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, as the Iraqi representative had asked. It would be published in loose-leaf form to facilitate constant updating.

14. The Iraqi delegation had proposed an amendment suggesting that the organization manual should cover all organizational units financed in full or in part under the regular budget. Some units, such as the International Trade Centre or the Institute for Namibia, which had been established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3296 (XXIX), were marginal cases. Such difficulties would be brought to the attention of Member States in the progress report of the Secretary-General at the thirty-first session.

15. He hoped that the Committee would not decide that the organization manual should also cover the structure of

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

UNDP. The Governing Council of UNDP would perhaps consider it useful to issue a manual on the departments of UNDP, but it would possibly be more appropriate if such a decision came from the Council.

16. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1250), as orally amended.

The draft decision was adopted.

17. Mr. SOKALSKI (Poland) said that the sponsors of revised draft resolution A/C.5/L.1231/Rev.1 had made every effort to take into account suggestions made by certain delegations, including those of the United Kingdom, Singapore and Pakistan. However, as they thought that no special treatment should be accorded to any particular subsidiary organ, they had been unable to accept the proposal made by the French delegation that CPC should be mentioned explicitly in operative paragraph 1. Furthermore, with reference to paragraph 3, the Indian delegation had said that a way should be found of avoiding any confusion about the meaning of the word "programmes" by establishing a suitable definition. While they appreciated the concern of the Indian delegation, the sponsors of the draft felt that the question would be better dealt with in a draft resolution on another subject.

18. Mrs. DERRE (France) felt that the intergovernmental bodies mentioned in operative paragraph 1 very rarely knew of all the decisions taken by their own subsidiary bodies during previous years. It was while they were studying the medium-term plan that they could decide on those programmes which were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective. She therefore proposed the inclusion of the words "in particular when they were examining the medium-term plan", after the words "appropriate intergovernmental bodies". That change was fully consistent with the first of the amendments submitted by Greece (A/C.5/L.1266).

19. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation supported the amendment proposed by the French delegation.

20. Mr. SETHI (India) announced that India had become a sponsor of the Greek amendments (A/C.5/L.1266).

21. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) supported the amendments proposed by France and Greece.

22. Mr. SOKALSKI (Poland), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the revised draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1231/Rev.1), accepted the oral amendment proposed by France and the amendments of Greece and India (A/C.5/L.1266).

The revised draft resolution, as amended, was adopted.

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1239

23. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Belgian delegation, sponsor of draft decision A/C.5/L.1239, had decided to delete paragraph 3 of that text, because operative paragraphs 2 and 4 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1231/Rev.1, just adopted by the Committee, as amended, conveyed the same idea.

The draft decision, as thus revised, was adopted.

Draft decisions A/C.5/L.1230/Rev.1 and A/C.5/L.1233 (concluded)*

24. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that his delegation had not opposed the adoption by consensus, at the 1749th meeting, of draft decisions A/C.5/L.1230/Rev.1 and A/C.5/L.1233. However, that did not mean that it agreed with all the views expressed at that meeting on the relations between expenses covered by the regular budget of the United Nations and those financed by voluntary contributions, including the cost of certain posts. The financial situation of the United Nations had for some years been so critical that certain activities considered urgent by the General Assembly had had to be financed from trust funds. In such cases the presumption was that the United Nations endeavoured to have most of the expenses transferred to the regular budget, which was the proper source for financing such activities. Furthermore, some activities started as pilot projects on the basis of voluntary contributions. If Member States subsequently felt that the activities met such an essential need that they ought to be included in the Organization's regular activities, such activities should naturally cease to be financed by voluntary contributions. Finally, while it was true that budgetary decisions should be taken after careful examination by the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly, which should consider any proposal for an increase in the regular budget in the light of other essential needs and the budgetary situation, activities financed by voluntary contributions were incontestably an element to be reckoned with in the total assessment.

25. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) endorsed the views expressed by the representative of Sweden.

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(continued)* (A/10184, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1):**

(a)* Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General *(continued) (A/10184, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1)**

26. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said he firmly believed that, in the light of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the only principles which should govern United Nations recruitment policy were, first, the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and, secondly, the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services was therefore to be congratulated for implementing the new methods described in the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/10184), namely, the modified vacancy announcement system (para. 7), newspaper advertisements for especially hard-to-fill vacancies (para. 9), recruitment missions in selected locations (para. 10), competitive examinations for young professionals and translators (paras. 11 and 12) and enlargement

* Resumed from the 1749th meeting.

** Resumed from the 1751st meeting.

of the computerized roster, which now had more than 4,000 names (para. 14). The Secretary-General would undoubtedly continue to improve the recruitment policy of the Secretariat during the next biennium.

27. He also noted with satisfaction that the Secretary-General had already endorsed the recommendation, contained in the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System,[2] that the Secretariat's search for talent should extend to academic and scientific communities, to State enterprises and private corporations.

28. With regard to the application of the principle of wide geographical representation, he favoured a broad distribution of posts among those who truly represented diverse nations and cultures. However, he favoured a gradual approach in the implementation of that principle because, bearing in mind that personnel expenditures accounted for nearly 75 per cent of the Organization's budget, he attached priority to the paramount consideration of the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

29. On the question of employment of young people in the Secretariat, he shared the concern of several delegations, but noted that the composition of international organizations was in keeping with their special nature, which should not be compared with that of national organizations. In most cases, specialists were relatively old, and the establishment of an equitable and strict mathematical ratio of posts to age categories was meaningless from the point of view of staff efficiency. The Secretary-General should endeavour to establish gradually an appropriate balance between young professionals and others, taking the provisions of the Charter into account.

30. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in paragraphs 42 and 43 of his report.

31. He welcomed draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1 on the employment of women in the Secretariat and the amendment proposed orally at the 1751st meeting, by the Colombian delegation calling for the replacement of the word *"Regretting"* in the last preambular paragraph with the word *"Noting"*. He also supported the amendment proposed, at the same meeting, by the Japanese delegation to the effect that the word "principle" in operative paragraph 1 should be replaced by the word "consideration".

32. The intention of the sponsors of the draft resolution was surely not to establish an exact mathematical relationship between men and women employed in the Secretariat, but rather to ensure, as far as possible, an appropriate and adequate distribution of posts between the two sexes, taking especially into consideration the situation of the developing countries. He therefore proposed that the word "equitable" in paragraph 1 should be replaced by the word "adequate". He also proposed that the words "and under-represented countries" at the end of paragraph 3 should be amended to read "or are under-represented in the Secretariat".

33. Mr. MAKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said the systematic application of the provisions of Article 101 of the Charter and of many relevant General Assembly resolutions would give Member States the assurance that the staff of the Secretariat would show the vitality and efficiency expected of them. The staff were not citizens of the world but nationals of Member States, who, in making their contribution to the international civil service with the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, also contributed their national qualities and peculiarities. The many resolutions adopted by the Assembly on staff recruitment required that it should not be restricted to one group of countries, as had unfortunately been the case for a long time. The Secretariat must be freed from the political and cultural domination which that group of countries had secured through preferential recruitment. Positive action had undoubtedly been taken to that end, thanks to the initiative of the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management and the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services, who had endeavoured to recruit staff on a more equitable geographical basis.

34. However, the problem had not been solved and the relevant resolutions were still not being fully implemented. Thus, 30 years after the Organization had been established, the Soviet Union, which was after all one of its founders, still suffered as a result of biased recruitment in the past, and its nationals had not yet been granted all the Professional and higher posts to which they were entitled. Moreover, tables 8 and 10 in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General (A/10184) showed that, of the 298 posts subject to geographical distribution which had been filled between 1 July 1974 and 30 June 1975, 110 had gone to nationals of countries which were already over-represented in the Secretariat and only 91 to nationals of under-represented countries. There should be an end to such appointments benefiting the over-represented countries, especially as the excessive power of the Western countries in the United Nations was now a thing of the past, and a country like the Soviet Union, which had succeeded with considerable effort in overcoming all the after-effects of the Second World War, now had very many qualified persons capable of filling any position whatsoever in the Secretariat. The only indispensable element was the goodwill of those in charge of the services concerned.

35. At the twenty-ninth session, the Fifth Committee had been informed[3] that a reorganization of the Office of Personnel Services was envisaged, including in particular the transfer to the various departments of some of the functions performed by the Office in order to avoid undue centralization and duplication of work. The Secretary-General gave no further details on that question in his latest report on the composition of the Secretariat, and he (Mr. Makeev) hoped that the reorganization would be fully in keeping with the provisions of the Charter. It must be borne in mind that the Secretariat should form a unified whole and that, consequently, personnel policies should also be unified and any defect in that respect should be duly corrected.

2 Document E/AC.62/9 of 28 May 1975 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.7).

3 See document A/C.5/1601 of 6 September 1974.

36. In 30 years, the volume and complexity of the work of the Organization had, of course, greatly increased. It was therefore no longer sufficient to have in the Secretariat perfectly qualified and conscientious staff members. Since the Secretariat must constantly adapt itself to changing attitudes and ways of thinking, the staff should be renewed frequently. The only effective procedure for achieving that purpose was to appoint staff members only for fixed terms. It was encouraging to note (*ibid.*, annex, table 9) that the proportion of fixed-term appointments to the total number of staff had risen from 37.2 to 38.4 per cent during the period covered by the report, but the proportion of permanent staff members remained much too high. It was therefore regrettable that permanent contracts were still being granted, particularly since nationals of countries already over-represented generally benefited from them, especially in the Professional category, where it was more important than in any other category to renew the staff frequently. Such a practice was very detrimental to the Secretariat itself, because it prevented the Organization from terminating the services of persons who eventually proved to be incompetent.

37. Moreover, he noted that more than 100 staff members who had reached retirement age were still in service, thus preventing the infusion of new blood and blocking the promotion of younger staff members, even when such promotion was merited. Such a policy was incompatible with staff regulation 9.5, under which the Secretary-General might retain staff members in active service beyond the age of 60 years only "in exceptional cases". Unfortunately, the exception had almost become the rule. In future, the Secretary-General should regularly indicate in his report the number of staff members who had reached the age limit and had actually retired and the number who had reached the age limit but had been granted an extension.

38. As requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 3352 (XXIX), the Secretary-General had sought means of ensuring an equitable balance between the number of men and women in the Secretariat, particularly in senior and policy-making posts. The Soviet Union, a consistent supporter of equality between the sexes, had duly supported that resolution. However, he could not agree with the Secretary-General that "no real breakthrough in the employment of women in Professional posts ... will be possible so long as the recruitment of women is subject to the guidelines of geographical distribution" (*ibid.*, para. 35). To believe that was tantamount to attempting to evade the principle of the equitable geographical distribution of Secretariat posts, a principle which was contained in the Charter. He objected to any such approach, which would favour those countries that were already over-represented and would undermine all attempts to achieve a genuinely equitable geographical distribution of posts.

39. The revised text (A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.1) of the draft resolution on the employment of women in the Secretariat was an improvement on the original text. However, it should be made even clearer that the procedure used in recruiting women must not only remain compatible with the principle of equitable geographical distribution, but must in all cases also allow the necessary appointments to be made within the limits of the "desirable range" established for each Member State.

40. Mr. MINCHEV (Bulgaria) noted that some progress had been made in recruitment policy during the period under discussion, but felt that there was a possibility for better and more flexible implementation of the main principles. In particular, the practice of recruiting nationals of the over-represented countries was continuing. Yet it was difficult to imagine that there were not enough qualified candidates from such industrial countries as the Soviet Union, Japan and others whose representation in the Secretariat was far below the minimum desirable figure.

41. He agreed with other delegations that the number of permanent appointments was too high. Reducing the percentage of such appointments would enable under-represented countries to obtain additional posts subject to geographical distribution. He wished to ask the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services whether some permanent contracts could not be replaced by fixed-term contracts of longer duration than at present. That would make it possible both to maintain the high qualifications required of permanent staff members and to recruit nationals of more countries; it would also ensure maximum efficiency on the basis of equitable and non-discriminatory geographical representation. Another means of improving the situation would be to comply strictly with the General Assembly's decision not to retain in service staff members who had reached the age of 60 years.

42. The Secretary-General should continue his efforts with regard to the employment and mobility of young people in the Secretariat, and it was to be hoped that the conclusions reached at the thirty-first session would be more satisfactory in that respect. He welcomed the approaches towards a greater participation of higher qualified women in the work of the Secretariat.

43. Mr. NYAMA (Mongolia) said that the degree of efficiency of the Secretariat was closely linked with recruitment policy. The main requirement was to ensure equitable and non-discriminatory representation of all countries and regions in the Secretariat. That requirement in no way conflicted with the need to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

44. In reading the report of the Secretary-General, he noted with appreciation the improvements achieved in some areas of recruitment policy. He had in mind the recruitment missions used as a means of interviewing groups of candidates in selected locations and evaluating their qualifications for particular posts, and the progress made in recruiting more and better-qualified young men and women.

45. However, the current geographical distribution of posts still needed much improvement. The Secretary-General's report confirmed that the imbalance in geographical distribution continued to exist, and sustained measures had not been taken to set right the situation. Quite a number of countries and regions, especially the region of Asia and the Far East and that of Eastern Europe, remained under-represented, while certain countries and regions still occupied a disproportionately high quota of

posts. As was shown by table 10 in the annex to the Secretary-General's report, of 298 Professional posts which were apportioned in terms of geographical distribution during the period from 1 July 1974 to 30 June 1975, the major part had been filled by nationals of over-represented countries. That clearly demonstrated that the principle of equitable geographical distribution expressed in the Charter, and the numerous General Assembly decisions adopted in reaffirmation of that principle, were not being fully observed; more attention should be paid to the implementation of those decisions, and in particular of resolution 2736 A (XXV), which had requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to achieve a better geographical distribution of the staff at all levels, particularly at the senior level.

46. Furthermore, effective measures should be taken expeditiously to secure the implementation of the long-term recruitment plan covering the period 1972-1977,[4] which was designed to eliminate the long-standing under-representation in the Secretariat of a number of States, to take measures against the excessive over-representation of other States and to improve recruitment procedures. The practice of employing staff members on permanent contracts was one of the real obstacles to the achievement of equitable geographical distribution, since it limited the number of posts available to candidates from under-represented countries. As indicated by table 9 in the annex to the Secretary-General's report, only 38.4 per cent of the 2,469 posts subject to geographical distribution were filled by candidates with fixed-term contracts, while the remainder had been occupied by persons with permanent contracts. Thus, access to more than 60 per cent of the posts in the Secretariat was closed to nationals of under-represented countries. The interest of the United Nations would be better served by establishing the ratio of permanent contracts to fixed-term contracts in such a manner that more younger people, better equipped for contemporary international life and possessing scientific and technical knowledge which would enhance the effectiveness of the Secretariat, could be recruited. Candidates from over-represented countries should not be appointed on permanent contracts, and the posts vacated by staff members holding permanent appointments should in future be filled by fixed-term employees, preferably recruited from under-represented countries.

47. With respect to the question of the employment of women in the Secretariat, his delegation supported the proposed measures to eliminate any discrimination between men and women in recruitment, again, with due regard to the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

4 See document A/8836 of 13 October 1972.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

1754th meeting

Monday, 1 December 1975, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1754

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE FOURTH COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10406 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 92* (A/C.5/1717)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1717) concerning the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Fourth Committee in its report (A/10406, para. 9). The statement indicated that the adoption of the draft resolution would give rise to an additional appropriation in the amount of $100,000 under section 3D of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that he had nothing to add to the comments by the Chairman. The amount of $100,000 had been specifically mentioned in the draft resolution in question. The adoption of the draft resolution by the General Assembly would accordingly lead to additional expenditure in the amount of $100,000.

3. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Fourth Committee, an additional appropriation of $100,000 would be required under section 3D of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10350 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/10378, A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1268)**

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1268

4. The CHAIRMAN reminded the members of the Committee that resolution 381 (1975) extending the mandate

* United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa: report of the Secretary-General.

** Resumed from the 1752nd meeting.

of UNDOF for a further six months had been adopted by the Security Council the previous night. As the authority of the Secretary-General to commit funds expired on 1 December, it was urgent that the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly should take a decision on the financing of UNDOF. A draft resolution on that subject (A/C.5/L.1268) had just been submitted. Because of the urgency of the problem, he appealed to delegations to agree, as an exceptional procedure, to a vote being taken on the draft resolution at the current meeting in order to allow the General Assembly to take a decision to give the appropriate authority to the Secretary-General. If he heard no objection, he would take it that delegations were prepared to follow the procedure he had outlined.

It was so decided.

5. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1268, said that the principles on which the text was based were the same as those underlying the draft resolution on UNEF that had been adopted by the General Assembly on 28 November (resolution 3374 B (XXX)). The sponsors of the draft resolution on UNEF had considered it necessary to submit a separate draft resolution on UNDOF because, at the time, the Security Council had not yet authorized the extension of the UNDOF mandate.

6. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation was not in principle opposed to the extension of the mandates of UNEF and UNDOF and, indeed, the representative of the Soviet Union in the Security Council had supported the resolutions on that subject. However, inadequate information had been provided by the Secretariat on the amounts spent during the period which had just elapsed and on the estimates for the coming six-month period. Moreover, projected expenditure under many of the items was too high. His delegation would therefore abstain in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1268.

7. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that his delegation had been absent when the General Assembly, in plenary meeting, had voted on the draft resolution on UNEF. Had it been present, it would have voted for that draft resolution, which it had supported in the Fifth Committee.

8. Mrs. DE REMON (Panama) said that, owing to a misunderstanding, her delegation had abstained in the vote on resolution 3374 B (XXX) at the plenary meeting, even though Panama was a sponsor of that text.

9. Mr. ALKAFF (Democratic Yemen) said that his delegation would not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1268 for the reasons it had outlined previously (1725th and 1752nd meetings).

10. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation would vote against draft resolution A/C.5/L.1268 in accordance with its position that the countries subjected to aggression in the Middle East should not bear any of the costs of financing UNDOF.

11. Mr. EL-AGIB (Sudan) said that his delegation, despite the fact that it had voted against resolution 3374 B (XXX), had decided to vote for draft resolution A/C.5/L.1268 on the understanding that the countries subjected to aggression in the Middle East would not be required to bear any of the financial burden.

12. Mr. WANG Lien-sheng (China) said that, for the reasons which it had previously outlined (1752nd meeting), his delegation would not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1268.

13. Mr. BENKHAYAL (Libyan Arab Republic) said that his delegation's position remained the same as in the past.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1268 was adopted by 62 votes to 2, with 10 abstentions.

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.1

14. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the revised draft decision in document A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.1 concerning compensation to troop contributors.

15. Mr. WOLDE-AREGAY (Ethiopia) observed that his delegation had at no time agreed to sponsor draft decision A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.1 and requested that Ethiopia should be removed from the list of sponsors.

16. Mr. MATHESON (Canada), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, apologized to the delegation of Ethiopia. It had been assumed that the sponsors of the previous draft resolution would wish to give their support to the draft decision in document A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.1; however, in the haste and confusion, the delegation of Ethiopia had not been consulted.

17. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation would vote against the draft decision because it considered that the amounts paid by the United Nations to troop-contributing countries were too high.

18. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was not altogether satisfied with the wording of the draft decision and, in accordance with its position that the Secretary-General should be asked to negotiate fair and reasonable settlements with troop contributors, proposed the following amendments. The words "authorize the payment to troop contributors of" should be replaced by the words "decide on the principle of paying troop contributors for" and the second part of the text, beginning with the words "and for which" should be replaced by the phrase "and instruct the Secretary-General to negotiate with the troop contributors to arrive at fair and reasonable settlements".

19. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that his delegation supported the idea of compensating troop-contributing countries for the usage factor for the personal clothing, gear and equipment which they had issued to their troops; such countries should not be called upon to make undue sacrifices in addition to supplying troops. He would reserve judgement on the amendment proposed by the United Kingdom delegation until the representative of the Secretary-General had informed the Committee whether that

proposal would entail the establishment of cumbersome negotiating machinery and additional expenditure.

20. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that the first amendment proposed by the United Kingdom delegation was somewhat unclear and suggested that it should be replaced by the words "approve the principle of paying troop contributors for".

21. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) supported the subamendment proposed by the delegation of New Zealand. In addition, he proposed that the General Assembly should "request the Secretary-General to negotiate with the troop contributors" rather than "instruct" him to do so, as in the United Kingdom amendment. He asked the delegation of the United Kingdom to clarify whether it intended that the compensation to troop contributors should take effect from 25 October 1975, as had been the original intention of the sponsors.

22. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that, in keeping with his Government's position on the question of financing UNEF and UNDOF, his delegation would not participate in the vote on draft decision A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.1, as it had not done in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1268.

23. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to the question of the representative of Pakistan said that, even assuming that the troop contributors were to show the same goodwill as in the past, negotiations with them would entail a considerable amount of additional work for the Secretariat. The evaluation of clothing, gear and equipment would have to be based upon the cost structure in the troop-contributing countries. Moreover, it would be necessary to establish rules for the prior usage factor.

24. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the discussion on draft decision A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.1 should be adjourned in order to give the sponsors and interested delegations an opportunity to hold consultations.

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

25. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management), speaking with reference to a statement made by the representative of the Ukrainian SSR at the 1746th meeting, said that the Secretariat was doing its utmost to comply with the decision taken by the Fifth Committee in 1973 concerning documentation, to which that representative had referred.

26. It would be recalled that the Secretary-General had issued reports on the status of documentation, both at the beginning of the session in document A/C.5/L.1225 and subsequently in the two revised versions of that document. The second revised text (A/C.5/L.1225/Rev.2) had been issued on 5 November, i.e., one day after the six-week deadline referred to in the decision in question. In that text, the Secretary-General had indicated that certain documents would not be available to the Committee until the middle of November. The Secretary-General acknowledged and regretted that, in certain instances, it had not been possible to issue the documentation by 4 November. It would be noted, however, that the documentation produced for the Fifth Committee at the current session had been exceptionally voluminous: as at 4 November it had totalled 3,665 pages.

27. With regard to the documents that had been issued since the deadline of 4 November, he noted that the performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975 (A/10035) came under the heading of revised budget estimates and that therefore its late appearance was not in violation of the 1973 decision. Apart from the performance report, which was 437 pages in length, seven documents, totalling 66 pages, had been submitted since 4 November. They covered the following questions: emoluments of the members of the International Court of Justice; pension coverage for members of the Joint Inspection Unit; comments of the Secretary-General on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on office accommodation; pension coverage for the staff of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; the report of the Secretary-General concerning the financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (A/10350); allowances of the General Service category at Headquarters; and the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences. He hoped that the Committee would understand the reason for the delay in the appearance of document A/10350 inasmuch as the mandate of UNEF had not been renewed until 23 October. Of the remaining documents, the 26-page report on the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences (A/10348) was the only one of substantial size. While nothing altered the fact that the documents he had referred to had appeared several days after the deadline set by the General Assembly, he assured the representative of the Ukrainian SSR that the Secretariat had, in all cases, endeavoured to meet that deadline. In the first five instances there had been special circumstances which had prevented the documents from being issued on time. As far as document A/10348 was concerned, it had been found necessary to make a substantial number of revisions in the first draft, which had been ready by 8 October; as a result, appearance of the final document had been delayed until 21 November.

28. The Secretary-General realized that the General Assembly's decision in respect of documentation had not been fully complied with and would endeavour to ensure that the Secretariat's performance in that respect was completely satisfactory in 1976.

29. Mr. ONISCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for his explanation. His delegation had taken note of the assurance that the situation would be improved in the future.

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(continued)* (A/10184, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1271):

***(a)* Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10184, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1271)**

30. Mrs. ABELE-EMICH (Austria) said that it had been suggested that the situation of women in the Secretariat

merely reflected the situation of women in Member States in general and that not very much could be done within the United Nations to improve it. Yet the United Nations should be one step ahead of Member States in the fight against discrimination based on sex. The United Nations Staff Rules concerning the treatment of female staff members had of course been amended and a Standing Committee on Employment of Women in the Secretariat had been established, but the status of women in the Secretariat and the efforts to recruit professional women left much to be desired. She quoted some statistics from the UNITAR publication *Women and the United Nations*[1] concerning the small number of women employed in the Professional category in the United Nations system. The increase in the proportion of P-2 posts held by women, from 29 per cent in 1972 to 49 per cent in 1974, did not mean that more women had joined the Secretariat but merely that they stayed much longer than men at that low level. She could not be convinced that there were not more qualified women to be recruited or that they did not deserve promotion to higher levels.

31. Discriminatory practices were only one part of the problem: the other part lay in the ,often unconscious prejudices of some Secretariat members against women. That psychological discrimination must be overcome. The implementation of some of the recommendations of the World Conference of the International Women's Year would be a big step forward. That of course would not be easy; even a number of Member States failed to implement the recommendations, notably the one to the effect that they should endeavour not to send most of their women delegates to the Third Committee. But that failure gave the Secretariat no reason to cease its efforts to overcome all obstacles to equal opportunities for women within the Secretariat. In view of the commitment of the United Nations to improving the situation of women in the Secretariat, her delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2 and hoped that its implementation would mean that the Organization was setting an example which Member States would follow.

32. Mrs. MAYMI (United States of America) noted that three quarters of the expenditures in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 were for the payment of staff costs and that salaries, training, redeployment and reclassification matters had heretofore always been talked of in terms of their impact on the budget. The Committee must now look at personnel policy as such and it had no more vital role than that of providing guidance to the Secretary-General in his task of staffing the United Nations with a core of competent, efficient and broadly representative people. She emphasized her Government's devotion to the principle set forth in Article 101 of the Charter. It was the Committee's duty to strengthen the resolve and add to the ingenuity of the Secretary-General and his colleagues as they sought to put that principle into practice. Her delegation was aware of the pressures and circumstances which made it difficult to adhere to such standards. It could not be otherwise when the staff was recruited from every corner of the world, when Member States pressed the claims of their nationals for employment and fair treatment in the Secretariat, and when the General Assembly did not exercise sufficiently strict control over the Organization's expenditures. There must be a common effort to strengthen the cement holding the United Nations together and make the Organization one to which every country could be proud to contribute its citizens.

33. Her delegation had studied the past year's developments in methods and procedures of international recruitment noted by the Secretary-General in his report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/10184). It was pleased to see that more than one candidate had been considered for a significantly larger percentage of posts and that more new appointees had high academic qualifications. However, it would like to have information as to whether the new appointees had more ability than in earlier years. Her delegation joined the Secretary-General in concurring with the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System that the search for talent should not be limited to foreign ministries and United Nations missions but extended to academic and scientific communities, State enterprises and private corporations.

34. Her delegation had some real difficulties with respect to the Secretary-General's discussion of the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution. With regard to his suggestion for an increase in the so-called membership factor from its current range of 1-6 to a range of 2-8, she pointed out that the Secretary-General stated that it was not a proposal but simply a possible alternative to be considered by the General Assembly, which, he recommended, should authorize him to submit definitive proposals in the following year. She recalled that from 1948 to 1962 the desirable ranges of each Member State had been based entirely on the contributions scale, a method which had been changed as a result of proposals by her delegation. Under the revised system, equitable geographical distribution had taken into account the fact of membership, the size of the Member's contribution, and a so-called regional population reserve; the membership factor had been assigned a range of 1-5 posts; a population reserve of 100 posts had been established for those countries with large populations and whose contributions were low, while the remainder of the range had been based on the Member's contribution. The membership factor had subsequently been increased to 1-6 and the population reserve from 100 to 200 posts.

35. Her delegation thought that the existing balance of relative weights assigned to membership, financial contribution, and population was out of proportion, but in a manner different from that assumed by the Secretary-General. The population factor was overweighted and the 200 posts allocated under that rubric should be brought back towards 100; the purpose of that factor had been at least partly taken care of by the increase in the membership factor. Furthermore, every admission of a new Member increased the total weight of the membership factor, and diminished that of the contribution factor, without any change in the formula. Thus her delegation did not favour a change in the formula for computing the membership factor. It supported the Japanese delegation in taking exception to the Secretary-General's conclusion in paragraph 20 of his report, which implied that the prevailing view at the previous session of the Assembly had been in favour of giving more weight to the membership factor. The

1 *Unitar News*, vol. 7, No. 1, 1975.

report did not set out a series of options in response to the request by the General Assembly but rather a single drastic suggestion, certainly much more so than the change from 1-6 to 2-6 put forward in the preceding year by the Secretary-General. That indicated a need for further review and the presentation of a genuine array of options by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session; in particular, the Secretary-General should re-examine the need for the current allocation of 200 posts to the population factor. The General Assembly would then be able to provide the Secretary-General with the guidance he needed to make a definitive proposal for a revision in the formula, if it was clearly the will of the Assembly that a revision was needed.

36. In paragraph 30 of his report, the Secretary-General spoke of the possibility of a regional approach to recruitment, which seemed reasonable, but her delegation was not persuaded of the wisdom of a redefinition of the geographical regions currently in use. Not only would such a redefinition have implications for other United Nations bodies, it would also leave questions as to where certain Member States would fit.

37. Finally, her delegation disagreed with the Secretary-General's proposal to base his statistical data concerning the composition of the Secretariat on the position at the end of the previous calendar year rather than at the end of June, for the item on personnel questions was normally taken up in November and December, and the data would thus be almost a year old. Her delegation wished to know why the data could not continue to be provided as of 30 June.

38. Her delegation attached particular importance to the employment of women in the Secretariat and it was troubled by the fact that, despite all the recent attention given to the subject, the results remained so paltry. It was true that discrimination had been eliminated from the Staff Rules and the pension system and that 1975 showed a substantial increase over 1974 in the number of women hired at the Professional level, but the figure remained needlessly low and the percentage of women holding Professional posts subject to geographical distribution bore no relationship to the potential of women from all over the world to occupy the most responsible posts at the United Nations. Furthermore, the figure had actually declined relative to 1971, and in some United Nations agencies it was far lower, and the barriers to the equitable treatment of the women who did succeed in joining the Organization had not all fallen despite the goodwill and hard work of many people in the Secretariat. The basic problem lay in the attitude of many countries towards women—and her own country's record was far from perfect. That attitude affected the educational and social opportunities of women and thus the availability of well-qualified women for recruitment; it affected the willingness of Governments to put qualified women foward and the treatment of women within the Secretariat. Thus her delegation was appealing not just to the Administration of the Organization but also to Member States, particularly those which did not offer women candidates in significant numbers. Nevertheless, the Administration had an institutional responsibility and high standards to meet. Her delegation wished to know when the Secretary-General would provide the comprehensive data on the types of duties performed by women in the secretariats of organizations within the United Nations system requested in General Assembly resolution 3352 (XXIX), paragraph 4. It continued to be struck by the almost total absence of women at the top policy-making levels of the Secretariat; each year the Secretary-General's report should show what developments had occurred in that respect. A fuller analysis of the participation of women in training programmes and the results of such programmes was also needed, together with a review of career development programmes in so far as they affected women. Her delegation would look favourably on any reasonable initiative to provide day-care facilities for the children of employees.

39. It was a source of great satisfaction that so many organizations within the Secretariat were pressing for an improvement in the condition of women; her delegation commended in particular the work of the Joint Advisory Committee's Standing Committee on Employment of Women in the Secretariat, which had already produced two reports. The United States delegation looked forward to a detailed account of its recommendations and of the Secretary-General's plans to implement them. It supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2 and appreciated the effort made by the delegations of Australia and Iran in particular to work out a generally acceptable text. Her delegation was entirely committed to the basic goals of International Women's Year, in the light of which it called for renewed attention to the problems of women in the Secretariat.

40. Mr. ONISCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that in discussing personnel questions his delegation was always guided by the desire to make a positive contribution to improving the effectiveness of the Secretariat's work, for on that effectiveness depended the success of the work of all United Nations organs. The equitable geographical representation of Member States, without any special treatment or privileges, was one of the most important conditions for the effective functioning of the Secretariat. The composition of the Secretariat and the recruitment of Professional staff were covered by the provisions of the Charter and by a series of General Assembly decisions. The General Assembly had repeatedly requested the Secretary-General to make every effort to achieve equitable geographical distribution, and in recent years the Secretary-General and his colleagues had taken some steps to implement that principle. One such step, which had been welcomed by his delegation, was the recruitment plan for the period from 1 July 1972 to 30 June 1977, but that plan had been in operation for three years without producing any perceptible improvement in the recruitment of staff on a broad geographical basis. The over-represented countries remained over-represented, while the quotas of the under-represented countries remained unfilled—facts confirmed by table 8 in the report of the Secretary-General (see A/10184, annex). The geographical distribution of staff was based on seven regional groups, but for years about half the staff occupying the 2,400 posts subject to geographical distribution had been nationals of countries of Western Europe and North America, while his own country's quota remained far from filled although in terms of its contribution to the United Nations it was among the first 10 Member States. Every year his country proposed qualified and experienced candidates to the

recruitment missions: for example, in April 1975 it had proposed 15 candidates, but not one of them had yet been recruited. Moreover, the report of the Secretary-General showed that from 30 June 1974 to 30 June 1975 the number of staff members from the Ukrainian SSR had increased by only one; at that rate it would be 15 years before the lowest point of the desirable range was reached. Of course the Office of Personnel Services argued that the recruitment plan still had two years to run, but his delegation wished to have a firm answer as to whether anything had been done to eliminate the discrimination against certain countries, including his own.

41. One of the main reasons for the slow implementation of the recruitment plan was the activities of the Western countries and their representatives in the Secretariat designed to secure the appointment of their own nationals to responsible posts, despite the fact that the majority of such countries were already over-represented. That practice must be ended, for it entailed the continued predominance and privileged treatment of one of the seven regional groups.

42. Another reason was the system of permanent contracts under which two thirds of the staff still worked, 80 per cent of them being nationals of Western European and North American countries. The large proportion of permanent contracts closed the Secretariat to nationals of under-represented countries, increased the average age of staff members and strengthened bureaucratic tendencies. The needs of the United Nations would be better served by an increase in fixed-term contracts, while the elimination of permanent contracts altogether would permit the recruitment of young people familiar with the latest scientific and technological developments. Such a change would improve the effectiveness of the staff and in many respects would eliminate the need for experts and consultants. The Secretariat itself, because of its inflexible policy with respect to permanent contracts, had reduced its own capacity to adapt to new needs. As a result, a large number of staff members were occupying senior Professional posts which had long ago become unnecessary, and one third of the staff members occupying senior posts had no higher education. The renewal of the Secretariat was also impeded by extending the service of staff members beyond retirement age. In that connexion it should be noted that the assets of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund already amounted to more than $1 billion, much of it on deposit in the banks of the Western Powers instead of being paid out to retired staff members. Accordingly, his delegation objected strongly to the legitimation of the practice of awarding permanent contracts, since it violated the Charter and impeded the recruitment of competent people from all geographical regions and countries. It would be easier to attract the best qualified staff if they knew that they were not bound by permanent contracts and if their Governments knew that after a given number of years such persons would be able to apply to the development of their own countries the experience and knowledge gained in the United Nations. An increase in fixed-term contracts would introduce new blood and creative thinking into the Secretariat, increase the flexibility of the recruitment policy, ensure a more just balance of staff with regard to sex and age, and promote a balanced geographical distribution of posts.

43. In addition, instead of constantly requesting the creation of new posts, the Secretariat should seek to use the existing staff more rationally. Such use was impeded by the unequal distribution of work resulting from the fragmentation of departments, poor division of labour and duplication of work.

44. There should be an increase in the employment of women, subject to the principle of equitable geographical distribution. His delegation could not support the Secretary-General's conclusion, in paragraph 35 of his report, since it entailed a violation of that principle.

45. Mr. RELLIE (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had been struck by the clear implication in many statements that candidates for Secretariat posts were normally proposed or sponsored by their Governments and that if a country was over-represented, it was because it had been able to manipulate the system to its advantage. The overwhelming majority of the United Kingdom nationals were in the Secretariat because they had taken the initiative in applying for employment, not because their Government had sought them out and asked them to apply. Moreover, they had been recruited by the Secretariat because they were the best applicants, not because the United Kingdom delegation had asked the Secretariat to employ them. Although there had been occasional secondments from the British civil service in the past and undoubtedly would be occasional ones in future, no United Kingdom officials were serving on secondment with the Secretariat at present. His delegation took satisfaction from the fact that the United Kingdom contingent consisted of individuals who had wished to be international civil servants and had been selected without outside political pressure being applied.

46. It should be clear from the foregoing that his delegation emphatically believed in the concept of an independent career international civil service, supported to the minimum extent consistent with efficiency by officials on short-term contracts. It did not agree with the views expressed by the Soviet and Ukrainian delegations, and indeed felt that the widespread practice of temporary secondment to senior posts must make it much harder for the Office of Personnel Services to find top-quality young career professional staff.

47. The United Kingdom had provided a high proportion of the founder members of the Secretariat and had been over-represented for many years. Its quota, however, was unbalanced in terms of age and departmental affiliation. There were virtually no United Kingdom Professional staff in the political departments, but there were many United Kingdom nationals in posts requiring expertise in short supply in many areas of the world, for example statistics, and there were many United Kingdom nationals among the language staff.

48. His delegation welcomed the steps taken to publicize vacancies more widely, particularly in professional and academic circles, and the de-emphasis of national recruitment services as a source of candidates. It was gratified at the success of the competitive examinations for young professionals, but believed that requirements should be defined in advance in such a way that successful participants were qualified for specific vacancies that already

existed or would shortly exist. It greatly regretted that so few of those selected in the examinations held in the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan could be offered posts. Use of the computerized roster could do much to redress geographical imbalance and to increase the number of women staff members, as well as widening the choice of qualified candidates for individual vacancies.

49. His delegation shared the view of the Japanese delegation that the conclusions in paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's report were premature and unrepresentative. The current formula for calculating desirable ranges was equitable and the United Kingdom would not wish to see any change at the moment in the minimum range of posts allocated to each State, especially in view of the steadily increasing weight of the membership factor. His delegation would support the proposal for a further discussion after the forthcoming reassessment of contributions, which would in itself radically change the size of many national quotas.

50. His delegation would strongly oppose any move to make language staff subject to national quotas. Such a step would put the United Kingdom and other countries similarly affected so far over their maximum desirable range that ways would have to be considered of stopping any recruitment whatsoever of United Kingdom nationals to areas such as statistics and translation where they were already strongly represented.

51. His delegation welcomed the emphasis in the Secretary-General's report on increasing the proportion of women in Professional posts and sympathized with his view that no real breakthrough would be possible so long as efforts to achieve that goal were subject to the requirements of equitable geographical distribution. It was ready to vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2, which it considered a great improvement on earlier drafts. But in general it remained convinced that the greater the flexibility allowed to the Office of Personnel Services the higher would be the standard of recruits.

52. Mr. GHERAB (Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services) said that, following some questions raised by delegations concerning the work and recommendations of the Joint Advisory Committee on the employment of women in the Secretariat, he wished to give the Committee some further information on that work. The point of departure of the Joint Advisory Committee had been the objective laid down by the General Assembly that a balance between men and women staff members should be achieved before the end of the United Nations Development Decade. The Joint Advisory Committee had interpreted that objective as meaning that the proportion of women on the staff would have to be raised significantly above the present level and, since the measures already put into effect would not produce the desired result, it considered that special administrative procedures would have to be adopted at the Secretariat level.

53. The procedures envisaged by the Joint Advisory Committee would be designed, first, to compensate for the greater difficulties encountered in recruiting qualified women candidates for service in the Secretariat, secondly, to prevent possible *de facto* discrimination by making information on the sex distribution of the staff at all grades and in all sectors of the Secretariat more readily available, and thirdly, to spread a greater awareness of the policy on the employment of women among all services concerned with the appointment, training, assignment and promotion of staff.

54. The specific measures recommended by the Joint Advisory Committee were the establishment of internal targets to guide the recruitment programme of the Secretariat, wider circulation of vacancy announcements to reach as many sources of candidates as possible, more frequent recruitment missions, fuller information on the qualifications and experience of all staff members, the extension of the competitive examinations for junior Professional posts to staff already in service, the institution of procedures to deal with individual grievances, and periodic review of progress made in implementing those measures. The Secretary-General considered those proposals to be entirely reasonable, as well as responsive to the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the employment of women and consistent with the relevant principle proclaimed in the Charter. The Secretary-General intended to report on the implementation of those proposals to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

55. Mr. TALIEH (Iran), introducing the second revised version (A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2) of the draft resolution before the Committee said that the delegation of Colombia should have been listed among the sponsors and that the delegations of Mozambique and Sri Lanka had also become sponsors.

56. In the last preambular paragraph, the words "lack of" should be replaced by "limited". Amendments proposed by the delegations of Turkey and France had been incorporated in paragraphs 3 and 5. The draft resolution enjoyed the full support of the Group of 77 and he hoped that it would be possible to achieve a consensus on the text in view of the extensive consultations that had been held and the new amendments incorporated by the sponsors with a view to improving it.

57. Mrs. JAYAWEERA (Sri Lanka) said that her delegation had decided to join the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2, since it felt that the action proposed would facilitate the access of women to employment within the United Nations system and would enable the Organization to utilize the skills of women in its complex and ever-expanding functions.

58. Her delegation would also like to urge that, when the provisions of the draft resolution were implemented, women should not be restricted to what were assumed to be female areas of employment such as health, children, and education. The United Nations should be guided by the criteria of individual aptitude and skills and social needs in appointing women to employment in the Secretariat. Since social needs differed from country to country, technical expertise without sensitivity to needs would tend to limit the success of the work of the United Nations.

59. Begum KHAN (Pakistan) said her delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2 and felt that its sponsors were to be commended for their timely

initiative and their co-operation with the Group of 77 and other interested delegations. The draft resolution attempted to deal with part of the larger question of equal rights for women and recognized that the battle to redress the injustice against women had to be waged by Member States, on the one hand, and the Secretary-General on the other. Paragraph 2 sought the collaboration of Member States and paragraph 3 requested the Secretary-General to take certain measures which should lead to an increase in the number of women employed in the Secretariat during the next two biennia. A sincere commitment to the principle of equal rights and opportunities for women would strengthen the United Nations, rather than weaken it. In that connexion, her delegation deplored the absence of a woman member on the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and was confident that the Government of Pakistan would give sympathetic consideration to the appointment of a suitably qualified woman to that body in the not too distant future.

60. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) said that his delegation still found it difficult to accept some parts of the revised draft resolution and would like to delete the words "to date" in the last preambular paragraph. Paragraph 3 was extremely controversial; it could be used to accentuate the regional imbalance and might result in a number of under-represented developing countries becoming even more under-represented. Accordingly, his delegation felt that the entire paragraph should be deleted. If that was done, his delegation would be glad to become a sponsor of the draft resolution. If the draft resolution was put to the vote, his delegation would like a roll-call vote on paragraph 3.

61. Mr. WHANNOU (Dahomey) said that his delegation had always taken the view that the main problem with regard to the composition of the Secretariat lay in the inequitable distribution of posts. It was regrettable that the principles which should be used in recruitment, and which had been clearly set forth in the Charter, were not strictly applied and that certain States continued to retain a monopoly on employment in the Organization by using discriminatory and other practices in order to exclude the overwhelming majority of Member States from employment in the Secretariat. Accordingly, his delegation would abstain in the vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2, which was designed to solve a secondary aspect of the problem. It would prefer to give its full support to any initiative to democratize the composition of the Secretariat by a system of recruitment which would take account of the principle of equitable geographical distribution on a regional basis, with the assistance of Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Permanent Missions. Such a distribution should be based primarily on the membership factor. The current method, which gave primary importance to the contribution to the budget, merely accentuated the unequal distribution of posts within the Secretariat, where a minority dominated the overwhelming majority simply because it contributed more. His delegation utterly condemned that situation in which the minority in question based its power on the shameless exploitation of the majority.

62. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that his country was one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2, which called for a more equitable representation of men and women in the Secretariat.

63. His delegation had not taken part and did not intend to participate in the criticisms levelled against departments or sections of the Secretariat or even against the staff as a whole. In that connexion, it felt that it might be appropriate to realize the responsibility borne by the Member States which recommended or sponsored candidates for Secretariat posts. The basic criteria for recruiting new staff members must be not whether their countries were over-represented or under-represented, but Article 101 of the Charter. His delegation did not underrate the importance of equitable or the widest possible geographical distribution but felt that, if geographical distribution was to be the paramount criterion, the choice of the Secretary-General might be severely limited.

64. The first five preambular paragraphs of the revised draft resolution recalled recent resolutions calling for better opportunities for the employment of women within the United Nations system. However, the Secretary-General's report revealed that the percentage of female staff members in Professional and senior posts had actually fallen. Operative paragraph 2 therefore urged Member States to intensify their efforts to seek and recommend qualified women candidates for Professional posts. The Secretary-General had expressed his belief that no real breakthrough in the employment of women to Professional posts would be possible as long as their recruitment was subject to considerations of geographical distribution, and paragraph 3 had taken a somewhat more regional approach to the matter in order to help the Secretary-General to recruit more women candidates from under-represented countries. Paragraph 5 recommended that the Secretary-General should pay special attention to training which would assist women, particularly from developing countries, to increase their career opportunities. That recommendation would also increase career opportunities for women already employed in the Professional or General Service categories. In its statement at the 1717th meeting, his delegation had suggested a budgetary appropriation for that purpose or alternatively the possibility of organizing training programmes for women staff members.

65. Mr. AL-MURTAJI (Kuwait) said that his delegation, which was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution, wished to thank the delegations of Iran and Australia for the co-operation and flexibility they had shown in formulating the revised text.

66. Mr. BERGAOUI (Tunisia) thanked the delegation of Iran and the other sponsors of the draft resolution for their efforts. His delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution, but wished to express its view that it would have been advisable, particularly in paragraph 3, to allow the Secretary-General a greater degree of flexibility in regard to the recruitment of women to Secretariat posts.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

1755th meeting

Monday, 1 December 1975, at 8.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1755

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(continued)* (A/10184, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1271, A/C.5/L.1272, A/C.5/L.1274):

***(a)* Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10184, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.1271, A/C.5/L.1272, A/C.5/L.1274)**

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the proposals before it.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2

2. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that the employment of women in the Secretariat of the United Nations was too important a subject to be plagued by dissent. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2 had worked hard to arrive at a text that was broadly acceptable to the vast majority of delegations. His delegation would have liked the text to go further, but had accepted the views of the other sponsors and those of the Group of 77. The text should now stand without substantive amendments.

3. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) noted that the text of operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution had been improved and that the sponsors had accepted Turkey's amendment to paragraph 3.

4. While his delegation accepted the substance of paragraph 1, it felt that equitable distribution of the positions between men and women in the Secretariat was not a major principle. More important were the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Article 8 provided that the United Nations should place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs. Article 101 stressed the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity, and the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. His delegation therefore proposed that the word "principle" should be replaced by the word "consideration" in paragraph 1.

5. Mr. HASSANE (Niger) said that his delegation approved the ideal of complete equality between men and women within the Secretariat. A more urgent consideration, however, was that all Member States should be equitably represented. His delegation still had difficulties with draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2. Paragraph 38 *(e)* of the report of the Secretary-General (A/10184) stated that competing priorities, such as geographical distribution, had a bearing on the recruitment of women. The draft resolution before the Committee would only heighten the conflict between those two competing priorities to the disadvantage of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, which greatly concerned the under-represented countries. Those countries had qualified personnel and were prepared to make sacrifices in the interests of the United Nations. The injustice of sexual discrimination should not be remedied at the expense of the principle of equitable geographical distribution. His delegation therefore wished to request the Secretary-General to intensify efforts to respect that principle. The Secretariat stood to benefit from the presence of qualified personnel who had an excellent awareness of particular environments.

6. The long delays in the recruitment process had been justifiably deplored by other representatives and his delegation hoped that situation would soon be redressed.

7. Mr. VON RUCKTESCHELL (Federal Republic of Germany) thanked the sponsors for their attempts to improve the wording of the draft resolution. The new text was more consistent with the wishes of the majority. His delegation, however, still had difficulties with paragraph 3 and wondered whether the 5 per cent quota was adequate and would not later be criticized. The Federal Republic of Germany, in view of its own under-representation within the Secretariat and its large number of qualified men, was concerned about the implications of paragraph 3, which was not completely clear. The paragraph appeared to establish the principle of geographical distribution on a regional basis. That was a dangerous tendency, which was likely to jeopardize the chances of the under-represented countries obtaining additional posts for their nationals.

8. His delegation proposed the deletion of paragraph 3, and supported the Turkish amendment to replace "principle" by "consideration" in paragraph 1.

9. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation approved the amendments to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2 and commended the sponsors for their efforts. It would, however, like the meaning of the term "priority" in paragraph 3 to be clarified, and wondered how such priority would be given in practice. It assumed that qualified women candidates from the over-represented countries would be credited in the 5 per cent regional quota. Qualified women candidates from the under-represented countries could be credited in their own national quota and/or in the 5 per cent regional quota. Unless, however, they were credited in the regional quota only, they would not benefit from the proposed system. He would therefore welcome some assurance from the sponsors in that regard.

10. His delegation also wished to know whether women candidates from the over-represented countries would be required to wait until the search for women candidates in the under-represented or unrepresented countries had been

exhausted towards the end of each biennium. That procedure would be essential if the word "priority" was to have any practical meaning.

11. The implications of paragraph 3 deserved close scrutiny. As far as the region of Asia and the Far East was concerned, 5 per cent of the mid-point of the desirable range amounted to 28 posts per biennium or 14 posts per year. Document A/10184 showed that, between 1974 and 1975, appointments from that region to posts subject to geographical distribution had amounted to 27. The adoption of paragraph 3 would therefore mean that half the new Professionals recruited from the region would in the future be women. That requirement could not easily be satisfied, and his delegation feared that the regional quota for Asia and the Far East might eventually apply to only a few countries, such as Australia, where the social status of women was higher than in others. Such a situation was neither fair nor equitable, and his delegation endorsed the strong reservations expressed by various representatives regarding the so-called regional approach. It was also afraid that some stigma might be attached to candidates recruited under the special quota system. That could create an unhealthy and unwelcome situation.

12. His delegation would not oppose the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus, but supported the representative of Venezuela in his request for a separate vote on paragraph 3. It supported Turkey's proposed amendment to paragraph 1.

13. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that in operative paragraph 1 "equitable" meant fair and just, and "principle" meant a fundamental truth.

14. The question raised by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany about qualified men from unrepresented and under-represented countries was dealt with towards the end of paragraph 3. That paragraph did not call for the establishment of a regional quota. It envisaged only the employment of women and was limited in application to two biennia. It was establishing no rules or precedents.

15. Replying to the questions put by the representative of Japan, he stated that paragraph 3 clearly explained the meaning of "priority" and that the text did in fact imply that qualified women candidates from over-represented countries would be required to wait until the search for women candidates from the under-represented countries had been exhausted. With regard to the number of women who might be recruited from Asia and the Far East, he drew attention to the words "*Requests* the Secretary-General to make every effort". The Secretary-General could not be asked to do more than was possible. However, the fact that 50 per cent of the Japanese candidates who had taken the competitive examination for Secretariat posts were women suggested that Japan had little to fear on that score.

16. The sponsors could not accept the amendment to paragraph 1 proposed by the representative of Turkey.

17. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) recalled that the beginning of the sixth preambular paragraph had been amended to read "*Noting* the limited progress made to date . . .". The phrase in the middle of paragraph 3 should read ". . . with priority being given to candidates from countries which are not represented or under-represented in the Secretariat".

18. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the measures envisaged in paragraph 4 would have financial implications. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 included an appropriation of $20,000 for travel expenses and $5,000 for advertising for recruitment missions. An intensification of regular and publicized recruitment missions would entail more interviews, more advertising and a greater processing of applications. As a result, an additional appropriation of $14,000 to $15,000 or, at the minimum, $10,000 would be required, although for the moment no requests would be made.

19. Miss FORCIGNANÒ (Italy) thanked the sponsors of the draft resolution for their efforts. Her delegation was prepared to support its adoption by consensus. It would abstain, however, in the separate vote on paragraph 3.

20. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said he was amazed that the Committee was still trying to improve on the excellent work done by the sponsors of the draft resolution in reconciling various positions. He intended to abstain in the vote on any proposed amendments and would vote in favour of the draft resolution as it stood.

21. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said that he would vote in favour of the draft resolution, since it promoted equitable distribution of the positions between men and women in the Secretariat. He thanked the sponsors for the conciliatory spirit they had shown and for the concessions they had made so that the text would be generally acceptable.

22. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should vote first on the amendment to operative paragraph 1 proposed by the Federal Republic of Germany and Turkey, namely, that the word "principle" should be replaced by the word "consideration". A separate vote would then be taken on paragraph 3, as requested by the representative of Venezuela. Finally, the Committee would vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

The amendment was rejected by 32 votes to 28, with 19 abstentions.

Paragraph 3 was adopted by 55 votes to 2, with 22 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1257/Rev.2 as a whole, as revised, was adopted by 83 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

23. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that, in voting in favour of the draft resolution as a whole and of paragraph 3 in particular, his delegation trusted that the Secretary-General, in interpreting paragraph 3, would bear in mind that the chief aim of the resolution was to strengthen the position of women in the Secretariat. Other considerations should be given very secondary importance. Although paragraph 3 stated that priority should be given to candidates from countries which were not represented or

were under-represented, it did not say that absolute priority should be given to such candidates. He trusted that in implementing the resolution the Secretary-General would ensure that women from adequately represented countries had a fair chance.

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1272

24. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) noted the particular importance which his delegation attached to the Joint Advisory Committee's Standing Committee on the Employment of Women in the Secretariat. He had also been pleased to hear the statement made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services (1754th meeting) concerning the recommendations of the Joint Advisory Committee based on the work of the Standing Committee. In order to commend the Standing Committee on its work and to urge the Secretary-General to give special attention to recommendations that had ensued from it, his delegation was submitting for the Committee's consideration a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1272) which was simple and self-explanatory; it did not duplicate and did not conflict with the draft resolution just adopted. He hoped that the draft decision would be adopted by consensus. The delegations of Australia and Sweden had requested that their names be included among the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1274

25. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) introduced a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1274), which reflected the concern of the developing countries over the anomalous situation whereby the Secretariat was managed at the senior level of D-1 and above by staff members who were nationals of countries which represented about 27 per cent of the membership of the Organization; nationals of the developing countries occupied only about 35 per cent of the senior posts. The draft resolution could be the first step towards putting an end to that anomaly, and he hoped that the Fifth Committee would adopt it.

26. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) requested information on the expected rate of recruitment during 1976 in order to clarify the meaning of the draft resolution. He also noted that another method of redressing the imbalance in the Secretariat was through promotion, which in turn might give rise to the question of the upgrading of posts, a matter on which the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had already made known its views.

* * *

27. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should adjourn consideration of draft decision A/C.5/L.1272 and draft resolution A/C.5/L.1274 until the following day.

It was so decided.

28. Miss FORCIGNANÒ (Italy) thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services for preparing the conference room paper[1] containing information on the distribution by nationality of the candidates included in the roster maintained by the Secretariat. However, it did not fully answer her question (1750th meeting). She was interested in knowing both the nationality of candidates and the positions for which they were being considered.

29. Mr. GHERAB (Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services) said that, since nationals of all countries were involved, it would take more time and effort to compile the information requested by the representative of Italy. The Secretariat was prepared to do so, however.

AGENDA ITEM 98

Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency: report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10279 and Add.1, A/10280 and Add.1, A/10360, A/C.5/1704)

30. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew the Committee's attention to section II of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10360), in which the latter recommended a new approach which seemed to be necessitated by recent developments in the United Nations system with regard to administrative and budgetary co-ordination and programme co-ordination. Although it had been expected that the problem of co-ordination within the United Nations system would have been alleviated with the introduction of programme budgeting and medium-term planning, the improvement had not been as great as had been expected. The reasons for that were given in paragraphs 6, 8, 9 and 10 of the report of the Advisory Committee. The Fifth Committee and the General Assembly obviously did not have time to consider the budgets of each of the agencies in detail. He therefore suggested that in subsequent years the amount of detail included in the Advisory Committee's annual reports on the budgets of the specialized agencies could be reduced. Secondly, since most agencies had already gone over to biennial budgeting, it might be possible to dispense with annual reporting to the Assembly on the agency budgets. It would appear more useful for the Advisory Committee to try to pin-point areas which had system-wide application and bring them to the attention of the Fifth Committee, which could then make appropriate recommendations in that regard. In paragraphs 14 to 20 of its report, the Advisory Committee singled out some areas which could be looked into in future; that list should not be taken as exhaustive but merely as an indication of the kinds of subjects which could usefully be considered. If the Fifth Committee approved the comments in section II of the report, that would constitute a kind of mandate to the Advisory Committee to pursue its efforts along the lines suggested. At its next session, the Advisory Committee would decide how to proceed with its subsequent reports based on the outline in section II and any observations made by the Fifth Committee.

31. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the Secretary-General wanted to bring to the Committee's attention a problem related to General Assembly resolution 2924 B

[1] Conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.13 of 1 December 1975.

(XXVII), concerning the Joint Inspection Unit. The provisions of paragraph 2 of the resolution caused concern to the Secretary-General in view of developments subsequent to the adoption of that text. At a time when a number of other important bodies had been established to consider the structure and machinery of the United Nations, the Secretary-General was not convinced that it would be appropriate for him to submit his own views on the question to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The requirements placed on him by a resolution which dated back to 1972 seemed to have been largely overtaken by subsequent events. Unless the Committee decided otherwise, the Secretary-General therefore proposed to concentrate his attention almost exclusively on matters affecting the Joint Inspection Unit and to explain his omissions with regard to resolution 2924 B (XXVII) by the fact that the matters in question were currently *sub judice* in a number of important intergovernmental bodies.

32. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) welcomed the report of the Advisory Committee and the related reports of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, which should be studied by delegations to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and also by delegations to the specialized agencies, as well as by their executive heads. Yet, at a time when centrifugal tendencies in the system increased the need for co-ordination, the Fifth Committee gave only cursory treatment to the item on co-ordination, thus preventing the General Assembly from fulfilling its obligations under Article 17, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular in respect of making recommendations to the specialized agencies. The Fifth Committee was the only body which could acquire an over-all view of the work of the United Nations through its consideration of the programme budget and the medium-term plan, and it had many system-wide responsibilities—for example, in respect of salaries and pensions. Apart from the time factor, one reason for the Committee's failure to devote more attention to co-ordination was that delegations tended to concentrate on the United Nations proper, which was only one organization in the system, and on budget figures. He advocated a system-wide approach to the problems under consideration and full use of the possibilities offered by the programme budgeting system.

33. The close relationship between programmes and budgets meant that the Economic and Social Council must be aware of the administrative and budgetary implications of certain proposals, while the Fifth Committee should be aware of the programme contents of certain proposals. The decision-making system could be improved by implementing the proposal of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery[2] for a close working relationship between the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee.

34. The Advisory Committee in its report had drawn attention to the inadequacies of the current system of co-ordination. He endorsed its useful suggestion that in future the traditional annual reports of the Advisory Committee on the budgets of the specialized agencies should be complemented by reports on specific problems of administrative and budgetary co-ordination containing appropriate recommendations. He also agreed with the Advisory Committee's suggestion in paragraph 14 of its report that the interaction between activities financed under the regular budgets and those financed from voluntary funds should be studied more closely and systematically; a comparative study by the Advisory Committee would certainly be welcome. In connexion with the comment in paragraph 15 that there were still short-comings in respect of co-ordination between the United Nations Environment Programme and the specialized agencies, he noted that the fourth session of the UNEP Governing Council to be held in the spring of 1976 would review the institutional arrangements for international environmental co-operation and discuss the idea of establishing a standing advisory body to assist it in co-ordination matters; he was confident that such a body would correct any deficiencies. He welcomed the statement in paragraph 16 of the Advisory Committee's report that it would study the possibilities for improving administration and management in the various agencies, and he agreed with the observation in paragraph 17 that there was a need for interagency co-operation in personnel questions. He also welcomed the Advisory Committee's intention to study more closely budgetary problems facing all agencies and, in view of the action taken by the Fifth Committee when, at its 1748th meeting, it adopted draft decision A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1[3] requesting the Secretary-General and the executive heads to examine the impact of inflation on the budgets of United Nations organizations, he understood that the Advisory Committee would co-ordinate its efforts in that field with ACC.

35. He suggested that the Advisory Committee might study the extent to which specialized agencies had taken action to harmonize their scales of contributions with those of the United Nations. The Committee on Contributions, in its report,[4] had quite correctly drawn the attention of the General Assembly to its resolutions 2190 A (XXI) and 2474 A (XXIII) requesting the Advisory Committee to report periodically on that matter.

36. He expressed the hope that at the thirty-first session, an off-budget year, the Fifth Committee could give in-depth consideration to co-ordination. It was of vital importance that the General Assembly should give central guidance on issues of interest to the system as a whole. He suggested that the Advisory Committee might make specific recommendations on how to improve the process of co-ordination.

37. In conclusion, he endorsed the new approach suggested in the report of the Advisory Committee.

38. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) suggested that, in view of the time factor, the Committee should consider deferring consideration of the item until the following session, or simply take note of the report of the Advisory Committee and postpone substantive consideration of that report.

39. Mr. BACHE (United States of America), supported by Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) and Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil),

2 See document A/10117 and Corr.1, of 17 June 1975, para. 77, recommendation 3 *(f)*.

3 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 96, document A/10500, paras. 66 and 68.

4 *Ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 11*, para. 28.

pointed out that some members of the Committee might wish to comment on the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management.

40. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) suggested that delegations might give their views on the suggestions made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 3 to 21 of its report, without commenting in detail on the administration of the specialized agencies, in order to give the Advisory Committee some guidance.

41. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee would welcome the observations of members of the Committee on the suggestions it had made in paragraphs 3 to 21 of its report, in which it described the new approach which the Advisory Committee wished to take, subject to the endorsement of the Fifth Committee.

42. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, without prejudice to the suggestion by the representative of New Zealand, the Committee should hear statements by delegations on the report of the Advisory Committee and in response to the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, in order to give the Advisory Committee and the Secretary-General some guidance, and that the question should be given more in-depth and comprehensive consideration at the thirty-first session.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)** **(for the previous A/... and A/C.5/... documents, see the 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6 and 11, A/C.5/1682/Add.1 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/1714, A/C.5/1715, A/C.5/1718, A/C.5/1722, A/C.5/1723, A/C.5/1725, A/C.5/L.1240)**

United Nations accommodation (A/9854 and Add.1, A/10279 and Add.1, A/10280 and Add.1)

43. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit which had been submitted at the twenty-ninth session (see A/9854) and to the comments on that report by the Secretary-General (A/9854/Add.1), who had indicated that he proposed to submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The Joint Inspection Unit had since produced two other reports on United Nations accommodation. The first one (see A/10279) concerned office accommodation provided for extra-budgetary staff in the United Nations system; in document A/10279/Add.1 the Secretary-General had transmitted the comments of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, indicating that ACC had decided to refer the matter to the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions for consideration in connexion with its current study on the whole question of programme support costs, and that ACC had intended to resume consideration of the report at its spring session in 1976. The other report of the Joint Inspection Unit (see A/10280) concerned the utilization of office accommodation at Geneva; the Secretary-General had transmitted his comments on that report, together with those of the Geneva-based specialized agencies, in document A/10280/Add.1.

44. He had been informed by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that that Committee would not report on the question at the current session. Accordingly, substantive discussion of the question would be postponed until the thirty-first session.

45. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in view of the Secretary-General's statement in paragraphs 10 to 12 of document A/9854/Add.1 that he would submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, the Advisory Committee had considered that there would be little point in commenting on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the basis of comments made by the Secretary-General in 1974. The Advisory Committee had similarly decided that there was little point in commenting on the report of the Unit contained in document A/10279, since ACC would be giving further consideration to it in 1976. Brief comments had been submitted by the Geneva-based organizations on the Joint Inspection Unit report contained in document A/10280. The Advisory Committee had considered that the three reports of the Unit were very closely related and that, in order to have a comprehensive picture and to be able to reach useful conclusions, it would be advisable for the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee to defer substantive consideration of the item until the thirty-first session. The Advisory Committee had, accordingly, not reported on the three Joint Inspection Unit reports.

46. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) expressed regret and surprise that consideration of a question of such importance as office accommodation, which accounted for a considerable amount of the expenditure of the United Nations and specialized agencies, should be deferred. He recalled that also at the previous session the Committee had deferred consideration of the Joint Inspection Unit report on office accommodation. While the Secretariat found time to deal with secondary questions, it apparently had no time to give full consideration to questions of such importance as office accommodation. However, in view of the time factor, his delegation had no choice but to agree to the Chairman's proposal.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Marcuard (Permanent Observer of Switzerland to the United Nations) took a place at the Committee table.

47. Mr. MARCUARD (Permanent Observer of Switzerland to the United Nations) said that the question of office accommodation was of interest to his Government, as the Joint Inspection Unit report in document A/10280 dealt with certain aspects of office accommodation at Geneva. Apart from the legal obligations incurred through headquarters agreements, his Government, as host to many international organizations, had many other responsibilities which it intended to continue discharging, as it had over the

* Resumed from the 1753rd meeting.

past 30 years. There were many matters of principle which he had wished to raise in connexion with the report in question, but as members of the Committee did not apparently wish to comment on the substance of the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, he felt it would be more appropriate to make his comments during the consideration of agenda item 100, concerning the pattern of conferences.

The meeting rose at 10.45 p.m.

1756th meeting

Tuesday, 2 December 1975, at 3.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1756

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS CONTAINED IN DOCUMENTS A/L.779 AND A/L.780 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 23* (A/C.5/1721, A/C.5/1724)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the statements by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1721 and A/C.5/1724) regarding the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolutions contained in documents A/L.779 and A/L.780, respectively. With regard to both draft resolutions, the Secretary-General had indicated that no additional appropriation would be required at the current stage, although draft resolution A/L.779 would entail potential additional requirements of up to $36,000 under section 3A of the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in document A/C.5/1721, the Secretary-General had costed the programme of work envisaged for 1976 by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. That programme of work was contained in the report of the Special Committee which the General Assembly would approve if it adopted draft resolution A/L.779. In paragraph 14 of his statement, the Secretary-General indicated that the total cost of the programme of work was estimated by him at $359,000. However, an amount of $323,000 was already included under section 3A of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 for the programme of work of the Special Committee in 1976. The Secretary-General estimated therefore that, if the Special Committee should carry out all the activities listed in its projected programme of work for 1976, he might subsequently need an additional amount of $36,000.

3. The programme of work costed by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1721 included the cost of dispatching visiting missions to several territories which were the subject of draft resolutions and draft consensuses adopted in the Fourth Committee. The details were given in annex I to document A/C.5/1721.

4. When the Advisory Committee had considered that statement, it had borne in mind that the Special Committee's programme of work was often subject to change in the light of decisions taken by the Committee during any given year. Given that uncertainty, the Committee agreed with the Secretary-General that adoption of draft resolution A/L.779 would not call for additional appropriations at the current stage.

5. In paragraph 4 of his statement (A/C.5/1724) regarding the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution A/L.780 on the dissemination of information on decolonization, the Secretary-General had indicated that no additional financial resources would be required by the Office of Public Information to give effect to the requests contained in the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee might therefore wish to inform the General Assembly accordingly.

6. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/L.779 and A/L.780, no additional financial resources would be required at the current stage.

It was so decided.

7. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that, while his delegation did not disagree with the decisions just taken by the Committee regarding the financial implications of draft resolutions A/L.779 and A/L.780, it did have strong reservations regarding the substance of both draft resolutions and would comment further on them at the appropriate time.

* Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous A/... and A/C.5/... documents, see the 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6, 11 and 12, A/C.5/1682/Add.1 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/1714, A/C.5/1715, A/C.5/1718, A/C.5/1722, A/C.5/1723, A/C.5/1725, A/C.5/L.1240)

United Nations accommodation* (concluded) *(A/9854 and Add.1, A/10279 and Add.1, A/10280 and Add.1)

8. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it decide to postpone to its thirty-first session comprehensive consideration of the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on the utilization of office accommodation in the United Nations system and that it also request ACC to submit at that same session its report on office accommodation provided for extra-budgetary staff in the United Nations system.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(continued)* (A/10184, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1271, A/C.5/L.1272, A/C.5/L.1274):

***(a)* Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10184, A/C.5/L.1224, A/C.5/L.1271, A/C.5/L.1272, A/C.5/L.1274)**

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1271

9. Mr. AKASHI (Japan), introducing a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1271) on behalf of its sponsors, pointed out that the Federal Republic of Germany should be deleted from the list of sponsors and replaced by Italy, and that Singapore should be added to the list. In addition, the words "in particular, from the developing countries" should be added after the word "Secretariat" in the operative paragraph. That addition was necessary in order to take into account the significant under-representation of the developing countries within the Secretariat.

10. The purpose of the draft resolution was to redress the existing imbalance within the Secretariat whereby 43 members of the United Nations were either unrepresented or under-represented, i.e., had not reached the upper limits of the desirable range assigned to them. The preambular paragraph took note of the observations contained in paragraphs 7, 9, 10 and 11 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/10184) regarding, *inter alia,* the need for giving wider publicity to vacancies, recruitment missions and the holding of competitive examinations, all of which measures were useful in securing equitable geographical balance within the Secretariat.

11. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.5/L.1271 without a vote.

It was so decided.

12. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that his delegation had joined in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1271 on the understanding that the necessary measures to be taken by the Secretary-General would fall within the approved budget and that in the future new staff members would not be recruited exclusively from the unrepresented or under-represented countries. The latter observation was necessitated by the slightly ambiguous nature of the language used in the operative paragraph.

13. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that his delegation had gone along with the consensus on the draft resolution, although the wording of the operative paragraph might be interpreted as meaning that Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations did not apply to recruitment from over-represented countries. Such an interpretation would, of course, be erroneous.

14. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had joined in the consensus but wished to associate itself with the remarks made by the representative of the United States of America.

15. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation would have preferred it if paragraph 16 of the report of the Secretary-General had also been mentioned in the preambular paragraph.

16. Mr. NAUDY (France) endorsed the comments made by the representative of the United States of America.

17. Mr. SETHI (India) said that, although his delegation shared some of the reservations which had been expressed regarding the wording of the draft resolution, it interpreted the operative paragraph loosely and thus had not opposed its adoption.

18. Mr. VON RUCKTESCHELL (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the draft resolution should be interpreted as meaning that preference in recruitment should be given to nationals from the unrepresented and under-represented countries.

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1272 (concluded)

19. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) observed that draft decision A/C.5/L.1272 made mention of certain recommendations of the Joint Advisory Committee based on the work and recommendations of its Standing Committee on the Employment of Women in the Secretariat. He wished to know whether those recommendations had been submitted in any form to the Fifth Committee for its consideration. As he recalled, the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/10184) contained a section pertaining to the employment of women in the Secretariat, but he could not remember whether the specific recommendations referred to in the draft decision were discussed or summarized in that document. He stressed that the Committee should have a clear knowledge of the recommendations in question before adopting the draft decision.

20. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation, too, was not familiar with the recommendations

referred to in draft decision A/C.5/L.1272. It was too much to expect the Fifth Committee to request the Secretary-General to accord priority attention to recommendations which it had not itself studied in any detail. Moreover, the notion of "priority", which had become a catch-all word in United Nations usage, implied that one set of recommendations would be favoured over another, and it was not at all clear what other recommendations might be involved. His delegation therefore would like to receive further information regarding the recommendations of the Joint Advisory Committee.

21. Finally, his delegation took the view that the draft decision dealt with a problem of internal organization of the Secretariat, and could not, therefore, support it.

22. Mr. ONISCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation was not familiar with the nature and purpose of the Joint Advisory Committee. If it was an internal organization of the Secretariat, its recommendations would be a matter for the personal attention of the Secretary-General.

23. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation shared the reservations expressed by earlier speakers regarding the draft decision. In the first place, his delegation did not have sufficient information regarding the work of the Joint Advisory Committee or its Standing Committee and was not therefore in a position to take a responsible decision in the matter under consideration. His delegation also had reservations of a legal nature, since the Joint Advisory Committee was an internal body established by the Secretary-General and had therefore no standing vis-à-vis the General Assembly except in so far as the Staff Rules had to be approved by the General Assembly. As a matter of principle, therefore, the Fifth Committee would be well advised not to comment on a matter of internal organization of the Secretariat. Finally, the current wording of the draft decision lent itself to some confusion as to whether the Fifth Committee was approving the recommendations of the Joint Advisory Committee or its Standing Committee, a confusion that was particularly evident when subparagraphs *(a)* and *(c)* were compared.

24. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that his delegation had similar difficulties as those expressed by previous speakers. He agreed that the notion of according priority to the recommendations of the Joint Advisory Committee implied the existence of other recommendations, and his delegation was not aware whether any such recommendations did in fact exist. Furthermore, some confusion existed in his mind regarding the precise nature of the Joint Advisory Committee. Since it had not been established by a resolution of the General Assembly, its accountability to the latter body was questionable. Thus, the draft decision as it stood was totally unacceptable, and his delegation could not support it.

25. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that he was not sure that he was as qualified as a representative of the Secretariat to describe the genesis of the Joint Advisory Committee and its subsequent work. In any event, the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services had dealt with that point at the 1754th meeting and had, in addition, made reference to the recommendations of the Joint Advisory Committee based on the work and recommendations of its Standing Committee.

26. He did not agree with the previous speakers who had contended that the employment of women in the Secretariat was an internal matter over which the Committee had no authority. The General Assembly did have the right to take a close look at the activities of the Secretariat, and the draft decision was therefore not inappropriate.

27. He agreed with the representative of the Upper Volta that the word "priority" had perhaps become over-used in United Nations documents, but if it was not included in the draft decision, the impression might be given that the Committee did not attach much importance to the recommendations in question.

28. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy) said that her delegation shared the views expressed by a number of previous speakers. Because her delegation was not familiar with the work of the Joint Advisory Committee and its Standing Committee, it found it difficult to support the draft decision. Her delegation would appreciate receiving any information the representatives of the Secretariat might be able to provide regarding those bodies and their recommendations.

29. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that, in spite of the statement just made by the representative of the United States, his delegation still shared the reservations expressed by the representatives of the Upper Volta, Japan, Kenya, Italy, and the Ukrainian SSR. In particular, his delegation did not have sufficient information regarding the legal status of the Joint Advisory Committee and its relation, if any, to the General Assembly, and could not therefore support draft decision A/C.5/L.1272.

30. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said he regretted that the representative of the United States had not been able to provide the desired clarifications. In the circumstances, his delegation had serious doubts whether the draft decision was at all admissible in view of the fact that it contained references to recommendations with which practically no one was familiar. He requested the representatives of the Secretariat to inform the Committee of any official documents before the Fifth Committee in which the recommendations might be found and also to inform it whether any other recommendations existed, as would seem to be implied by the notion of "priority" in subparagraph *(c)* of the draft decision.

31. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that, if it was the feeling of the Committee that it had insufficient information at the current stage regarding the recommendations of the Joint Advisory Committee, his delegation was willing to defer taking a decision until such time as the necessary information had been obtained from the Secretariat.

32. Mr. GHERAB (Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services) explained that when he had addressed the Committee at the 1754th meeting, it was to answer questions regarding the Standing Committee of the Joint Advisory Committee. At that time, he had pointed out that in 1975, pursuant to a suggestion made by a number of

delegations in the Fifth Committee, the Secretary-General had consulted the Joint Advisory Committee regarding possible measures to be taken to ensure equal opportunity for women within the Secretariat. The Joint Advisory Committee was, as its name implied, a joint body composed of representatives of the Secretary-General and the Staff Council and made recommendations to the Secretary-General on administrative questions affecting the staff. It had recently completed work on a set of proposals aimed at increasing the number of women employed in the Secretariat, and the Secretary-General had, after study of the proposals, indicated which of them he considered to be completely reasonable and in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly regarding the employment of women.

33. Mr. SETHI (India) said that his delegation still had difficulties with draft decision A/C.5/L.1272, such as those described by the representative of the Upper Volta. It would therefore be helpful if the sponsors of the draft decision could indicate whether any decisions based on the recommendations of the Standing Committee had been taken by policy-making bodies–for example, by the World Conference of the International Women's Year. Such information would be needed if the Committee was to take a well-founded decision on the matter.

34. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that, as far as he was aware, no legislative decisions had been taken so far on the basis of the recommendations of the Standing Committee since they had been finalized and submitted to the Joint Advisory Committee only a short while ago. He pointed out, however, that resolution 8 of the World Conference of the International Women's Year on the situation of women in the employ of the United Nations and specialized agencies[1] had recommended that the United Nations and its specialized agencies should give priority attention to the recommendations of the Standing Committee of the Joint Advisory Committee. Since that resolution had been adopted unanimously, it could be assumed that all the delegations to the Conference at Mexico City had had some knowledge of the existence of the Standing Committee and of the fact that the recommendations in question had not yet been made at that time. The adoption of the resolution would seem therefore to be an expression of confidence in the recommendations which the Standing Committee would eventually make.

35. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said he trusted that the required information regarding the recommendations of the Standing Committee of the Joint Advisory Committee would be provided to the members of the Committee in the form of a document or paper before it took a final decision on draft proposal A/C.5/L.1272.

36. The CHAIRMAN observed that draft decision A/C.5/L.1272 seemed to pose difficulties of a procedural and drafting nature. Since the representative of the United States had indicated his willingness to postpone taking a decision, he suggested that the Committee should defer its consideration of the draft proposal until a future meeting.

It was so decided.

1 See *Report of the World Conference of the International Women's Year* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.1), chap. III.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1274 (concluded)

37. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the representative of Iran had introduced draft resolution A/C.5/L.1274 at the 1755th meeting.

38. Mr. GHERAB (Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services), replying to a question put by the representative of Pakistan at the preceding meeting, said that the following appointments at the D-1 and higher levels had been made during the period from 1 July 1974 to 30 June 1975: 3 Under-Secretaries-General; 2 Assistant Secretaries-General; 10 directors (D-2); and 19 principal officers (D-1). During the same period 5 staff members had been promoted to the D-2 level and 20 to the D-1 level. The proportion of appointments to the total number of posts in each grade during the period from 1 July 1974 to 30 June 1975 had been: at the level of Under-Secretary-General, 18 per cent; at the level of Assistant Secretary-General, 13 per cent; at the director (D-2) level, 14 per cent; and at the principal officer (D-1) level, 9 per cent; the average was thus 11 per cent.

39. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) wondered whether there was a contradiction between draft resolution A/C.5/L.1271, which the Committee had already adopted, and the draft resolution now before it. According to the former, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to recruit staff members from the countries unrepresented and under-represented in the Secretariat, whereas under the terms of the latter he was requested to recruit staff members from among nationals of developing countries. In order to be consistent, draft resolution A/C.5/L.1274 should refer to under-represented countries.

40. His delegation had difficulties with the last preambular paragraph, which might be taken to imply that, owing to its geographical composition, the Secretariat was failing to implement satisfactorily the decisions of intergovernmental bodies.

41. Another short-coming of the draft resolution was that it referred only to the principle of equitable geographical distribution and omitted mention of the other factors applicable to the establishment of desirable ranges. In addition, it failed to refer to Article 101 of the Charter, whose provisions should guide all recruitment.

42. The CHAIRMAN said that, in his view, there was a basic difference between the proposals in documents A/C.5/L.1271 and A/C.5/L.1274: the first dealt with the recruitment of nationals from under-represented developing countries, whereas the second was concerned with recruitment for senior posts in the Secretariat.

43. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that his delegation would have liked the draft resolution to be more comprehensive and to cover the Secretary-General's proposal that the number of Professional and higher-level posts allocated under the factor of membership should be increased from 2,400 to 2,600 (A/10184, para. 28). He trusted that the Secretary-General would ensure that an adequate number of the 200 additional posts were filled by nationals from developing countries and requested him to report to the Fifth Committee on that particular point at the thirty-first session.

44. The draft resolution should also have contained a reference to the Secretary-General's proposal to base the statistical data concerning the staff of the Secretariat on the position at the end of the previous calendar year (*ibid.*, para. 31), in an effort to contribute towards the more rational use of the computerized personnel information system.

45. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) asked whether the Office of Personnel Services had any readily available data on the number of promotions and appointments of nationals from developing countries to senior posts in the Secretariat.

46. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America), referring to the preamble of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1274, said the fact that the developing countries constituted 73 per cent of the membership of the United Nations was certainly worth keeping in mind but was not helpful in determining the proper allocation of posts in the Secretariat. The paramount consideration must remain the need to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, as required by Article 101 of the Charter. Geographical considerations, while extremely important, were secondary.

47. Of the three factors used to determine the desirable ranges of posts in order to apply the principle of equitable geographical distribution, the factor of contributions continued to be of overriding importance. Simple equity would appear to demand that the number of posts assigned to a country should be in direct proportion to its financial contribution. It was not an easy matter to explain to United States taxpayers and legislators why the United States was granted only 18 per cent of the posts although it in fact paid 25 per cent of the expenses of the Organization. Nevertheless, his delegation believed that 18 per cent was, roughly speaking, an equitable figure because it had been arrived at on the basis of a compromise between the interests of the large contributors, which would prefer the greatest weight to be attached to the factor of contributions, and the small contributors, which might wish to see more importance attached to the factor of membership.

48. His delegation rejected the implication in the draft resolution that the diversity of cultures and attitudes of all the Member States were not adequately reflected in the Secretariat. The word "adequately" could not mean that each Member State was equally represented, regardless of size or financial contribution. It must, however, mean that even the smallest and poorest Member State was represented in the Secretariat, as was provided for in the existing formula. If there were a few Member States that were still altogether unrepresented, that situation was deeply regrettable and should be corrected.

49. The implication in the last preambular paragraph that the objectives and goals of the United Nations with respect to the developing countries could not be achieved without a change in the recruitment formula was not acceptable to his delegation. The developing countries were now represented more strongly than ever at policy-making levels—at some 4 percentage points higher than the mid-point of their desirable range. Anyone familiar with United Nations proceedings must acknowledge that the developing countries had enormous impact on economic decision-making at the highest levels.

50. In fact, the Secretary-General was over-complying with the demands for recruitment from developing countries under the geographical formula approved by the General Assembly. Consequently, his delegation could not support any proposal which would put pressure on the Secretary-General to increase the number of senior officials recruited from those countries. Rather, attention should be focused on the problem of meeting the demands of under-represented and unrepresented countries and on the need to recruit more women.

51. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) expressed support for the draft resolution, whose aim was not to change the total number of posts allocated to developing countries but rather to ensure that more of the senior posts in the Secretariat were filled by recruits from developing countries. In other words, the draft resolution was aimed at eliminating the inexcusable practice of reserving senior-level posts for certain countries.

52. Mr. SETHI (India) said that his delegation did not question the validity of the basic criteria referred to in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter and agreed with the view that a flexible application of those criteria was essential in order to ensure a high level of efficiency. However, it should be borne in mind that the countries in which the various organizations in the United Nations system had their headquarters supplied the bulk of the General Service staff. Moreover, under the existing geographical distribution formula, more weight was attached to the membership and contribution factors than to the population factor. Indeed, the population factor appeared to play little part in fixing the desirable ranges for each Member State. While his delegation would prefer the population factor to be more influential in the recruitment of staff, it did not feel that it was necessary to make any radical changes in the geographical distribution formula at the current stage. Furthermore, it was prepared to support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1274, despite its clearly restricted scope.

53. Mr. HASSANE (Niger) said that the problem which the draft resolution was designed to solve was extremely serious. He hoped that the rather timid text would not be construed as a pious wish since, as was evident in the case of past resolutions dealing with the recruitment of women, pious wishes did not lead to results. His delegation would support the draft resolution on the understanding that every effort would be made to strengthen the representation of developing countries at senior levels in the Secretariat.

54. Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone) said that the draft resolution did not go as far as his delegation would have wished; however, it represented a first step in the right direction. He trusted that the Secretary-General would take the necessary steps to implement the operative part of the text and that a thorough discussion of the subject would be held at the thirty-first session.

55. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) welcomed the growing interest being shown at the current session in the matter of securing

justice for countries which were under-represented or unrepresented in the Secretariat. Noting that Kuwait was not represented at all in the Secretariat, he urged the sponsors to include a reference to the rights of under-represented countries in the draft resolution before the Committee. If such a reference was not included, his delegation would abstain in the vote.

56. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that, contrary to the views of some delegations, the developing countries occupied very few posts which were influential in the decision-making process. In requesting that they should be given an equal opportunity to participate in policy-making, the developing countries were not asking for favours—they were seeking to protect their rights. In some cases the flimsiest of pretexts were offered for turning down candidates from developing countries. Consequently, his delegation intended to look very critically at the results of the Secretary-General's efforts to ensure that the developing world played a greater role in policy-making.

57. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that the problem was not as clear-cut as some representatives appeared to think. While it was true that some developed countries were well-represented at senior levels in the Secretariat, it was also true that a number of developing countries were well-represented; the reverse was equally true.

58. A reference to Article 101 of the Charter would make it easier for a number of delegations to support the draft resolution. Accordingly he proposed that the words "taking into consideration the provisions of Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter" should be inserted in paragraph 1 after the word "appropriate".

59. Mr. RELLIE (United Kingdom) said that, in keeping with his delegation's strong support for a career international civil service, it did not favour the idea of increasing national quotas at all levels, which would exacerbate the present tendency towards filling senior posts by means of appointments from outside the Secretariat. The percentage of senior posts available to any country or group of countries should be closely related to the percentage of posts available to it in the Secretariat as a whole. Those quotas had been worked out carefully and fairly and should not be altered without mature reflection. His delegation regretted the pressure being placed on the Office of Personnel by the speakers in the discussion and trusted that the Office would resolve its dilemma by continuing to abide by Article 101 of the Charter.

60. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) announced that the delegations of Algeria, Chad, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Kenya and Sierra Leone had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

61. He recalled that, in the Group of 77, many of the developing countries had expressed support for the intent of the draft resolution but had found the text too weak. The sponsors, however, had preferred to keep the text uncontroversial, although they regarded it as a first step towards an improvement in the composition of the Secretariat.

62. The representative of the United States had said that it was only worth taking note of the fact that 73 per cent of the membership of the United Nations was composed of developing countries. It was precisely that kind of thinking which had encouraged the developing countries to seek more equitable representation at the senior levels of the Secretariat and a greater role in policy-making. The United States representative had also referred to the three factors used in establishing the desirable ranges. It should, however, be pointed out that those factors were applicable to recruitment for posts at the D-1 and D-2 levels but not for the posts of Assistant Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General, for which the career international civil service did not normally provide candidates. As far as the question of "adequate" representation was concerned, he asked the United States representative whether he considered that the overwhelming share of senior posts held by developed countries in the United Nations Office at Geneva—85 per cent—gave the developing countries an opportunity to be adequately represented. Finally, he could not accept the argument that because a country paid 25 per cent of the expenses of the Organization, it was entitled to 25 per cent of the posts.

63. Acceptance of the provisions of the Charter was implicit in the draft resolution; consequently, his delegation saw no need for the New Zealand amendment.

64. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia) moved the closure of the debate on the question.

65. Mr. DJEKILAMBERT (Chad) opposed the motion for closure.

The motion for closure was adopted by 77 votes to 1, with 9 abstentions.

66. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) said that his delegation would be unable to support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1274 because it did not refer to the developing countries unrepresented in the Secretariat but only to those already represented. His delegation would abstain in the vote.

67. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said that his delegation would have liked to support the draft resolution, but could not do so in view of the sponsors' rejection of the New Zealand amendment.

68. Mr. VON RUCKTESCHELL (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation would have liked to see the point made by the representative of Kuwait incorporated in the draft resolution together with a reference to under-represented countries. The draft resolution as it stood meant that the membership factor would be the most important consideration in filling senior posts in the Secretariat, which was not the best way of proceeding. Until such time as the existing system of equitable geographical distribution was changed, there should be no change in the balance of the factors to be taken into consideration.

69. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation would vote for the draft resolution because Greece was a developing country, because it appreciated the moderation of the sponsors and because undue stress should not be given to the contribution factor. The contributions of small countries were as important to them as the contributions of large countries were to those countries.

70. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) endorsed the comments made by the representative of Kuwait. His delegation would abstain in the vote.

71. Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark) said that his delegation would have liked to support the initiative of the sponsors but it must associate itself with the views of the Canadian delegation concerning the New Zealand amendment.

72. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy) said that her delegation had been ready to support the draft resolution, but could not now do so because of the sponsors' refusal to refer to Article 101 of the Charter. Her delegation would abstain in the vote.

73. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation was ready to support the draft resolution, but shared the difficulties which had been expressed concerning the failure to refer to Article 101. If the New Zealand amendment was adopted, his delegation would vote for the draft resolution; otherwise it would abstain.

74. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation regretted that it would not be able to support the draft resolution as it stood, because the last preambular paragraph contained an implied criticism which it did not endorse and because operative paragraph 1 made no mention of Article 101.

The New Zealand amendment (see para. 58 above) was rejected by 36 votes to 29, with 22 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1274 was adopted by 61 votes to 14, with 15 abstentions.

75. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of Iran had twice misquoted him. First, he had not said that the fact that the developing countries constituted 73 per cent of the membership of the United Nations was only worth taking note of; he had said that the fact was certainly worth keeping in mind. Secondly, he had not said that since the United States contributed 25 per cent of the United Nations budget it was entitled to 25 per cent of Secretariat posts; he had said that it was not an easy matter to explain to United States taxpayers why the United States was granted only 18 per cent of the posts although it in fact paid 25 per cent of the expenses of the Organization; that nevertheless his delegation believed that 18 per cent was, roughly speaking, an equitable figure.

76. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote. It had full sympathy for the aim of the sponsors, but it would have preferred an explicit reference to Article 101 of the Charter and to the concern of the unrepresented and under-represented countries.

77. Mrs. BASTOS SANDIFER (Portugal) said that her delegation had voted for the draft resolution for the same reasons as the representative of Greece. The contributions of the smaller developed countries were just as important as those of the larger ones, and the ability of candidates from developing countries was just as high as that of those from developed countries. Her delegation would have preferred a reference to Article 101 of the Charter, but it was confident that the point could be taken for granted without prejudice to the resolution.

78. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that his delegation respected the underlying aim of the draft resolution, but it could not support yet another proposal for limiting the possibilities open to the Secretary-General in following the paramount rule in the employment of staff, i.e., to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Apart from Article 101 of the Charter, it might be proper to recall Article 100 which spoke of the staff as international officials responsible only to the Organization, and not as representatives of one Member State or another. His country's representation in the United Nations was provided by its permanent mission and not by Swedish nationals who had applied on their own initiative for work as international civil servants and had been accepted on the basis of their personal qualifications and in competition with applicants from other countries. In accordance with its aim of preserving the Secretariat as an international body and not converting it into an intergovernmental institution, his delegation had abstained in the vote.

79. Mr. ONISCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation had voted against the draft resolution because the preamble referred to the developed countries without making a distinction between capitalist and socialist countries. Furthermore, the draft resolution made no mention of Article 101 of the Charter or of the interests of unrepresented and under-represented countries, a group which included the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

80. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation had voted against the draft resolution. It sympathized with the sponsors' aim, but regretted that they had put Poland and the other socialist countries in the same category as the Western States. Furthermore, the draft resolution gave insufficient attention to the inadequate representation of the socialist countries in senior Secretariat posts, and his delegation would have preferred a specific reference to Article 101 of the Charter.

(b) Other personnel questions: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716

Amendments made to the Staff Rules during the period from 1 July 1974 to 30 June 1975 (A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1)

81. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1) on amendments made to the Staff Rules. If there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of those amendments.

It was so decided.

* Resumed from the 1742nd meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 105

United Nations salary system *(continued)*:*
***(a)* Report of the International Civil Service Commission *(continued)** (A/10008/Add.9, A/10030, A/C.5/1700, A/C.5/1703, A/C.5/L.1260/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1269);**
(b)* Report of the Secretary-General *(continued)*

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1260/Rev.1

82. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) introduced a revised version (A/C.5/L.1260/Rev.1) of the draft resolution that he had submitted earlier on the report of the International Civil Service Commission (A/10030). The delegation of Poland, which had become a sponsor of the draft resolution, had made some suggestions which had been incorporated in the revised text, amplifying the initial version without detracting from it in any way.

83. Replying to a question from the representative of Pakistan, he said that the subsidiary body mentioned in paragraph 4 would not be an intergovernmental body but an expert group made up of about six members serving in their individual capacity.

84. The CHAIRMAN said that if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/L.1260/Rev.1.

It was so decided.

Draft resolution contained in document A/C.5/L.1269

85. The CHAIRMAN said that, in document A/C.5/L.1269, he had submitted a draft resolution on interim changes in the post adjustment system to the Committee solely in order to expedite its work. Delegates should feel free to change the draft in any way. In the first preambular paragraph "paragraphs 7 to 65" should read "paragraphs 37 to 65".

86. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation could not support the draft resolution because the Commission had not yet fulfilled the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly: it had not yet submitted its final report on the salary system and until it did so the Committee should not take any decisions concerning increases in the remuneration of any staff members.

87. Mr. MARTIN (Spain) said that the existing post adjustment system was confusing; the main problem was to decide whether it should be changed or not. The system certainly discriminated against staff members having no dependants, but he was not sure that the remuneration was generally inadequate. Nor were the implications of the interim changes clear. Nevertheless, the problem did require urgent attention and his delegation would therefore support the proposed changes.

88. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that the draft resolution represented a reasonable attempt to improve an unfair situation which could affect the morale of staff with no dependants. His delegation would therefore support the draft resolution.

89. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said that where problems of inequity existed they should be removed. Since the draft resolution, even as a temporary measure, would remove one such inequity, it had his delegation's support.

90. Mr. HART (Australia) said that his delegation could support the draft resolution. Although some work remained to be done on the salary system, no staff member should be penalized by continuing to suffer until that work was completed.

The draft resolution (see A/C.5/L.1269) was adopted by 72 votes to 10, with 2 abstentions.

* * *

91. Mr. QUIJANO (Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission) thanked the members of the Committee for their support. He had taken note of their comments, especially those concerning the way in which the Commission presented its proposals and the invitation to submit its final recommendations to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The Commission would do its utmost to comply with the Committee's wishes.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

* Resumed from the 1753rd meeting.

1757th meeting

Wednesday, 3 December 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1757

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 100

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous A/... and A/C.5/... documents, see the 1734th meeting; A/10008/Add.6, 11 and 12, A/C.5/1682/Add.1 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/1714, A/C.5/1715, A/C.5/1718, A/C.5/1722, A/C.5/1723, A/C.5/1725, A/C.5/1728, A/C.5/1730, A/C.5/L.1240)

First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)

SECTION 23. CONFERENCE AND LIBRARY SERVICES *(continued)*** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Pattern of conferences (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10032 and Corr.1, A/10348 and Corr.1, A/10397, A/C.5/1711):

***(a)* Report of the Committee on Conferences (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10032 and Corr.1, A/10397, A/C.5/1711)**

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in addition to the report of the Committee on Conferences (A/10032 and Corr.1), the Fifth Committee had before it document A/C.5/1711 entitled "Statement of administrative and financial implications of the recommendations contained in paragraph 113 of the report of the Committee on Conferences". That document had been submitted by the Secretary-General pursuant to the decision taken by the Fifth Committee at its 1736th meeting.

2. The related report of the Advisory Committee was circulated as document A/10397. The Fifth Committee might find the report of the Advisory Committee of limited help in its consideration of the item to which it related. The report, however, was the best the Committee could prepare given the form, content and nature of the Secretary-General's own report. Indeed, the Advisory Committee was unable to get from the representatives of the Secretary-General the kind of information which would have enabled it to advise the Fifth Committee on the administrative and financial impact of the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences. The Secretary-General, in his statement of administrative and financial implications, seemed to have confined himself largely to the narrower aspect of assessing whether the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences would lead to additional budgetary requirements under the regular budget during the coming biennium. As stated in paragraph 5 of its report, the Advisory Committee was unable to satisfy itself of the soundness of the position taken by the Secretary-General.

3. The Advisory Committee had therefore indicated in its report, particularly in paragraph 9, the kind of information which the Secretary-General should supply to the Fifth Committee and to the Advisory Committee when the Committee on Conferences submitted its next report. That, of course, would depend on whether the Fifth Committee agreed with the Advisory Committee's interpretation of what was required in a statement of administrative and financial implications of a report of the Committee on Conferences such as the one currently before the General Assembly. Even if the Fifth Committee decided otherwise, the Advisory Committee would still require the kind of information indicated in document A/10397 if it was to discharge its responsibility to the General Assembly in the same manner as it had done with respect to other items.

4. Finally, in paragraph 10 of its report, the Advisory Committee urged the Secretary-General to pursue the development of a more refined system for the determination of conference servicing requirements. The Committee believed that progress in that area would greatly assist the Committee on Conferences in the discharge of its responsibilities as called for under its terms of reference.

5. Mr. GORITZA (Romania), Rapporteur of the Committee on Conferences, introducing the report of the Committee on Conferences (A/10032 and Corr.1), said that in the first year of its mandate the Committee had concentrated on three aspects of its work: intersessional departures from the approved calendar for 1975; the provisional calendars of conferences and meetings for 1976 and 1977 and, more generally, the establishment of the pattern of conferences.

6. In dealing with requests for intersessional departures from the approved calendar, the Committee had agreed that minor changes without financial implications could be made by the Secretariat on the advice of the Committee and that decisions on important changes should be taken by the Committee. Annexes I and II to the report contained the provisional calendars of conferences and meetings for 1976 and 1977 and included recommendations that departed from past practice, although they made no provision for new meetings proposed during the thirtieth session of the General Assembly. He drew attention to recommendation 13, in paragraph 113, the effect of which would be to bring the calendar into line with the biennial programmes in the programme budget.

7. With regard to the pattern of conferences, the Committee had considered each of the principles stated in General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV) and the exceptions listed therein. Its deliberations on the subject were set forth in chapter III and the relevant recommendations were sum-

* Resumed from the 1746th meeting.

** Resumed from the 1734th meeting.

marized in recommendations 1 to 12. The Committee had stressed the need to develop a set of guidelines for the effective use of the conference servicing capacity of the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

8. One of the main concerns of the Committee on Conferences in its future work would be the optimum apportionment of conference servicing resources. Under that item it would consider further the question of informal meetings and the possibility of instituting a quota system for the allocation of resources. It would also turn its attention to conference servicing operations and co-ordination within the United Nations and with the specialized agencies and IAEA.

9. Finally, he drew attention to document A/10032/Corr.1 which contained the new text of the draft resolution reproduced in recommendation 15.

10. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) noted that the Advisory Committee had stated in paragraph 5 of its report (A/10397) that the Secretary-General had overlooked the impact of the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences on the optimum allocation of manpower and other resources. Yet it was the Committee on Conferences itself which had decided to leave aside during the first year of its mandate that part of its terms of reference which concerned the optimum apportionment of conference resources, facilities and services. The information contained in the table in paragraph 6 of the report had been provided by the Budget Division in response to a question asked when the Secretary-General's representatives had first appeared before the Advisory Committee on that matter. With regard to the Advisory Committee's assertion in paragraph 7 that no attempt had been made in document A/C.5/1711 to quantify the financial elements, he drew attention to paragraphs 4, 8, 13, 14, 21, 22 and 23 of that document, all of which contained references to dollar amounts. Full estimates had not been included for the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, since they would appear in separate papers, or for the International Civil Service Commission, since those figures were already available.

11. Turning to the specific criticisms listed in paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report, he said with regard to subparagraph *(a)* that, while the Secretariat might have reproduced table 23-26 from the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), identifying the bodies listed therein which met at Geneva as provided for under the exceptions mentioned in paragraph 9 *(i)* of General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV), the question had not been asked in the form in which it was currently put and it had not occurred to the Secretariat that the Advisory Committee wanted information that was already available. With regard to subparagraphs *(b)* and *(c)*, it was his view that the report of the Secretary-General already provided the information requested. As to subparagraph *(d)*, it was not for the Secretariat to explain the actions of the Committee on Conferences. Nor was it proper for the Secretariat to propose alternatives to the recommendations of that Committee, as suggested in subparagraph *(e)*. With regard to the two new "exceptions"—ECWA and the International Civil Service Commission—he pointed out that paragraphs 23 and 24 of the Secretary-General's report provided the information sought in respect of the former and that paragraph 25 referred to document A/C.5/1700, which contained the budget estimates for the latter. Finally, while he hoped that the outcome of programme budgeting would be an apportionment of conference servicing costs among United Nations bodies, it hardly seemed possible to do that as part of an exercise to estimate financial implications.

12. Speaking more generally, he pointed out that the Committee on Conferences was an intergovernmental subsidiary body of the General Assembly and that document A/C.5/1711 was merely meant to be a statement of the administrative and financial implications of that Committee's recommendations. Since the Advisory Committee had been highly critical of the Secretariat, he wished to recall that, at the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, pressure had been exerted on the Secretariat to present the Fifth Committee with recommendations on changes in the pattern of conferences. The Secretariat had been reluctant to do so because that pattern was constantly changing and because bodies and delegations were very jealous of their sovereign rights. In that connexion, he cited the International Law Commission and the Economic and Social Council. One delegation had proposed that the question should be studied by the Joint Inspection Unit. The recommendation to create a Committee on Conferences had come from the Unit. The complexity of the matter was obvious: the main problem was how to eliminate peak and slack periods in the calendar of conferences. That was the most difficult task and no one was satisfied—least of all the Secretariat, which felt it was being made the scapegoat.

13. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a communication he had received from the President of the Economic and Social Council who, in accordance with the decision taken by the Council at its 1981st meeting, on 10 November 1975, transmitted to him the summary record of that meeting.[1] He read out excerpts from the statements made during the discussion of the calendar of conferences by a number of delegations which had qualified as unfortunate the fact that positions taken in the Fifth Committee could affect decisions which the Council might wish to adopt at its organizational session in January 1976. They had also stressed that the Council's right to determine the date and venue of its sessions was established in the Charter and that, before taking a decision on the calendar of conferences, the Fifth Committee should be made aware of the importance which the Council attached to that right.

14. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece), supported by Mr. SETHI (India), said that the Chairman should advise the President of the Economic and Social Council that the Fifth Committee would act on the matter bearing in mind the respective functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

15. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) recalled that, in a statement made at the 1734th meeting, in connexion with section 23 of the proposed programme budget, his delega-

1 See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Resumed Fifty-ninth Session.*

tion had stressed the need to arrange the calendar of conferences so that the resources provided by fixed expenditure, such as established teams of interpreters, were fully utilized. It had assumed that that had been the main budgetary concern of the Committee on Conferences when it had considered the future pattern of conferences, though it recognized that political and other factors had also to be taken into account.

16. Since the Committee on Conferences had not described the reasoning behind its recommendations, his delegation had proposed that the Secretary-General should submit a paper on the financial and administrative aspects—not on the narrow financial implications—of the report of that Committee. The Secretary-General had nevertheless chosen to interpret the proposal in the narrowest sense as a request for information about the additional budgetary provision necessitated by the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences and had made no attempt to identify the savings which might have been made had that Committee made different recommendations. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee's adverse comment on that fundamental defect and considered that the Secretary-General had failed to provide the Fifth Committee with the information it had requested. If the representatives of the Secretary-General had kept silent in order to avoid any suggestion that they might be passing adverse comment on the work of an intergovernmental committee, they had erred; they had only been asked for information. Moreover, his delegation could see little sense in the Secretariat refusing information to the Fifth Committee for fear of seeming to criticize a subsidiary body set up on the recommendation of that Committee.

17. Since the Fifth Committee had been deprived of essential relevant facts, his delegation would probably abstain on the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences. Moreover, it had concluded that the new Committee on Conferences, like its predecessor, had already proved to be of no real utility. Accordingly, he read out the text of a draft resolution[2] proposing the dissolution of the Committee on Conferences and requesting the Secretary-General to undertake the tasks which had been assigned to that Committee under General Assembly resolution 3351 (XXIX) and to report to the Assembly at its thirty-first session and annually thereafter. His delegation intended no judgement on the ability of the members of the Committee on Conferences but was merely saying that the re-creation of the Committee had been structurally the wrong solution.

18. Mr. SETHI (India) recalled that, at the twenty-ninth session, it had been stated in connexion with the establishment of the Committee on Conferences that its meetings would have no financial implications. He did not see how such a statement could have been made in advance, but since the Committee had in fact held 38 meetings, he asked the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services what the financial implications had actually been.

19. Under its terms of reference the Committee on Conferences had basic responsibility for the optimum use of conference resources. Its meetings should therefore have their regular place in the calendar of conferences, since that would help the Committee discharge the functions set out in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 3351 (XXIX) and would also assist the Secretariat in preparing documentation to help it in its task.

20. With regard to intersessional consideration of requested departures from the calendar of conferences, the Committee might delegate powers to its Chairman, or meet as circumstances required.

21. He proposed an amendment[3] to the new text (A/10032/Corr.1) of the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Conferences, whereby a new paragraph would be added requesting that Committee, in the light of paragraph 11 of its report, to include in its future reports the financial and administrative information on which its decisions and recommendations were based.

22. He noted the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1711) on the financial implications of the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences, and recalled that the Fifth Committee had deferred consideration of the item in accordance with a request made by the United Kingdom representative at the 1736th meeting. He agreed that a statement of financial implications was generally necessary for consideration of any item but did not agree that no progress could have been made in the absence of the statement in question, particularly in view of the few data it contained. He noted that the United Kingdom representative, who had suggested postponement, had already made his general statement on section 23 of the programme budget; that seemed hardly fair to other delegations which had waited to make their statements on the matter. The United Kingdom representative's statement at the current meeting had shown a certain lack of moderation in its references to the Secretary-General.

23. With regard to the observations in paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10397) regarding the information it would have expected the Secretary-General to provide, he considered that subparagraph *(a)* related more to the manner in which the Secretary-General had presented section 23 of the programme budget. With regard to subparagraphs *(b)* and *(c)*, he thought that his proposed amendment to the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Conferences could fill the gap which the Advisory Committee had noted. He had considerable reservations regarding subparagraph *(d)*, which he regarded as encroaching on the competence of an intergovernmental body; to that extent he agreed with the observations of the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services. The feasibility, mentioned in subparagraph *(e)*, of an alternative pattern of conferences for bodies exempted from the general principle was a matter for consideration by the Committee on Conferences, though the Fifth Committee could recommend that it be studied, or could take its own decision. He agreed in general that the information referred to in subparagraphs *(f)* and *(g)* should be provided, though in the latter case it was not directly relevant to the Committee's study of the work of the Committee on Conferences. He also agreed with the Advisory Committee's

2 Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1276.

3 Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1277.

request, in paragraph 10 of its report, that the Secretary-General should pursue the development of a more refined system for the determination of conference servicing requirements.

24. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that the role of conferences in the United Nations was so important that it was unwise to exercise undue parsimony regarding the resources made available for conference services, but, by the same token, it was necessary to avoid waste and ensure maximum effectiveness in the use of those resources. Measures to increase the employment of permanent conference service staff were to be encouraged, and he approved the proposal to create three new teams of interpreters in New York and one at Geneva. He asked the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services whether his proposals for Geneva were adequate and whether he intended to make less use of free-lance assistance in Geneva and increase the permanent interpretation staff there. He also wished to know whether the Geneva conference facilities as a whole were fully utilized and whether any measures were contemplated to use them more economically and effectively.

25. It was necessary to be very careful in comparing costs. For example, estimates of the costs of conferences at Geneva were usually higher than for a similar conference in New York, but it was often forgotten that the larger conference staff in New York gave Headquarters the capacity to take on additional meetings without apparent additional costs, though in fact invisible costs were present in the larger appropriations for the Headquarters conference services as a whole. Similarly, he thought that the indices for the volume of work were different as between New York and Geneva. He also agreed that, according to the table in paragraph 23.6 of the first report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008 and Corr.2), on the proposed programme budget, it did not seem as though there would be an increase in conference activities sufficient to justify the resources requested. That was surprising in view of the general growth in the number of conferences; however, the omission of estimates of the volume of work for the biennium 1976-1977 had deprived the Committee of important information.

26. The information on the volume of work of the conference services in New York and Geneva did not seem to include meetings held elsewhere; he asked whether it was possible to prepare a table showing all conference activities.

27. The report of the Committee on Conferences shed light on the difficulties and setbacks which had plagued its predecessor. It was legitimate to speculate on the usefulness of the current Committee, despite the dedication of its members. His delegation would examine with the greatest interest the draft resolution submitted by the delegation of the United Kingdom.

28. In general, he supported the comments in paragraphs 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10397). The Committee on Conferences would have been better advised to concentrate on the exceptions to the previously approved conference schedule and follow the lines suggested by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 10 of its report, devoting more attention to the current and future requirements for conference services and facilities and the optimum distribution of meetings. The possibility of a quota system for the allocation of conference resources among the various kinds of activities should have been examined as a matter of priority in view of its basic importance.

29. In conference activities in general it was important not so much to establish gross comparisons between the costs of various centres as to try and use more economically and efficiently the existing possibilities of those conference centres within the context of the requirements for decentralization. The need to improve the conference centres themselves should be studied only after the resources of the various centres had been placed on an equal footing, since only then would it be possible to make a true comparison of costs.

30. Mr. OGAWA (Japan) said that, where meetings had to be held away from the headquarters of United Nations bodies, the inviting Government should defray the actual additional costs in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV). However, the Governments of States represented at such meetings often had to bear an additional financial burden in sending delegates from their permanent missions. As the number of international conferences had greatly increased in recent years, meetings away from established headquarters strained the financial resources of many Governments, besides causing administrative disruption for the secretariats servicing such meetings, as was pointed out in paragraph 236 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the matter.[4] Moreover, there might be sizable indirect costs. He therefore stressed the need to adhere strictly to the principles stated in General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV). He noted with concern paragraph 42 of the report of the Committee on Conferences, in which it was stated that considerations of a political nature and promotion of interest in United Nations activities were among the factors justifying a derogation from those principles. The application of such general and rather ambiguous considerations might eventually emasculate the principle itself, and precise guidelines should therefore be established so as to limit exceptions to a minimum.

31. He was gratified to note that the Committee on Conferences itself had taken the first step in that direction by making recommendations to reduce the exceptions listed in paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV); further efforts should be made to eliminate such exceptions altogether.

32. The governing bodies of various United Nations organs continued to hold meetings according to the practices established at the time of their inception, regardless of subsequent changes of circumstances. Newly created organizations might well require frequent policy guidance from their governing bodies, but as they became more firmly established, the frequency of meetings should be greatly reduced. For example, as far back as 1968 the Committee on Conferences had recommended that the General Assembly invite the Governing Council of UNDP, with other bodies, to review the possibility of meeting only once a year. Since most UNDP projects were grouped in country

[4] See document A/9795 of 7 October 1974.

programmes covering a period of several years, two annual sessions seemed no longer essential.

33. His delegation attached great importance to the work of the new Committee on Conferences, whose role should be strengthened. It was natural for the members of any body to consider it their prerogative to decide when and where to meet, but in order to avoid chaos and waste of resources there must be a body which reviewed the over-all situation and co-ordinated conflicting demands for conferences. The General Assembly, through the Fifth Committee acting on the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences, had ultimate authority to approve the calendar of conferences, and the Committee on Conferences acted on behalf of the Assembly during the intersessional period in sanctioning any departure from the approved calendar.

34. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on section 23 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. At the same time, he shared the concern expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom regarding the increase in teams of interpreters. In view of the increasing difficulties of recruiting qualified free-lance interpreters and the costs involved, it was not unreasonable to increase the number of interpreters on the regular staff, but any budgetary increase for that purpose should be largely offset by reductions in funds for temporary assistance. The increased manpower should be fully utilized so that recourse to temporary interpreters could be kept to a minimum. That would require strict discipline and careful scheduling of United Nations meetings in terms both of timing and location. Meetings should be evenly spread throughout the year and rationally allocated between New York and Geneva. He was also concerned about the fact that it was becoming increasingly difficult to recruit well-qualified interpreters, particularly in the case of certain languages, and a number of established posts had therefore remained vacant. He asked the representative of the Secretary-General whether he was certain that qualified candidates could be found to fill the new posts to be established.

35. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments), replying to the question raised by the representative of India, said that the financial consequences of the work of the Committee on Conferences were nil in the sense of identifiable out-of-pocket expenses. It was a standing committee and the Secretariat worked in close co-operation with its officers to accommodate its meetings whenever spare capacity was available—for example, following the cancellation or rearrangement of other meetings. There were no documentation costs, since there was no pre-session documentation and no meeting records; there would be a certain cost for the reproduction of the Committee's report to the General Assembly. If the Department of Conference Services could achieve the same kind of flexibility with respect to other United Nations organs, so that it could fill valleys and level peaks in the conference schedule, half its problems and 99 per cent of those of the delegations would be solved.

36. With regard to the proposal of the representative of India that the meetings of the Committee on Conferences should be scheduled in the calendar of conferences, he pointed out that if that were done there would be financial implications. To give a cost figure he would need to know the length of the session and its timing and location.

37. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation would welcome a written statement of the financial implications of the Indian proposal. It was disturbed by the negative attitude shown towards the Committee on Conferences and considered various statements made against that Committee unjustified.

38. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) noted that the United Kingdom had not opposed the creation of the Committee on Conferences with its original membership of 12, but had changed its position when the Committee had been enlarged. That was consistent with United Kingdom policy, which was to support a committee that was limited in size, and to oppose its existence once it began to reflect a more equitable geographical distribution.

39. Immense efforts had been made to find a solution to the chronic problem of the pattern of conferences. The Committee on Conferences was constantly faced with changes in the dates and locations of conferences. Were it to be abolished, the work of the Organization would be seriously hampered. The United Kingdom proposal thus made a mockery of the Fifth Committee. The Committee on Conferences had been given an experimental three-year mandate and it was inappropriate to qualify it as a failure at such an early stage.

40. Mr. SETHI (India) observed that the Committee on Conferences was a flexible standing committee which could be convened at short notice. During the course of the year, there were peak periods for meetings and conferences and off-peak periods. It might perhaps be possible for the Committee on Conferences to meet during one week in 1976 when the necessary conference services would be available. His delegation felt it was desirable to know roughly when the Committee on Conferences would meet for substantive work, but did not wish to prescribe a set time.

41. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) said that he was prepared to follow the wishes of the Fifth Committee and provide the information requested. He wondered, however, whether the Committee wanted the Committee on Conferences to meet according to its own plan of meetings or in consultation with the Department of Conference Services. The off-peak period for 1976 meetings was in January and February. He wished to know whether the Committee on Conferences was to meet only during those months. Conference services often became available when there were unexpected cancellations.

42. The Fifth Committee might decide that the Committee on Conferences should meet on certain dates. Only when such a decision was made would it be possible to provide a statement of financial implications.

43. Mr. SETHI (India) said that his delegation was anxious to know when the Committee on Conferences could schedule its meetings without entailing any financial impli-

cations. It would be prepared to accept a proposal for that Committee to meet for one week towards the end of February 1976.

44. The CHAIRMAN, supported by Mr. McCARTHY (Australia), suggested that consideration of the question should be deferred until a subsequent meeting, and stated that the meeting was being extended by 30 minutes.

45. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wondered whether it was justifiable to defer consideration of the question and to embark on a new agenda item at such a late hour. A more conscientious effort should be made to begin and end meetings at scheduled times. The Soviet delegation was one of the most punctual, patient and disciplined delegations. He sensed that the Chairman was trying to dictate to his and other delegations and regretted that tendency. The Chairman had not called on representatives who wanted to put questions to the Under-Secretary-General. At a previous meeting, a proposal for an intelligent approach to the item concerning the pension system had been rejected by the Chairman. His delegation appreciated the need to expedite proceedings, but felt there was a proper way to do so. He appealed to the Chairman to show greater consideration to delegations.

46. The CHAIRMAN agreed that the Soviet delegation was among the most punctual and patient. He had had to begin the meeting without a quorum despite his many appeals to representatives to be more punctual. Since the list of speakers on the question had been exhausted, he considered it wise to postpone further consideration to a subsequent meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:*

***(a)* Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued)** (A/10009, A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1258, A/C.5/L.1259, A/C.5/L.1263, A/C.5/L.1264, A/C.5/L.1270, A/C.5/L.1273);**

***(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/10335, A/10374, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1697, A/C.5/1729, A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.1)**

47. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) recalled that a number of representatives had referred to paragraph 32 of the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/10009), according to which the market value of the total Fund at 31 March 1975 was $936 million while the book value was $934 million. Those figures were misleading, since they gave the impression that the Fund had increased by a mere $2 million. In fact, the book value of the Fund represented total contributions received net of payments to participants and expenses of the Fund plus income earned from the investments of $185 million.

48. A variety of considerations governed investment decisions. The Fund had investments throughout the world, primarily in transnational corporations, which offered a certain amount of economic security. Its policy was to invest its assets in solid stocks which could withstand the uncertainties of the economic climate and yield a solid return. It had no direct investments in countries declared to be racist by resolutions of the United Nations. However, it was possible that some very large corporations in which the Fund had invested might have some minor sales of their products in those countries.

49. It was unwise to attempt to assess the management of the Fund's assets at any given moment. A thorough evaluation was possible only in the long term, since management was an ongoing affair. The relatively rapid turnover rate of securities and the high ratio of switching which had taken place in the Fund were the result of management decisions and were consistent with the policies of other large pension funds. Such switching had been advisable under the prevailing market conditions.

50. Although certain losses had been realized on the sale of securities, they were not as considerable as the representative of Cuba had stated. That representative had referred to gross rather than net sales. Moreover, they were only temporary losses and, in the long run, the over-all transactions would prove to have been profitable. That fact could not emerge from a simple statement of profits and losses, but was evident when one considered the increase in the yield to maturity of the bonds. The Fund was performing well and should be able to show a steady long-term upward trend.

51. As at 30 June 1975, the Fund had $40 million invested in large development banks and it had since built up the amount to $51 million. It was hoped that a target of $75 million would soon be reached. He shared the view of the representative of Argentina that the Fund should seek to diversify its investments for the sake of a better balanced pattern of investments. However, it should be borne in mind that not all markets were apt and prepared to receive investments from the Fund. Factors such as the mobility of the securities market and the potential yield were important considerations. The Pension Fund was a sacred trust and emphasis had to be placed on security and good returns. The Investments Committee already had one member representing the developing countries and it had been decided to enlarge it to include another *ad hoc* member from a developing country.

52. It was often misleading to compare the figures for investment returns from inside and outside the United States. Because of currency fluctuations, earnings shown in dollars could either be overstated or understated. That fact was due to market conditions beyond the control of the Fund and helped to explain certain inconsistencies in the figures.

53. Discussions on the question of transfer tax exemptions were under way. The fees which the Fund paid to its advisers were under close scrutiny and were kept to a strict minimum.

54. Mrs. TSIEN (Chairman of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board), replying to questions raised by the representative of France (1741st meeting), said that comparisons made in 1973 with the practices of the seven countries where United Nations bodies had their headquarters had shown that the maximum creditable length of

* Resumed from the 1751st meeting.

contributory service in all cases significantly exceeded that of the United Nations. In some instances, for example in France, contributions continued to be paid after the maximum period was exceeded while in others, such as Austria, where the maximum amount of the pension was established at 80 per cent of the base salary even before 30 years of contributory service had been completed, contributions continued to be paid after that period had been completed. The reason for delays in payments from the Emergency Fund was the need to check the facts in the requests received, many of which were based on medical grounds. That time-lag would not be reduced if standard forms were used.

55. Replying to the question of the representative of Belgium *(ibid.)*, concerning the confidentiality rule, she said that the prime purpose was to protect the Fund's pensioners from proceedings by third parties rather than to deny Governments any information. With regard to the actuarial imbalance, it would rise as a result of increases in the general level of salaries only if the rate of such salary increases proved to be higher than the rate assumed by the actuaries for the purpose of the evaluation.

56. Turning to the question raised by the representative of Spain (1743rd meeting) regarding the actuarial cost of increasing maximum contributory service to 32 years, she said that the $17 million actuarial cost related to all participants, current and future, who might accumulate 32 years of contributory service. If there was no limit on such service, the actuarial cost for all participants, current and future, would be about $54 million. The approximate liability resulting from the Board's proposal in respect of current participants only who would retire at age 60 in the next two years with 32 years of contributory service would be about $240,000. It was they who, as from 1 February 1976, would accumulate service beyond 30 years and who would be affected if the General Assembly were to postpone action.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

57. Replying to a question from Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany), the CHAIRMAN said that he would try to make arrangements so that the Committee might discuss as soon as possible the Controller's answers[5] to questions raised by various delegations concerning the effect of possible reductions of the inflationary element in the budget.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

5 See conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.11 of 26 November 1975.

1758th meeting

Wednesday, 3 December 1975, at 8.15 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1758

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Matseiko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 98

Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency: report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions *(continued) (A/10279 and Add.1, A/10280 and Add.1, A/10360, A/C.5/1704)**

1. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the scope and delicate nature of the question required that it should be given the unhurried and in-depth consideration of the Fifth Committee. For that reason, his delegation shared the view that the Committee should consider the question in off-budget years. In that connexion, he recalled that the Committee would have before it at the thirty-first session the views of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, which would be helpful in deciding the direction to be taken with regard to co-ordination within the system.

2. His delegation considered that it would be useful to have a document which provided in tabular form, data on expenditure and staff, both under the regular budgets and from voluntary funds, of the various agencies of the system. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions should continue to seek to identify general budgetary trends, to follow the efforts made by the agencies to counter inflation and currency instability and, above all, to indicate the lessons to be learnt from them both by the United Nations itself and by the other organizations of the system, which would then be dealt with in reports on specific problems.

3. The Advisory Committee should provide information regarding intersecretariat co-ordination, accompanied by its comments and opinions regarding ways to improve it and make it less costly. Such co-ordination did not necessitate cumbersome bureaucratic machinery; on the contrary, it should always be flexible.

4. In order to reply to the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 8 and 9 of its report (A/10369), it was desirable to await the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that it would be difficult to formulate

* Resumed from the 1755th meeting.

detailed recommendations regarding the budgets of the specialized agencies. Nevertheless, by stating its views on administrative and budgetary problems of common interest in the year in which the agencies were not discussing their budgets, the Fifth Committee could ensure that its recommendations would be taken into account when the budgets of the agencies were discussed the following year. Thus, while his delegation considered it untimely for the Committee to go into the details of budgets that had already been adopted, it was fully in favour of considering problems of common interest with a view to formulating possible recommendations.

5. The Advisory Committee and other bodies concerned should provide further clarification regarding the real distribution of expenditure between the regular budgets and extra-budgetary funds. His delegation was particularly concerned with the question of overhead costs for technical assistance activities, which must be established with greater accuracy.

6. If, in off-budget years, the Committee could devote its unhurried attention to the problems mentioned in paragraphs 18 and 19 of the report of the Advisory Committee, perhaps it would be able to make recommendations on those subjects to the specialized agencies. Nevertheless, his delegation had some doubts in that regard since, as mentioned in the report of the Advisory Committee, the specialized agencies had already made genuine efforts to reduce their budgets and to economize by eliminating outmoded programmes, while the General Assembly had so far done practically nothing in that sphere. One could, therefore, legitimately wonder whether the Assembly could presume to give advice to others which it did not follow.

7. With regard to paragraph 20 of the report, his delegation requested the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee to draw up a list of jointly financed operations which had previously not been scrutinized by any intergovernmental organ, to study their costs with a critical eye and to submit a report to the General Assembly on the subject.

8. His delegation noted with interest the efforts made by the specialized agencies—particularly UNESCO—to supervise their administrative machinery.

9. In connexion with the remarks made at the 1755th meeting by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, he said that, while it was true that the thrust of the report to be prepared by the Secretary-General in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII) would depend in part on the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, the report should not be affected by the conclusions of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery. Resolution 2924 B (XXVII) dealt with the functions of administrative and budgetary control, investigation and co-ordination. It had already been decided that the General Assembly would appraise, at its thirty-first session, the work of the Joint Inspection Unit in the context of the over-all review prescribed in that resolution. The Fifth Committee had also decided unanimously to give similar consideration to the work of the Administrative Management Service. The reports of both those bodies demonstrated clearly the urgent need to improve the machinery for control and investigation within the United Nations Secretariat. His delegation was confident that the Secretary-General would prepare the best possible report in the circumstances, in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 2924 B (XXVII).

10. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) said that the question under consideration was highly important because it influenced directly the effectiveness of the United Nations system in the various fields of its activity. Through better co-ordination, activities could be streamlined and programmes could be carried out most economically. His delegation regretted the fact, noted by the Advisory Committee in its report, that the Fifth Committee did not always have sufficient time to give in-depth consideration to that question and it endorsed the proposal that the General Assembly should accord particular attention to it in off-budget years and, in particular, at its thirty-first session.

11. His delegation also believed that the annual reports on the budget should be accompanied by information regarding the state of interagency co-ordination so that overlapping and conflicts of jurisdiction could be avoided.

12. Without awaiting the results of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, the Advisory Committee, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination should draw up a list of organizational problems affecting relations among the various components of the system. Such a list should be as exhaustive as possible and should be accompanied by suggestions for possible remedies. Despite the difficult nature of the problems involved, his delegation was confident that practical solutions could be found if clearly defined terms of reference were given to the competent bodies.

13. A solution to the organizational problems besetting the United Nations system must be found as soon as possible. His delegation was concerned over the frequent lack of co-ordination in the execution of operational activities for development, evidence of which could be seen in the frequent revisions made in the plans of operation for projects executed jointly by UNDP and specialized agencies. The situation was compounded by the fact that UNDP had a five-year programming period which did not fit easily into the framework of the biennial budget cycle of the United Nations and the various executing agencies.

14. The need for harmonization had also become clear in a number of other areas. Structures needed to be revitalized through the implementation of programme budgeting or full budgeting. The method of evaluating programmes and preparing budget estimates should be harmonized as well. In so far as possible, a unified terminology for the budget should be adopted. Unified ways for calculating growth should be devised. Procedures for recruitment and the grading of posts should also be harmonized.

15. The dimensions of the problem were so vast and the time available to the Fifth Committee so limited that his delegation shared the view expressed by others that the

General Assembly should take note of the Advisory Committee's report and defer consideration of it until the thirty-first session.

16. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that his delegation agreed whole-heartedly with the view expressed by the representative of the Netherlands at the 1755th meeting that the subject of administrative and budgetary co-ordination deserved more attention from the Committee than it had been receiving in recent years. It also agreed that the Advisory Committee should be commended for proposing a new approach, described in paragraphs 3 to 21 of its report, to co-ordination, and should be encouraged to pursue the areas of inquiry discussed in the report.

17. With respect to the question raised by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management in relation to paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII), his delegation agreed that in his report to the Assembly at its thirty-first session the Secretary-General should give primary attention to the Joint Inspection Unit, without neglecting totally the broader questions mentioned in paragraph 2 of the resolution. A factual description of the activities of the intergovernmental bodies which had recently dealt with those questions would be helpful.

18. Mr. HART (Australia) agreed that, owing to lack of time, the question of co-ordination should be deferred until the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, The matter was of great importance and warranted detailed consideration by the Assembly. Although the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System had a broad mandate which included the question of co-ordination, it was unlikely that it would be able to deal with that question in any detail. Thus, it was appropriate for work to continue in that area under the guidance of the General Assembly but in close co-operation with the *Ad Hoc* Committee.

19. The General Assembly had a general responsibility for the budgets of the specialized agencies under Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Advisory Committee had pointed out in paragraphs 11, 18 and 19 of its report a number of possibilities for action by the General Assembly pursuant to that responsibility. In particular, it had suggested in paragraph 19 that the General Assembly might make recommendations on aspects of budgetary methodologies. In paragraph 21, the Advisory Committee noted that work was proceeding under the auspices of ACC with a view to harmonizing programme budget presentation in the United Nations system and expressed the hope that the various agencies would take practical steps to that end, a hope shared by his delegation. Australia therefore believed that it was appropriate for the General Assembly to continue its work on budgetary co-ordination. In accordance with paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII), the Secretary-General should submit a report at the thirty-first session, which would take place in an off-budget year. It might be useful to solicit the views of the various governing bodies of specialized agencies and the other bodies mentioned in paragraph 2 of that resolution. The report of the Advisory Committee (A/10360) would also provide a useful starting-point for the Assembly's consideration of the question at its thirty-first session.

20. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) asked that in future the list of speakers should not be closed on the same day that discussion of an item was begun, as had been the case with the item under consideration. It was necessary to allow at least one day for delegations to peruse the documentation and determine whether they wished to speak on a particular question.

21. In analysing the question of administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and IAEA, it was necessary to bear in mind Articles 17 and 58 of the Charter. His delegation regretted that the Committee had been able to devote no more than a few meetings each year to the question, especially as the budgets of the specialized agencies amounted to more than $500 million in contributions from Member States. It should therefore be a matter of interest to all to ensure that the specialized agencies and the entire United Nations system functioned in the most efficient and economical manner.

22. His delegation had been surprised that the representative of New Zealand had proposed, at the 1755th meeting, that the Committee should merely take note of the report of the Advisory Committee and defer actual consideration of it until the thirty-first session. Even though the Committee was pressed for time, it should at least inform the specialized agencies that it was aware of its responsibility under the Charter and that it was concerned with the problems caused by the existence of different systems of administration.

23. The report of the Advisory Committee described the various steps being taken by the specialized agencies to deal with the problems caused by currency instability and inflation, and suggested effecting economies by establishing common services and improving interagency co-ordination in the field of electronic data processing and information systems. His delegation fully supported the observations of the Advisory Committee on that subject and believed that the common services might also cover statistics, computers and procurement.

24. With regard to personnel questions, his delegation welcomed the fact that the International Civil Service Commission had begun its work; it would no doubt submit recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the development of a unified international civil service. Other bodies which had a contribution to make in ensuring administrative co-ordination were the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, the Joint Inspection Unit and the Advisory Committee.

25. Ideally, the Fifth Committee should make a recommendation to all the specialized agencies that they should intensify their efforts to evolve a common methodology and a co-ordinated administrative and budgetary system which would make it possible to apply the same solutions to similar problems.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) took the Chair.

26. Miss FORCIGNANÒ (Italy) said that her delegation attached great importance to the item under consideration.

It was also concerned that, at the very end of each session, the Fifth Committee had been obliged to postpone consideration of the question to the following session for lack of time. The Committee currently had before it the report of the Advisory Committee, which contained timely proposals for a new approach to co-ordination. A rationalization of the structure of the United Nations system was needed if the Organization was to meet the challenges of a constantly changing world.

27. Her delegation fully supported the comments of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 12 and 14 of its report. The suggestions made in paragraph 14 with regard to the reimbursement of overhead costs would enable the specialized agencies to identify more accurately the nature and amount of costs for which they requested reimbursement. Her delegation also endorsed the proposal for standardizing the methodologies for forecasting the volume of voluntary-fund projects. On the whole, her delegation supported the new approach embodied in the report of the Advisory Committee and looked forward to the thirty-first session when the question of co-ordination would finally receive the in-depth consideration it merited.

28. Mr. SETHI (India) noted it was no longer possible to consider the question of co-ordination from a simple administrative and budgetary standpoint in isolation from programming. Indeed, co-ordination could no longer be limited to attempts to eliminate overlapping and duplication; rather, co-ordination at the programming level should be dynamic. That approach implied co-ordination throughout the United Nations system in order to attain the objectives set by the legislative organs. It was true that programme co-ordination in the economic and social sectors fell within the purview of the Economic and Social Council alone and, to be effective, depended in large measure on the dedication of Member States and the coherence of their actions. The Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery had noted, in paragraph 39 of its report,[1] that the introduction of global interdependence into the United Nations system implied that the "network approach" became inevitable for a number of global issues. The Working Group had also endorsed the idea that leadership and co-ordination were closely linked. That link was significant, because co-ordination became all too often a substitute for leadership.

29. The Advisory Committee had identified four problem areas falling within the field of administrative and budgetary co-ordination, all of which were of interest to the Fifth Committee. The personnel questions referred to in paragraph 17 should be studied by the International Civil Service Commission with a view to the elimination of all inconsistencies. With regard to budgetary questions and, more specifically, assumptions as to rates of exchange and inflationary trends, his delegation reminded members that the Fifth Committee—in adopting, at its 1748th meeting, under agenda item 96, draft decision A/C.5/L.1226/Rev.1—had already taken a decision requesting the Secretary-General to study the possibility of devising a common methodology for estimating the cost of inflation on proposed programme budgets within the system. The two questions dealt with in paragraphs 14 to 16—interaction between activities financed under the regular budgets and those financed from voluntary funds, and administrative and management improvements—were under continuous review.

30. His delegation had noted the comments of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 4 of its report and felt that it would be desirable for the Fifth Committee to consider a few specific questions of administrative and budgetary co-ordination each year rather than attempt to cover the entire range of issues in that area.

31. With reference to the comments of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management on paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII), he suggested that the Secretary-General should bring up to date document A/7938, of 21 September 1970, which contained a list of all the expert, intergovernmental and secretariat bodies dealing with the examination, formulation and evaluation of programmes and budgets in the United Nations and the specialized agencies. When brought up to date, the document would be extremely useful to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. Accordingly, his delegation wished to submit a draft decision to that effect.[2] He noted that in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII) the Secretary-General was requested as chief administrative officer of the United Nations and as Chairman of the Administration Committee on Co-ordination, to give his views on the system for administrative and budgetary control, investigation and co-ordination. A number of representatives of the Secretary-General having already made statements to the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System and to the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery, it could be said that the Secretary-General had accomplished an important part of his task, even if that had been done outside the context of the terms of reference of the Joint Inspection Unit.

32. As far as the renewal of the terms of reference of the Unit was concerned, clearly the *Ad Hoc* Committee itself might make certain proposals aimed at strengthening the Unit. If his delegation's proposal concerning the updating of document A/7938 was adopted, the Secretary-General could perhaps in the new version give an account of the activities of the Unit since its establishment. It was not necessary to separate the question of the future of the Unit, particularly its potential role in the field of evaluation, from a general study of the question dealt with in General Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII). The *Ad Hoc* Committee on Restructuring could carry out that general study, and the conclusions it reached would form the basis of the decisions the Fifth Committee would take at the thirty-first session concerning the Joint Inspection Unit and some specific aspects of budgetary and programme co-ordination.

33. Mrs. DERRE (France) welcomed the report of the Advisory Committee, which, for the first time, assembled in a single document adequate general information on the budgets of the specialized agencies. It was to be hoped that the same type of document would appear in the future, at least in years when the programme budget was considered.

1 Document A/10117 and Corr.1, of 17 June 1975.

2 Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1280.

She regretted that the Fifth Committee had so little time to spend on the consideration of the question at the current session.

34. It was somewhat difficult to make the necessary distinction between administrative co-ordination and budgetary co-ordination when the *Ad Hoc* Committee established at the seventh special session was about to consider the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. It could no doubt be assumed, however, that the main organs would remain; in that case administrative co-ordination would continue to be the responsibility of the Economic and Social Council, as was prescribed in the Charter.

35. While her delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that planning and programme budgeting did not automatically result in better co-ordination, it felt that the introduction of those two techniques was a first essential step towards successful co-ordination. She emphasized that there should be co-ordination when the medium-term plan was drawn up rather than at the stage when the budget was prepared. Subsequently, the Economic and Social Council should ensure that all co-ordination measures were respected.

36. A strict interpretation of Article 17 of the Charter was no doubt difficult owing to the size of the budgets of the specialized agencies. Furthermore, all member States were entitled to express their views on those budgets in the governing bodies of the agencies. Accordingly, perhaps Member States should envisage greater internal co-ordination within each delegation. It was certainly possible to respect at least the spirit of Article 17, and the Fifth Committee should address itself to that problem. It should discuss the harmonization of methodologies and budget cycles, bearing in mind that, in the case of some of the specialized agencies, it might be preferable to retain the existing budget cycles.

37. It was somewhat surprising to learn from document A/10360 that the rates of inflation assumed by the specialized agencies located at Geneva and by the United Nations Office of Geneva were not the same. It was to be noted, too, that some of the agencies endeavoured to absorb the additional expenses arising from inflation through savings—something which the United Nations had regrettably not attempted to do. That question should be studied by the Fifth Committee, preferably before a vote was taken on the appropriations in order to preclude the need to reverse previous decisions. In any event, it was preferable not to leave the solution of the problem to the Secretary-General, as had been done for the current biennium.

38. The International Civil Service Commission could be expected to introduce improvements in the area of personnel questions. In the meantime, the Advisory Committee rightly expressed concern about the phenomenon of "grade creep" perceptible throughout the system, particularly in, for example, UNDP. That question, too, deserved the Committee's further consideration.

39. In connexion with the comments of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management on General Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII), she felt that the Secretary-General should feel free to collect the information he considered useful regarding administrative and budgetary control, investigation and co-ordination, particularly as the results of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System might lead to drastic changes. In any event, the report on that subject should be kept separate from the study of the future role of the Joint Inspection Unit, to which her delegation attached the greatest importance.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the 1757th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 4. POLICY-MAKING ORGANS (ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES) (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Revised estimates for the United Nations Water Conference (A/10008/Add.1, A/C.5/1701)

40. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider section 4 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 in conjunction with the revised estimates for the United Nations Water Conference submitted in the report of the Secretary-General on that subject (A/C.5/1701) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.11).

41. In the proposed programme budget (A/10006), the Secretary-General had requested an amount of $1,713,000 under section 4. The Advisory Committee, in its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2, paras. 4.2, 4.6 and 4.8), had recommended a reduction of $208,000 in that estimate. In the light of the proposals of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1701, the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 9 of its report in document A/10008/Add.11, had recommended an additional amount of $210,000 under section 4. Consequently, the total amount recommended under section 4 by the Advisory Committee for the biennium was $1,715,000.

42. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, apart from the exceptions indicated in paragraph 4.1 of the Advisory Committee's first report, the estimates under section 4 covered the cost of temporary assistance, travel, and printing estimates for meetings of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary and related bodies.

43. In table 4-1 of the proposed programme budget, the Secretary-General indicated that, of the total estimate of $1,713,000, an amount of $430,000 represented programme growth at 1975 rates. However, the representatives of the Secretary-General had informed the Advisory Committee that, to correct an error in computing the estimates for travel to the joint meeting of the Council organ on

programme and co-ordination and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the 1976-1977 estimates should be reduced by $22,000 to $1,691,000.

44. Temporary assistance for the Geneva sessions of the Economic and Social Council, its standing committees and functional commissions, and for the Governing Council of UNDP was, as from 1976, included in section 23B of the proposed programme budget. The representatives of the Secretary-General had informed the Advisory Committee that the 1976-1977 estimates had been prepared for the first time on the basis of an actual costing of the travel of each individual expected to attend the meetings in question. Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee in paragraph 4.6 of its report was recommending a further modest reduction of $80,000 on the assumption, based on experience, that not all the members entitled to travel expenses and *per diem* would attend all sessions of the bodies concerned for their entire duration.

45. Section 4 of the proposed programme budget contained estimates for the United Nations Water Conference amounting to $306,000. The Advisory Committee had experienced some difficulties in its examination of the Secretary-General's initial request and an attempt to obtain additional clarifications had not resolved the problem at the time. The Advisory Committee had accordingly recommended an amount of $200,000 for the Conference subject to the Secretary-General's submitting additional information in support of his estimates. The additional information had now been supplied in document A/C.5/1701, in which the Secretary-General dealt at some length with the preparatory work for the Conference, the resources needed for such work, the tasks to which the Conference would address itself and the over-all revised estimates of the Conference.

46. It was now estimated that from 1974 to 1977 the Conference would cost $888,230, including extra-budgetary resources. The Secretary-General estimated that $421,600 would be required for 1976-1977 from the regular budget as against the $306,000 included in his initial estimates. The difference of $115,600 consisted of $103,600 for conference servicing costs under section 23 which had been inadvertently omitted from the initial programme budget proposals, and $12,000 for travel of Headquarters staff to regional meetings. In connexion with the latter amount, the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 6 of its related report (A/10008/Add.11), indicated that provision for that item was already included in the proposed programme budget. Bearing that in mind, the Advisory Committee had recommended approval of additional requirements for the Conference in the amount of $210,000. Accordingly, the total amount recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 4 was $1,715,000.

47. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey), speaking with reference to paragraph 4.4 of the Advisory Committee's first report, suggested that a more accurate estimate of actual requirements for travel expenses and *per diem* could be obtained by establishing ratios between, on the one hand, the latest revised appropriation and the actual expenditures, and on the other, the number of staff members who had actually received travel expenses and *per diem* over a period of, say, 5 or 10 years and the total number of staff members in the units concerned over that same period. If the Director of the Budget Division considered his suggestion to be a constructive one, perhaps it could be followed in the budget estimates for the following biennium.

48. His delegation shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 4.5 of the same report. While there were certain managerial considerations to be taken into account, the Secretary-General could undoubtedly achieve additional savings and greater staff productivity over the long term.

49. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) asked whether his delegation was correct in its assumption that meeting costs under section 4 were higher than they might be owing to the following three factors: first, 12 staff members were required to travel from New York to Geneva in order to attend the meetings of the Statistical Commission; secondly, the Commission for Social Development met each year for three weeks in Geneva, although it was serviced by units of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in New York; and thirdly, the cost of servicing the Commission on the Status of Women would be greater because of an extension in meeting-time from two to three weeks and a change in venue from New York to Geneva, entailing travel expenses for New York staff.

50. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation could support the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. However, it would welcome some clarification concerning paragraphs 36 and 37 of document A/C.5/1701. First, he wondered whether it was normal practice to finance the cost of public information programmes for international conferences from voluntary contributions. Secondly, he asked what the Secretary-General intended to do if the voluntary contributions were not forthcoming, bearing in mind that the information programme should be launched in 1976.

51. Mr. CARRESSE (Uruguay) said that his delegation attached great importance to the United Nations Water Conference and would welcome the development of a public information programme to encourage support for the Conference. In that connexion, he pointed out that the adoption the previous day of a draft resolution by the Second Committee[3] had obviated the necessity of obtaining voluntary contributions to meet the expenses of the public information programme.

52. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) thanked the representative of Turkey for his constructive suggestion; it should be possible to make the comparisons and produce the statistical data requested, thus improving the accuracy of budget estimates in connexion with travel expenses.

53. With regard to the three factors mentioned by the United States representative, he said he was not currently in a position to supply the information requested, but hoped to be able to do so at the following meeting.

[3] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 12, document A/10467, para. 57, draft resolution VI.

54. The problem of voluntary contributions to meet the expenses of the public information programme in connexion with the United Nations Water Conference had been solved by the adoption of the draft resolution of the Second Committee.[3] The statement of financial implications submitted to the Second Committee[4] concerning that draft resolution indicated that an amount of $140,000 would be appropriated to finance information activities in connexion with the Conference. If that procedure was approved by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee, it would no longer be necessary to seek voluntary contributions.

55. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said that his Government looked forward to acting as host to the United Nations Water Conference in 1977 and would co-operate in every possible way to ensure its success. The budgetary problems relating to the Conference appeared to have been solved, including the question of meeting the expenses of an effective public information programme.

An appropriation in the amount of $1,715,000 under section 4 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 66 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

56. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote because it was dissatisfied with the explanations provided for certain items of expenditure both in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1701) and in the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008/Add.11). Annex I to the latter document, in particular, failed to give a detailed explanation of the estimated costs for temporary assistnace, travel expenses and consultants. If a separate vote had been taken on the items relating to temporary assistance, travel expenses and the adjustments necessary to cover losses due to inflation, his delegation would not have been able to support those appropriations.

57. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said that his delegation had voted for the appropriation, but wished to reiterate the reservations it had made at the preceding session of the Economic and Social Council concerning the venue, desirability and date of the United Nations Water Conference.[5]

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 100

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the 1757th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 23. CONFERENCE AND LIBRARY SERVICES *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Pattern of conferences *(continued)* (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10032 and Corr.1, A/10348, A/10397, A/C.5/1711, A/C.5/L.1276, A/C.5/L.1277):

***(a)* Report of the Committee on Conferences *(continued)* (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10032 and Corr.1, A/10397, A/C.5/1711, A/C.5/L.1276, A/C.5/L.1277)**

58. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) recalled that at the twenty-ninth session (1659th meeting) his delegation had expressed doubts as to the advisability of setting up the Committee on Conferences. Those doubts had been justified by the work of the Committee at its first session. However, if the majority of the members of the Fifth Committee wished to extend the Committee's mandate, his delegation would not oppose such a decision. It had particular difficulty with three recommendations made by the Committee on Conferences. First, it failed to understand the reasoning behind the Committee's recommendation that the January session of the Governing Council of UNDP should be held at Geneva and the June session in New York; bearing in mind the current financial crisis, it would seem preferable to continue the traditional practice of holding the January meeting in New York and the June meeting at Geneva or elsewhere. Secondly, his delegation could not accept the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences that the sixtieth session of the Economic and Social Council should meet from 13 April to 14 May 1976, since that would overlap with the fourth session of UNCTAD, which was scheduled to meet from 3 to 28 May 1976. Finally, his delegation could not endorse the proposal that the World Food Council should meet at Geneva instead of Rome, which was its provisional seat.

59. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) welcomed the report of the Committee on Conferences (A/10032 and Corr.1) and said that that Committee had amply justified the confidence placed in it by the General Assembly. While he did not underestimate the institutional difficulties to be overcome, the goal of a more rational and efficient use of the conference servicing capacity of the United Nations justified the effort. The seven points contained in paragraph 112 of the report were a step in the right direction, and he hoped that the Committee would give them further consideration and be able to recommend guidelines to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. He suggested that, when the Committee on Conferences gave further consideration to point 6, concerning the holding of sessions of United Nations bodies away from their established headquarters, account should be taken of the substantial indirect costs involved for the United Nations and Member States.

60. He welcomed the recommendation contained in paragraph 100 of the report that the cycle of meetings and conferences should coincide with the budgetary financial period, and he endorsed the suggestion that a biennial programme of conferences be included in the programme budget.

61. Commenting on the point raised by the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services at the preceding meeting, he said that in the view of the New Zealand delegation it was entirely appropriate for the Committee on Conferences to continue to be regarded as a standing committee, and that it should be authorized to meet whenever the need arose, as indeed it was required to do under its terms of reference. The Committee would not be able to perform the tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly if it were required to confine its deliberations to a one-week or two-week session each year.

62. He did not share the views of the United Kingdom delegation that, in the light of the difficulties encountered

4 Document A/C.2/L.1487 of 2 December 1975.

5 See the summary record of the 744th meeting of the Economic Committee (E/AC.6/SR.744), held on 16 July 1975.

by the Committee on Conferences during its first year, it should be dissolved. The Committee had been in existence for only 11 months, and the proposal to dissolve it seemed somewhat harsh. He appealed to the United Kingdom delegation to withdraw the draft resolution it had submitted (A/C.5/L.1276).

63. Mr. ZDROJOWY (Poland) said that, on the basis of the report of the Committee on Conferences, his delegation considered that Committee a useful body and appreciated its first efforts to systematize or curb the proliferation of United Nations meetings, in keeping with its mandate under General Assembly resolution 3351 (XXIX).

64. He drew attention to the working paper submitted by his delegation,[6] in which it requested detailed information on certain problems, and he noted that almost one fifth of all time allotted to meetings was lost. The amount of money lost was also correspondingly large, as the cost of one average hour of meeting time of the General Assembly and its Main Committees was approximately $3,500.

65. He supported the principle recommended in the report of the Committee on Conferences that the meetings of United Nations bodies should be convened in their respective headquarters unless there were particular reasons to do otherwise. He had some difficulty, however, in accepting the proposal in paragraph 48 of the report; his delegation considered that the January session of the Governing Council of UNDP should be held in New York and that in June the Council should avail itself of the generous invitation of the Government of Cuba to meet at Havana. He requested clarification on that point from the Committee on Conferences. Limiting the number of meetings would enable the Secretariat to limit the production of documentation, the cost of which was approximately $250 per page, thus leading to considerable savings and greater clarity in the work done. He regretted that, probably owing to lack of time, the Committee on Conferences had not made any suggestions concerning the possible elimination of certain meetings, and he expected that problem to be dealt with by the Committee and covered in its following report.

66. As the question of the pattern of conferences was linked to the organizational efforts of the Secretariat, he drew attention to the effectiveness of the conference services in spite of the increased workload. He trusted that reliability and savings would continue to be features of the Department of Conference Services, thus helping to reduce costs and improve organizational activities.

67. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt) said that his delegation could not support the United Kingdom draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1276) calling for the abolition of the Committee on Conferences. His delegation was a member of that Committee, which had made serious and energetic efforts to attain the goals for which it had been established. It had been clear from the outset that there was a real need for such a committee to meet between sessions and take decisions on matters which were politically sensitive and could not be left to the Secretariat to resolve. Though there had been some short-comings in the work of the Committee on Conferences during its first year of existence, perhaps due to incomplete understanding of its goals on the part of the Secretariat and even on the part of some of its members, the solution did not lie in its abolition. The difficulties it faced could be overcome by improved organization and methods of work. For example, the representative of India had proposed that during the first few years the Committee on Conferences should be given more opportunity to study the principles which should govern the various matters before it such as the pattern of conferences, the distribution of documents, meeting records and so forth. He suggested that the Committee on Conferences should meet every month for regular consideration of questions submitted to it by the Secretariat. That of course would not prevent it from being convened whenever any urgent business arose.

68. Commenting on the report of the Advisory Committee in document A/10397, he suggested that one remedy to the problems raised might be the adoption of the amendment submitted by India (A/C.5/L.1277), requesting the Committee on Conferences to include in its future reports the administrative and financial information on which its decisions and recommendations were based.

69. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) invited the Secretariat to submit a list of the books which the Dag Hammarskjöld Library was considering buying in 1976. His Government felt that the Library did not have a large enough collection of Arabic books and was considering donating books to the Library.

70. He appealed to the United Kingdom delegation to withdraw its draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1276). While the Committee on Conferences might be criticized, it was doing its best to carry out its mandate under General Assembly resolution 3351 (XXIX), and it should not be abolished.

71. He proposed that recommendation 3 of the Committee on Conferences in paragraph 113 of its report (A/10032 and Corr.1) should be amended to indicate that the Governing Council of UNDP should meet in January in New York and in June at Havana. He understood that the Secretariat had received a letter from the Government of Cuba on that matter, and that the Governing Council of UNDP agreed in principle that it could meet in Cuba.

72. Miss FORCIGNANÒ (Italy) said that her delegation accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendations on section 23 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

73. Referring to the report of the Committee on Conferences, she drew attention to item 32 of the provisional calendar of United Nations conferences and meetings for 1976 contained in table A of annex I to the report, indicating that the World Food Council would meet from 8 to 12 March at Geneva. Since the dates and location were tentative, and the President of the Council was holding consultations with members on the most appropriate time and place for the meeting, the dates and location given in the calendar should be replaced by the phrase "To be determined".

6 Conference room paper (A/C.5/XXX/CRP.1) of 1 October 1975.

74. She supported the view that the January meeting of the Governing Council of UNDP should be held in New York, particularly in view of current financial difficulties. As for its June meeting, her delegation found the Cuban Government's invitation acceptable if a general trend in that direction developed among members of the Governing Council.

75. Referring to the problem of the timing of the session of the Economic and Social Council, she said that she did not agree with the proposal by the Committee on Conferences that the session should be deferred.

76. Mr. SETHI (India) supported the Algerian amendment concerning the January and June sessions of the Governing Council of UNDP. He also supported the Italian amendment concerning the dates and location of the meeting of the World Food Council.

The meeting rose at 11.10 p.m.

1759th meeting

Thursday, 4 December 1975, at 3.15 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1759

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 100

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (A/9854 and Add.1, A/10006 and Add.1, A/10008 and Corr.2, A/10008/Add.1-6 and 11-13, A/10279 and Add.1, A/10280 and Add.1, A/C.5/1669, A/C.5/1671, A/C.5/1673-1675, A/C.5/1677 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1678, A/C.5/1679, A/C.5/1681, A/C.5/1682 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, A/C.5/1685, A/C.5/1686, A/C.5/1688 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1692, A/C.5/1699, A/C.5/1701, A/C.5/1708, A/C.5/1709, A/C.5/1714, A/C.5/1715 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1718, A/C.5/1722, A/C.5/1723, A/C.5/1725, A/C.5/1728, A/C.5/1730, A/C.5/L.1240)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 23. CONFERENCE AND LIBRARY SERVICES *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Pattern of conferences *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the 1758th meeting):

(a)* Report of the Committee on Conferences *(continued)* *(idem)

1. The CHAIRMAN reminded representatives that the Committee had decided at its previous meeting, to limit interventions to a maximum of four minutes.

2. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that his delegation supported the Committee on Conferences and would vote against the draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom (A/C.5/L.1276). The work of the Committee on Conferences should not be assessed prematurely. Its shortcomings might well be eliminated in the future.

3. Cuba was a member of the Governing Council of UNDP and had offered to act as host to the session of the Council to be held in June 1976. His delegation was therefore requesting an amendment to the pattern of conferences to allow the Governing Council to meet in January 1976 in New York and in June 1976 either at Geneva or in a developing country extending an invitation.

4. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America), referring to paragraph 23.36 of the first report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008 and Corr.2) on the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977, said that his delegation would appreciate an explanation and a justification for the transfer of 5 posts, formerly under the UNCTAD budget, to the Geneva library services budget. It wished to be assured that it was not a case of conversion of posts financed by temporary assistance or extra-budgetary funds to the regular programme budget.

5. In section 23B, $690,800 had been budgeted for servicing UNDP meetings at Geneva. His delegation wished to suggest that UNDP should meet the costs of its own meetings and, unless the secretariat could provide a convincing reason why those expenses should remain in the regular budget, the United States would favour their elimination, or, alternatively, an arrangement for reimbursement by UNDP, which, of course, would mean a corresponding increase in the income estimate.

6. The estimates in section 23 did not include the $43.3 million for conference services requested elsewhere in the budget. His delegation would urge the Secretary-General to include all conference servicing costs in section 23 in future budget presentations. His delegation, like the Advisory Committee, had been handicapped by the lack of comparisons between the workload for 1976-1977 and for the current biennium. It therefore requested the Secretary-General to provide such comparisons in future.

7. The thorough airing of views on the usefulness of the Committee on Conferences was proving helpful. While the Committee had some genuine accomplishments to its credit, it had not even begun to carry out much of the important and far-reaching mandate with which it was entrusted by the General Assembly. It needed the understanding and support of all Member States during the

experimental period. Good co-ordination by respective Governments of substantive policies and conference policies was essential to make the system work.

8. His delegation supported Italy's proposal to delete the mention of Geneva as the venue of the World Food Council meeting to be held in March 1976. It also wished to propose that the meeting of the Commission for Social Development should be rescheduled for January 1977, when it would normally have convened. It had been scheduled instead for late 1976 in order to review the 1978-1979 programme budget. However, the overriding consideration was the fact that the social items on the agenda of the Third Committee had not been dealt with during the session in progress and would probably be postponed until the thirty-first session. It was essential that Commission members should be available for the Third Committee work, which would not be possible if their own meeting was scheduled simultaneously at another location.

9. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that more than 21 per cent of the staff of the United Nations worked in the Department of Conference Services, the provisional budget of which for the biennium 1976-1977 amounted to some $150 million, a sum which grew yearly owing to unjustified increases in the number of meetings, their unsatisfactory planning, the employment of temporary staff, and so on. The General Assembly had established the Committee on Conferences as a means of achieving more effective and rational use of the Department's existing resources. Some of the Committee's recommendations were unjustified from that standpoint. For example, it recommended that from 1977 meetings of the Legal Sub-Committee and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be held in New York, although it was clear from the report that no savings would result. His delegation could not support recommendations of that kind. It hoped that in 1976 the Committee on Conferences would concentrate on preparing recommendations to ensure the effective and economical use of resources in connexion with the holding of meetings, and that the Secretariat would supply the Committee with all the data it needed in carrying out its work.

10. Under section 23 of the proposed programme budget, 138 new posts were requested for the Department of Conference Services, not counting the 89 new Arabic-language posts. The Secretariat was requesting the 138 new posts despite the fact that the Committee on Conferences had not proposed any staff increase. Indeed, the Fifth Committee had before it no documents of the Committee on Conferences or of the Administrative Management Service justifying any staff increase. Naturally, his delegation could not support the proposal.

11. Furthermore, the work norms used in determining the volume of resources needed for the servicing of meetings and conferences were too low and led to unjustifiably high expenditures. For example, the Secretary-General's statement on the administrative and financial implications of the United Nations Conference on Desertification (A/C.5/1719) indicated that the daily norm for a translator was 4 pages, and the same amount for a steno-typist. The General Assembly should request the Joint Inspection Unit to study the norms of conference staff and make recommendations to the thirty-first session.

12. The breakdown of the number of meetings by field of activity, prepared by the Secretariat,[1] was incomplete and would thus impede the establishment of a quota system for meetings and documentation; there should be a further breakdown to make it clear which parts referred to political, social and economic, anti-colonial, legal, administrative, and financial activities.

13. His delegation understood the difficulties encountered by the Department of Conference Services in trying to make more rational and effective use of existing resources. Nevertheless it thought that the interests of Member States required that all the short-comings should be eliminated as quickly as possible so as to save Member States from having to make unnecessary expenditures on the servicing of meetings and conferences.

14. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was withdrawing the draft resolution it had tabled (A/C.5/L.1276), proposing the dissolution of the Committee on Conferences, in deference to the clear consensus within the Fifth Committee that such a step would be premature.

15. Some judgement, however, had to be passed on the Committee on Conferences. It had not been thoroughly successful during its first year and his delegation was gravely concerned about its inherent structural difficulties. A problem arose, for instance, from the fact that the Economic and Social Council was responsible for its own calendar. His delegation would deplore any confrontation between the Fifth Committee and the Economic and Social Council.

16. It was incumbent upon all members of the Fifth Committee to strive to make the Committee on Conferences a success. He hoped his delegation would not be accused of inconsistency; it was the duty of all to accept the views of the majority. The United Kingdom supported the amendment proposed by India (A/C.5/L.1277), which would require the next report of the Committee on Conferences to contain information which was essential if the Fifth Committee was to make a reasoned judgement on the problem of the calendar of conferences. The Committee on Conferences should be empowered to distribute documents to all capitals and missions, so as to ensure that important financial and micro-economic information was available to all.

17. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation would like to see all conference servicing costs included under section 23 of the proposed programme budget in future. The Secretary-General might wish to note the Advisory Committee's opinion (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 23.3) that it would be more practical to deal jointly with the estimates for conference services at Headquarters and at Geneva. The object was to make the best use of established posts through a comparison between the structures in New York and Geneva. He wished to know from

[1] In a conference room paper (A/C.5/XXX/CRP.5) of 5 November 1975.

the Under-Secretary-General whether such a comparison could be presented in the programme budget for the next biennium.

18. No indicative data had been provided in justification of the programme budget proposals. The Advisory Committee needed such data on which to base its actions. His delegation wished to know whether the recommendations of the Advisory Committee could be followed in the future, depending, of course, on a decision by the Fifth Committee that the Committee itself was entitled to determine the financial estimates for conference services.

19. His delegation supported the increase of the interpretation teams from 7 to 11, on the understanding that they would be composed of competent and experienced interpreters. The volume of conferences and meetings would be increasing and, as the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services had stated, the Department of Conference Services could not rely to the same extent as before on free-lance interpreters.

20. He (Mr. Garrido) would welcome some clarification as to the nature of the work performed by the Publishing Division and wished to know whether any formula for determining printing costs was being devised. His delegation supported the requirements of the Department of Conference Services. The efforts of the Department as a whole, and of the interpreters in particular, deserved the recognition of the Fifth Committee. His delegation endorsed the estimates recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 23.

21. He appreciated the spirit of co-operation shown by the representative of the United Kingdom in withdrawing draft resolution A/C.5/L.1276. The Committee on Conferences provided useful ideas on the rationalization of the work of the Department of Conference Services and it should be given an opportunity to survive. He would support India's proposal (A/C.5/L.1277) to request the Committee on Conferences, in the light of paragraph 11 of its report (A/10032 and Corr.1), to include in its future reports the financial and administrative information on which its recommendations were based. His delegation believed that the Committee on Conferences should maintain its status as a standing committee, which was flexible enough to meet at short notice.

22. He endorsed the Greek proposal (1757th meeting) according to which the Chairman would state in reply to the President of the Economic and Social Council that the decisions of the Fifth Committee on the pattern of conferences would not pre-empt those of the Council at its organizational session in January 1976. It was hoped that the Chairman's reply to the Council would first be considered by the Committee.

23. Mr. MATSEIKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) observed that the appropriation of $105,399,000 requested by the Secretary-General under section 23 exceeded by 29.6 per cent the revised appropriations for the current biennium despite the fact that it did not include all requirements for conference services; the Secretary-General was requesting additional credits of $43.3 million. Although the Committee on Conferences had done useful work, it had still not produced the expected results, and expenditures on meetings and conferences continued to increase. Of course the Committee had not yet had time to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly, but his delegation was alarmed by the fact that neither the report of the Committee on Conferences nor the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/1711) of the administrative and financial implications of the recommendations contained in paragraph 113 of the report contained any information about the financial aspect of the decisions taken by the Committee on the schedule of conferences. As a result, the Advisory Committee had been unable to determine the full extent of the administrative and financial implications of the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences. In paragraph 6 of its report (A/10397) the Advisory Committee quite rightly stated that the magnitude of the amounts involved in conference servicing called for particular attention to how the conference schedule could be carried out most economically. Nevertheless, the Secretary-General was requesting 138 new posts under section 23, apart from the 89 Arabic-language posts. Moreover, his delegation thought that the arguments put forward by the Secretary-General in justification of the conference services requested were not always complete. There was no data about the volume of conferences expected in 1976-1977 and there was no comparison of the workload in the current biennium with that anticipated for the next one. Nor was there any information about the output of the Publishing Division. In a number of cases the Secretary-General's request for posts was inconsistent with the anticipated increase in the volume of work.

24. Thus his delegation would not be able to support the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General under section 23.

25. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) thanked the representative of the United Kingdom for withdrawing draft resolution A/C.5/L.1276. The Committee on Conferences had been established on an experimental basis by the General Assembly. The work it had done so far should be acknowledged.

26. His delegation supported Italy's proposal that the World Food Council should meet at Rome rather than at Geneva. It also supported the proposals made by Algeria and Cuba that the UNDP Governing Council should meet at Havana in June 1976.

27. He wished to pay a tribute to the work of the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services, to the Department of Conference Services as a whole, and to the interpreters.

28. Mr. CARRASCO (Chile) said that his delegation appreciated the work done by the Committee on Conferences, which should be given a chance to carry out the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly in its resolution 3351 (XXIX). Chile would have been unable to support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1276 and was happy that, in the true spirit of co-operation, it had been withdrawn by the United Kingdom. It supported the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences and the amendment proposed by the representative of India (A/C.5/L.1277).

29. His delegation endorsed the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee concerning section 23 of the proposed programme budget and wished to congratulate the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and the Department of Conference Services for their commendable work.

30. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that his delegation was highly dissatisfied with the situation confronting the Fifth Committee in dealing with section 23. It was well known that there was insufficient time to analyse the section thoroughly and he failed to see how representatives would be able to express their views adequately on a section under which expenditures of approximately $150 million were envisaged. He wished to know the reason for the insufficient information submitted to the Advisory Committee and the reason for the delay in submitting that information.

31. He inquired whether the Department of Conference Services had developed work standards in the areas of its activities to be used as objectives in the relationship between the work volume and the resources requirement. Such standards would be of great help to legislative bodies in translating the work volume into budgetary requirements. If there were such standards, he wondered what attempts were being made to improve them and increase their effectiveness. If there were no such standards, he wondered what measures had been taken to establish them. He asked also whether the Department of Conference Services had been able to schedule interpreters so that they were employed on the average 7 meetings per week, as recommended by the Joint Advisory Committee in June 1974.

32. The proposed programme budget called for an increase in the number of interpreters for Geneva, and it was assumed that the result would be a reduction in the use of free-lance interpreters. In view of the different scheduling standards between regular interpreters and free-lance interpreters, he wondered whether productivity would be affected. He also wished to know whether the Department of Conference Services had explored the possibility of using computer techniques in the planning of meeting schedules and in the deployment of interpreters and other staff, as well as facilities.

33. He inquired whether the productivity of translators had improved over the past five years, whether any specific measures had been undertaken to improve it or whether any such measures were contemplated.

34. In its progress report to the Advisory Committee, the Administrative Management Service had mentioned a study being carried out at the request of the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Service on verbatim reporting, interpreting, précis writing and translation. He asked whether the results of the study were available and, if not, when they might be available.

35. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) said that his delegation had noted with satisfaction the withdrawal of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1276 by the United Kingdom. The Fifth Committee had thus been prevented from acting with undue haste on a premature proposal. Despite its own special problems, the Committee on Conferences had made a valuable contribution and should be allowed a chance to perform the mandate entrusted to it by General Assembly resolution 3351 (XXIX). His delegation supported India's proposal to request the Committee on Conferences to include in its future reports the financial and administrative information on which its recommendations were based. It also endorsed the recommendations of the Advisory Committee concerning section 23 of the proposed programme budget.

36. The CHAIRMAN invited the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services to state the position of the Secretariat on the amendment submitted by the Soviet Union in document A/C.5/L.1255–during the consideration of agenda item 101 concerning the publications and documentation of the United Nations–which had been adopted by the Fifth Committee at the 1746th meeting and incorporated into draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2.[2]

37. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) said that the information he was going to provide would allow the Fifth Committee to take its decisions with a full knowledge of all the facts. Not only money was involved; also at stake were the conference services which various United Nations bodies might or might not have at their disposal in the future, depending on the decisions of the Fifth Committee.

38. It was the Secretariat which had taken the initiative of considering meeting records with a view to implementing savings and streamlining the whole operation. The Secretariat had informed the Fifth Committee that the advantages of the quota system of documentation were in danger of being completely obliterated because of the great volume of meeting records. The Committee, in response to the Secretariat's request for guidance as to what should or should not be recorded, had requested the Secretariat to establish criteria for the provision of meeting records. Although hesitant, the Secretariat had complied with the request and had produced document A/C.5/1670–also under agenda item 101. The Secretariat believed that the application of the criteria set out in paragraph 14 of that document would lead to a better streamlining of the whole documentation process and result in considerable savings in expenditure.

39. The Fifth Committee was asking the Department of Conference Services to pin-point the areas where its budget might be cut for the next biennium in connexion with the suggested criteria. The Department, however, could not make such cuts itself. The Fifth Committee was the sovereign master of the United Nations budget and was empowered to make reductions and additions. It was for the Secretariat to provide information about the possible effects of the Committee's decisions. The decision on summary records could lead to a reduction in the workload by reducing the number of meeting records to be produced and discontinuing the reissue in full of final meeting records other than those of plenary meetings of main organs. The reduction in the number of meeting records to be produced was contingent on actions still to be taken by the bodies concerned and by the Committee on Conferences. The

2 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 101.

debate in the Fifth Committee on documents A/C.5/1670 and A/10299 had not been very encouraging. Some delegations had suggested that the criteria should not be applied to human rights bodies; others had suggested that they should not be applied to political, legal and other bodies. Still others had pointed out that economic activities had become paramount and that the criteria should not be applied to bodies in that area.

40. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2 was ambivalent. Paragraph 3 requested the Secretary-General to apply the criteria, as appropriate and on an experimental basis. The amendment added to paragraph 4 by the representative of Greece called for special consideration to be given to the merits of each particular case. Account also had to be taken of other steps envisaged which would affect the net reduction in workload. For example, the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System was tentatively scheduled to hold 60 meetings in 1976, for which summary records were requested. The *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Charter of the United Nations, which had not received summary records for its 1975 session, would, according to a draft resolution currently before the Sixth Committee,[3] receive summary records in 1976. A draft resolution before the First Committee[4] would establish an *ad hoc* committee of the General Assembly to carry out a basic review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and would provide that committee with summary records. The Department of Conference Services did not intend to request additional appropriations in order to provide those records. However, the increase in meeting records would offset the reductions to be realized through the application of criteria 2 and 6 set out in paragraph 14 of document A/C.5/1670.

41. Another factor involved in the total workload was the length of the summary records. Whenever a committee decided to have statements reproduced *in extenso*, the total workload was increased. During the session in progress, the Fourth Committee had decided on *in extenso* coverage during the debate on the Western Sahara. Various other decisions taken during the session made the production of summary records more difficult. The praise offered to the interpreters was entirely justified, but it should be borne in mind that one of the hardest, most time-consuming and most nerve-wracking activities was that of preparing summary records. In addition, it was a fact that the Department of Conference Services was constantly bombarded with corrections and counter-corrections from delegations. During the month of November, 200 corrections had been received for General Assembly records alone.

42. The discontinuance of the reissue in full, in final form, of meeting records would have an impact in the area of official records editing and in that of reproduction and printing. Savings were hoped for in the area of editing. In the past, far less time had been spent on final records issued in mimeographed form than on the printed records of the Main Committees. The thirty-first session of the General Assembly would be the first one to be affected by the new criteria. The Department of Conference Services proposed not to recruit for that session the temporary staff which was normally recruited for the Official Records Editing Section. The budget allocation for that purpose for 1976 and 1977 could therefore be relinquished. However, if the experiment did not prove acceptable to delegations, the Department of Conference Services would be obliged to request a reinstatement of the sum.

43. The reproduction and printing workload for 1976 would primarily be concentrated on records for the thirtieth and previous sessions, and, not including the records in Chinese, that would correspond to one year's production. The budget estimates for printing for 1976-1977 combined the value of internal reproduction and that of external contractual printing. Turning the value of internal reproduction into a budget reduction would require reducing the staff of certain units or producing internally items normally produced externally. With regard to meeting records, contractual printing was relied on mainly for the Arabic, Chinese and Russian versions. Thus, if savings were to be implemented in the area of external printing for 1976-1977 the impact would be on the outstanding records in those languages.

44. He drew the attention of the Committee to a conference room paper, which mentioned "the continuing efforts to reassess needs for documentation with a view to making such adjustments as are possible, without impairing the work of the Organization".[5] In that context, and in the light of the statements made by the representative of Iran, he wished to provide information on the efforts being made to improve output in terms of numbers and in terms of quality. It was clear that the demand was for work of quality. However, if the Secretariat bowed to pressure, as it must, and translated everything into figures it must be realized that that quality might suffer. He did not wish to go into the question whether translation and interpretation was technical or intellectual work, artistic or mechanical. The members of the Committee were quite able to judge for themselves. As to the actual figures, in 1956 there had been 275 translators who had produced 152,000 pages of translation. In 1975, owing to the addition of further working languages, the number of staff had risen to 385—the size of the French and English translation sections had not increased—and the number of pages produced had risen to 275,000. Thus a 40 per cent increase in staff had resulted in an 80 per cent increase in production. There was no need to say more.

45. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) expressed concern at the statement by the Under-Secretary-General and asked whether the Secretariat intended to implement the provisions of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1249/Rev.2, as amended, which had been adopted by the Fifth Committee and in which the Secretary-General was invited, on the basis of the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10299), to make the appropriate corrections in the budget of the United Nations for 1976-1977. His delegation had no objection to the Secretary-General presenting his comments in conjunction with the corrections; however, the corrections must be provided.

3 Subsequently adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 3499 (XXX).

4 *Idem.*, resolution 3484 (XXX).

5 Document A/C.5/XXX/CRP.6 and Corr.1, of 11 November 1975, para. 5.

46. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) fully supported that view. He wondered what the Under-Secretary-General meant by saying that the discussions of the Fifth Committee had not been encouraging and what the Committee must do to please him.

47. The CHAIRMAN suggested that consideration of the item should be deferred until the following meeting.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:*

***(a)* Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued)** (A/10009, A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1258, A/C.5/L.1263, A/C.5/L.1264, A/C.5/L.1270, A/C.5/L.1273);**

***(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/10335, A/10374, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1697, A/C.5/1729, A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.1)**

48. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, in a note (A/C.5/L.1270), he had submitted a resolution intended to facilitate the Committee's work; in that connexion, he drew attention to the first paragraph of the note. The draft proposal it contained was a consolidated version of several texts, and incorporated in substance the draft decision of Austria and Canada (A/C.5/L.1259).

49. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) reminded the Chairman that he (Mr. Schmidt) had proposed, at the 1743rd meeting, that the decision on the proposed amendment to article 29 *(b)* (i) of the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, which would increase the maximum length of contributory service, should be postponed until the following year. Since it was a procedural suggestion, he had not put it in writing.

50. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), recalling that, at the 1743rd meeting, the Soviet representative had asked certain questions–which had been reproduced in a conference room paper[6]–referred to the conference room paper containing the replies[7] and requested a clarification of the reply to the third question, which stated that, while the Pension Fund did not have investments in companies whose objectives were the production of armaments, it did own stocks of numerous companies in many countries which undoubtedly sold directly or indirectly to Governments. He wished to know precisely what was being sold and to whom, and asked for a list of the companies involved.

51. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) expressed satisfaction with all but one of the answers to his questions. While his delegation had no objection to the practice of switching of bonds and equities, it did question the degree to which that practice was engaged in. A turnover of 75 per cent seemed rather high. Moreover, while the Controller had stated that the switching to other stocks had produced a 20 per cent gain, unless he could show the comparative market figures of the equities which had been sold it was possible to believe that that gain might have been due to an over-all improvement in the market rather than to the switch.

52. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that his delegation would still like to know the amount of money invested in transnational corporations and whether there was any truth in the rumours that the Pension Fund held investments in religious institutions. Two other questions of his had not been answered: what were the previous and current amounts invested in bonds of the United States Government and public bodies, and what was the total value of the stocks whose resale had resulted in a loss of $77 million?

53. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), repeating the questions which he had asked at the 1741st meeting, asked whether it was true that, in addition to paying fees to two institutions providing advisory services to the Fund–such fees, which were in the nature of administrative costs, were contractually linked to the market value of the investments and had been estimated at about $1.5 million for 1976–the Fund also paid brokerage commissions to those same institutions on any transactions? Secondly, what was the volume of all the transactions carried out by the Fund during the past year which had resulted in a net loss of $22.7 million? Thirdly, what was the amount of the commission which the Fund paid? Was it only the amount of approximately $2 million shown under the heading "Payable for securities purchased" in annex I, statement I of the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (A/10009)?

54. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that her delegation shared the concern expressed by the representatives of Japan and Belgium. The Controller's explanation of why the bonds had been sold was not entirely satisfactory. She noted that only 20 per cent of the losses incurred in selling certain stocks was recuperated annually. However, since the Fund had been losing tens of millions of dollars annually for some years, she wondered when the losses would be fully recuperated. She also wondered what were the investments which had resulted in such a loss.

55. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked for a breakdown by region by the $40 million invested in the developing countries.

56. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to the question of the representative of the Soviet Union concerning the answer to his third question, said that the Secretariat had wanted to point out that the Fund had shares in companies which, though not themselves engaged in the production of armaments, sold equipment to parties and Governments and that such equipment might possibly end up being used for military purposes.

57. Turning to the question of the representative of Japan, he said that the turnover figure had been 17 per cent rather than 70 per cent. That was the highest it had ever been and was quite in harmony with the figures of similar large funds. It was true that careful consideration must be given to the question of switching investments. However, the Fund must be able to react to new situations.

* Resumed from the 1757th meeting.

6 Document A/C.5/XXX/CRP.8 of 25 November 1975.

7 Document A/C.5/XXX/CRP.8/Add.1 of 26 November 1975.

58. He endorsed the view expressed by the representative of France that the sale of stocks at a loss raised the question whether the investment had ever been sound. As to her question, he pointed out that when the Fund was forced to cut its losses by selling its shares of a falling stock, the result showed up clearly as a loss. However, the money obtained through that sale was used to buy other stocks. Any gain resulting from increase in the value of such new stock remained hidden until that stock was sold. That fact should be borne in mind when considering the figures for the losses incurred.

59. The representative of Japan was quite right to say that the only way of correctly measuring whether the new investments had been good was by comparing their performance with that of the old ones over the same period. The 20 per cent gain which he had mentioned in connexion with the new stocks had been based on such a comparison.

60. In connexion with the question raised by the representative of Cuba, he said that, while it was not easy to define what exactly a transnational corporation was and therefore to give precise figures of the amounts invested in such corporations, approximately $600 million was invested in them. As to the breakdown of losses on sales of investments for the year ended 31 December 1974, the cost of common stock had been $33,987,000 and the loss 39 per cent; the cost of securities convertible into stock had been $61,926,000 and the loss 3.4 per cent; and the cost of bonds had been $61,181,000 and the loss 12.4 per cent. The Fund had no investments in religious institutions.

61. Replying to the representative of Belgium he pointed out that the fees paid to the investment advisers must be considered separate from the brokerage commission payable on transactions. To deduct the brokerage commission from the fees paid to the advisers might act as a disincentive for them to advise reasonable switching of stocks. He stressed that the fees the Fund paid for the services of the institutions were among the lowest.

62. The CHAIRMAN proposed that consideration of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.1 should be deferred pending the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the statement (A/C.5/1729) submitted by the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial implications of the text.

63. Mr. SETHI (India) expressed surprise at the fact that the Secretary-General had not informed the Committee at the outset of the financial implications of the various proposals in that document. By taking so long to submit those financial implications–which must also now be considered by the Advisory Committee–he seemed to be showing a certain lack of enthusiasm for the proposal itself. On behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution, he asked the Chairman to request the Advisory Committee to consider the financial implications of the report submitted by the Secretary-General as soon as possible so that the Fifth Committee might come to a final decision on the draft.

64. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said he did not feel that the Committee should try to impose a work programme on the Advisory Committee at the current stage. The Committee should merely ask the Chairman to transmit the request of the sponsors to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

65. The CHAIRMAN said that he would do so.

66. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1258) submitted by his delegation at the 1743rd meeting, said that the aim of the draft decision was to ensure full compliance with a decision taken at the twenty-eighth session; the text was self-explanatory.

67. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) thought that the draft decision was not self-explanatory. First, it should not be addressed to the secretariat of the Joint Staff Pension Board, which was responsible only to the Board itself and not to the General Assembly. Secondly, he did not understand what was meant by the phrase "in the same form as at the twenty-eighth session"; the Board had indicated the nationality of its members in its previous report and in its present report. The question had come up several times before and the representative of the USSR must already know the nationality of the members of the Board and the procedure for their appointment; no member was in fact appointed by nationality. If the representative of the USSR wished to challenge that procedure, in other words, to introduce the principle of equitable geographical distribution, he should state his purpose plainly.

68. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) endorsed the comments made by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany. He could not see the logic of the draft decision: there was no relationship between nationality and membership of the Board. Was the Soviet aim to deny members of the Secretariat their right to elect their representatives to the Board? The draft decision served no useful purpose. The only important point was whether the members of the Board were well qualified; they did not serve the interests of any country but those of the participants in the Pension Fund. The draft decision should be withdrawn.

69. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) agreed with the representative of the United States of America. He understood that the staff had made it clear that they wished to be free to choose their representatives on the Board on the basis of competence and were not interested in the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

70. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) repeated that the purpose of the draft decision was to ensure compliance with a decision taken at the twenty-eighth session. He was astonished that the delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States and the United Kingdom were so vehemently opposed to the proposal; he took exception to the strong language used by the representative of the United States. Any delegation was entitled to introduce any proposal it wished. It should be made clear that his delegation was interested in the countries to which the members of the Board belonged. Only one geographical group of countries was really represented on the Board: there were no members from the Eastern European, African and Asian

groups, and the Latin American group was inadequately represented; that was not fair. His delegation wanted the Board's report to show the preponderance of the Western group on the Board. It would not withdraw the draft decision and indeed requested a roll-call vote on it.

71. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that he had not questioned the right of delegations to table proposals but only the wisdom of doing so currently. The information sought by the Soviet Union was already in the Board's report. If the Soviet Union's true purpose was to challenge the appointment procedure, it should do so.

72. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) pointed out that the two thirds of the members of the Board representing the Executive Heads and the Secretariat were international civil servants and that their nationality could not be relevant. He assumed that the representative of the USSR wished to know the nationality only of the members appointed by the General Assembly.

73. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the draft decision did not challenge the appointment procedure: its aim was merely to put before the Committee information on the nationality of the members. He could not understand the apprehensions of the representative of the United States.

74. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) observed that his own name appeared on page 3 of the Board's report; he had been elected to the Board as representative of a local staff pension committee. He did not represent the Federal Republic of Germany on the Board.

75. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany had also been elected to the Advisory Committee in his personal capacity, yet the name of his country was given in the list of members of the Advisory Committee.

76. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that since the representative of the Soviet Union knew that certain geographical groups were not represented on the Board he must know the nationality of the members. Moreover, the representative of the Soviet Union apparently thought that China and Pakistan were not parts of Asia.

77. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) read out the text of the decision in question from the report[8] submitted by the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session. In compliance with that decision, the Board had included the information as requested in its reports to the Assembly at the twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions. The purpose of the draft decision before the Committee seemed to be that the information should be presented "in the same form as at the twenty-eighth session". As far as he had been able to discover, no information on the nationality of the members of the Board had been given to the Fifth Committee at the twenty-eighth session. The matter had been discussed inconclusively and the representative of Algeria had suggested that the Chairman of the Board should consult with the Soviet delegation and convey the information it wanted on an informal basis. If his understanding of the situation was correct, the difficulty was how to present information in the same form as at the twenty-eighth session when no such information had been presented at that time. Accordingly, he sought clarification as to what the Soviet delegation meant by "in the same form as at the twenty-eighth session".

78. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he could not understand the purpose of impeding the adoption of the draft decision. He was astonished by the Under-Secretary-General's statement. At the twenty-eighth session a document concerning the membership of the Board had been circulated to the Fifth Committee by the then Chairman of the Board.

79. The CHAIRMAN thought that there might be a contradiction between the decision taken at the twenty-eighth session and the draft decision before the Committee. He suggested that the words "the secretariat of" be deleted from the draft decision and requested the representative of the Soviet Union to supply the symbol of the document he had mentioned so that the situation could be clarified.

80. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) accepted the amendment suggested by the Chairman but said that he would be unable to supply the document symbol until the next meeting.

81. The CHAIRMAN asked the representative of the Soviet Union whether he would be willing to defer a decision on the draft decision until the next meeting.

82. Mr. NSUBUGA (Uganda) suggested that the difficulty might be overcome by deleting the reference to the twenty-eighth session.

83. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the whole point of the draft decision was that the information should be presented in the same form as at the twenty-eighth session. He insisted that a decision be taken immediately.

84. Mr. EKONG (Nigeria) said that his delegation had been ready to vote for the draft decision because it thought it represented a mere request for information. It was not now sure what the purpose of the draft decision was and would therefore abstain in the vote.

At the request of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a vote was taken by roll-call on the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1258), as amended.

Nicaragua, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Poland, Romania, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, Upper Volta, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Benin, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chad, Congo, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, India, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Republic, Mongolia.

8 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 88, document A/9386, para. 22.

Against: Norway, Philippines, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Germany (Federal Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand.

Abstaining: Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Zaire, Zambia, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, Cyprus, Finland, France, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Indonesia, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico.

The draft decision was adopted by 29 votes to 15, with 39 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

1760th meeting

Friday, 5 December 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1760

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 100

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the 1759th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 23. CONFERENCE AND LIBRARY SERVICES *(continued)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Pattern of conferences *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the 1758th meeting):

(a)* Report of the Committee on Conferences *(continued) (idem)

1. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) said that the representative of France, at the 1757th meeting, had asked several questions concerning the level of staff resources at the United Nations Office at Geneva, in particular, whether it was intended to increase the permanent staff of interpreters, whether the existing permanent staff at Geneva were fully occupied, and whether the facilities at Geneva could be more fully utilized. The great reliance of the United Nations Office at Geneva on temporary staff was borne out by the fact that hardly a week in the year passed when free-lance staff were not required. It was therefore evident that the permanent staff were fully occupied within the plan of work and calendar of meetings designed for the Geneva Office. At Geneva and in other United Nations offices, including Headquarters, temporary assistance was used whenever the need arose, and at Geneva the need arose throughout the year. The pool of free-lance workers was almost exhausted in what could be called the traditional international languages, in the old sense of the term. However, the situation was worse for free-lance interpreters in Russian, Chinese and Arabic, one of the reasons being that the use of Arabic and Chinese had only fairly recently become widespread at international conferences. The Department of Conference Services was doing its best to provide services in those languages for the numerous conferences scheduled to take place during the coming biennium. However, he wished to assure delegations, some of which had complained about the lack of Arabic interpretation facilities, that unless the Arab countries helped the Secretariat to constitute adequate pools of free-lance workers who would be willing to wait for temporary assignments, it would be increasingly difficult to provide the necessary services in Arabic, Chinese and, to a certain extent, Russian. The Secretariat could not maintain a pool of free-lance workers, because it would have to pay them for the time when they were not working for the Secretariat, which would be far more costly than recruiting them as permanent staff. With the support of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, therefore, the Secretariat was requesting the Fifth Committee to authorize a significant increase in the number of interpreters on permanent contract in those languages which were used at all United Nations conferences.

2. The representative of France had also asked about the physical facilities at Geneva and, although that matter was largely under the supervision of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, he could state that efforts were being made to use those facilities as much as possible. However, he pointed out that the United Nations Office at Geneva operated on a different kind of schedule and dealt with different types of meetings than Headquarters. Of the 5,600 meetings held at the Geneva Office in 1974, 1,100 had required no interpretation, almost 1,900 had required no United Nations services and between 2,500 and 2,600 had required interpretation in various combinations of languages. The number of meetings was impressive and showed that efforts were being made to use the Geneva facilities to the fullest possible extent. However, there were limitations, because Geneva could not accommodate all kinds of meetings since the majority of the conference rooms were small. The principle that meetings should be held at the headquarters of the bodies concerned was also involved. If delegations felt that there should be a departure from that principle, additional expenditure would be incurred and some offices might well

have to be transferred to another site. He added that the Geneva premises were full to capacity.

3. He agreed with the representative of France that some confusion had arisen from the fact that financial implications were presented in a different manner at Geneva and New York. The Secretariat was aware of the problem and was taking steps to correct it by the forthcoming year.

4. He did not fully share the concern expressed by the representative of France and others over the requested increase for interpretation services. In the preceding three years, the number of meetings held at Headquarters, particularly outside the General Assembly period, had increased by an average of 7 per cent a year. The criticism that the projection for Headquarters meetings in 1976 had not been provided early enough was quite justified, but not all the information had been available for submission to the Advisory Committee or at the time when the proposed programme budget had been finalized, because the bodies involved had not all decided on their requirements for meetings in 1976 and 1977. However, by the end of November 1975, it was known that the Secretariat would have to service 3,549 meetings during 1976, an increase of 35 per cent over the 2,620 meetings held in 1974. The projections for 1977 showed that 2,600 meetings had already been scheduled to be held at Headquarters. He drew attention to the table in paragraph 29.2 of the report of the Secretary-General on the budget and programme performance for the biennium 1974-1975,[1] which showed an increase of 9 per cent in the workload of interpreters in terms of assignments during the biennium 1974-1975. That was why the Department of Conference Services was requesting an increase in interpretation services. He pointed out that, no matter how good statistics were, there was still a wide area of operation that was not covered by them. For example, the Security Council was now meeting on the question of the Middle East and a great many consultations were being held. Most of the work of the interpreters serving such consultations was not included in statistics.

5. He thanked the representative of Japan for his understanding and support with regard to the question of recruiting qualified interpreters. As he had suggested at the 1757th meeting, it would be difficult to find qualified interpreters and the Secretariat was working on the matter at three levels: a recruitment and advertising campaign for interpreters; a programme for Chinese interpreters showing sufficient promise to justify investment in training, including on-the-job training; and an in-house training programme for language staff from other areas, a programme which had already borne fruit. It would be over-optimistic to expect all posts to be filled by fully qualified staff during the first year or two; without the posts, however, there would be no possibility of carrying on the recruitment and training programmes.

6. The representative of Algeria had referred to the situation in the Library. The General Assembly had approved an amount of $24,000 for the current biennium for the purchase of material for the Library in Arabic. In 1974 and until August 1975, acquisition and processing activities had been delayed because of the lack of Arabic-speaking staff competent to work on such material. During the second half of 1975, the Library had proceeded with a systematic purchasing programme. It had already received over 500 copies of books in Arabic and some 450 more were on order. It was also subscribing to 13 Arabic-language newspapers, 6 of the subscriptions being financed from the regular budget for the biennium. Total expenditure and obligations in 1975 amounted to $22,000 and efforts would be made to use the remaining $2,000 by the end of the year. The Library did not currently keep records of its acquisitions on a language basis, with the exception of Arabic since it was a new language for the Library, and it would therefore be costly to obtain comparative data on the number and cost of items purchased in each language. He assured members that, whenever any delegation informed the Secretariat that a book was needed, the Library would acquire it; the Library would also be happy to receive official publications from Arab and other countries.

7. At the preceding meeting, the representative of Iran had asked whether interpreters were employed on an average of 7 meetings per week. The answer was that their work was planned on that basis, but the last-minute cancellation of meetings sometimes made it difficult to reschedule teams with the result that the performance figure was lower. The interpreters not only interpreted for meetings; they also checked the verbatim records in various languages, at great savings to the Organization. Furthermore, there were periods—for example, many weeks during the General Assembly—when interpreters covered 8 to 10 meetings per week, some of them involving considerable nervous strain. He did not think that the increase in the number of permanent-contract interpreters in Geneva and the resulting decrease in free-lance interpreters would affect productivity. Regarding the use of computer techniques to plan meeting schedules and deploy interpreters, other staff and facilities, that possibility had been explored in three studies, two of which showed that it would definitely not be cost-effective. It had been found that it would be far more efficient and less costly to use other tools to improve operation and planning. The representative of Iran had referred to a report by the Administrative Management Service on the language services. The Department of Conference Services had indeed asked the Administrative Management Service to compile various statistics and devise work measurement techniques. However, he had not informed the Committee about the report because it had not yet been completed and it was an internal effort.

8. The representative of the Philippines, also at the preceding meeting, had referred to the role of the Publishing Division. He could inform him that the Publishing Division, *inter alia*, prepared cost estimates and contracts for external printing, binding and related work; obtained bids internationally to ensure due geographical distribution of printing contracts; and was responsible for the execution of the printing programme, the value of which would be $19 million during the forthcoming biennium. A large printing plant worked in the Secretariat on a three-shift basis 24 hours a day, operating and maintaining machinery and equipment valued at $1 million. The Publishing Division also controlled the Organization's official mailing list of over 1,500 recipients and maintained several hundred mailing lists including some 400,000 addresses for worldwide distribution of United Nations documentation. He

[1] Document A/10035 of 13 November 1975.

assured the Philippine delegation that efforts were being made to achieve uniformity in the methods used by Conference Services at Headquarters and at Geneva to measure, evaluate and present the workload and budgetary requirements.

9. He thanked the representative of Turkey for his patience in waiting for the answer to the question he had asked at the 1733rd meeting, during the consideration of agenda item 101, on the study of new techniques for producing meeting records referred to in criterion 1 (see A/C.5/1670, para. 14). He assured him that the study had been initiated and that it was intended to review the entire process of documentation from the input of material to the moment when the user received the document. The study would take about one year to complete and would involve the computerized production and correction of records and documents. The main emphasis would be on cost-effectiveness, since the Secretariat did not wish to be over-hasty in using new techniques if they were very costly and if delegations were not prepared to accept them. For example, only a few delegations to date were prepared to use microforms.

10. In conclusion, he said that the Department of Conference Services did its best; it accepted criticism, especially when that criticism could help to overcome its shortcomings; and it was grateful for acknowledgement of its work.

11. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had before it the draft resolution submitted by the Committee on Conferences as recommendation 15 in paragraph 113 of its report (A/10032 and Corr.1). The text had already been amended by the Committee itself (A/10032/Corr.1), to delete the references to the Advisory Committee in the second preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 1. The representative of India had submitted an amendment (A/C.5/L.1277) proposing the addition of a new paragraph 4. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee was prepared to adopt that amendment.

The amendment submitted by India (A/C.5/L.1277) was adopted.

12. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the amendments which had been proposed to the provisional calendar of United Nations conferences and meetings for 1976, submitted by the Committee on Conferences in its report (A/10032 and Corr.1, annex I).

Governing Council of UNDP

13. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the representatives of Algeria and Cuba had proposed an amendment to recommendation 3 in paragraph 113 of the report of the Committee on Conferences, to the effect that in 1976 the January meeting of the Governing Council of UNDP should be held in New York instead of Geneva and the June meeting should be held in Havana instead of New York. He understood that the Cuban Government had already transmitted an invitation to the Governing Council to that effect and the decision would, of course, be subject to the approval of the Governing Council.

14. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany), supported by Mr. SETHI (India), said that, according to the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences, the Fifth Committee was not to take a decision on the recommendations but on the calendar of conferences.

15. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that he had understood the representative of Cuba to say, at the 1759th meeting, that the Committee should take a decision to the effect that the January 1976 session of the Governing Council of UNDP should be held in New York and the summer session at Geneva or a developing country. He wished to know whether the Cuban delegation had changed its mind. His Government had received a letter from the Cuban delegation stating that it intended to invite the Governing Council to Havana and that a formal invitation would be issued at the January session of the Governing Council. The Governing Council should take a decision on the basis of that invitation, taking into account General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV). He did not think that it was for the Fifth Committee to take a decision on the matter without a formal invitation from the Cuban Government.

16. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that the representative of the Netherlands was quite correct. His delegation had proposed that the Governing Council of UNDP should meet in June either at Geneva or in a developing country, in other words away from its headquarters, and that the January meeting should be held in New York, at which time the Governing Council could decide on the venue for its summer session. The representative of Algeria had wished to propose directly, as a suggestion to the Governing Council, that the summer session should be held at Havana. His delegation had no objection to that proposal, but would like to hear the views of the Algerian delegation on the matter.

17. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that it was his delegation's understanding that the June session of the Governing Council of UNDP would be held at Havana. However, it agreed with the Cuban delegation that it was not possible to specify in the recommendation that the session would be held at Havana since a formal invitation had not yet been issued by the Cuban Government to the Governing Council. For that reason, it would be best to make reference in the recommendation to "a developing country" as the venue of the June session.

18. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation agreed in general with the proposed amendment but felt that procedurally it would be more correct for the Fifth Committee to amend the relevant items in the provisional calendar of conferences annexed to the report of the Committee on Conferences.

19. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed that the Fifth Committee could not amend the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences. It should take note of those recommendations and then, in its own report to the General Assembly, make any changes in the calendar of conferences which it deemed necessary.

20. The CHAIRMAN explained that the Committee was considering a proposed amendment to one of the recom-

mendations of the Committee on Conferences. If the Fifth Committee decided to adopt that amendment, the calendar of conferences would be amended accordingly.

21. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) suggested that the Committee might accommodate the proposed amendment by inserting, in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution which the Committee on Conferences had recommended for adoption by the General Assembly (see A/10032/Corr.1), a phrase such as "with the exception of the following meetings:", followed by an enumeration of the exceptions. From the legal point of view that would seem to be the best course of action.

22. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that, in any event, the final version of the draft resolution adopted by the Committee would include the phrase "as amended" in paragraph 2. He said that, if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the amendment proposed by the delegations of Algeria and Cuba.

It was so decided.

World Food Council

23. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the representative of Italy had proposed, at the 1758th meeting, that the dates and location for the second session of the World Food Council in item 32 of the provisional calendar of United Nations conferences and meetings for 1976 (A/10032 and Corr.1, annex I, table A) should be replaced by the phrase "To be determined".

24. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wished to know whether the Italian amendment would imply that the duration of that session would be subsequently changed.

25. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said he too would be grateful for clarification regarding the purpose of the Italian amendment.

26. Miss FORCIGNANÒ (Italy) said that the reason for her delegation's proposed amendment was that the President of the World Food Council was in the process of holding consultations with member Governments regarding the agenda and the most appropriate dates and venue for its session.

27. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the amendment submitted by Italy.

It was so decided.

Commission for Social Development

28. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that the representative of the United States had proposed that the dates "1-19 November" in item 123 for the twenty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development should be replaced by the observation "early 1977".

29. He said that, if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the United States amendment.

It was so decided.

Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

30. Mrs. DERRE (France), referring to recommendation 6 of the Committee on Conferences in paragraph 113 of its report, noted the Committee proposed that, beginning in 1977, the meetings of the Legal Sub-Committee and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be held at their headquarters in New York. Her delegation took the view that the Legal Sub-Committee should meet in New York and Geneva alternately as it had in the past.

31. Mrs. ABELE-EMICH (Austria) proposed that, in deference to the wishes of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space recorded in paragraph 61 of the report of the Committee on Conferences and in view of the observation of the representative of France, recommendation 6 of the Committee on Conferences should be amended to read:

> "6. The Committee recommends to the General Assembly that the meetings of the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should continue to be held in New York and Geneva".

32. Mr. LELIKI (Sweden) supported the comments of the representatives of France and Austria.

33. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that, from the technical point of view, the Committee could not amend the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences but could only state that it did not accept it.

34. With regard to the financial implications of the proposal, her delegation believed that the figures submitted by the Secretariat to the Committee on Conferences were not conclusive and had never been verified by the Advisory Committee.

35. The CHAIRMAN said that it was his understanding that the Fifth Committee did have the authority to amend or reject any recommendation made by the Committee on Conferences. It could either reject any recommendation outright and replace it with a formulation of its own, or it could simply make amendments to the recommendation itself.

36. Mr. NORBURY (United States of America) said that, despite its short-comings, the Committee on Conferences had a number of genuine achievements to its credit in the previous year, among which had been its decision to recommend that both sub-committees of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should meet at Headquarters. That procedure would result in significant financial savings. His delegation therefore would not support the Austrian amendment.

37. Mr. OGAWA (Japan) said that his delegation fully shared the views expressed by the representative of the

United States and was not therefore in a position to support the Austrian amendment.

38. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that, in order to take a wise decision in the matter, the Committee would need further information as to whether considerable savings would in fact be realized by having both sub-committees meet at Headquarters.

39. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) pointed out that his country was a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. He believed that such committees should have a say in determining the venue of their meetings. In view of the clearly expressed desire of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, as reported in paragraph 61 of the report of the Committee on Conferences, his delegation would support the Austrian amendment.

40. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the holding of a session of the Legal Sub-Committee at Geneva instead of in New York would entail an additional cost of approximately $40,000 or $50,000.

41. Mrs. DERRE (France) observed that the information provided by the Director of the Budget Division was somewhat vague. It was, moreover, the stock answer given to any question raised regarding the cost of meetings at Geneva. Her delegation therefore believed it was necessary to have a written statement of financial implications which should be verified by the Advisory Committee.

42. Her delegation also wished to know more about the considerations which had led to the initial decision to have the Legal Sub-Committee meet alternately at Geneva and New York. Cost was certainly not the only consideration. There was, for example, the question of facilities, such as libraries, which the legal experts might need for their work. Consequently, the Committee should take a decision on the amendment only when it had all the facts at its command.

43. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should defer a decision on the Austrian amendment until it had received a definitive statement of the financial implications.

It was so decided.

Preparatory Committee for Habitat

44. Mr. LELIKI (Sweden) drew attention to paragraph 35 of the report of the Committee on Conferences, in which a request was made for the extension by one week of the period foreseen for the second session of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. Paragraphs 37 and 38 referred to the division of views on the matter in the Committee, as a result of which no decision had been taken. The arguments for prolonging the session were outlined in paragraph 36. His delegation formally proposed that the session should be extended by one week and that it should be held from 12 to 23 January 1976, in accordance with the request in paragraph 35.

45. Mr. SETHI (India) said that he could see no reason for delaying a decision on the matter.

46. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that one week was sufficient for the second session of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat. A considerable number of preparatory meetings had already been held and at its second session the Preparatory Committee would only have to reach agreement on the rules of procedure for the audio-visual programmes, which it could easily do in one week. She therefore formally requested that the second session should last one week.

47. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation could not support the Swedish proposal.

48. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that, on the basis of information he had received from the secretariat of Habitat and from other informed sources, it appeared that much work still remained for the Preparatory Committee to do. It would therefore seem necessary to allow it more time, especially to finalize the rules of procedure for the Conference, without which Habitat could not be a success. Therefore, while understanding the position of the Soviet Union and France, his delegation supported the Swedish proposal.

49. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that every effort should be made to ensure the success of Habitat and that the proposed extension was justified, particularly in view of the fact that it would not involve financial implications beyond those already foreseen.

50. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that his delegation was a member of the Preparatory Committee and had been able to observe that its work had not yet progressed to the point where the smooth running of the Conference was assured. Past experience indicated that four days was insufficient time for such preparatory work, particularly if serious difficulties existed regarding the rules of procedure. His delegation therefore supported the Swedish proposal.

51. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) endorsed the Swedish proposal and drew attention to paragraph 36 of the report of the Committee on Conferences, which indicated that no cost beyond those originally foreseen for the servicing of the session would be involved.

52. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that, consistent with the position it had adopted in the Second Committee, his delegation could not support the Swedish proposal.

53. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) endorsed the Swedish proposal.

54. The CHAIRMAN said that he had just been informed by the representatives of the Secretary-General that the Swedish proposal was likely to have financial implications. Accordingly, he suggested that the Committee should defer a decision until a statement of the financial implications was received.

It was so decided.

Economic and Social Council

55. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany), supported by Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) and Mrs. DERRE

(France), proposed that the dates for items 50 and 86 of the calendar of conferences, concerning the sixtieth and sixty-first sessions of the Economic and Social Council, should be replaced by the words "To be determined". He made that proposal because the sixtieth session of the Council might have to be curtailed, falling as it did between the fourth session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and the fourth session of UNCTAD. It was therefore highly likely that the sixty-first session would have to be prolonged in order to deal satisfactorily with all the items on its agenda.

56. Mr. VANDERGERT (Sri Lanka) said that his delegation would not object to the adoption by consensus of the proposal made by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany, if that should be the wish of the Committee. However, his delegation was concerned lest the duration of the summer session of the Council should be extended beyond 6 August, for in that case it would clash with the dates of a conference of great importance to the developing countries, namely, the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, which had been scheduled for the period from 9 to 19 August. If the dates were to overlap, considerable strain would be placed on those of the non-aligned countries which were members of the Council.

57. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation would welcome some guidance from the Chairman as to whether the Fifth Committee was competent to change the dates of the sessions of the Economic and Social Council. It did not share the view that that matter had been regulated once and for all by the Charter and the rules of procedure of the Council.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that it was the opinion of the Office of Legal Affairs that, once the General Assembly had taken a decision on the dates of conferences, it should invite the Economic and Social Council to change the dates of its sixtieth session; the Council would then need to take a decision, in accordance with its rules of procedure, to alter the dates of its sixtieth session, and any such alteration would require the suspension, for that session, of rule 2 of the Council's rules of procedure.

59. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the timing of the spring session of the Council had been greatly complicated by the scheduling of two major conferences, namely, the fourth session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and the fourth session of UNCTAD. On the one hand, the Secretariat would find it difficult to service both the Conference on the Law of the Sea and the Economic and Social Council at the same time; on the other, a number of delegations, including his own, would find it difficult to send representatives to both the Council's session and the UNCTAD session, since both were concerned with economic matters. That being so, it might be advisable for the Council to shorten its agenda at the spring session and, if necessary, prolong its summer session. However a decision on those matters should be left to the Council; consequently, his delegation had proposed that the dates of the spring and summer sessions should be left open.

60. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that further discussion of the amendment under consideration should be adjourned until representatives had had time to consult other members of their delegations.

It was so decided.

61. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Committee had heard a statement at the preceding meeting by the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services concerning the savings that might arise as a result of the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee concerning publications and documentation. The Committee had also heard statements by the representatives of Belgium and Iran, who appeared not to be in agreement with the interpretation of the Under-Secretary-General. He assumed that further consultations had taken place and that the Committee was now in a position to take a decision on the appropriation under section 23 of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977.

62. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the meeting schedule had not left much time for consultations. However, he would like to explain the reasons why he had proposed that the amount recommended under section 23 by the Advisory Committee should be reduced by $2 million for the biennium 1976-1977.

63. At its 1746th meeting, at the close of its consideration of agenda item 101, the Committee had adopted, by 83 votes to none, with 3 abstentions, a draft resolution which would soon be submitted to the General Assembly.[2] Under the provisions of paragraph 2 of that draft resolution, the General Assembly would endorse the criteria proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 14 of his report (A/C.5/1670), as modified by the comments of the Advisory Committee (A/10299) and would invite the Secretary-General, on the basis of the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee, to make the appropriate corrections in the budget of the United Nations for 1976-1977. In paragraph 23 of document A/10299, the Advisory Committee stated that, if the Assembly adopted the proposed criteria, the potential savings at 1975 prices to be derived in one year would reach about $2 million. If the 10 criteria were already being applied and if the Assembly asked the Secretariat to abandon them and to return to the existing system, he felt certain that additional estimates of at least $4.5 million would be proposed by the Secretariat on the ground that there would be price increases due to inflation and other factors. He would remind the Secretary-General that, once the General Assembly had adopted the draft resolution in question, he (the Secretary-General) would be required to make the appropriate corrections in the budget for 1976-1977. Consequently, it seemed entirely reasonable to make a reduction of $2 million in the budget estimates submitted under section 23, indicating that that reduction would apply to United Nations publications and documentation. His delegation therefore proposed that the Fifth Committee should make that reduction and pointed out that it was the Advisory Committee itself which had established that the savings would reach approximately $2 million a year if the criteria were applied.

2 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 101, document A/10398, para. 13.

64. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation continued to support the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee.

65. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that, after a further study of the matter in conjunction with the Department of Conference Services, the Budget Division felt that it could suggest some reduction in the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 on the basis of the draft resolution recommended to the General Assembly by the Fifth Committee. Savings of $195,000 during the biennium seemed to be within reach as a result of the application of criterion 5. That reduction would come, not under section 23, but under the budget for the General Assembly in section 1A. The budget estimates under section 1 had already been adopted in first reading, but a change could be made in second reading. The amount of $195,000 represented savings under the heading of temporary assistance for editing final meeting records. The amount was not as large as that estimated by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 23 of its report (A/10299) because the full effects of applying criterion 5 would not be felt until the following biennium, when the backlog of official records could be expected to have been eliminated and the permanent staff concerned to have been redeployed.

66. The application of the other criteria depended upon decisions that had yet to be taken by a number of United Nations bodies, including the Committee on Conferences, the Economic and Social Council, UNCTAD and UNDP. The outcome of those decisions was still very uncertain. Until those decisions had been taken, it would be less than honest for him to state that the Secretariat expected immediate savings. However, the Secretary-General would report fully to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on any savings he had been able to make following the decisions of the bodies concerned.

67. Mr. SETHI (India) noted that the roles of the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee were reversed in the current instance, for the Secretariat was commenting on the calculations of the Advisory Committee. He suggested that the Advisory Committee should be invited to review the matter again and to present further recommendations in the light of the information provided in a conference room paper on the subject[3] and orally by the Director of the Budget Division.

68. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said that the Department of Conference Services had one of the most difficult tasks of the entire Secretariat. The Under-Secretary-General had clearly been administering the Department with a view to achieving savings and economies wherever possible. While his delegation appreciated the point being made by the delegation of Belgium, it would support the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

69. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in document A/10299 were based solely on the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1670) or whether they had also been influenced by the Advisory Committee's consultations with the representatives of the Secretary-General. As he recalled it, the Advisory Committee's figures in paragraph 23 of its report were based on figures prepared by the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee appeared to be changing its position.

70. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted the constructive suggestion made by the representative of India. The Advisory Committee had based the figures quoted in paragraph 23 of its report on information supplied by the Secretariat. He would like the representative of the Secretary-General to state whether those figures represented definite savings that would accrue if the criteria were applied. If they did not, he suggested that the representative of the Secretary-General should explain the basis on which those figures had been drawn up.

71. Again, with respect to the proposal by the representative of Belgium, it was for the representative of the Secretary-General to state the impact of a reduction of $2 million in the budget estimates for 1976-1977 if, in his view, savings of that order were possible.

72. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) said that the figures supplied to the Advisory Committee were notional figures and had been given on the understanding that, if all the bodies concerned approved the criteria elaborated in the Secretary-General's report, then the estimated savings would be those shown in paragraph 23 of the Advisory Committee's report. He emphasized that any savings to be made would depend on the decisions of the intergovernmental organs concerned. As in the case of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, any funds saved by the Department of Conference Services would be reported to the Assembly at its thirty-first session.

73. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) noted that the representative of Canada had said that he supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. In that case, that representative should be insisting upon a reduction of over $4 million in the budget estimates for the biennium. What he himself was advocating, however, was that the budget estimates under section 23 should reflect a sum amounting to less than half of the potential savings estimated by the Advisory Committee.

74. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), supported by Mr. NAUDY (France), said that his delegation had a great deal of sympathy for the point being made by the representative of Belgium and shared his scepticism regarding the comments of the Secretariat. None the less, in the circumstances, he believed that the Committee should accept provisionally the point of view of the Secretariat on the understanding that, at the thirty-first session, it would be given a full account of the savings achieved in 1976 and an estimate of any further savings to be made.

75. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) observed that the Committee had been assured by the Secretariat that adjustments to the budget would be made at the following session.

3 Document A/C.5/XXX/CRP.6 and Corr.1 of 11 November 1975.

Consequently, he proposed that the Committee should vote on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

76. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would adjourn the discussion in order to give delegations time to reflect on the two conflicting proposals before the Committee, namely those made by the delegations of Belgium and the Philippines.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

1761st meeting

Friday, 5 December 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1761

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:*

***(a)* Report of United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued)** (A/10009, A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.1263/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1264, A/C.5/L.1270, A/C.5/L.1273);**

***(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/10335, A/10374, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1697, A/C.5/1729, A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.1)**

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the draft texts that were before it.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1263/Rev.1

2. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/L.1263/Rev.1, which incorporated suggestions made by various delegations. The investments of the Joint Staff Pension Fund in developing countries remained inadequate and were made only through international financial organizations. The aim of the draft resolution was to improve that situation.

3. The word "direct" should be deleted from the second preambular paragraph and the word "directly" inserted after the words "Pension Fund". The beginning of the operative paragraph should be amended to read: "*Requests* the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts substantially to increase the investments that the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund makes directly in developing countries . . .".

4. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) endorsed the draft resolution of Cuba.

5. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation also supported the draft resolution, but thought that the Committee must not lose sight of the need to protect the Fund's assets. There were indeed many opportunities for sound investments in the developing countries. He suggested amending the operative paragraph by inserting the following phrase after the words "Secretary-General": "while continuing to bear in mind that the investment objective of the Fund is to provide the highest long-term return consistent with the protection of its assets"; the words "on safe and profitable terms" would then be deleted. The amendment was not designed to hamper investment by the Fund in developing countries, but the rationale of such investment must be the benefit of the participants in the Fund rather than that of the developing countries.

6. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) supported the draft resolution as it stood; he was not convinced by the arguments of the representative of Australia and thought that the words "on safe and profitable terms" constituted a sufficient condition. It was doubtful whether the Fund could in fact "provide the highest long-term return", since there could never be prior knowledge as to how investments would turn out.

7. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) endorsed the comments of the representative of the Upper Volta. He could not accept the Australian proposal.

8. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that he did not think the difference in the wording of the draft resolution and his amendment was wide enough to warrant his insisting on the amendment. He therefore withdrew it.

9. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that investments ran two types of risk: economic and political. The Fund's losses on its investments in the United States and other industrialized countries had been due to the economic risk. Many developing countries offered safe investment opportunities and the Fund's investment policy should be an act of faith in the establishment of a new international economic order. His delegation supported the draft resolution.

10. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) proposed that the words "in conformity with article 4 *(d)* of the Regulations of the Joint Staff Pension Fund" should be inserted in the operative paragraph after the words "Secretary-General". The aim of his proposal was not to underline the difference between the purposes of the Regulations and those of the draft resolution but to make it clear that the draft resolution did not [illegible]

* Resumed from the 1759th meeting.

11. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that he could not accept the amendment. Of course the Secretary-General acted in conformity with the Regulations; there was no need to remind him of them.

12. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) pointed out that article 4 *(d)* of the Regulations did not speak of intensifying efforts and that the reference to the article was therefore irrelevant.

13. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation favoured sound investments, wherever they were made, as well as diversification of the Fund's investments. It sympathized with the Australian proposal but also understood the points made by the representative of the Upper Volta. In view of the useful advice given by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the subject of investments, his delegation proposed an additional preambular paragraph, which would read as follows:

> "*Noting further* the conclusions of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in document A/10335, in particular those contained in paragraph 22".

14. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) withdrew his amendment in favour of the United States proposal.

15. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that he was growing perplexed by the series of amendments to his draft resolution. The original wording gave full guarantees with regard to the Fund's investments. There had not been so much concern about protecting the Fund's assets when it had been a question of the investment of $600 million in transnational corporations. The current excessive concern about investments in the developing countries indicated a belief that those countries would be unable to fulfil their obligations. He could not accept the United States proposal.

16. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that it could be seen from a comparison of the revised draft resolution with the original version that the representative of Cuba had gone to commendable lengths to make the text acceptable to the Committee. The last sentence of paragraph 22 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10335) was very relevant to the discussion.

17. Mr. NKIELE-ATYPO (Congo) supported the draft resolution, which would contribute to the establishment of a new international economic order. Investments in the developing countries would of course be safe and profitable and would help to eliminate investment losses attributable to inflation.

18. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) agreed that investments in the developing countries should be increased and welcomed the fact that the draft resolution referred to "safe and profitable terms". That condition must remain the basis for the Fund's investments and his delegation would therefore have preferred to retain the amendment proposed by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany. His delegation accepted the United States proposal but suggested that the new paragraph should begin with the words "*Taking into account* the conclusions . . .".

19. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) accepted the Japanese suggestion.

20. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) observed that there was a strong movement in the Committee to weaken the draft resolution. The text should be adopted as it stood.

21. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) expressed surprise at the sensitivity of some members of the Committee concerning investments in the developing countries. It was certainly time for the Fund to find alternative channels of investment. There was no need to prejudge the returns likely to be obtained in the developing countries; there could be no *a priori* guarantee of high returns on any investment. The draft resolution as it stood should be adopted by consensus.

22. Miss VRECH (Argentina) supported the draft resolution as it stood. The reference to paragraph 22 of the report of the Advisory Committee was unnecessary; the aim of the paragraph was to correct the impression given in paragraph 39 of the Board's report (A/10009) and in paragraphs 30 and 32 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1) that investments in developing countries were to be made, at least in part, for the purpose of rendering assistance to those countries. The representative of Cuba had already complied with the thrust of paragraph 22 by removing the references to the financing of development from the draft resolution, replacing them with the reference to "safe and profitable terms".

23. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) noted that there had been losses on investments in the developed countries despite the policy of protecting the Fund's assets. There were certainly safe and profitable investment opportunities in the developing countries. The draft resolution did not request that a given percentage of investments should be made in developing countries but merely that such investments should be increased. That was perfectly reasonable and he could not see the point of the controversy. The draft resolution as it stood should be adopted.

24. Mr. SETHI (India) said that his delegation could support the draft resolution. He thought that the debate was no longer fruitful and proposed its closure.

25. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) supported the proposal for closure of the debate.

The proposal was adopted.

The United States amendment, as modified by the Japanese suggestion, was rejected by 39 votes to 19, with 20 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1263/Rev.1 was adopted by 73 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1264

26. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba), introducing another draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1264), said that it stressed the need to make Pension Fund investments in currencies

which were not in crisis. The Working Group on Currency Instability had stated in paragraph 50 of its report[1] that United Nations investments should be made in sound currencies, and it was a widely accepted principle of investment policy that investments should not be made in unsound currencies. Paragraph 29 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1) bore testimony to the losses resulting from investments in unsound currencies.

27. Various delegations had asked what Cuba meant by "currencies in crisis" and which currencies were in crisis. Currencies in crisis were those which were unstable and tended to depreciate; currencies not in crisis had a stable value or tended to move upwards. His delegation could not carry out an examination of all currencies to determine which ones were in crisis. That problem was to be solved by the advisers of the Secretary-General when decisions on investments were being made. However, the Swiss franc, because of its stable value, was a typical example of a currency not in crisis, and the pound sterling was an example of the opposite. The purpose behind the draft resolution was clearly outlined in the operative paragraph.

28. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that the notion of currencies in crisis and not in crisis was somewhat difficult to define. The time factor was a crucial element. The value of the Swiss franc might well change with consequent losses on investments made in that currency.

29. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1264 appeared to contradict draft resolution A/C.5/L.1263/Rev.1, which had just been adopted, and might be used as a pretext for not implementing the provisions of the latter draft resolution. Because of their financial situation, some developing countries might be affected by the terms of the draft resolution under consideration.

30. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation could not support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1264. In the current international economic situation, all currencies fluctuated and it was extremely difficult to identify currencies not in crisis.

31. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) noted that the Committee had just adopted draft resolution A/C.5/L.1263/Rev.1, submitted by Cuba, which contained a reasonable proposal. The new draft resolution raised a number of problems and he hoped that it would be withdrawn. The matter should be studied in greater detail and the Fund should be left free to determine ways of minimizing the investment risk.

32. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1264, which was very reasonable. The security of the Fund's assets was crucial. Currency fluctuation did not take place by chance; it was caused by the manipulations of the industrialized countries. An ideal arrangement would be to invest the Fund's assets in a variety of currencies, in order to cushion the effect of fluctuations in exchange rates.

33. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) questioned whether there were any currencies not in crisis. Until a convincing definition of currencies not in crisis was offered, his delegation would find it difficult to accept the draft resolution.

34. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that his delegation was unable to comply with requests to withdraw the draft resolution and would like it to be put to the vote. An important question of principle was involved. Every year immense losses resulted from the investment of the Fund's assets in currencies which were in crisis. It was not true that all currencies were in that state. Some were in crisis, some in a state of semi-crisis, and some not in crisis at all. That was not to say that a given currency, which at one particular moment was not in crisis, might not later find itself in crisis. It was true that, if investments were made in a variety of currencies, the effect of fluctuation in exchange rates would be cushioned.

35. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) observed that it was the phrase in the draft resolution "currencies which are not in crisis" that gave rise to the most problems. Everyone, however, would agree that the Fund should avoid losses due to currency fluctuations. He would therefore propose that the first preambular paragraph should be amended to read:

> "*Recognizing* that a sound investment policy must take account of the need to avoid losses due to currency fluctuations".

Furthermore, he proposed that the operative paragraph should be amended to read:

> "*Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that, in making the investments of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, all possible care is taken to avoid losses due to currency fluctuations".

36. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) and Mr. SETHI (India) endorsed the amendments proposed by Italy.

37. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) sympathized with the intention behind draft resolution A/C.5/L.1264, but felt it should be studied in greater depth. There was no doubt about the need to avoid the effects of currency fluctuations, which were suffered primarily by the developing countries because of their trade ties and their assets in Western banks. It might be advisable, however, for a time element to be incorporated into the draft resolution.

38. He wondered which currencies could be defined as being not in crisis in the current economic situation. The representative of Cuba should not insist on an immediate vote on the draft resolution. Delegations should have the opportunity to discuss it further, perhaps reword it, and decide which currencies would be accpetable.

39. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that his delegation appreciated the need to avoid investing the Fund's assets in currencies which apparently were in crisis, but could not support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1264 as it stood. He would like to hear the Cuban delegation's reaction to the welcome proposal made by Italy.

40. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that his delegation would not object to any amendment which did not obscure the intention behind the draft resolution. It therefore accepted the Italian amendments.

[1] Document A/9773 of 26 September 1974.

41. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.5/L.1264, as amended.

It was so decided.

Draft resolution contained in document A/C.5/L.1270

42. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the draft resolution contained in his note (A/C.5/L.1270), drew attention to an amendment submitted by Belgium (A/C.5/L.1273). He said that an amendment had also been proposed orally by the Federal Republic of Germany to section II of the draft resolution; it called for the addition of the following words at the end of the section: "except for those changes relating to the extension of the maximum period of contributory service".

43. He had submitted the draft resolution in order to expedite the work of the Committee. Representatives should feel free to make such changes as they might deem appropriate.

44. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) noted that the draft resolution under consideration had incorporated the proposal by Austria and Canada, according to which the Pension Board would study and report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the advisability of establishing a special account. Dividing the Pension Fund into different accounts would make it difficult to administer and would isolate one set of benefits from another. It would lead to the establishment of various little funds for various benefits. His delegation realized that only a study was envisaged, but it had doubts about the advisability of the proposal.

45. The Pension Board had proposed, as an interim measure, that the maximum period of contributory service should be extended to 32 years. His delegation failed to see how one could agree to benefits for pensioners on an interim basis and revoke those benefits at a later stage. A decision should be deferred until a final proposal was submitted. It was not unfair to expect those participants who wanted to remain in service to wait for a final proposal.

46. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), introducing the amendment in document A/C.5/L.1273, said that his delegation was disturbed by the danger of an increase in the financial burden borne by Member States for the financing of the Pension Fund. Year after year, the General Assembly was requested by the Pension Board to increase benefits. To that end, the basis on which contributions were assessed had been modified. At the insistence of the Board, the contributions of the member organizations–in other words of States–were no longer based on net salary or on the average between net salary and gross salary or on gross salary but, as from 1 July 1975, on gross salary plus 20 per cent.

47. As at 31 December 1974, the contributions of the organizations towards the pensions of Professional staff had increased by 27.2 per cent. That had resulted from a 6 per cent rise in gross salary, effective 1 January 1975, and from the fact that the pensionable remuneration was increased by 20 per cent, reflecting cost-of-living changes. The increase had amply taken account of inflation and currency instability and was a very substantial compensation, since in monetary terms, the 20 per cent roughly corresponded to eight classes of post adjustment. The organizations–or, in other words, Member States–currently paid between $2,000 and $10,000 per annum for each staff member in the Professional category.

48. Total United Nations expenditure for 1975 would amount to $2 billion; salaries accounted for 75 per cent of that sum. A 2 per cent increase in the contribution of organizations would require an increase of the order of $15 million per annum in contributions by States, solely for participants in the Fund and not including the indirect financial implications of such a measure with regard to non-participants. Total expenditure might therefore approach $30 million per annum, with substantial increases likely in the next few years.

49. Certainly international civil servants were entitled to a decent pension and the organs concerned should adopt all necessary measures to that end, including a better investment policy. The international community, however, had to keep a sense of proportion and bear in mind that the money came from ordinary taxpayers, whose salaries were often far below the average pension of an international civil servant.

50. His delegation requested the Board to tailor its ambitions and those of the participants to the means of the Fund. The inflation and currency fluctuation situation had recently taken a turn for the better, and the expected improvement in the world economy would result in increased investment returns for the Fund.

51. The Board's proposals for an adjustment of benefits should not increase the financial liabilities of Member States. His delegation therefore hoped that the amendment which it was proposing would be adopted by the Committee. Belgium was requesting the Board to propose a unified and durable system, which responded as equitably as possible to the needs of retired persons and which did not require an increase in the current or future financial responsibilities of Member States. It would be normal for the Board to evolve a formula which would increase small pensions by a larger margin than bigger pensions.

52. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) suggested that the word "currency" should be inserted before "exchange rate fluctuations" at the end of section I, paragraph 2, of the draft resolution.

53. The Board ought to give consideration to an increase in the benefits payable to widows and orphans. He read out a new paragraph which he proposed should be added as paragraph 2 to section II of the draft resolution:

> "*Requests* the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board to study the possibility of increasing survivors' and disability benefits, bearing in mind the actuarial position of the Fund, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session".

54. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that his delegation had doubts about section I, paragraph 2, of the draft resolution

and was opposed in principle to the proposed study. There was a danger that certain privileges might be given to one pension system over another, thereby creating a disparity between pensioners in developing countries and those in the developed countries, as well as a further disparity within the developing countries between pensioners covered by the United Nations pension system and those covered by their national pension system. That would be contrary to Algeria's policies, which were aimed at eliminating social disparities.

55. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that the proposal made by Austria and Canada in document A/C.5/L.1259, and reincorporated into section I, paragraph 2, of the draft resolution, explicitly countenanced the idea of increasing the Fund's over-all contribution rate from 21 per cent to a possible 24 per cent. Although the representative of Canada had said that approval of the study would not imply endorsement of that idea by Member States, such approval would inevitably encourage the expectations of the participants and imply some degree of commitment by Member States. Moreover, the Canadian delegation had not said whether it expected the employees' contribution of up to 1 per cent to the special account to come from existing pensionable remuneration, or whether a special pay increase of 1 per cent would have to be authorized to prevent staff from suffering a diminution of pay. The total extra cost to the United Nations regular budget of a 3 per cent increase in total contributions on the latter assumption would be about $15 million per biennium, or about the same amount which the Advisory Committee had recommended should be deleted from the budget proposals for the 1976-1977 biennium. If, however, one assumed that no special pay increase would be authorized, the proposal would be coolly received by United Nations staff members, particularly those who intended to retire to countries where the WAPA system had provided adequate protection for pensions.

56. The Advisory Committee had endorsed the General Assembly decision that the Board should recommend to the Assembly at its thirty-first session a unified and durable scheme of pension adjustment without adding to the current or potential liability of the membership. He did not accept the interpretation of paragraph 29 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10335) given by the Canadian delegation. The Advisory Committee had not said that the Board faced a dilemma over the possible extra cost of the proposed new scheme of adjustment; it had merely reminded the Board and the Fifth Committee of the view it had expressed in 1974. His delegation supported the view of the Advisory Committee and opposed the proposal of the Canadian delegation.

57. On the basis of the extremely scanty evidence provided by the Canadian delegation, he found it impossible to see the relevance of the proposal that a special account should be created to take account of inflation and exchange rate fluctuations. The guidelines given to the Board should therefore remain unchanged.

58. Accordingly, if section I of the draft resolution was put to the vote, his delegation would vote against it. While it fully agreed with the idea behind the Belgian amendment (A/C.5/L.1273), the latter left open the possibility of adopting the proposal for a study by the Board of a special account; it would be better to reject the proposal entirely.

59. His delegation could support sections II, III and IV of the draft resolution.

60. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that there was no point in undertaking the study and that her Government would in no case increase its contribution to the Pension Fund. Her delegation had no objection to the Belgian amendment. It wished to propose the deletion of section I, paragraph 2, of the draft resolution.

61. The suggestion to postpone the decision on the extension of the maximum period of contributory service to the following year was a good one. The same should be done regarding the Philippine proposal concerning the situation of widows and children. Her delegation was not opposed in principle to the proposal but felt that in view of the current situation it was reasonable to move gradually.

62. Mrs. ABELE-EMICH (Austria) supported the Philippine amendment.

63. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) supported the French proposal for the deletion of section I, paragraph 2 of the draft resolution. As to the proposal to extend the maximum period of contributory service, his delegation was not, in principle, against it, since flexibility in that respect was an element of personnel management.

64. Mr. MATHESON (Canada), responding to the comments made by various representatives, said that a unified, durable and reasonably equitable scheme could not be established without some additional cost. Under the circumstances, his delegation shared the views of the Board and the Advisory Committee. How could there be no extra cost in an adjustment scheme which, the previous year, had required approximately 4 per cent of the contributions to the Fund, compared to the 17 per cent needed for the basic benefits? The choice was between selectively reducing benefits—that was the basic intent of the Belgian proposal—or selectively providing some measure of relief against inflation and currency fluctuations. It was not his delegation's intention to propose a study involving a net increase of up to 3 per cent in the level of over-all contributions to the Fund, but to have the Board determine whether a special account based on adjustments involving both benefits and contributions could produce a system that met the desirable standards set by the General Assembly. The Board should also consider the desirability of basing the rate of contribution on the gross salary rather than on the pensionable remuneration. If all adjustments for inflation and exchange rate instability could be treated separately, Member States would be able periodically to review the need for the special account in the light of changing economic circumstances.

65. The Belgian proposal was in intent identical to the one endorsed by the General Assembly the previous year. Accordingly, it could be adopted without affecting the remainder of the draft resolution.

66. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) asked whether each amendment was to be voted on separately. If that was the case, and if the Belgian and French amendments were adopted, his delegation would be able to vote in favour of section I and probably in favour of the draft resolution as a whole.

67. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the Belgian amendment (A/C.5/L.1273).

It was so decided.

68. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the French proposal to delete paragraph 2 of section I.

The proposal was adopted by 38 votes to 12, with 26 abstentions.

69. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the amendment submitted by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, calling for the addition, at the end of the operative paragraph in section II, of the words "except for those changes relating to the extension of the maximum period of contributory service".

It was so decided.

70. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the amendment submitted by the representative of the Philippines, proposing the addition, in section II, of a paragraph which would then become paragraph 2 (see para. 53 above).

It was so decided.

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.5/L.1270, as amended, was adopted by 69 votes to none, with 10 abstentions.

71. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had intended to ask for a vote on the amendment proposed by the Federal Republic of Germany, postponing a decision on the extension of the maximum period of contributory service. Had that amendment been put to the vote, his delegation would have voted against it. He believed that the amendment would not have been adopted. His delegation would raise the issue again the following year and would see to it that a decision was taken.

72. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) assured the representative of the United Kingdom that his delegation agreed that a decision should be taken the following year.

Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.1

73. The CHAIRMAN announced that Portugal was no longer a sponsor of the draft resolution. It would be considered as soon as the Advisory Committee had commented on the statement of administrative and financial implications submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1729).

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1258

74. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that at the 1759th meeting the Committee had adopted the Soviet draft decision concerning a request to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board to submit information on the nationality of members and alternate members of the Board in the same form as it had at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly. He formally asked the secretariat of the Pension Board to inform the members of the Committee whether such information had indeed been provided to the Soviet delegation at the twenty-eighth session and, specifically, in what form that information had been provided.

75. Mrs. TSIEN (Chairman of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) replied that, so far as she knew, at the twenty-eighth session the then Chairman of the Pension Board had given the information informally to the Soviet delegation. She could provide that same information on the same basis to the Soviet representative and to any other members of the Committee who might desire it, but she could find no other reference to the matter in the records of the Committee's meetings. If any further questions were raised, she would have to consult the former Chairman of the Joint Staff Pension Board.

76. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, on the basis of the decision taken by the Committee, the Pension Board was being asked to provide the information formally, for distribution prior to the end of the session. Provision of the information was consistent with the decision taken by the Assembly at its twenty-eighth session. The Chairman of the Pension Board had provided the Soviet delegation with that information before and was therefore bound to continue doing so. He (Mr. Palamarchuk) had brought the document which his delegation had received the previous year to assist the Chairman of the Pension Board in providing the necessary information.

77. The CHAIRMAN said that the decision adopted by the Committee at the 1759th meeting stated that the Pension Board should provide the information in the same form as at the twenty-eighth session of the Assembly and that in future it should conform strictly to that form. The document which the Soviet delegation had received was not an official one and he was not certain whether a document which had been presented informally could be made formal retroactively. Accordingly, he would seek the opinion of the Legal Counsel and for that purpose requested a copy of the document.

The meeting was suspended at 6.05 p.m. and resumed at 6.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(continued) (A/10350 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/10378, A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.2)**

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.2

78. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said his delegation would like to know what criteria the Secretary-General would

* Resumed from the 1754th meeting.

apply to arrive at fair and reasonable settlements in the matter of paying troop contributors for the usage factor. He wondered, since no specific date was mentioned in the latest version (A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.2) of the draft decision before the Committee, what the Secretary-General would envisage as the most probable date from which settlements would take effect.

79. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said it would be extremely difficult to give any reliable answer to that question before negotiations were held. While the subject-matter was not complicated in principle, a number of questions of detail would have to be taken up. In previous discussions of the matter, the troop-contributing countries had all shown a remarkable spirit of co-operation and understanding, and he was confident that a well-balanced solution could be worked out. The Controller was aware that any obligations incurred in connexion with peace-keeping operations would have to be met on a basis of strict equality. That also applied to the legal obligation to compensate one country for the loss of an aircraft.

80. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) suggested that the final phrase of revised draft decision A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.2 should be amended to read "to arrive at a formula for fair and reasonable settlements". That wording would, in his opinion, preclude the possibility of any form of discrimination based on the nationality of troop contingents, such as that to which the representative of Poland had referred.

81. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said he agreed to some extent with the observations made by the representative of Algeria, but felt that the same point could be made by substituting the word "sound" for the word "fair" at the end of the draft decision.

82. Mr. HAHN (Canada), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the draft decision, accepted the amendment proposed by the representative of Brazil.

83. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) supported the suggestion made by the representative of Algeria.

84. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) assured the representative of Algeria that the Secretary-General applied the same general principles in arriving at settlements with all troop-contributing countries. An attempt would be made to work out a general formula for such settlements in the forthcoming discussions. However, the individual circumstances of each country providing troop contingents must be taken into account.

85. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that he would not insist on his amendment but hoped that a single formula for settlements could be worked out.

86. The CHAIRMAN noting that the Committee did not have a quorum, suggested that the vote on the revised draft decision, as amended, should be taken at the following meeting.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the 1759th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 11. UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2, A/C.5/1669, A/C.5/1671)

87. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the note (A/C.5/1669) by which the Secretary-General transmitted the proposed programme budget for the International Trade Centre for 1976-1977, and another note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1671) dealing with the question of administrative arrangements for the Centre.

88. In the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), the Secretary-General had proposed an amount of $40,764,000 under section 11. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its related report (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 11.31), had recommended a reduction of $604,000 in that estimate. Furthermore, the reduction proposed by the Advisory Committee with regard to the representation allowances discussed in paragraphs 63 to 65 of its report would require an additional reduction of $3,600 under section 11. Finally, the Secretary-General estimated that, out of the total reduction for reclassification of posts recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 61 of its report, an amount of $9,000 could be attributed to section 11. Accordingly, the total amount recommended under section 11 by the Advisory Committee was $40,147,400.

89. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General's estimates under section 11, in the amount of $40,764,000, represented an increase of 29.1 per cent over the adjusted revised appropriations for 1974-1975. Real growth for UNCTAD was given by the Secretary-General as 4.48 per cent, which was more than that for the budget as a whole. The total resources needed to implement UNCTAD programmes were currently estimated at roughly $58 million.

90. Section 11 also contained estimates for the holding of the fourth session of UNCTAD, currently expected to cost some $2.3 million, or 81.1 per cent more than the third session. The reasons for that sharp increase were indicated in paragraph 11.3 of the Advisory Committee's report. The Committee had been informed that the method of work for the fourth session would be simplified so that the Conference could concentrate on the main issues before it. No effort should be spared to achieve that goal and thus effect economies in the cost of the Conference, especially in such areas as documentation, printing costs, and overtime and night differential.

91. Other areas where economies were possible were travel, temporary assistance and the use of experts and consultants. With regard to the latter, the Advisory Com-

mittee had noted that, on the whole, the 1976-1977 estimates were slightly less than those for 1974-1975. The Committee had, however, for the reasons stated in paragraph 11.18, recommended a reduction of $31,000 in the provision for consultants, since it had been informed that the activity for which a similar amount had been budgeted in 1974-1975 had been completed. The Advisory Committee also recommended, in paragraph 11.11, a minor reduction in travel funds because it felt that the justification for the entire amount requested was not fully convincing.

92. The Advisory Committee had been informed that during the coming biennium UNCTAD would give priority to the following areas: primary commodities; economic co-operation among developing countries; transfer of technology; monetary and financial issues. In considering the staffing proposals made by the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee had been guided by the above considerations. Accordingly, of the 26 new posts requested by the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee had recommended acceptance of 11 Professional and 6 General Service posts. The Committee had also accepted the request to convert 11 peak-load posts–5 Professional and 6 General Service–to permanent established posts. The Committee had approved that request on the understanding that requests for funds to finance peak-load posts would no longer be made in the future.

93. The request to reclassify 1 D-2 post to the level of Assistant Secretary-General had also been accepted by the Advisory Committee. However, that request had given the Advisory Committee a great deal of difficulty. The Committee was concerned at the fact that so far no precise criteria had been developed which could be used to determine whether a request of that nature was warranted or not. While the Committee realized that there were various considerations involved, it would be desirable for the Secretary-General to consider the possibility of developing guidelines to guard against the danger of having a secretariat which was too top-heavy.

94. The estimates under section 11 contained an amount of $4,530,000 as the United Nations share of the assessed contribution to the joint UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre. In paragraphs 11.24, 11.25 and 11.27 of its report, the Advisory Committee had made recommendations concerning the estimates for the Centre, recommendations which, if accepted by all parties concerned, would have the effect of reducing the United Nations share by $93,000. With regard to the action already taken on those estimates by the GATT Council, he trusted that the representative of the Secretary-General would in due course make a statement, after which he (Mr. Mselle) would inform the Fifth Committee of the position the Advisory Committee had taken in its consideration of that matter.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.

1762nd meeting

Saturday, 6 December 1975, at 10.40 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1762

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)* (A/10350 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/10378, A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.2)

Draft decision A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.2 (concluded)

1. The CHAIRMAN, as he had announced at the preceding meeting, put the revised draft decision (A/C.5/L.1267/Rev.2), as amended, to the vote.

The draft decision was adopted by 65 votes to 1, with 8 abstentions.

2. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked what period was covered by the draft decision and what the magnitude of its financial implications would be.

3. The CHAIRMAN said that a date included in the original version of the draft decision had been omitted in the revised text so that it could be determined by negotiation. The Secretariat would make a statement on financial implications at a later stage.

AGENDA ITEM 101

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General *(concluded)**

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1278)

4. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introduced the draft report of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/L.1278).

The draft report was adopted.

* Resumed from the 1746th meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 105

United Nations salary system *(concluded)*:*
(a)* Report of the International Civil Service Commission *(concluded)*;
(b)* Report of the Secretary-General *(concluded)*

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1275)

5. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introduced the draft report of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/L.1275) on the United Nations salary system.

6. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) drew attention to the first preambular paragraph of draft resolution B, appearing in paragraph 23, concerning interim changes in the post adjustment system; in fact the recommendations made by the International Civil Service Commission appeared only in paragraph 64 of its report (A/10030) and the draft resolution should be amended accordingly.

7. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that it was too late to revise a text already adopted by the Committee.

8. The CHAIRMAN said that in view of the comment by the representative of the Soviet Union, the draft resolution could not be amended. The statement by the representative of the Philippines would, however, be reflected in the summary record.

The draft report (A/C.5/L.1275) was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(continued)** **(A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716):**
(a)* Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General *(concluded)*

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (part I) (A/C.5/L.1283)

9. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introduced part I (A/C.5/L.1283) of the draft report of the Fifth Committee concerning the composition of the Secretariat; part II, on "other personnel questions", would be issued when the Committee had concluded its consideration of that part of the agenda item. He pointed out that New Zealand had been omitted in error from the list of additional sponsors in paragraph 25.

10. Mr. MATSEIKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) proposed that the last sentence of paragraph 12 should be amended to read: "Some representatives suggested that permanent contracts should be eliminated."

11. Mr. SETHI (India) proposed that the following text should be added at the end of paragraph 14: "One delegation, while abstaining from advocating radical changes in the current system, noted what it considered to be the lack of uniformity in the application of the three main criteria governing the distribution among States of posts subject to the principle of geographical distribution, emphasizing in particular that the criterion of population was not applied in the same manner as the two others".

12. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) proposed that the following sentence should be added after the second sentence of paragraph 19: "One delegation pointed out that, in giving that priority, the Secretary-General should give a fair chance to women candidates from adequately represented countries."

13. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) proposed that the opening words of paragraph 19 should be amended to read "Several representatives supported", with a consequential change in the pronoun in the second sentence. The additional third sentence proposed by the representative of Greece would not be affected.

The four amendments proposed were approved.

Part I (A/C.5/L.1283) of the draft report, as amended, was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 98

Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency: report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions *(continued)** **(A/10279 and Add.1, A/10280 and Add.1, A/10360, A/C.5/1704, A/C.5/L.1280/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1282)**

14. Mr. BACHE (United States of America), introducing revised draft decision A/C.5/L.1280/Rev.1 on behalf of India and the United States, recalled that, at the 1755th meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management had asked for guidance on preparing the material which he was required to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 2 of Assembly resolution 2924 B (XXVII). The revised draft decision combined his delegation's suggestions with those of the representative of India.

15. Mr. NAUDY (France) congratulated the sponsors on clarifying the proposal. He interpreted the revised draft resolution as asking the Secretary-General to give his comments, observations and conclusions on the Joint Inspection Unit, as one component of the system of administrative and budgetary control, investigation and co-ordination of the United Nations.

16. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the updating of document A/7938 of 21 September 1970, which was called for in the draft decision, might involve an expenditure of about $1,500 for printing, but that expenditure could be met from the approved appropriation for the biennium.

17. Mr. SETHI (India) said that document A/7938 included financial information on the cost of various organs enumerated in the document. He understood that the

* Resumed from the 1756th meeting.

* Resumed from the 1758th meeting.

updated cost figures would relate to 1974, since the figures for 1975 might not be available.

18. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that when the Secretary-General prepared the report called for by the draft decision he should bear in mind that the Fifth Committee had asked him to evaluate the work of the Administrative Management Service.

19. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee adopt draft decision A/C.5/L.1280/Rev.1 by consensus.

It was so decided.

20. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands), introducing a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1282), said that its provisions reflected the views of a large number of delegations.

21. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that he saw no need to include the words "in depth" in subparagraph *(f)*; their omission would improve the text. The type of discussion to be held at the thirty-first session, and subsequently in off-budget years, should be a matter for the Committee to decide at the time.

22. Mr. HART (Australia) said that it was important to consider the question of co-ordination on a regular basis, and he supported the inclusion of the words "in depth" to indicate the manner of consideration.

23. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed that the word "Endorse" in subparagraph *(b)* should be replaced by "Take note of".

24. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) proposed that the words "for their attention and necessary action" should be added after the word "concerned" in subparagraph *(c)*.

25. Mr. SETHI (India) proposed that the words "the consultative machinery of" in subparagraph *(d)* should be deleted. He suggested that the phrase "the item on co-ordination" in subparagraph *(f)* might usefully be made more specific.

26. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) proposed the following formulation for subparagraph *(f)*:

> "Decides to consider in depth the item on administrative and budgetary co-ordination normally in off-budget years, starting from the thirty-first session".

27. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) accepted the amendments proposed by the representatives of the Soviet Union, India and the United States of America. He understood that the representative of Turkey also accepted the formulation proposed by the United States representative for subparagraph *(f)*. The objection of the representative of Pakistan could be met by adding the words "and necessary action" at the end of subparagraph *(d)*.

28. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked that the Advisory Committee, in its next report, should express its opinion on the functioning of ACC and give its views on ways in which administrative co-ordination might be improved and made less costly. He was aware that ACC was an intersecretariat body.

29. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that his delegation attached great importance to the improvement of administrative and budgetary co-ordination and welcomed the draft decision, as amended.

30. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee adopt draft decision A/C.5/L.1282, as amended, by consensus.

It was so decided.

Mr. Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS XI A AND XI B SUBMITTED BY THE FOURTH COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10427 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 23* (A/C.5/1740, A/C.5/1741)

31. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the statements submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1740 and A/C.5/1741) concerning administrative and financial implications of draft resolutions XI B and XI A respectively, submitted by the Fourth Committee in its report (A/10427, para. 72). The Secretary-General indicated that the adoption of draft resolution XI A would not give rise to additional requirements. With regard to draft resolution XI B the Secretary-General advised that it would necessitate financial requirements of approximately $45,000, but, in the absence of specific information, he would refrain from seeking additional appropriations; however, at the appropriate time, he would seek the consent of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to his incurring the necessary commitment under the provisions of the General Assembly resolution relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

32. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had taken note of the course outlined by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1740 and suggested that the Fifth Committee might wish to inform the General Assembly that, if draft resolution XI B of the Fourth Committee was adopted, the Secretary-General would be authorized to enter into commitments under the provisions of the resolution relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses, with the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee.

33. With regard to draft resolution XI A the Advisory Committee wished him to propose that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that the adoption of the draft resolution would give rise to no additional financial requirements.

34. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that the question of Spanish Sahara was of the greatest importance for the African countries. If the provisions of draft resolution XI B were implemented and the General Assembly confirmed the vote taken in the Fourth Committee, the fundamental

* Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

principle of self-determination for colonial countries and peoples which had always guided the United Nations would be contravened. The draft resolution noted a *de facto* situation which had arisen without any consultations being held with the people of the region, and the sending of a representative of the United Nations to the region would have the effect of recognizing that fait accompli. He was anxious to have consultations with his colleagues and accordingly proposed that the Committee should defer consideration of the financial implications of the draft resolution.

35. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that if the Committee decided to defer consideration of the administrative and financial implications of one of the draft resolutions on the question of Spanish Sahara it should defer consideration of both draft resolutions.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) resumed the Chair.

36. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation supported the proposal made by the representative of Algeria.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that, in the light of the difficulties that some members had, he proposed that consideration of the administrative and financial implications of the two draft resolutions should be deferred until the following meeting.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION D SUBMITTED BY THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10411 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 54* (A/C.5/1720)

38. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee wished him to propose that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution D submitted by the Special Political Committee in its report (A/10411, para. 15), an additional appropriation of $7,000 would be required under section 2A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

39. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should draft resolution D of the Special Political Committee be adopted, an additional appropriation of $7,000 would be required under section 2A of the programme budget for 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

* United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East:

(a) Report of the Commissioner-General;

(b) Report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;

(c) Report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine;

(d) Report of the Secretary-General.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the 1759th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 11. UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT *(concluded)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2, A/C.5/1669, A/C.5/1671)

40. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that his delegation supported the cuts recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/10008 and Corr.2) and believed that further cuts of approximately $900,000 could be made without impairing the efficiency of the UNCTAD secretariat, by simply not establishing certain requested permanent posts. A greater effort should be made to identify the activities of UNCTAD that should be given priority so that existing resources could be used more efficiently. The request of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD for 37 additional posts—26 new posts and the conversion to permanent posts of 11 posts formerly financed from temporary assistance credits—appeared to run contrary to the promise of better utilization of personnel he had made when requesting the establishment of an Economic Policy Evaluation and Co-ordination Unit within his own office. His delegation opposed the conversion of the 11 temporary posts; such conversions were not good management practice because they permitted augmentation of payrolls by a "backdoor" approach. It also opposed the upgrading of the post of Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD to the level of Assistant Secretary-General because all positions at the level of Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General should be reserved for officials directing departments and offices; in any event, such a reclassification might encourage wholesale reclassification within the United Nations system. His delegation considered the 4 new posts requested for the programme "Transfer of technology" to be unjustified; there should be no expansion of activity in that area until the role of UNCTAD had been defined through the discussions currently under way. It agreed with the statement of the Group B countries at the fourteenth session of the Trade and Development Board regarding both the lack of congruency between the programme budget and existing intergovernmental resolutions and decisions on transfer of technology, and the need for co-ordination of UNCTAD activities with those of other international organizations dealing with science and technology. Furthermore, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD should refrain from anticipating the decisions of intergovernmental bodies and confine his work to carrying out specific mandates from them.

41. His delegation urged UNCTAD to cut down on its documentation: it was projecting an increase from 48 to 76 million pages in 1977 whereas other United Nations bodies were showing a steady decrease.

42. His delegation would thus support an appropriation of no more than $39,256,000 for the biennium.

43. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his country had always supported the development of UNCTAD activities as a way of promoting equitable international trade relations among all countries.

44. One of the major items in the estimates for UNCTAD concerned the fourth session of the Conference which, it was estimated, would cost $1.1 million more than the third session. His delegation was surprised that the Advisory Committee merely trusted that it would be possible to make significant savings in the estimate currently indicated, rather than making radical proposals to cut the inordinately large estimate for the session.

45. His delegation considered that the reduction of $604,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee for section 11, including the International Trade Centre, was too small. On the basis of its position of principle with regard to the costs attributed to inflation, to the expansion of the staff of the UNCTAD secretariat and to other unjustified expenditure, his delegation could not support the estimates. Accordingly, if a separate vote was taken on the Secretary-General's request for appropriations for those purposes, his delegation would vote against it, and it would abstain in the vote on the amount requested for section 11 as a whole.

46. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) noted that one of the reasons cited for the increase of approximately 81 per cent in the cost of the fourth session of the Conference in comparison with the third session was the longer duration of the session. However, he understood that the fourth session was to last from 3 to 28 May 1976, whereas the third session had run from 13 April to 21 May 1972. He asked for an explanation of the apparent discrepancy.

47. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that UNCTAD was the economic tribune of the developing countries and had contributed to the new dialogue between the North and the South. Accordingly, his delegation approved the Advisory Committee's recommendations and would support no further reduction in the appropriation. In particular, it was opposed to any reduction in the programme "Transfer of technology".

48. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked whether the estimate for UNCTAD "submitted by the Secretary-General" had been carefully scrutinized by the United Nations Budget Division.

49. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that all sections of the proposed programme budget had been subjected to the normal scrutiny.

50. With regard to the point made by the representative of the United States concerning the 4 new posts for the programme "Transfer of technology," he pointed out that at least 3 of the posts had been specifically requested under the terms of decision 117 (XIV) of the Trade and Development Board,[1] dated 13 September 1974, and that a statement of the financial implications of that text had been submitted to the Board.[2]

51. The proceedings of the fourth session of the Conference would in fact cover seven weeks; that period included some two or three weeks' work by the Trade and Development Board at a special session and two days' preparatory work by the Board immediately prior to the Conference.

52. With regard to the proposed upgrading of the post of Chief Administration Officer in the Division of Administration and Common Services of the International Trade Centre from P-5 to D-1, which the Advisory Committee had not supported, he stressed that, in the view of the GATT Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration, the responsibilities of the post justified the upgrading and that it would not entail any changes in the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee; apart from that point, the GATT Committee accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

53. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that since the upgrading of the post of Chief Administration Officer from P-5 to D-1 would not lead to reinstatement of the reductions in the Centre's budget recommended by the Advisory Committee, it had decided not to interpose any objection to the proposal by the GATT Committee.

54. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that as UNCTAD was the most important United Nations body in the field of trade and development it should be given the resources it needed to gear its work to the objectives of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. His delegation therefore endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendations. He understood that the International Trade Centre was financed partly by the United Nations and partly by other organizations; he asked which other organizations were involved and what proportion of the financing each contributed.

55. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation's criticism of section 11 applied only to the estimates and in no way to the programmes concerned. The estimates had not been drawn up with the necessary rigour and many items of expenditure appeared unjustified. For example, the justification given for the regrading of the post of Co-ordinating Officer requested in the proposed programme budget for the International Trade Centre (see A/C.5/1669, p. 19) was meaningless if the retiring Director (Promotion) was to be replaced.

56. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that he could not comment on the justification for the request mentioned by the last speaker, but he stressed that the Secretary-General was not the author of the document in question and was merely submitting it for the Committee's consideration.

57. Replying to the representative of the Philippines, he said that the financing of the Centre was shared equally by the United Nations and GATT; no other organizations were involved.

58. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 11 (see 1761st meeting, para. 88).

1 See *Official Records of the Trade and Development Board, First part of the Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 1.*

2 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 15,* annex VII.

An appropriation in the amount of $40,147,400 under section 11 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 66 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

59. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the International Trade Centre (A/C.5/1669 and A/C.5/1671).

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 100

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the 1759th meeting)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (continued)**

SECTION 23. CONFERENCE AND LIBRARY SERVICES *(continued)** (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Pattern of conferences *(continued) (A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10032 and Corr.1, A/10348 and Corr.1, A/10397, A/10454, A/C.5/1711):**

(a)* Report of the Committee on Conferences *(continued)* **(A/10003, chap. VI, sect. G; A/10032 and Corr.1, A/10397, A/C.5/1711)**

60. The CHAIRMAN said that at the 1760th meeting the Committee had adjourned consideration of the proposal submitted by the delegation of Austria concerning recommendation 6 in paragraph 113 of the report of the Committee on Conferences (A/10032 and Corr.1). The amendment read as follows:

> "6. The Committee recommends to the General Assembly that beginning in 1976 the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should continue to meet in New York and Geneva, and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should meet at Headquarters in New York."

He invited the Director of the Budget Division to make a statement on the financial implications of the proposed amendment.

61. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the proposal to continue alternating the sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee between New York and Geneva would have no financial consequences for 1976-1977 because it would not change the current schedule for the 1976 session at Geneva and the 1977 session in New York. However, it would have implications for subsequent biennia. After 1977, the additional costs of a session of the Legal Sub-Committee at Geneva every other year would be about $60,000 at the current rate of exchange, comprising $45,000 for temporary conference staff and $15,000 for the travel costs of the substantive staff from New York.

62. Mrs. DERRE (France) noted that the proposal would involve no financial implications for the forthcoming biennium, which was the one under discussion. She pointed out that the Committee was not discussing the budget or the pattern of conferences for 1978-1979 and that in any event the observations by the Director of the Budget Division referred to a hypothetical situation. Her delegation therefore maintained its support of the Austrian proposal.

63. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) noted that if the Legal Sub-Committee held its 1976 session in New York, $60,000 would be saved. When his delegation asked for the financial implications of decisions on arrangements regarding meetings, its purpose was to ascertain whether money could be saved. That was why the Committee on Conferences had been set up. If it could not achieve savings, its usefulness was open to question. In view of the answer given by the Director of the Budget Division, his delegation would vote in favour of having the Legal Sub-Committee meet in New York in 1976 and 1977.

64. Mrs. DERRE (France) asked why the Legal Sub-Committee wished to continue to meet alternately in New York and Geneva.

65. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that even if the proposal by Austria was rejected, the application of recommendation 6 of the Committee on Conferences would not produce the savings envisaged by the United Kingdom representative. Since the proposal by the Committee on Conferences that the Legal Sub-Committee should meet in New York would not take effect until 1977, it would affect neither the 1976 session, which would be held at Geneva, nor the 1976-1977 budget.

66. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the amendment proposed by Austria to recommendation 6 in paragraph 113 of the report of the Committee on Conferences.

The amendment was rejected by 15 votes to 13, with 35 abstentions.

67. After a procedural discussion on the validity of the vote and the presence of a quorum in which Mr. SETHI (India), Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan), Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mrs. DERRE (France), Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) and the CHAIRMAN participated, Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) proposed that the meeting should be adjourned.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

* Resumed from the 1760th meeting.

1763rd meeting

Monday, 8 December 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1763

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS XI A AND XI B SUBMITTED BY THE FOURTH COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10427 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 23 *(continued)* (A/C.5/1740, A/C.5/1741)

1. The CHAIRMAN, recalling that the statements by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1740 and A/C.5/1741) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolutions XI A and XI B, submitted by the Fourth Committee in its report (A/10427, para. 72), had been introduced at the 1762nd meeting, and that the representative of Algeria had requested that a decision on them should be deferred, invited the Committee to resume its consideration of them.

2. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the decolonization of Spanish Sahara was an extremely serious and complicated question. Because of the imprecise nature of the financial implications of draft resolution XI B of the Fourth Committee, his delegation wished to request that the debate on them should be deferred.

3. However, since there were no financial implications for draft resolution XI A, the Committee should take a decision on it and submit its views to the General Assembly.

4. The CHAIRMAN said that it was his understanding that the two draft resolutions would have to be submitted to the General Assembly together. He would therefore like to know when the Algerian delegation would wish to resume consideration of the question.

5. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that it was not the wish of his delegation to hold up the work of the plenary. However, it was important for States to be told the level and qualifications of the representative of the Secretary-General and the officials who would accompany him to Spanish Sahara to carry out the mission envisaged in draft resolution XI B. The basic problem was whether the draft resolution was viable; there appeared to be a radical conflict between the principle of self-determination and the so-called Madrid agreement. The General Assembly could either confirm the Madrid agreement, thereby rejecting the principle of self-determination, or it could maintain the principle of self-determination and ignore or explicitly condemn the Madrid agreement–which was in fact not an agreement but a declaration of principles. One could not invoke the principle of self-determination in the case of a people whose territory one had decided to partition. Since the General Assembly did not have the entire text of the agreement before it, it would be well advised not to take a decision on the draft resolution, particularly since there was every reason to believe that the Madrid agreement constituted a negation of the doctrines on decolonization which the United Nations had upheld for almost two decades. Any Assembly recommendation should be based on established principles and on the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and the report of the visiting mission. If the sponsors of draft resolution XI B wished to have the opinion of the General Assembly on the document, they must obtain the full text of the Madrid agreement and allow the Assembly to judge the legality of its provisions.

6. The Secretariat had not provided the Committee with all the necessary information concerning the proposed mission. The representative of the Secretary-General must be selected on the basis of his honesty, integrity and ability to perceive the entire question. His delegation and other African countries which supported the principle of decolonization would categorically oppose the sending of a puppet official and would refuse, for example, to countenance the sending of the Secretary of the Fourth Committee who, in any case, was not an African.

7. In conclusion, if the financial implications of draft resolution XI B were put to a vote, his delegation would abstain.

8. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that his delegation supported the proposal to defer consideration of the item, for the reasons adduced by the delegation of Algeria.

9. Mr. BENKIRANE (Morocco) said that he did not think that the Fifth Committee should enter into a debate on the question, which had already been discussed at length in the Security Council, the Group of African States and the Fourth Committee. The Fourth Committee had adopted the draft resolution in full knowledge of its implications. Sixty-two countries had voted in favour of the draft resolution, which recommended a practical solution of the problem in conformity with the objectives of the United Nations. He did not believe that the Fifth Committee wished to stand in the way of a solution.

10. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had supported draft resolution XI A because it reflected the principles enshrined in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and, in particular, the right of peoples to self-determination. It could therefore support the statement of financial implications (A/C.5/1741).

11. His delegation was not convinced that the cost of implementing the provisions of draft resolution XI B should be met under the provision of the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. The Algerian delegation had pointed out that the financial implications had not yet been

clearly defined, and his delegation was inclined to agree that the vote should be postponed. If the implications were put to a vote, his delegation would abstain.

12. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) agreed with the Soviet and Algerian delegations on the need for additional information about the financial implications of draft resolution XI B. However, the Committee could vote on document A/C.5/1741 since draft resolution XI A, to which it related, had no financial implications.

13. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said that her delegation supported the Algerian proposal because it felt that the Committee could not vote on an incomplete statement of financial implications. Her delegation had abstained in the vote on draft resolution XI B in the Fourth Committee and would follow the same course of action in the Fifth Committee concerning the financial implications as long as the situation remained the same. However, the Committee could perhaps deal with document A/C.5/1741.

14. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) noted that the discussion in the Committee centred on the question of information. Had the Secretariat been asked to provide that information?

15. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the Secretariat had tried to gather as much information as possible, but had not been able to ascertain such details as how long the representative of the Secretary-General would stay in Spanish Sahara, since the Secretariat had no information on the intentions of the sponsors of draft resolution XI B.

16. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) proposed that the Committee should vote on document A/C.5/1741 and defer the consideration of document A/C.5/1740.

17. Mr. BENKIRANE (Morocco) felt that the intentions of draft resolution XI B, and in particular paragraph 4, were quite clear. He was authorized to state, however, that if there was the slightest difficulty with regard to the implications of that draft resolution, the Governments of Morocco and Mauritania were prepared to assume responsibility for the amount of the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General.

18. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) welcomed the statement by the Moroccan delegation. If Morocco and Mauritania were prepared to cover those expenses, draft resolution XI B would have no financial implications.

19. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria), speaking on a point of order, said that he had made a formal proposal that the Committee should vote on document A/C.5/1741 and that consideration of document A/C.5/1740 should be deferred until further information had been received. The Committee, in his view, was not empowered to accept or reject offers by Governments, offers which were in line with their own interests.

20. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) questioned the legality of the proposal made by the Moroccan delegation. Could the expenses of a United Nations staff member sent to supervise a matter in which Morocco had a vested interest be paid by the country concerned? She felt that it would be useful to have the opinion of the Legal Counsel on the question.

21. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that, although the Secretary-General was not yet asking for an additional appropriation, it was obvious that draft resolution XI B would have financial implications.

22. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) asked the Chairman to put his delegation's formal proposal to the vote.

23. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with rule 116 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, two representatives might speak in favour of and two against a motion for adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion, after which the motion would be immediately put to the vote.

24. Mr. BENKIRANE (Morocco) opposed adjournment of the debate and saw no reason why the Committee should discriminate between two statements of financial implications by adopting one and postponing action on the other.

25. Mr. FALL (Mauritania) said that his delegation also opposed postponement of the consideration of the statement of financial implications contained in document A/C.5/1740.

The motion for adjournment of the debate was adopted by 30 votes to 17, with 38 abstentions.

26. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee accepted the statement in document A/C.5/1741 concerning the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution XI A of the Fourth Committee.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10405 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 55* (A/C.5/1734)

27. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10405, para. 10). With regard to the provision of Arabic language services for the fourth session of UNCTAD at Nairobi, the Secretary-General had indicated in the statement he had submitted on the subject (A/C.5/1734) that, should the draft resolution be adopted by the General Assembly, an additional appropriation of $310,000 would be required under section 11 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. Also, additional requirements of $70,000 would be required for temporary assistance and travel should summary records be provided for the Conference; the Secretary-General was not requesting an appropriation at the current stage, but would do so at the time of the 1976 performance report should it be required.

* United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: report of the Trade and Development Board.

28. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee accepted the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General that should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, an additional amount of $310,000 would be required under section 11 of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977.

29. Mr. ALKAFF (Democratic Yemen) said that the document before the Committee was of concern to his own delegation and the other Arab delegations. His delegation wished to place on record its surprise at the obstacles raised in the Secretary-General's statement in document A/C.5/1734. That statement purported to explain the difficulties which had arisen with regard to the use of Arabic at the fourth session of UNCTAD to be held at Nairobi from 3 to 28 May 1976. His delegation wished to point out that the Arab group in the Second Committee had requested the Secretariat to take the necessary action to provide Arabic language services for UNCTAD, but the Secretariat had ignored that request. Thus, in paragraph 4 of document A/C.5/1734, the Secretary-General assured the Committee that he would make every effort to locate fully qualified staff to provide the required services, but could not guarantee that he would be successful. According to paragraph 5 he had assumed that summary records would not, in practice, be provided for the fourth session. In paragraph 7 it was indicated that should the draft resolution be adopted by the General Assembly and should the Secretary-General be able to provide the level of services indicated in the statement, an additional appropriation of $310,000 would be required under section 11 of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977. The reasons adduced in the statement by the Secretary-General were not convincing and were not sufficient to prevent the implementation of the provisions of the draft resolution, in operative paragraph 3 of which it was stated that the General Assembly "Decides ... that the languages of the fourth session of the Conference shall be those used in the General Assembly and its Main Committees". His delegation would like to know which authority would be responsible for locating qualified staff to provide the required services if the Secretary-General could not do so. His delegation would also like to point out that Arabic, a language of civilization and science, was an official language of the General Assembly and its Main Committees. It believed that the Secretariat had enough time to solve any difficulties before the Conference took place. It wished to thank all the delegations for having unanimously adopted the draft resolution in the Second Committee and called upon the members of the Fifth Committee to insist upon its implementation and the removal of any obstacles by adopting the following recommendation:

> "The Fifth Committee urges the Secretary-General to take all necessary steps in order to ensure the availability of Arabic language services to the fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development".

His delegation wished to request the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management to ensure that the Secretariat implemented the provisions of the draft resolution of the Second Committee, and in particular operative paragraph 3.

30. Mr. SCHLAFF (Department of Conference Services) said that the Department had been in contact with all but 3 or 4 of the very limited number of free-lance Arabic interpreters and had received assurances that 12 of them would be available to provide services to UNCTAD at Nairobi. However, all 12 were already committed to the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, the last week of which overlapped with the first week of UNCTAD. Since there was only 1 Arabic interpreter post in the manning tables, the pool of free-lance interpreters was the only one upon which the Secretariat could draw. In his statement at the 1760th meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services had drawn attention to the considerable difficulties involved in finding suitably qualified language staff, particularly for Arabic and Chinese, and had requested the assistance of the delegations concerned.

31. A competitive examination for Arabic translators had been held recently in the capitals of all the Arab countries and also in London, Paris, Geneva and New York, but there remained 8 vacancies in the Arabic Translation Service at Headquarters. Although the Department had been authorized to recruit 10 additional translators for the General Assembly, it had been able to fill 2 posts only. It had been informed that UNCTAD would require the translation of 1,500 pages of in-session documentation alone; there was simply not the capacity, in view of the proposed calendar of conferences and the other work of the Department, to handle that workload with the existing staff, much less to provide summary records for the meetings of UNCTAD. The Department was trying to find more staff and could continue to do so. However, it should also be borne in mind that UNCTAD would be followed by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, for which Arabic language services had also been requested, and that other international meetings were also scheduled to be held at Geneva. The Department of Conference Services considered that it was fairer to explain its position and its doubts regarding its ability to find the necessary number of fully qualified staff than to confront delegations with a *de facto* situation when it was too late.

32. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt) said that his country would offer all the assistance it could for the provision of Arabic services for the fourth session of UNCTAD. He supported the proposal of the representative of Democratic Yemen, which should be reflected in the Committee's report.

33. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) endorsed the statements made by the representatives of Democratic Yemen and Egypt. Arabic must be treated in the same way as the other official languages. There was certainly enough time to find qualified interpreters for the fourth session of UNCTAD; he could not accept the argument that interpreters were not available.

34. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) supported the proposal of the representative of Democratic Yemen. He noted the real difficulties encountered by the Department of Conference Services and the Egyptian offer of help. He was sure that the problem could be overcome and urged the Secretariat to co-operate with Egypt.

35. Mr. ALKAFF (Democratic Yemen) thanked the representative of the Department of Conference Services for his statement. The difficulties could certainly be overcome, especially in view of the Egyptian offer. For such an important conference the Secretariat should do its utmost to provide adequate Arabic language services; the Secretariat had sufficient time to discharge its responsibilities.

36. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) supported the proposal of the representative of Democratic Yemen.

37. Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) thought that Arabic language services were encountering indifference in the United Nations. He endorsed the statements of the representatives of Democratic Yemen and Egypt and assured the Department of Conference Services that all the Arab countries would co-operate in helping to meet the language requirements for the session of UNCTAD. The argument that qualified staff could not be found was unconvincing. The Arab countries had sufficient qualified staff to meet all the needs.

38. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) thought that the proposal of the representative of Democratic Yemen was reasonable and legitimate. Since no delegation had opposed it, he proposed the closure of the debate.

39. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to close the debate.

It was so decided.

40. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee approved the proposal of the representative of Democratic Yemen.

It was so decided.

41. The CHAIRMAN said that the Egyptian offer would be reflected in the Committee's report. He suggested that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Second Committee, an additional appropriation of $310,000 would be required under section 11 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and an additional provision of $56,000 for staff assessment would be required under section 25, offset by a similar amount under income section 1.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION V SUBMITTED BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10412 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 59* (A/C.5/1726)

42. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee concurred in the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1726) concerning the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution V submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10412, para. 27).

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) took the Chair.

43. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Second Committee, additional appropriations of $89,650 would be required under section 13 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. An amount of $8,500 for staff assessment would be required under section 25, offset by a similar amount under income section 1.

It was so decided.

44. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that his Government's position with respect to the amount of $18,150 referred to in paragraph 5 of the statement of administrative and financial implications was that representatives of national liberation movements should be invited by the General Assembly only for such time as was reasonably necessary for them to participate in the consideration of items relevant to them. In general, travel and subsistence payments should adhere as closely as possible to the general principles set forth in resolution 1798 (XVII). His delegation had doubts therefore as to the propriety of the United Nations meeting the costs of travel to Vancouver and of subsistence for the representatives of liberation movements from its regular budget.

45. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that his delegation in the Second Committee had made its position clear with regard to the financial implications of the draft resolution in so far as they concerned the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the Conference at Vancouver on human settlements. He again placed on record his delegation's opposition to any financial contribution by the United Nations to the participation of that organization.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION IV SUBMITTED BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10467 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 12* A/10008/ADD.15, A/C.5/1719)

46. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that under the terms of operative paragraph 4 of draft resolution IV submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10467, para. 57), the General Assembly would decide that the cost of the United Nations Conference on Desertification would be borne by the United Nations regular budget. As indicated in the Secretary-General's statement of administrative and financial implications (A/C.5/1719) and in paragraph 2 of the Advisory Committee's related report (A/10008/Add.15), the Secretary-General had interpreted paragraph 4 of the draft resolution to mean that full administrative and substantive respon-

* United Nations Environment Programme:
(a) Report of the Governing Council;
(b) Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements: report of the Secretary-General;
(c) Criteria governing multilateral financing of housing and human settlements: report of the Secretary-General.

* Report of the Economic and Social Council.

sibility for the preparation of the Conference rested with the United Nations Environment Programme and that the United Nations would provide direct conference servicing facilites. On that basis, the Secretary-General estimated that $540,000 would be required in 1977 to service the Conference. His estimates would seem to be based on maximum requirements and assumed no input from regular conference staff or other related resources of either the United Nations Office at Geneva or Headquarters, in New York. The Advisory Committee recalled that in considering the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006) it had agreed (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 23.11) to an increase in the number of interpretation teams at both Headquarters and Geneva, thus reducing considerably the recourse to temporary assistance. That consideration became especially relevant because the Conference would take place at a time when the volume of meetings and conferences was normally low. However, the Advisory Committee appreciated the problem facing the Secretary-General in his attempt to determine nearly two years ahead the precise requirements for the Conference and the contribution to be made from resources already in hand. Accordingly, it was of the opinion that no appropriation should be made at that stage and that estimates concerning the Conference should be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, when the Secretary-General would be in a better position to assess the requirements for the Conference and their full impact on the regular budget.

47. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in accordance with the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 9 of its report, the Fifth Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Second Committee, an additional appropriation not exceeding $540,000 might be required under section 4 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, but that the exact extent of those requirements was not as yet ascertainable and would be the subject of a separate submission by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEMS 96 AND 100

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1759th meeting; A/10008/Add.14, A/C.5/1730/Add.1)

***First reading of individual sections of the programme budget* (concluded)**

SECTION 23. LIBRARY AND CONFERENCE SERVICES *(concluded)* (A/10006, A/10008 AND CORR.2)

Pattern of conferences *(continued)* (for the documentation, see the 1762nd meeting):

(a)* Report of the Committee on Conferences *(continued)* *(idem)

Preparatory Committee for Habitat (concluded)*

48. The CHAIRMAN observed that the Committee on Conferences had not reached any decision concerning the second session of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. At the 1760th meeting, the representative of Sweden had proposed that the Preparatory Committee should meet for two weeks from 12 to 23 January 1976, while the representative of France had proposed that it should meet for only one week from 19 to 23 January. In accordance with rule 130 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, he proposed to put the Swedish amendment to a vote first; if that amendment obtained the required majority, the French proposal would automatically lapse.

49. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the Swedish proposal entailed no financial implications.

50. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that his delegation was opposed to any extension of the second session of the Preparatory Committee. Some 10 regional preparatory meetings had already been held and the work was sufficiently advanced to make the additional week unnecessary. The Conference was to focus on the problems of human settlements in the developing countries but the main problem for the developing countries was development. The problem to be debated at the Conference was therefore one for the future.

51. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that the preparatory work was not as far advanced as the representative of Algeria thought; substantive work remained to be done, notably completion of the drafting of the rules of procedure. The rules of procedure must be thoroughly prepared if the Conference was to be productive. The benefits that might result from the Conference were not at issue; rather it was a question of whether it would be productive in terms of the investment made in it. The Preparatory Committee needed more time and its second session should be extended.

52. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) endorsed the comments made by the representative of Kenya.

The Swedish amendment was adopted by 36 votes to 24, with 15 abstentions.

53. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that, if it had been present, his delegation would have voted for the proposal.

Economic and Social Council (concluded)*

54. The CHAIRMAN said that, at the 1760th meeting, the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany had proposed that items 50 and 86 of the provisional calendar of United Nations conferences and meetings for 1976 (A/10032 and Corr.1, annex I, table A) should be amended by deleting the dates and replacing them by the words "To be determined". The aim was to ensure that the Economic and Social Council would be free to decide on its own arrangements and to adjust them to the heavy schedule of meetings in 1976. The competence of the Council had not

* Resumed from the 1760th meeting.

been questioned by the Committee on Conferences and he suggested that the aim of the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany would be met if the discussion in the Fifth Committee was reflected in its report.

55. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that he could accept the Chairman's suggestion on the understanding that the recommendations containing specific dates which had already been approved would be subject to the same reservation.

56. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) endorsed the Chairman's suggestion.

57. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee approved the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences contained in paragraph 113 of its report, with the exception of recommendation 3, and agreed that the reservation of the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany should be reflected in the Fifth Committee's report.

It was so decided.

* * *

58. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the draft resolution (see A/10032/Corr.1) recommended by the Committee on Conferences for adoption. He recalled that the text replaced that initially submitted as recommendation 15 in paragraph 113 of the Committee's report. In the new text two references to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had been deleted, and a paragraph 4, the text of which (A/C.5/L.1277) had already been adopted by the Committee at its 1760th meeting, had been added to the operative part.

The draft resolution, was adopted.

59. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the 1757th meeting he had drawn attention to a communication he had received from the President of the Economic and Social Council regarding the Council's right to determine the date and venue of its sessions. The representative of Greece had made a proposal on that occasion.

60. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that, in the light of subsequent discussions he felt it advisable to withdraw the proposal which he had made at the 1757th meeting. He had no intention of drawing the Committee into a discussion of the respective competence of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council regarding the calendar of conferences. The discussions which had taken place at the 1981st meeting of the Council on 10 November 1975 showed that complex legal questions were involved. Probably for that reason, the Council had refrained from going more deeply into the matter and had limited itself to transmitting to the Fifth Committee its views on the subject.

61. Consequently, the Committee could either reach a decision, implicitly or explicitly, on the apportionment of competence between the General Assembly and the Council with regard to the calendar of conferences, in which case it would be well advised to ask for guidance from the Legal Counsel, or it could put on record and convey to the Council the views which had been expressed on the matter. It was the latter course which he was proposing.

62. The CHAIRMAN proposed that he should draft a reply to the President of the Council and circulate it to the members of the Committee during the week.

It was so decided.

63. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should take note of chapter VI, section G, of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/10003).

It was so decided.

64. Mr. ARAUJO (Brazil) repeated his delegation's reservation regarding the venue, the date and the opportuneness of the United Nations Water Conference.

65. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to questions put by the representative of the United States at the 1759th meeting, said that the posts transferred to the library at Geneva instead of appearing under section 11–relating to UNCTAD–of the proposed programme budget did not represent the conversion of temporary into permanent posts. There had been a change in the budgetary account, but no conversion of posts.

66. The United States representative had also asked why the conference expenditures of the Governing Council of UNDP were charged to the regular budget of the United Nations. It would be recalled that by its resolution 2029 (XX) the General Assembly had established the Governing Council as an organ of the United Nations. Consequently, conference expenditures were included under the regular United Nations budget, as they were for any other organ, and the Governing Council was included in the pattern of conferences. There was of course a clear distinction between conference expenditures and expenditure relating to the secretariat of UNDP, which was financed by voluntary contributions.

67. With reference to section 4 of the programme budget, he confirmed the supposition put forward by the United States representative at the 1758th meeting that the reasons for the increase in expenditure on certain meetings of bodies of the Economic and Social Council was the longer duration of sessions and more staff travel following a change of venue.

68. With reference to section 23, it would be recalled that the Secretary-General had estimated at some $194,000 the savings which could be made on expenditure for documentation if criterion 5, recommended by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10299) relating to agenda item 101, were adopted. More detailed study had shown that the actual savings over the whole of the biennium 1976-1977 might be as high as $300,000; the savings would relate mainly to section 1.

69. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) recalled that the Advisory Committee had estimated at about $4 million, at 1975 prices, the minimum total savings which could be achieved over the biennium in the matter of documents and

publications if the criteria, which had since been endorsed by the General Assembly, were applied. The report of the Advisory Committee had been prepared some two months later than its recommendations with regard to section 23 and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had left it to the Fifth Committee to take a decision on both documents. In view of the information just provided by the Director of thy Budget Division to the effect that a total of $300,000 could be saved over the biennium, he proposed that the Fifth Committee should recommend a reduction in the budget estimates under section 23 of an amount equal to only one third, at 1976-1977 prices, of the minimum realizable savings calculated by the Advisory Committee. That would amount to a reduction of $1.5 million and not $2 million as he had proposed at the 1760th meeting.

70. There was an obligation on the Fifth Committee to recommend savings where it could. The budget estimates should be adapted to real needs and if exceptional events beyond the control of the Secretary-General occurred during the biennium, which would preclude any substantial savings, the matter could be reported again to the Committee. He hoped that the Committee would accept by consensus the modest reduction which he had proposed.

71. He expressed appreciation of the enthusiasm and dedication of the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and his staff.

72. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) recalled that, at the 1760th meeting, he had suggested that it be left to the Secretary-General to make whatever budgetary adjustments he could and to report at the thirty-first session on the savings that had been achieved and those that were anticipated for the ensuing year, so that the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee could study the matter more thoroughly at the thirty-first session and decide whether larger savings should be reflected in the revised budget estimates.

73. In view of the Belgian representative's statement that his proposed reduction would be only $1.5 million and was intended to be subject to review in 1976 and 1977, he would agree that that was an equally good approach, bearing in mind that it was not certain how much could be saved in the coming biennium; $1.5 million might be too severe a cut, but on the other hand it might be too little.

74. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) repeated his objection to any outright cut in the Advisory Committee's estimates. The Advisory Committee's recommendations should be put to the vote.

75. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that he welcomed the initiative of the Belgium representative because the savings which he had suggested emanated from criteria proposed by the Secretariat, in which the Advisory Committee had concurred.

76. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) said that the Secretary-General was bound to make the appropriate corrections in the budget of the United Nations for 1976-1977, in pursuance of the instruction in paragraph 2 of resolution 3415 (XXX) adopted by the General Assembly that same morning. However, it must be borne in mind that the criteria for the provision of meeting records proposed in the Secretary-General's report on publications and documentation of the United Nations (A/C.5/1670) did not all relate to section 23. Consequently, if the Secretary-General had to apply an arbitrary cut of $1.5 million, he should be told where the cuts were to be made, otherwise funds might not be available to implement decisions which the Fifth Committee, having been informed of the financial implications, had approved on the understanding that the Secretary-General would have at his disposal the funds approved by the Advisory Committee. A less confusing procedure would be for the Secretariat to make all the savings it could through application of the criteria, and to report on the implementation of the savings during the following year.

77. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) supported the proposal of the representative of the Philippines. He proposed that the debate be closed and the recommendation of the Advisory Committee regarding section 23 of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 be put to the vote.

78. Mr. PALARMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that the Belgian proposal was an amendment that had to be voted on first in accordance with rule 130 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

79. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) and Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) maintained that the Belgian proposal was not an amendment and that the Advisory Committee's recommendation should be put to the vote.

80. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he must insist on rule 130 of the rules of procedure being applied. If it were not, he would be obliged to ask for an opinion by the Legal Counsel.

81. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that he withdrew his objection to the Belgian proposal being voted on first.

82. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation was in favour of savings but rejected the approach that all savings should be made under section 23. He would withdraw his proposal, but would vote against the Belgian proposal because it did not specify how the cuts were to be made.

83. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that it should be understood that the reduction he had proposed related specifically to expenditure on publications and documentation.

84. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the proposal of the representative of Belgium to reduce the appropriation under section 23 of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977 by $1.5 million.

The proposal was rejected by 42 votes to 20, with 18 abstentions.

85. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that he shared the Belgian representative's concern and appreciated his efforts, but believed that the budget estimates should not be cut unless it was indicated which substantive programmes or activities were to be reduced. The best course would be to permit the

Secretary-General to adjust the budget estimates, subject to subsequent review by the Advisory Committee.

86. Mr. OUÉDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that he agreed that savings should be made and noted the Secretary-General's estimate of possible savings of $4 million through application of the criteria. However, the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services had said that the criteria, and therefore the cut, could not necessarily be applied to section 23 alone, so that the basis for the reduction of the Belgian representative's figure from $2 million to $1.5 million was not clear.

87. Mr. WHANNOU (Benin) said that, if he had been present during the vote, he would have voted for the Belgian proposal.

88. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee vote on the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 23 (see 1734th meeting, para. 24).

An appropriation in the amount of $103,989,600 under section 23 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 70 votes to 10, with 3 abstentions.

89. The CHAIRMAN said that the reduction of $300,000 under section 1, mentioned by the Director of the Budget Division, would be considered in second reading.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.

1764th meeting

Monday, 8 December 1975, at 8.45 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1764

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1759th meeting; A/10008/Add.14, A/C.5/1730/Add.1)

Working paper submitted by the Controller

1. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) introduced the working paper which he was submitting to the Committee[1] showing the effect on the budget of the United Nations for the biennium 1976-1977 of reducing the inflation factor by 2 or 3 per cent and of assuming different rates of exchange. The total gross expenditure estimates submitted by the Secretary-General amounted to $737 million. When the initial budget estimates had been prepared, an exchange rate of 3.10 Swiss francs to the dollar had been assumed and agreed to by all the specialized agencies as a common approach; however, the current rate was closer to 2.63 Swiss francs to the dollar. The potential deficit because of that change was approximately 17.87 per cent, or $25,029,000 for the total estimates of $737 million. Revised estimates of $11,316,000 and financial implications of proposals made during the session–$6,072,000–might, however, be added to the amount approved in first reading, giving a final total of $738,622,000 plus $26 or $27 million due to changes in the rates of exchange. The effects of assuming lower rates of inflation were given in annex I; the $25 million saving from reducing the inflation rate by 2 per cent would, when the changes in the rates of exchange were taken into account, be reduced to $24 million; likewise, in the case of a 3 per cent reduction on the assumed inflation rate, the saving would be approximately $23.6 million, once the changes in the rates of exchange were taken into account.

2. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) thanked the Secretariat for the information provided in the working paper. The Committee would have to decide what inflation rates it would assume for the purposes of the budget. The Secretary-General in his proposed programme budget had provided no justification at all for the assumed 7 or 9 per cent inflation rates, while the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in paragraph 22 of its report (A/10008 and Corr.2), had confined itself to commenting that the Secretary-General's assumption was a working hypothesis. The Chairman had stated that approval of estimates in first reading did not prejudge the final decision on what inflation rates would be used in the budget. Inflation rates could only be estimated, but they should be a reasoned guess, and he asked what rates the Secretary-General proposed to use and for what reasons. He trusted that answers to his questions would be given in the revised estimates. His delegation's position on the budget would depend on the answers provided.

3. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that he agreed in general with the observations of the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Secretary-General should take a new look at inflation rates in view of financial and economic developments since May when the proposed programme budget had been drawn up, and submit a report to the Fifth Committee through the Advisory Committee. He trusted that the most recent forecasts for inflation would be used by the Secretary-General. His delegation was willing to accept the Secretary-General's assumed inflation

[1] Conference room paper A/C.5/XXX/CRP.11 of 26 November 1975.

rates provided he took a fresh look at the situation and satisfied the Advisory Committee. As for rates of exchange, he suggested that the revised estimates should be based on the rates prevailing on the day on which those estimates were drawn up.

4. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that the aim in making assumptions concerning inflation rates and the rates of exchange between the United States dollar and the Swiss franc should be to estimate requirements as accurately as possible. The Secretary-General should not be given too little in an effort to force economies on him, or too much to aid him with his cash-flow problem.

5. As the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany had said, the question was whether the working assumptions in the Secretary-General's original budget estimates could still be justified in the light of the evidence available. It was, of course, difficult to forecast inflation and exchange rates, but it was essential to try and, in so doing, to be guided by the latest evidence. The Government of the United States of America, like the Government of the United Kingdom, did not forecast inflation, but had recently indicated that it expected a dramatic fall in food prices in 1976, and it had adopted a policy of price controls for petroleum products which would have a significant steadying effect on the consumer price index. The statistical inflation trend in the United States had been downwards in recent months and its economic policy was still very cautious. Accordingly, he maintained that the Secretary-General's working assumptions for inflation in New York in 1976 and 1977 needed to be revised. The same held good for Geneva, as the Swiss Government had forecast 5 or 6 per cent inflation for 1976. In the light of that evidence, he asked the Controller whether he agreed that the rates to be assumed in the budget should be revised downwards, and if so, what the rates should be. His delegation's attitude towards the programme budget might well depend on whether the rates assumed seemed justified by reference to the available evidence.

6. On the question of the rate of exchange between the United States dollar and the Swiss franc, he suggested that it should be revised from 3.10 Swiss francs to the dollar to the current rate of approximately 2.65 Swiss francs to the dollar, provided that the Secretary-General revised his inflation assumption downwards in the light of the evidence. He could not support any change in the parity assumption unless it was accompanied by a significant downward revision of the inflation assumption.

7. On the question whether the Secretary-General should be asked to react to increased costs attributable to inflation by more actively searching for economies, he said that a search for economies should not be directly linked to semi-full budgeting assumptions. It seemed right, however, when inflation was weighing heavily on Member States, to ask the Secretary-General to economize in every possible way and to report at the thirty-first session on how he had done so. His delegation would support any draft resolution to that effect.

8. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said that the Committee had been avoiding the crux of the whole problem. There were certain basic factors involved which simply could not be disregarded. Inflation was extremely difficult to predict, and it affected and involved the whole world. It could not be regarded as a purely technical question with technical solutions; the problem was a political one.

9. He proposed that the Committee should establish a fact-finding sub-committee, composed of approximately 20 members of the Fifth Committee, 10 representing the major contributors and 10 the regional groups, to deal with the questions raised in the working paper submitted by the Controller. The sub-committee might give detailed consideration to the question during March and April 1976, and report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. He urged the Committee to support his proposal, which reflected a balanced and sound approach to the problem of inflation. If there was no support for it, however, he was prepared to withdraw it.

10. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that inflation involved a matter of principle and a technical matter. The matter of principle was whether the budget should include an inflation and exchange rate factor: he maintained that such full budgeting was the correct approach, and he believed that a majority of members of the Committee endorsed it.

11. The technical matter involved the rates to be assumed. As the Advisory Committee had said, only hypotheses were available, and the Secretary-General had proposed an inflation rate of 7 to 9 per cent for New York and Geneva over the coming biennium. If the Secretary-General were to propose different rates in the light of recent developments, his delegation would have no difficulty in accepting them, but if the Secretary-General could show that there was no convincing reason for changing his original rates, it was willing to accept those rates.

12. Commenting on annex II to the working paper, he noted that salaries and wages plus common staff costs accounted for almost 70 per cent of expenditures due to inflation, which was a sector in which economies could hardly be made. He suggested that the Fifth Committee might decide in principle to approve the inflation rate used for the budget and subsequently revise it upwards or downwards depending on developments.

13. He did not support the proposal by the representative of Brazil because he held that inflation was not a problem which could be solved by 20 wise men making political recommendations.

14. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said that the question of inflation was already being discussed in a political forum and that ultimately any decision taken on it was a political decision.

15. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) asked what would happen, in the context of the financial regulations and the programme budget, in the event that the exchange rate between the Swiss franc and the United States dollar and inflation rates proved higher or lower than those assumed in the budget estimates. He requested the Controller to inform the Committee of the source of the forecasts which estimated higher or lower inflation rates than those used in the programme budget, with an indication of the accuracy

of their previous forecasts. He also requested information on Government inflation forecasts.

16. As he understood it, the United Kingdom representative had linked the question to the cash-flow situation. The solution to the problem of inflation would, he himself believed, be linked to the question of whether the Working Capital Fund was doubled, as suggested by the Secretary-General.

17. He reserved his delegation's position on the Brazilian proposal.

18. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the inflation rate used by the Secretary-General in his initial programme budget estimates was probably no longer valid. He invited the Secretary-General to provide information on the forecasts available, so that the Committee might gain some understanding of the views of Governments and financial circles on inflation. Inflation was apparently easing in the United States of America and Switzerland, and much had been said about an inflation rate of 6 or 6.5 per cent. The Secretariat might do some further work on the question and submit the most likely rates to the Advisory Committee for its comments, and that Committee should report to the Fifth Committee as soon as possible.

19. On the question of full budgeting, he said that he would prefer a working hypothesis to be used for inflation for the following two years in which the assumed rate was slightly lower than the current rate, so that the Secretariat would make adjustments to accommodate at least 1 per cent of the budget.

20. On the question of currency instability, he said that the Secretary-General should submit estimates to cover losses actually incurred because of changes in the exchange rates.

21. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that it would be most unorthodox for the Committee to tamper with the inflation rates assumed by the Secretariat when it had already approved the budget estimates in first reading. His delegation favoured the full-budgeting approach because it believed that account should be taken of inflation and currency rates. There was a tendency to forget that inflation arose in the developed countries and that abandonment of the full-budgeting approach would jeopardize programmes which, for the most part, were designed to assist developing countries.

22. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that he wished to correct a misunderstanding that might have arisen owing to some comments made by the representative of Greece, who had understood him to say that there was a link between the inflationary component of the budget and the cash-flow problems of the Organization. In fact, he had said that the Fifth Committee should not strive to give the Secretary-General too much, either to ease his cash-flow problems or for any other reason, or to give him too little in an effort to force him to make economies.

23. In the light of the statement made by the representative of Algeria, he wished to stress that his delegation's approach was a full-budgeting one.

24. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that she fully endorsed the statement made by the representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and Belgium. Full budgeting had been employed, even though it did not meet with the agreement of all delegations. The problem to be settled concerned assumed rates of inflation. In advocating that the rates selected by the Secretary-General in May should be adjusted downwards in order to reflect current trends, her delegation was not criticizing the Secretariat, which had performed its task well. She agreed with the representative of Belgium that there was a case for selecting rates of inflation that were slightly lower than the real rates and, as was done by some of the specialized agencies, absorbing some of the additional expenditures by achieving economies in appropriate ways. The problem of miscalculations arising from currency fluctuations was a practical one and could easily be remedied at the end of the financial year by the submission of supplementary estimates.

25. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that, to the best of his recollection, the Committee had agreed to begin its consideration of the budget estimates in first reading on the clear understanding that, by so doing, it was not prejudging a subsequent decision on the assumed rate of inflation to be incorporated in the budget.

26. The CHAIRMAN said that the recollection of the representative of Belgium was correct. Since there had been some difference of opinion among delegations on the question of full budgeting, he had appealed to the Committee at the 1702nd meeting to take up the budget estimates in first reading on the understanding that a final determination of the inflationary component would be reached at a subsequent stage.

27. Miss FORCIGNANÒ (Italy) endorsed the comments made by the representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium and the United Kingdom. The subject under discussion was not a political issue, and there was no question of abandoning certain programmes. What was required was to adjust the rates of inflation selected by the Secretary-General in May so as to reflect the current economic situation. The common-sense approach was to base the inflationary component of the budget on up-to-date projections of inflation in the United States and Switzerland. As the representative of France pointed out, any changes arising from currency fluctuation could be rectified through the submission of supplementary estimates.

28. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had already stated its position regarding the matter of additional expenditures arising from inflation. It had emphasized that, in keeping with earlier decisions taken by the General Assembly, such additional expenditures should be absorbed through adjustments within the budget—by reviewing programmes, reordering priorities, and achieving savings wherever possible. His delegation could not agree with the representative of Algeria that the Committee should approve any rate of inflation selected by the Secretariat or that the substantive programmes would suffer from the approach which it was advocating. The funds expended on Secretariat staff had no real impact on the economy of the developing countries. Certain delegations tended to forget that Member States,

particularly the main contributors to the budget, had limited resources and could not afford to support uncontrolled growth of the United Nations budget. His delegation could not therefore accept budget estimates that were based on arbitrary assumptions of rates of inflation. It would like the Controller and his staff to study the budget estimates very carefully and to prune them wherever possible. Any additional expenditures that might subsequently arise owing to inflation and currency fluctuations should be financed by savings within the budget, even if that meant the curtailment of non-essential programmes.

29. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the discussion should be resumed at a subsequent meeting.

It was so decided.

Revised estimates resulting from decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-eighth and fifty-ninth sessions (A/10008/Add.6, A/C.5/1682 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1)

30. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the reports of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1682 and A/C.5/1682/Add.1 and Corr.1) and to the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.6).

31. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General in his first report (A/C.5/1682) estimated that implementation of the Council's decisions would lead to additional expenditures of about $2.3 million, offset by an amount of $318,000 in estimated income during the current biennium.

32. A summary of the Advisory Committee's recommendations was contained in paragraph 57 of its report. The bulk of the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee concerned sections 5A, 8, 10 and 18. Except in the case of section 8, the Advisory Committee had based its recommendations on the conclusion that the Secretary-General could implement the various decisions of the Economic and Social Council with fewer funds than he was requesting in his report.

33. In paragraphs 9, 11 and 12 of its report, for example, the Advisory Committee had recommended that the $137,000 requested for section 5A should be reduced by $57,000 and had recommended combined reductions of $42,000 for sections 10 and 18. In all those cases, it had been mindful of the credits already included in the initial budget proposals for such items as consultants, printing, expert groups and travel and of the Fifth Committee's urging that the Secretary-General should endeavour at all times to administer funds authorized for those items with due regard to economy and efficiency. The Secretary-General had also included estimated amounts of $33,000 for each of the proposed regional meetings on technical co-operation. In each case the Advisory Committee had recommended the deletion of $8,000 for the travel from New York of United Nations and UNDP substantive staff, because the financing from the regular budget of that travel expenditure was not in conformity with the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1963 (LIX), which required the United Nations to meet the cost of conference servicing for the regional meetings on technical co-operation.

34. The reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 8 were, however, based on different considerations. The Secretary-General had requested an amount of $690,000, the breakdown for which was given in paragraph 19 of the Advisory Committee's report. In paragraph 41 of that report the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of $539,500 in the estimates requested by the Secretary-General. Part of that reduction was being effected through the decision of the Secretary-General temporarily to withdraw the amount of $175,000, representing salaries and common staff costs for 9 posts, and travel and consultant funds requested for the programme of work of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee.

35. The Secretary-General had submitted additional information in document A/C.5/1682/Add.1 and Corr.1 since the report of the Advisory Committee had been circulated. In view of that information, the Advisory Committee was prepared to endorse the request for the 9 posts and the related additional amount of $175,000 requested in paragraph 14 of the document in question. That recommendation was, however, subject to the comments and observations made by the Advisory Committee in its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2) on the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977, in particular in paragraphs 8.3 to 8.5.

36. One of the Secretary-General's requests under section 8 concerned an amount of $382,500, which was related to the implementation of ECLA resolution 357 (XVI)[2] on the institutional aspects of ECLA action. Of that total, $337,500 was for salaries and common staff costs of 7 staff members of the Latin American Centre for Demography (CELADE), which it was proposed to transfer to the ECLA manning table. Those posts—1 D-2, 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-3 and 3 local-level posts—were currently financed from extra-budgetary resources. As would be seen from paragraphs 24 to 28 of the Advisory Committee's report, the initial proposal for that transfer had been made by the Committee of the Whole of ECLA at its tenth extraordinary session in March 1975, when it had recommended, in its resolution 346 (AC.68), the incorporation of CELADE in the ECLA system as a permanent institution with its own identity. It was regrettable, however, that neither in the Committee of the Whole nor in ECLA itself had proper regard been paid to the need to formulate a comprehensive statement of administrative and financial implications for the decision in question. Furthermore, when the Economic and Social Council had adopted decision 104 (LIX) on 22 July 1975, it had not had before it the report of the Committee of the Whole of ECLA on its tenth extraordinary session; it had taken note of the report of the ninth extraordinary session and of the resolutions in part II of that report. In other words, in document A/C.5/1682 the Secretary-General was requesting funds to implement a decision of the Economic and Social Council which the Council had not yet taken. The Fifth Committee would no

2 See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 9*, part III.

doubt wish to weigh all the implications of that unorthodox approach before taking any decision on the proposals of the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee had had no alternative but to conclude that the estimates requested by the Secretary-General were not receivable and had therefore been unable to recommend approval of them.

37. Apart from that technical problem, the proposal to transfer the 7 posts currently funded from extra-budgetary resources to the ECLA manning table, if approved, might have repercussions that would transcend the amount of $337,500 related to the posts concerned. In paragraphs 29 to 36 of its report, the Advisory Committee dealt at some length with the origin of CELADE, its method of financing and the resources currently available to it, and drew attention to the need for General Assembly guidance on the principles which the proposal involved. In paragraph 35 of its report the Advisory Committee suggested a possible course of action which the Fifth Committee might wish to consider.

38. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the table in paragraph 57 of the Advisory Committee's report, in which a summary of the requests by the Secretary-General and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee appeared section by section. In view of the statement of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, the figures denoting the amounts recommended by the Advisory Committee should be revised as follows: under section 8, a sum of $175,000 should be added; under section 25, an amount of $35,000 should be added; and income section 1 should be amended to show the same figure as section 25. The new total for the various expenditure sections would thus be $1,660,500.

39. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in keeping with his delegation's position of principle, he was unable to support any additional expenditures arising from inflation, currency fluctuations and additions to the manning table. Similarly, his delegation was unable to support increases in the revised estimates resulting from the recruitment of temporary personnel or consultants. It was surprising to note that, despite a decision by the General Assembly regarding the need to reduce expenditure on outside experts and consultants, the Secretariat and certain intergovernmental bodies were continuing to formulate requests for such services, thus placing a heavy burden on the budget. If such expenditures were voted on separately, his delegation would oppose them.

40. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee under sections 5A, 5B and 18 were acceptable to his delegation.

41. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) thanked the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for drawing attention to the unacceptable practice of requesting funds to implement a decision which had not yet been taken. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

42. Speaking with reference to paragraph 36 of the Advisory Committee's report, he opposed the practice of financing regional centres and institutes from the United Nations regular budget whenever there was a decrease in voluntary funding. In such times it was the responsibility of the Governments of the region to ensure the continued operation of such centres and institutes.

As total additional appropriation in the amount. of $1,467,500 under sections 1, 4, 5A, 5B, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 18 and 23 for the biennium 1976-1977 and an additional amount of $193,000 under section 25, as well as an additional amount of $193,000 under income section 1, were approved by 65 votes to none, with 10 abstentions.

Revised estimates under section 1. United Nations Special Fund (A/10008/Add.13, A/C.5/1714)

43. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Second Committee had adopted a draft resolution[3] under the provisions of which the General Assembly would decide that, for the time being, the administrative expenses of the United Nations Special Fund should be borne by the regular budget. In the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), the Secretary-General had included for the Fund, under section 1, an amount of $535,000 which the Advisory Committee had subsequently recommended should be deleted (A/10008 and Corr.2, para. 1.23), pending the submission of more realistic estimates for the Fund. The new estimates were given in document A/C.5/1714 and the report of the Advisory Committee on them had been circulated as document A/10008/Add.13.

44. The Secretary-General's estimates were in the amount of $240,400. They were, once again, provisional and they related only to 1976. A pledging conference was proposed for 1976, and the Secretary-General intended to review the requirements of the Fund in the light of its results. In paragraph 7 of its report the Advisory Committee indicated that the existing workload did not warrant the maintenance of a secretariat of 9 posts, 5 of which were in the Professional category. The situation might change after the pledging conference, but in the absence of information as to the extent to which the pledging conference might affect the work of the existing secretariat, the only tenable position was to assume that the existing state of affairs would continue until a proper work programme had been established. The Advisory Committee had accordingly recommended that the provision to be made at the current session for general temporary assistance should be limited to $112,000, to cover costs in the first half of 1976, after which the situation would become clearer in the light of the results of the pledging conference. In addition, the Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the Secretary-General's request for $14,000 to cover the travel expenses of the President of the Board of Governors. The total amount recommended by the Advisory Committee was therefore $126,000.

45. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the position of the Soviet Union with regard to the provision of economic and technical assistance

3 Subsequently adopted as General Assembly resolution 3460 (XXX).

to the developing countries, including those which were most seriously affected by the world economic crisis, had been stated at the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and at its regular sessions. He had already stated in the Fifth Committee that the Soviet Union was providing significant levels of assistance to the developing countries and would continue to do so in the future, and that the contribution of the Soviet Union in that field had been acknowledged by the developing countries. The assistance of the Soviet Union would continue to be based on the needs of the developing countries and on its own capacity.

46. The attitude of his delegation to the Special Fund was conditioned by the fact that it was essentially a voluntary undertaking, and that, accordingly, all contributions to the Fund should be voluntary. His delegation could not agree to the administrative expenses being met from the regular budget.

47. With regard to the functions of the Special Fund, his delegation believed that it was improper to give any such body powers of control over assistance provided on a bilateral basis; to do so would be incompatible with the principle of sovereignty and might lead to interference in the internal affairs of States. His delegation could not, therefore, support the appropriations recommended by the Advisory Committee.

48. Replying to a question put by Mr. FELLAH (Algeria), Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the President of the Board of Governors travelled first class.

An additional appropriation of $126,000 for section 1 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved by 65 votes to 9, with 1 abstention.

49. The CHAIRMAN said that an additional appropriation of $25,000 would be included under section 25 for staff assessment, to be offset against the equivalent amount under income section 1.

Financial problems of the United Nations (A/C.5/1730 and Add.1, A/C.5/L.1240)

50. The CHAIRMAN said that, since consultations on the question of the Organization's financial problems were still in progress, it might be useful for the Controller to make an introductory statement, so that his views might be taken into account by any delegations which intended to submit proposals to the Committee.

51. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that one of the most serious problems requiring the attention of the Committee was the financial situation of the United Nations. That situation was, however, extremely difficult to assess in all its aspects. It was common knowledge that a deficit existed, and at times a crisis situation appeared to be about to develop. Even the fact and figures relating to the situation could not possibly present a conclusive picture.

52. In the analysis of the estimated short-term deficit as at 31 December 1975 submitted by the Secretary-General in annex I to document A/C.5/1730, two alternative figures for the deficit were given, namely, $89.3 million and $104.9 million. The difference derived from alternative views as to whether Member States were entitled to repayment or credits in respect of the surplus shown in the account of the United Nations relating to UNEF (1956) and ONUC. In any event, that difference might be put aside for the moment, subject to the observation that both deficits were considered "short-term" inasmuch as they excluded the long-term repayment of capital and interest on the United Nations bond issue and the amortization of long-term construction loans.

53. In that annex, the deficit was broken down into four components, the third of which, relating to UNEF (1956), amounted to $31 million. In order to comprehend that amount it was necessary to consult the annual financial statement, which had been presented to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Statement V, of the interim accounts of 30 June 1975, indicated that no deficit existed and that assets exceeded liabilities. It should be noted, however, that paid assessed contributions included both announced withholdings totalling $27.6 million, which were, in effect, offset against similar amounts payable to Member States which had provided the Organization with troops and equipment in 1956, and a further amount of $3.4 million due to the United Nations Special Account.

54. The fact that no deficit was shown was due to United Nations accounting procedures, under which unpaid assessed contributions were shown as accounts receivable until collected or written off by appropriate decision. Contributions that went unpaid were not and could not be reflected in the financial statements as liabilities. Consequently it was difficult to assess the real financial situation of the Organization since the financial statement did not readily reveal the actual cash it had on hand or could expect to receive.

55. The same was true for ONUC, for which there was a short-term deficit of $14.5 million representing debts owed to Member States. It should be stressed that the deficits relating to UNEF and ONUC were financed, in practice, by those Member States which had not yet been reimbursed for their contributions.

56. Another component of the Organization's deficit related to UNEF (1973) and UNDOF. The $10.2 million involved represented contributions withheld by certain Member States. Because of that shortfall, the Organization was unable to reimburse troop-contributing countries for the cost of troops and other related expenses.

57. The first component of the deficit, as indicated in annex I, related to the regular budget and amounted to $65.4 million. The financial impact of that deficit was basically different from that of the other components in that it did not represent debts owed to Member States but commitments which had to be settled immediately by actual cash payments. The question therefore arose as to what cash resources had had to be tapped to cover those expenses.

58. First of all, the funds available in the Working Capital Fund, amounting to $40 million, had been used. It should

no longer be assumed that the Working Capital Fund was untouched merely because, in the accounts of the Organization, that amount had to be shown as an advance repayable to Member States. The Fund had, in fact, been utilized to cover part of the $65.4 million deficit under the regular budget; there still remained a difference of $25.4 million between the deficit and the cash available in the Working Capital Fund. The United Nations had therefore had to use the United Nations Special Account to which 24 Member States had made voluntary contributions totalling $31.8 million. On the basis of those figures it might be concluded that the Organization still had approximately $6.4 million in cash reserves, to which could be added the $10 million contributed by the Japanese Government, but that contribution could be used only on certain conditions.

59. It would be recalled that the cause of the regular budget deficit was the withholding by some countries of part of their contributions, a situation discussed in section III of document A/C.5/1730. Furthermore, that shortfall was increasing yearly by approximately $3.8 million and would at that rate deplete the small reserves of the Organization in the near future.

60. It might still be concluded that the situation of the United Nations was not as dire as might have been expected, since a small but definite cushion of cash reserves remained to compensate for the withholding of contributions. That would be a fair conclusion, were it not for an additional element, namely, the delay in payment of contributions. As indicated in the graph on page 6 of document A/C.5/1730, the shortfall of contributions as compared with the actual expenditures of the United Nations was chronic. Given that situation, the Organization was forced to resort to other sources, such as the special accounts, and in particular, the special account for UNEF/UNDOF. If ever that cash reserve was exhausted, the United Nations might even have to turn to the trust funds, a course of action which had thus far been avoided and which would, if taken, involve the payment of interest.

61. In attempting to present a fair picture of the Organization's financial situation, the main problem was to forecast accurately its expenditures for the coming months. In that connexion, he drew attention to the figures presented in the table in the annex to document A/C.5/1730/Add.1. The amounts shown excluded only the special account for UNEF/UNDOF and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and, of course, the trust funds. As at 15 November the total amount available to cover disbursements was $5.2 million, and, as indicated in the table, a steadily increasing shortfall was anticipated and would reach $53 million in June 1976. That shortfall could be made up only by utilizing the reserves of UNEF/UNDOF, UNFICYP or the trust funds.

62. The data on which that forecast was based had been gathered through careful examination of the pattern of disbursements and payments of contributions obtaining in previous years. It might prove to be either too pessimistic or too optimistic. The over-all picture, however, was clear. The search for an effective remedy led inevitably to the root cause of the shortfall, the delay in the payment of contributions. The most effective solution, therefore, would be to improve that particular situation. A further useful measure would be to increase the Working Capital Fund and thereby to restore its basic function which was, as stated in financial rule 106.1, to make advances necessary to finance budgetary appropriations pending the receipt of contributions.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION II SUBMITTED BY THE THIRD COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10408 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 74* (A/C.5/1743)

63. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General had estimated that the adoption by the General Assembly of draft resolution II submitted by the Third Committee in its report (A/10408, para. 14) would require approximately $8,000 in additional consultancy funds under section 5A of the proposed programme budget. As indicated in paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's statement, efforts were being made to obtain extra-budgetary resources for that purpose. The Advisory Committee urged the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to that end, and, should they prove unsuccessful, it recommended that the expenditures should be met within the existing appropriations under the regular budget for the social development programme, which amounted to $132,000.

64. The CHAIRMAN said that if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should the draft resolution of the Third Committee be adopted, no additional appropriation would be required.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.15 p.m.

* Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in relation to detention and imprisonment.

1765th meeting

Tuesday, 9 December 1975, at 3.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1765

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1759th meeting; A/10008/Add.14 and 16, A/C.5/1730/Add.1)

Emoluments of the members of the International Court of Justice (A/10008/Add.12, A/C.5/1699)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in 1973 the Advisory Committee had considered proposals submitted by the Secretary-General to revise the salary and other related allowances of the members of the International Court of Justice. It had recommended[1] that effective 1 January 1974 the annual salary of a member of the Court should be set at $45,000 net. The salaries of members of the Court were not subject to staff assessment and their pension coverage, which was set at 50 per cent of final salary, was non-contributory.

2. The Secretary-General had recommended in the report before the Committee (A/C.5/1699) that the salaries of the members of the Court should be raised to $55,000 in 1976, with a pro-rated adjustment in fees and allowances paid to *ad hoc* judges, the President of the Court and the Vice-President when the latter acted as President.

3. As the Secretary-General indicated in his report, the aim of the proposed increase was to restore the purchasing power of the payments in question, which, according to the Secretary-General, had declined as a result of inflation and the impact of fluctuations in the currency exchange rates. The Secretary-General had again expressed his belief, as he had done in the past, that there was a need to develop some relatively simple formula to maintain the purchasing power of the salaries of the judges without requiring frequent review by the General Assembly.

4. In its corresponding report (A/10008/Add.12), the Advisory Committee agreed with the Secretary-General that the emoluments of the judges should be protected from inflation and the fluctuation of currency exchange rates and that they should not be subject to frequent review by the General Assembly. Where the Advisory Committee differed with the Secretary-General was on the method to be used for that purpose. The Secretary-General was inclined to favour using the same system as for the adjustment of salaries of staff members in the United Nations common system. In the view of the Advisory Committee, that system should not be applied, at least not in the same manner, to salaries of the judges which were *sui generis* and should remain so. The Advisory Committee was not satisfied that all options had been explored to develop the appropriate method for adjusting the emoluments in question. Accordingly, in paragraph 4 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should once again address himself to that issue and report on the question of principle involved to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

5. Meanwhile, the Advisory Committee recommended that a judge's salary be increased to $50,000 net per annum, with effect from 1 January 1976. The effect of that proposal on the other related payments was detailed in the annex to the report of the Advisory Committee. In making its proposal, the Advisory Committee wished to underline its conviction that the salary of members of the Court should be determined within the framework of ensuring that the service of the most competent and qualified persons would continue to be obtained. The Advisory Committee would caution against the tendency to compare uncritically the emoluments of a member of the Court and those of selected officials in the United Nations system. In that connexion, he drew attention to paragraph 5 of the Advisory Committee's report in which it stated that, while it was aware of the erosion in the purchasing power of judicial salaries, information provided to it indicated that the emoluments accorded judges of the International Court of Justice compared quite favourably with the level of remuneration for judges on national and other high courts.

6. Mr. SETHI (India) said that his delegation fully endorsed the proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General, since it believed that emoluments should be viewed in terms of the standard of living which they could procure. The proposal of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 4 *(b)* of his report consisted essentially in providing compensation for the loss of purchasing power of salaries of the members of the Court by applying the methods used for the United Nations common system. His delegation could not, therefore, see why the Advisory Committee had opposed that proposal. Moreover, it did not consider it appropriate for the Advisory Committee to issue opinions regarding the character of the judges but should instead confine itself to the areas of its own competence. In particular, his delegation found the observations contained in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Advisory Committee's report to be arbitrary and not based on specific data. In recommending that the salaries of the judges should be increased to $50,000 as an interim measure, the Advisory Committee gave the impression that it had chosen that figure either at random or for the sake of convenience. His delegation hoped that the proposals of the Secretary-General would be approved.

7. With regard to the Secretary-General's observation regarding the need for a simple method of maintaining the

1 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8A*, document A/9008/Add.3, para. 4.

purchasing power of the judges' salary, his delegation proposed formally that the Committee should adopt a draft resolution or decision to that effect.

8. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation did not agree with the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee to reduce by half the salary increase proposed by the Secretary-General, or with its argument that linking the salaries of the judges to the weighted average of post adjustments would be contrary to the *sui generis* nature of those salaries. In the view of his delegation, the *sui generis* nature of the judges' emoluments did not mean that the WAPA system could not be used, but merely that it need not be used.

9. The Advisory Committee had also pointed out that the emoluments of the judges compared favourably with the level of remuneration of judges in national judiciaries. The judges of the International Court should, however, be at the very least equal, if not superior, in position to judges in national judiciaries, given the calibre of jurist the Court wished to attract. In addition, account should be taken of the fact that the judges of the Court were not permitted to engage in outside professional activities, that they often had to maintain a second home away from The Hague, and that only the President and the Vice-President when acting as President received special allowances.

10. His delegation agreed that the analogy drawn by the Secretary-General betweeen the judges and the Registrar of the Court was irrelevant, but, unlike the Advisory Committee, it did not consider that sufficient reason for not increasing the emoluments in question by the amount requested by the Secretary-General. In view of the cost of living in The Hague, his delegation considered the increase requested by the Secretary-General to be fair and the recommendation of the Advisory Committee to be inadequate and arbitrary.

11. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation supported the main recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the annual salary of the members of the International Court of Justice should be increased to $50,000. The main point was that the judges should be well paid by comparison with the top judges of national judiciaries, and a net salary of $50,000 was far in excess of the net salaries of comparable judges in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France. In that connexion, the Fifth Committee might reflect upon whether it wished to spend money needlessly and overpay the judges of the Court.

12. His delegation agreed with the view expressed by the Advisory Committee that judicial salaries should not be linked to WAPA, since to do so would be inconsistent with the *sui generis* nature of those salaries. Since the salaries of the judges were not subject to staff assessment, any adjustment to them would have to be made on a basis other than WAPA. The Secretary-General was continuing to investigate fair ways of linking such salaries with the cost of living which took into account the special circumstances of the judges, including the fact that the salaries they received were net.

13. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation held the International Court of Justice and its judges in highest esteem and therefore agreed with the Advisory Committee that the emoluments of the judges should be such as to attract jurists of the highest calibre to the Court. The salary recommended by the Advisory Committee was indeed sufficient for that purpose. His delegation believed, however, that the salaries of the judges should be linked to some form of post adjustment system. That approach was more practical and equitable than having to review the entire question every two or three years. While awaiting completion of the study of the Secretary-General, his delegation had no objection to adopting the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

14. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the judges of the Court should have a standard of living commensurate with their renown and competence and the importance of the questions with which they dealt. His delegation was perplexed, therefore, that the Advisory Committee and the Secretary-General had recommended different increases in the emoluments of the members of the Court. In addition, two of the members of the Advisory Committee had just spoken in the Fifth Committee to oppose the recommendation of the Secretary-General. In the future, a solution should be found so that the members of the Advisory Committee would not be so determined to influence the Fifth Committee's decisions. It was the view of his delegation that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee alone was empowered to speak on behalf of the members of that Committee. That had already been done quite ably by Mr. Mselle and there was no need for individual members of the Advisory Committee to add their voices to his.

15. The Secretary-General had neglected to provide in his report a piece of essential information for the Committee's consideration, namely, the emoluments paid to the Registrar of the Court. Accordingly, he requested the representative of the Secretary-General to provide the Committee with that information.

16. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) asked the representative of the Secretary-General whether the judges were required to work for the full year or only part of the year, and how their workload compared to that of other staff in the Secretariat.

17. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that the question had been considered by the Committee only a few years earlier. At that time, his delegation had taken the view that the United Nations already provided the judges with generous remuneration. The Secretary-General was currently proposing a new increase in their salaries, although the General Assembly had taken a decision that no salary increases should be implemented until such time as the International Civil Service Commission presented a comprehensive report on the United Nations salary system. For that reason, his delegation could not support any proposal for a salary increase at the current stage.

18. His delegation wished to have further information on the workload of the judges. To the best of his knowledge, there had been years in the past when the Court had not considered a single case and some judges spent only limited time in The Hague each year.

19. The delegations of India and Australia had not put forward a single argument to substantiate their view that the judges' salaries should be increased. If they wished to be so generous, they could defray the costs involved themselves, but they should not impose that burden on other delegations. The Committee should be very circumspect about adopting such proposals, and should seek agreed solutions, rather than arbitrary and unjustified ones.

20. A pernicious practice had established itself in the Fifth Committee whereby at the end of each session numerous questions, all having serious financial implications, remained to be dealt with. Consequently delegations did not have adequate time to study the documentation seriously and take well-founded decisions. The item under consideration was just one in a series of items of equal complexity which remained on the Committee's agenda.

21. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to the question asked by the representative of Algeria, drew the attention of the Committee to paragraph 11 of the Secretary-General's report and paragraph 6 of the report of the Advisory Committee. The Registrar had the rank of Assistant Secretary-General with a net salary of $52,763, which included post adjustment and spouse allowance.

22. With regard to the questions asked by the representative of Iran, he said that the judges of the Court normally remained in The Hague for seven months of the year, while the President was required to be there throughout the year. It was difficult, however, to assess the workload of the Court, since the number of cases brought before it in a given year varied considerably. In seeking to establish a relationship between the workload of the Court and the salaries of judges, it should be borne in mind that the Court was a highly important organ of the United Nations system. Like other courts of similar stature, it was not possible to measure the salary of the judges in terms of the actual work they performed. It was imperative for judges to be free to devote their undivided attention to their duties and it was therefore irrelevant to calculate the amount of time actually spent on court cases. Moreover, in order to preserve their absolute integrity and independence, the judges were not permitted to engage in outside activities which might interfere with their responsibilities as international judges. Such factors should be taken into account when considering the question of emoluments.

23. Mr. SETHI (India) said that he wished to reply to a number of arguments put forward to oppose the proposed salary increase.

24. First, with regard to the objection based on the fact that the salaries of the judges were tax-exempt, he pointed out that if he was not mistaken, the salaries of all United Nations staff were tax-exempt.

25. His delegation did not believe that the salary increase proposed by the Secretary-General was over-generous. What was involved was simply a question of equity and justice. A decision had been taken that the judges of the Court should have the rank of Assistant Secretary-General and should be remunerated accordingly. A system of compensating for the loss of purchasing power was applied to the remuneration of United Nations staff and should, therefore, also be applied to the emoluments of the members of the Court.

26. The remarks made by the representative of France were very much in the spirit of the reasoning of the Advisory Committee and the same objections that the Indian delegation had raised with regard to the latter applied to the former.

27. His delegation shared the view expressed by the representative of Algeria regarding the vehemence with which certain members of the Advisory Committee had sought to influence the decision-making process in the Fifth Committee.

28. The representative of the Soviet Union had made a truculent statement in which he had accused the Indian delegation of wishing to be over-generous. The issue was really that the Committee should not be too stingy and fail to do justice to the members of the Court. The crux of the problem was that it was impossible to compare the volume and quality of work performed by persons in different professions. Above all, it was not possible to gauge the value of the work performed by the International Court of Justice by the number of cases it dealt with.

29. The Fifth Committee needed an atmosphere of calm for its work and all delegations should seek to ensure it. The representative of the Soviet Union seemed to be saying that the Committee must take all its decisions unanimously, and not merely by consensus or vote, as provided in the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. It would appear that the Soviet Union, which already had a veto in the Security Council, now wanted to exercise the same right of veto in the Fifth Committee. The Indian delegation was not willing to bear the entire cost of a decision taken by the Fifth Committee in accordance with the rules of procedure any more than the Soviet Union was willing to pay for the deficit for which it was responsible.

30. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that it was not the intent of the Advisory Committee to influence the Fifth Committee. The Advisory Committee provided advisory opinions in its reports to the Fifth Committee which the Fifth Committee was free to approve, reject or modify. The representative of India, in questioning whether the Advisory Committee should have submitted an advisory report on the emoluments of the judges, had raised the issue of when the Advisory Committee should submit reports. The Advisory Committee had received the report of the Secretary-General on the question and had reported on it. It was then for the Fifth Committee to determine whether the report was acceptable or not.

31. He pointed out that the emoluments of judges of the International Court of Justice were not governed by the common system of salaries and allowances. ICSC would not examine their salaries. Until the General Assembly might decide otherwise, proposals were submitted by the Secretary-General to the Advisory Committee, which then submitted a recommendation to the Fifth Committee for it to approve or reject. In the past the Fifth Committee had usually accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

32. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), replying to the representative of India, reiterated his view that judges in various countries—for example, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France—were not paid as much as the judges at the International Court. A decision to overpay those judges would imply that the United Nations was prepared to spend money on judges rather than on other objectives such as the establishment of a new international economic order.

33. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) drew attention to the fact that the net remuneration of the Registrar of the Court was 17.3 per cent higher than a judge's salary, a fact which appeared to have escaped the Advisory Committee's attention. He was not questioning the integrity of the Advisory Committee but was simply questioning its recommendation on emoluments for the judges. He considered that the judges performed an extremely important function, even if they dealt with only one or two cases a year.

34. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew attention to paragraph 6 of the Advisory Committee's report, which dealt with the remuneration of the Registrar. The Advisory Committee had noted that, while the judges participated in a pension scheme which was non-contributory on their part, the Registrar contributed to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, and that accordingly, the remuneration of the Registrar was actually $48,290 and not $52,763 as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General.

35. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) refuted the statement by the Soviet representative that his delegation's support of the Secretary-General's request was arbitrary. Since 1973, the occasion of the most recent adjustment of judges' salaries, the cost of living, according either to The Hague indices or the WAPA system, had risen by more than 20 per cent. The Secretary-General's proposal was simply intended to ensure that the judges' emoluments kept pace with the rise in the cost of living, not that they should show a real increase. Recommending reduction of the Secretary-General's proposal by 50 per cent was, he felt, an arbitrary act on the part of the Advisory Committee.

36. Mr. TALIEH (Iran), observing that whenever the Registrar's salary was increased the judges' salaries had to be increased and vice versa, suggested that a suitable method for determining the emoluments of the judges should be determined once and for all. In that connexion, he endorsed the suggestion made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 4 of its report that the Secretary-General undertake a study of that question and report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. He also fully supported the Advisory Committee's most reasonable recommendation that the judges' salaries should be increased by $5,000.

37. He asked how many cases the Court had considered during the previous year.

38. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the International Court of Justice had handed down two judgements between 1 August 1973 and 31 July 1974, two judgements in the latter part of 1974 and one advisory opinion in 1975.

39. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), responding to comments by the representative of India, recalled that in his earlier statement he had urged the Fifth Committee to strive to achieve a consensus on financial questions before it and had certainly not mentioned or implied anything about a veto. He assumed there had been a misunderstanding, as he found no other way to explain the comments by the representative of India.

40. At the request of Mr. SETHI (India), the CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the proposal by the Secretary-General to appropriate an amount of $464,600 under section 19 of the proposed programme budget for the emoluments of the members of the International Court of Justice.

The proposal was rejected by 47 votes to 9, with 26 abstentions.

41. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested that a vote be taken on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee contained in paragraph 8 of its report (A/10008/Add.12).

The Advisory Committee's recommendation was adopted by 63 votes to 11, with 9 abstentions.

42. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee took note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1699) and of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.12) and concurred with the recommendations contained in paragraphs 4 and 7 of the Advisory Committee's report.

It was so decided.

43. The CHAIRMAN said that a draft resolution reflecting the recommendations of the Advisory Committee would be included in the draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly on agenda item 96.

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(continued) (A/10422, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716):**

(b)* Other personnel questions: report of the Secretary-General *(continued) (A/10422, A/C.5/1672 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1716)**

Dependency allowances for staff in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters (A/10422, A/C.5/1716)

44. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had considered the note by the Secretary-General on dependency allowances for staff in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters (A/C.5/1716) and had submitted a report on it (A/10422). The Secretary-General, for reasons indicated in paragraph 7 of his note, suggested, in the following paragraph, that the General Assembly authorize him, as an exceptional and

* Resumed from the 1762nd meeting.

** Resumed from the 1742nd meeting.

temporary measure, to place a broader interpretation on the provision of staff regulation 3.4 *(d)* in setting the rate of children's allowance for staff in the General Service and related categories in New York, pending consideration by the General Assembly of the report of the International Civil Service Commission on that matter. The Secretary-General had also recommended that the Commission should include the matter in its review of the United Nations salary system on which it was going to report in 1976. The Advisory Committee, in looking at the underlying reasons for the Secretary-General's proposals, had felt that the Secretary-General had submitted the current note to the General Assembly largely because of the position taken by the staff members themselves, even though he had recognized that he was going beyond the authority vested in him under staff regulation 3.4 *(d)*.

45. In its report, the Advisory Committee had pointed out that the salaries and allowances of staff members in the General Service category were determined by the Secretary-General himself taking into account the best prevailing local conditions. Granting the provisional authority requested by the Secretary-General would fundamentally alter that principle. The Advisory Committee had further noted that the International Civil Service Commission, under its statute, had authority in that area and that it was thus for the Commission to give an opinion on the principles governing the rates of allowances for General Service staff. The International Civil Service Commission had indicated in its report to the General Assembly at the current session[2] that in 1977 it would assume its functions relating to allowances for staff members in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters. The Advisory Committee had therefore decided that a decision along the lines suggested by the Secretary-General would tend to pre-empt any decision by the Commission. In addition, in view of the doctrine of acquired rights, the Commission would not be in a position to modify the effect of the current proposals of the Secretary-General even if it determined that such a modification was justified.

46. The Advisory Committee had therefore recommended that the Fifth Committee should not accept, even on a temporary basis, the request of the Secretary-General. In paragraph 14 of its report, the Advisory Committee had recommended that the General Assembly should invite the International Civil Service Commission to give consideration to the possibility of examining the principles and criteria underlying the determination of allowances and benefits payable to General Service staff as part of its comprehensive review of the United Nations salary system. That was a logical course of action, which would in no way pre-empt any future decision by the Commission.

47. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 14 of its report (A/10422).

It was so decided.

48. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) requested information from the Office of Personnel Services on the implementation of the decision taken the previous year by the Fifth Committee[3] calling for a flexible interpretation of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2480 B (XXIII) concerning the relationship between the promotion of staff members and adequate and confirmed knowledge of a second official language. He understood that a memorandum sent on 1 October 1975 by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services to heads of departments referred to that resolution but not to the decision taken by the Fifth Committee and indicated that, if a candidate for promotion did not have adequate and confirmed language proficiency, each supervisor must give specific reasons why the promotion was necessary to the proper functioning of the Secretariat. That did not appear to be a proper interpretation of the provisions of the resolution or of the Committee's decision. He requested an explanation of why such a strict criterion for promotion was still being applied.

49. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) expressed reservations in respect of paragraph 11 of the report of the Advisory Committee. For reasons of social justice, he did not share the views expressed on parity between the children's allowance for General Service staff and the amount established for Professional staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10436 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 39* (A/C.5/1727)

50. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had examined the statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1727) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee in its report (A/10436, para. 8) and recommended that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution no additional appropriations would be required.

51. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should the draft resolution of the First Committee be adopted, no additional appropriation would be required.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION XI B SUBMITTED BY THE FOURTH COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10427 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 23 *(concluded)*** (A/C.5/1740)

52. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the 1763rd meeting the Committee had agreed to adjourn consideration of the

2 *Ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 30.*

3 *Ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes,* agenda item 81, document A/9980, para. 47.

* Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace: report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean.

** Resumed from the 1763rd meeting.

statement of financial implications (A/C.5/1740) of draft resolution XI B submitted by the Fourth Committee in its report (A/10427, para. 72). He understood that consultations had taken place and that the Committee was now in a position to take a decision on that question.

53. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that, if the General Assembly adopted the draft resolution, an additional appropriation of $45,000 would be required under section 3 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. That amount would be required to cover travel and subsistence costs and general expenses in connexion with the assignment of a high-ranking official and supporting staff to carry out the tasks described in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution.

54. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee concurred in the Secretary-General's estimate of an amount of $45,000.

55. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) recalled that his delegation had proposed that the discussion should be adjourned in accordance with rule 154 of the rules of procedure, which required the Secretary-General to keep all committees informed of the detailed estimated cost of all resolutions recommended for approval by the General Assembly.

56. Some delegations had stated that it was wrong for the Fifth Committee to politicize its discussions. If that was true, the delegation of South Africa would be participating in the current proceedings of the General Assembly. Any discussion which addressed itself to the substance of a question was bound to be political.

57. His delegation would abstain in the vote on the appropriation for draft resolution XI B.

58. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that his delegation approved the appropriation of $45,000 proposed by the Secretary-General. It trusted that a decision on the question would be made at the current session.

59. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said her delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution in the Fourth Committee and, in keeping with that position, would abstain in the vote on the appropriation for the tasks covered by the draft resolution.

60. The CHAIRMAN proposed to the Committee that it request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should draft resolution XI B of the Fourth Committee be adopted, an additional appropriation of $45,000 would be required under section 3 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

The Chairman's proposal was adopted by 36 votes to none, with 46 abstentions.

AGENDA ITEM 103

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly *(continued):**

(b)* Committee on Contributions *(continued) (A/C.5/1739)**

61. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1739) informing the Committee that Mr. Takeshi Naito had resigned from the Committee on Contributions and that it would be necessary for the General Assembly to fill the vacancy for the unexpired portion of Mr. Naito's term of office, namely, from 1 January to 31 December 1976. The Government of Japan had nominated Mr. Junpei Kato to fill that vacancy. He assumed that the Committee wished to hold the election in accordance with rule 93 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Ekong (Nigeria) and Mr. Garrido (Philippines) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	92
Invalid ballots:	2
Number of valid ballots:	90
Abstentions:	6
Number of members voting:	84
Required majority:	43
Number of votes obtained:	
Mr. Junpei Kato	80
Four other persons	4

Mr. Junpei Kato (Japan) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended his appointment as a member of the Committee on Contributions.

62. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly on the matter.

It was so decided.

***(d)* Investments Committee: confirmation of the appointments made by the Secretary-General (A/10154)**

63. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a note by the Secretary-General (A/10154) in which he submitted for confirmation by the General Assembly the reappointment of Mr. R. Manning Brown and Mr. Jean Guyot as members of the Investments Committee.

64. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested the Secretariat to fill in the gaps in document A/10154 by informing the Committee of the nationalities of the members of the Investments Committee. He would also like to know why the principle of equitable geographical distribution was not respected and why 2 of the members were nationals of the same country.

* Resumed from the 1734th meeting.

** Resumed from the 1726th meeting.

65. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that, in accordance with article 20 of the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, the 6 members of the Investments Committee were appointed by the Secretary-General after consultation with the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board and the Advisory Committee; the appointments were subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Currently 2 of the members were nationals of the United States of America because the bulk of the Fund's investments were in that country and it was imperative to have a broader panorama of local financial conditions than could be provided by one man. In order to respect as fully as possible the principle of equitable geographical distribution and to obtain advice on investment conditions in the different regions, the Secretary-General used his prerogative to appoint additional members to serve on an *ad hoc* basis. He had recently appointed an *ad hoc* member from a Latin American country.

66. With regard to the nationalities of the members of the Investments Committee, he said that Mr. Brown was from the United States, Mr. Guyot from France, Mr. Montagu from the United Kingdom, Mr. Murphy from the United States, Mr. Nehru from India and Mr. Oltramare from Switzerland.

67. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the lack of representation of Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe in the Investments Committee was clear evidence that the principle of equitable geographical distribution was not being observed. He trusted that the Secretary-General would take steps to remedy that situation in the near future. The fact that 2 of the members came from the same State was a clear infringement of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and should not be tolerated.

68. In view of the foregoing, it was particularly unfortunate that document A/10154 had been issued so late in the session. There did not seem to be any good reason for the delay. He trusted that in the future the Committee would have more time to discuss the item and that delegations from regions which were unrepresented in the Investments Committee would make proposals aimed at remedying that abnormal situation.

69. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) endorsed the comments made by the representative of the Soviet Union concerning the need to respect the principle of equitable geographical distribution. There was clearly a need for a rotation of membership of the Investments Committee in order to avoid a situation in which some of the developed countries monopolized influential posts and the developing countries were not given a say in policy-making.

70. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) wondered whether the words of praise for the Investments Committee in paragraph 2 of document A/10154 were warranted in view of the large losses suffered by the investments of the Joint Staff Pension Fund and the concentration of investments in one geographical region. His delegation categorically objected to the reappointments proposed by the Secretary-General.

71. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) asked whether the Joint Staff Pension Board and the Advisory Committee simply approved the candidates proposed by the Secretary-General or whether there were more detailed consultations about the composition of the Investments Committee.

72. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia) agreed with the representative of the Soviet Union that the question of geographical representation in the Investments Committee should be taken up at some subsequent time. He expressed appreciation to that representative for demonstrating a flexible and co-operative attitude in the matter.

73. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) apologized for the late distribution of document A/10154 and explained to the Committee that preparation of the document had been delayed in order to enable the Secretary-General to appoint a Latin American member on an *ad hoc* basis.

74. He stressed that members of the Investments Committee were required to be extremely expert in banking and monetary matters. The 2 candidates whose reappointment was proposed by the Secretary-General had served with distinction for many years.

75. As he had pointed out earlier, the Secretary-General's desire to have 2 United States nationals in the Investments Committee was linked with the fact that most of the Fund's investments were in the United States. At one stage 3 members had been United States nationals. However, in addition to the member from Latin America, a financial expert from the Asian region was serving on an *ad hoc* basis. Thus, it could be seen that the Secretary-General was endeavouring to secure the broadest possible geographical representation. It should be borne in mind, too, that it was not easy to find international banking experts who were willing to serve. None the less, if the Advisory Committee expressed criticism of the Secretary-General's choices, the Secretary-General endeavoured to find other suitable candidates.

76. Mr. NSUBUGA (Uganda) said that he somewhat resented the Controller's implication that one region alone had a monopoly of financial knowledge. The expertise of the present members of the Investments Committee had not helped the Joint Staff Pension Fund to avoid financial losses during the past year.

77. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) proposed that the membership of the Investments Committee should be enlarged to 9 or 11 members, so that all geographical regions could be represented. Clearly, the Pension Fund could benefit from the expertise which undoubtedly existed in all the geographical regions. It was time to put an end to the monopoly of investment advice proferred by the developed countries, which, after all, had not produced very good results.

78. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) rejected the implications of the Controller's statement that investment expertise could be found only in the United States.

79. Mr. SETHI (India) commended the spirit of co-operation shown by the representative of the Soviet Union. He

agreed with earlier speakers that no single region had a monopoly of financial expertise and that it would be possible for the Secretary-General to find suitable candidates with the necessary qualifications in all parts of the world.

80. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said that she was somewhat surprised by the Controller's statement, which seemed to imply that high-level banking experts could be found only in the United States and in certain industrialized nations.

81. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that his delegation was not satisfied with the explanations provided by the Controller. He requested that the Committee should take a vote to decide whether to recommend confirmation of the appointments made by the Secretary-General.

82. The CHAIRMAN noted that the representative of the Dominican Republic had submitted a draft decision,[4] according to which the General Assembly would request the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board to review article 20 of the Regulations of the Fund with a view to providing a more equitable geographical distribution of membership of the Investments Committee and, if necessary, increasing its membership.

83. He proposed that the Fifth Committee should vote on the confirmation of the appointments made by the Secretary-General and include the proposal of the Dominican Republic in its report.

84. Mr. BAMBA (Upper Volta) said he was grateful to the representative of the Soviet Union for his question and his conciliatory statement after the reply of the Controller.

85. His delegation believed that it should be possible to reconcile the need for expertise within the Investments Committee and the need to achieve an equitable geographical distribution of its members. If the Advisory Committee accepted the erroneous argument which the Committee had just heard from the Controller, all hope was lost. Representatives of third-world countries had stressed that expertise was also available in the developing countries.

86. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) reiterated his delegation's position concerning the responsibility of the Investments Committee for the investment losses of the Pension Fund. He supported Algeria's proposal for a vote on the confirmation of the appointments made by the Secretary-General.

87. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) drew to the attention of the Soviet representative the fact that it was in accordance with the provisions of article 20 of the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund that members were appointed to the Investments Committee. The appointees were not governmental representatives, but experts who had distinguished themselves in their field of endeavour.

88. Admittedly, the United States of America was not the only country where the required expertise was available; the Controller had made no such statement. What was essential was that the Secretary-General should continue to recommend the most highly qualified individuals, whatever their country of origin. The principle of equitable geographical distribution could not be a primary consideration. It was important that no effort should be spared to ensure that there were the best possible investment returns on the assets of the Pension Fund. It was to the advantage of the retired staff members of the Organization that the investments of the Fund should not be compromised.

89. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) asserted that nothing he had said could be interpreted to mean that preference was given to any particular region. It was certainly true that expertise was available in all regions. He had been asked to explain the geographical distribution of the membership of the Investments Committee and had simply given the facts. In view of the functions of that Committee, members were required who could give sound advice and information about particular markets.

90. He had not given any erroneous information about the functions of the Investments Committee. He had tried to explain what activities were involved. Those who had served on the Investments Committee had demonstrated that they were capable of making a valuable contribution.

91. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that a vote should be taken on the proposals made by Algeria and the Dominican Republic.

92. Addressing himself to the United States representative, he said that it would be impossible to relegate to a secondary position the principle of equitable geographical distribution. To depart from that principle would be to violate the rights of Member States to decide matters in the way they saw fit.

93. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that representatives needed time to examine the Dominican proposal. Before a vote was taken on it, the Committee should hear the views of the Chairman of the Joint Staff Pension Board.

94. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should defer consideration of the Dominican proposal to a subsequent meeting, at which some debate would be possible, and proceed to a vote on the confirmation of the appointments to the Investments Committee made by the Secretary-General.

It was so decided.

95. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that, in accordance with the Algerian proposal, a separate vote should be taken for each appointee.

96. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), explaining his vote before the vote, stressed that the personalities of the appointees were not in question. However, in view of the investment losses, several new candidates should be appointed.

97. His delegation wondered whether Mr. R. Manning Brown, or the corporations which he directed, had interests

[4] Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1284.

in Namibia, South Africa or Southern Rhodesia. Since it had no precise information on that matter, it would oppose the confirmation of the appointments.

98. Mr. HART (Australia) said that his delegation would support the appointments made by the Secretary-General. It was rational, in terms of an effective decision-making process, to have a concentration of expertise in the countries concerned.

99. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) recalled that in 1974 the Office of Financial Services had given an assurance that appointees were not involved in corporations which had interests in Namibia, South Africa or Southern Rhodesia. His delegation would welcome a similar assurance with regard to the 2 appointees under consideration.

100. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that to the best of his knowledge, the corporations with which Mr. R. Manning Brown and Mr. Jean Guyot were associated had no economic links with South Africa or Southern Rhodesia.

101. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that his delegation was unable to approve the appointment of the United States representative.

102. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) stated that Mr. R. Manning Brown had not been nominated by the United States and was not its representative. He had been chosen by the Secretary-General.

The Committee confirmed the appointment of Mr. R. Manning Brown by 31 votes to 18, with 29 abstentions.

The Committee confirmed the appointment of Mr. Jean Guyot by 37 votes to 1, with 38 abstentions.

103. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation had voted for the confirmation of the appointments. It would like to request, however, that in the future the relevant documents should be circulated at the beginning of the session.

The meeting rose at 7.05 p.m.

1766th meeting

Wednesday, 10 December 1975, at 8.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1766

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1759th meeting; A/10008/Add.14 and 16, A/C.5/1715/Rev.1, A/C.5/1730/Add.1)

Coverage by the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund for periods of service of certain staff members of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East between 1950 and 1960 (A/10008/Add.16, A/C.5/1709)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that staff members of UNRWA were currently entitled to participate in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund in pursuance of a decision of the General Assembly at its twenty-first session. General Assembly resolution 2191 (XXI) had cleared the way for the admission of UNRWA staff members retroactive to 1 January 1961 but the period prior to that date remained to be covered. The Secretary-General stated, in his report, that the reason for that omission was "lost in antiquity" (A/C.5/1709, para. 2). The Advisory Committee understood, however, as indicated in its report (A/10008/Add.16, para. 5), that UNRWA staff members had not received retroactive coverage for service prior to 1961 simply because UNRWA had lacked the resources to make the necessary contributions to the Pension Fund.

2. The Secretary-General was proposing that service rendered between 1950 and 1960 by UNRWA staff members who would still be serving on 31 December 1975, with UNRWA or another organization or agency in the United Nations common system, should be validated and credited to the staff members concerned for the purpose of pension coverage. UNRWA staff members, the United Nations and UNRWA would all pay certain amounts for the actuarial cost of that coverage, which was estimated by the Secretary-General at about $2 million. The Secretary-General estimated that the maximum requirement from the regular budget would be $1,020,840. However, because it was uncertain how many of the 45 staff members affected would actually elect to validate their service prior to 1961, he was proposing that for the moment an amount of $700,000 should be appropriated.

3. The Advisory Committee had carefully examined the Secretary-General's request. UNRWA had been established on a temporary basis and until it had been realized that the Agency would be in existence for some time UNRWA staff members had not been allowed to participate in the Pension Fund. For reasons of equity and fairness, staff members who had worked with UNRWA from 1950 onwards and who were still with the Agency or were working elsewhere in the United Nations system should not be deprived of

pension coverage for any period of their service, unless they decided of their own free choice not to participate.

4. After considering the contractual and financial obligation of UNRWA, the Advisory Committee had concluded that, while it would be legally reasonable to ask UNRWA and its staff to bear the total actuarial costs involved, such a course of action would not in fact be fully in line with the position taken by the Assembly at the twenty-ninth session, when it had decided that the salaries of the international staff of UNRWA should be financed from the regular budget. The Assembly had been mindful of the financial difficulties facing UNRWA, and it was because those difficulties persisted that the proposal was being made. For reasons of equity, therefore, the Advisory Committee had recommended that the Secretary-General's request for $700,000 should be approved. It was conceivable that some of the 45 staff members referred to in the Secretary-General's report, especially those who were not participants in the savings account, might opt not to participate in the scheme because they were unable to pay their share, and that would mean fewer payments by the United Nations than was currently envisaged. Consequently, the Advisory Committee, while agreeing to the request for a maximum provision of $700,000 in the 1976-1977 biennium, nevertheless stipulated (*ibid.*, para. 8) that the commitments to be entered into by the Secretary-General should be limited to the amount that would be required to provide coverage for the staff who elected to participate.

5. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked what had motivated the Pension Board's decision in 1966 providing that admission of UNRWA staff as full participants in the Pension Fund should be made retroactive to 1961 instead of to 1950.

6. Mr. ZIEHL (Deputy Controller) explained that UNRWA had felt that it had not sufficient financial resources to extend the period of retroactive coverage any further.

7. Sir John RENNIE (Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, endorsed the Deputy Controller's explanation. The Pension Board had agreed, however, that the way should be left open for further validation of service if that became possible.

8. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee in its report *(ibid.)* that the Secretary-General's proposal in document A/C.5/1709 should be approved and that the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into commitments up to $700,000 on the basis suggested by him in paragraph 10 of that document, subject to the observations of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

The recommendation was approved by 68 votes to 10, with 2 abstentions.

9. The CHAIRMAN said that the appropriate adjustment would be made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 when it came before the Committee in second reading.

10. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had voted against the recommendation, not because it was opposed to having UNRWA staff members join the Pension Fund on the same conditions as other staff members, but because it questioned the propriety of a retroactive decision relating to so remote a period. Moreover, it felt that the financial burden should be borne by the agency to which the staff member belonged rather than by Member States.

11. Mr. SETHI (India) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the recommendation because it had always taken the position that any person who worked full-time for the United Nations was entitled to a pension and that that principle should be applied without any reservations.

12. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said that his delegation had supported the recommendation, but noted that it applied only to staff members of organizations in the United Nations common system who would still be in service on 31 December 1975. He suggested that the Secretariat should examine the implications of its proposals in document A/C.5/1709 with regard to staff members who had formerly served with UNRWA and who had retired prior to 31 December 1975 and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the implications of extending such coverage to those former staff members. The Assembly would then be able to decide whether there was a case based on equity to include such former staff members in the pension arrangement.

13. Mr. ZIEHL (Deputy Controller) said that some former UNRWA staff members might be interested in such an arrangement. In his consultations with the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, the Secretary-General had felt that it was necessary to set a cut-off date for the proposal in order to be able to submit specific financial implications. The Secretariat would be willing to study the matter if the Committee so wished, although it might be rather difficult to locate all former staff members in order to ascertain their wishes.

14. Mr. WOLDE-AREGAY (Ethiopia) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote because it had not fully grasped all the issues involved in the proposal.

15. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation had supported the retroactive provision of pensions, but sympathized with some of the views expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union. His delegation regretted that the Canadian representative had not raised the issue of former staff members before the Committee had taken a decision on the proposal, and it did not feel that it would be useful to reopen the cases of former staff members of UNRWA.

16. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Canadian delegation had simply asked for the Secretariat's opinion and had not made a formal request. The Deputy Controller had answered him and, in the view of his delegation, the matter should rest there.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that a decision by the Committee was not required, provided the Secretariat agreed to

proceed along the lines of the suggestion of the representative of Canada.

Revised estimates under section 13. Architectural and engineering study relating to the construction of a permanent headquarters for the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi (A/10008/Add.14, A/C.5/1718)

18. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take up the revised estimates under section 13, relating to UNEP. The estimates had been revised to take account of the architectural and engineering study on the construction of a permanent headquarters for UNEP in Nairobi.

19. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in his report (A/C.5/1718), the Secretary-General requested $451,000 for the architectural and engineering study and related aspects of the planning process for the permanent headquarters of UNEP. Of that sum, $307,000 was for the proposed study—of which $260,000 was earmarked for fees for specialized services, and $47,000 for related requirements, including one meeting in Nairobi of a panel of six experts to advise on the selection of a joint international and local architectural team—and $144,000 for establishing a small temporary planning unit.

20. The Advisory Committee had accepted the request to establish the planning unit and, in its report (A/10008/Add.14), had recommended approval of the related $119,000 for salaries and common staff costs, to be included in the regular budget under section 13. However, the Advisory Committee urged the Secretary-General to ensure that maximum co-ordination was maintained between the planning unit and the Office of General Services at Headquarters.

21. In paragraphs 11 to 13 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended that the balance of $332,000 should be shared between the United Nations regular budget and the Fund of UNEP; it would be recalled that it had recommended a similar cost-sharing arrangement[1] in connexion with the Secretary-General's request for an additional appropriation in 1974. In its report, the Advisory Committee had indicated a number of existing ratios of sharing for various items. It was recommending that the sum of $332,000 should be shared in the proportion of 2:1, with the result that the United Nations would pay $111,000. In paragraph 14 of its report it recommended that the estimate under section 13 should be increased by $230,000. The remaining costs, totalling $221,000, would accordingly be borne by UNEP. Members of the Committee would note that the Governing Council of UNEP had authorized the Executive Director to construct temporary premises pending a decision to construct permanent premises.

22. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that, while his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations, it was concerned about the relationship between the proposed planning unit and the Office of General Services. It regretted that the Advisory Committee, while urging maximum co-ordination between the unit and the Office of General Services, had not stated more explicitly what that co-ordination might mean.

23. The United Nations had encountered difficulties before with regard to construction projects, such as the extension of the Palais des Nations, which had been largely the responsibility of the United Nations Office at Geneva, with only minimal input from the Office of General Services. His delegation hoped that ultimate policy responsibility for any construction would be vested in the Secretary-General, operating through the Office of General Services, and that the Office would have a more important role in the construction of a permanent headquarters for UNEP.

24. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation had been struck by the last sentence of paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report, in which representatives of the Secretary-General were reported to have stated that "such elaborate planning for the study became necessary in view of the world-wide interest anticipated in the project". He assumed that the project was proposed because it was necessary, not because it would arouse world-wide interest. He was not very impressed by the arguments adduced in the Secretary-General's report, and felt that there might be a tendency to spend too much, particularly in that kind of study.

25. Mr. STEDMAN (United Nations Environment Programme), speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General and of UNEP, said, in reply to the representative of the United States of America, that the Secretariat had intended to make it clear in paragraph 19 of document A/C.5/1718 that the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UNEP were seeking to ensure close and effective co-operation. UNEP had no expertise in that matter, and the small planning unit could not function without the closest co-operation and full support of the Office of General Services; policy control would remain with that Office.

26. With reference to the comment of the representative of Belgium concerning paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report, he said that the Secretary-General and UNEP were interested in ensuring careful and adequate planning for the new UNEP headquarters. They wanted to take full advantage of United Nations experience in construction activities in order to ensure that the first headquarters of a United Nations organization to be sited in a developing country would be first-class, would be appropriate for the small UNEP secretariat and would satisfy the General Assembly and all Member Governments.

27. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) drew attention to General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), section II, paragraph 3, in which the General Assembly had decided that the costs of servicing the Governing Council and providing a small secretariat would be borne by the regular budget of the United Nations and that operational programme costs, programme support and administrative costs of the Fund of UNEP would be borne by the Fund.

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 8*, document A/9608/Add.16, para. 24.

28. The United Nations was involved in a number of construction projects at various duty stations. In the case of the UNIDO building under construction at Vienna and the new United Nations Development Corporation building in New York there were a number of unresolved questions. It was therefore surprising that the Secretariat should be planning to undertake new construction activities without sufficient serious thought. The Advisory Committee was to be criticized for not having adequately considered the question of the new permanent headquarters of UNEP before recommending that the architectural and engineering study should be continued. Neither the Secretariat nor the Advisory Committee had seriously thought out the provisions of the General Assembly resolution to which he had referred, which laid down very clearly the division of responsibility between the United Nations and the Fund of UNEP. That resolution had been invoked in the Second Committee in connexion with the UNEP budget, and the United Nations had agreed to bear the cost of the proposed planning unit. Clearly, administrative costs had to be borne by the Fund and, in his view, they included construction costs.

29. His delegation was therefore unable to support the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the architectural and engineering study.

30. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that his delegation interpreted General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) differently from the Soviet delegation. In his report the Secretary-General recommended that the total amount should be paid out of the regular budget; the Advisory Committee, on the other hand, recommended that only one third of the amount should come from the regular budget, the rest being borne by the Fund of UNEP.

31. The Committee had discussed the matter earlier in connexion with section 13; at that time, the Advisory Committee had drawn the attention of the Governing Council of UNEP to the need to ensure that the growth of the UNEP secretariat did not overtax the voluntary resources of the Fund (1705th meeting). In his view, the administrative and programme support costs of UNEP had grown too fast.

32. His delegation had the impression that if the Advisory Committee's advice were to be followed, the Fund would be overtaxed, and it therefore supported the Secretary-General's recommendation. He suggested that the Advisory Committee might be contradicting itself, in view of its earlier recommendation.

33. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that he had indicated that $230,000 should be appropriated in the regular budget, $221,000 should come from the Fund, and that $332,000 should be shared between the Fund and the United Nations regular budget in the proportion of 2:1. The Advisory Committee had also recommended that the cost of the planning unit should be borne by the regular budget. He therefore saw no contradiction in the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

An additional appropriation in the amount of $230,000 under section 13 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved by 62 votes to 8, with 4 abstentions.

Working paper submitted by the Controller* (continued)

34. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, since the Committee had exhausted the list of speakers on the working paper, the Controller might wish to make a concluding statement.

35. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) asked the Chairman at whose request the Controller was making his statement.

36. The CHAIRMAN said that it was his understanding that it was normal procedure for representatives of the Secretary-General to make a statement after all delegations wishing to speak on an item had done so in order to reply to their comments and give any necessary explanations.

37. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation was among those which had made a number of requests for information from the Controller. It was, therefore, interested in hearing his observations.

38. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation was also anxious to hear the ,comments of the Controller on statements made by delegations, including his own.

39. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia), speaking on a point of order, said that she associated herself with the question asked by the representative of Algeria. Her delegation hoped that the Controller would indeed answer all the questions which had been asked during the discussion of the working paper, but did not accept that the Controller's statement should conclude the Committee's consideration of the item. If he intended to provide answers to questions raised by delegations, the discussion of the item was really just beginning.

40. The CHAIRMAN observed that when he had said that the Controller would make a concluding statement, it was, of course, understood that the Committee could, if it so desired, pursue its consideration of the item.

41. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation regretted that the working paper had been submitted so late as to preclude adequate consideration at the current session. It agreed with a suggestion made at the 1764th meeting to the effect that the Secretary-General should rely on whichever working hypothesis for calculating the rate of inflation seemed best at the time when the budget was being prepared. His delegation had already stated its position of principle regarding inflation and currency instability. Subject to that position, it believed that the estimates of the inflation factor in the budget should be adjusted by reference to the most accurate data currently available. It was imperative that the budget should reflect as accurately as possible the situation prevailing at the time it was adopted. His delegation did not understand, therefore, why the Secretariat had made no effort to correct its forecast of inflation when it became aware of changes in the rate of inflation. The Member States relied on the ability of the Secretariat to prepare the programme budget. The Secretariat was being given a chance to demonstrate its concern for prudent financial management by making the adjustments in the budget necessitated by changes in the

* Resumed from the 1764th meeting.

rate of inflation. A recalculation of the inflation factor in the budget would not adversely affect the programmes and activities of the Organization, but rather promote the spirit of fiscal restraint and sound management which were so sorely needed.

42. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the twin problems of currency fluctuation and inflation were the most sensitive and difficult issues that had arisen during the Committee's deliberations on the budget.

43. As to currency fluctuation, he associated himself fully with the statements made by several delegations on the subject of full budgeting. A budget should, above all, be truthful and reflect accurately the activities of the Organization. For that reason, to ignore the impact of exchange rate fluctuations on the budget would be misleading and a denial of the basic purpose of programme budgeting, which was to show the financial resources actually required for the implementation of each programme. To underestimate cost elements would be to disregard the principles of sound budgeting and to jeopardize the attainment of the Organization's fundamental goals.

44. He thanked those delegations which had acknowledged the need for the Secretary-General to formulate a precise and realistic estimate of the anticipated impact of variations in international exchange rates on the expenditures of the United Nations. While the budget submissions to date had been based on the assumption of an exchange rate of 3.10 Swiss francs to the United States dollar, an assumption adopted by agreement among all the agencies of the United Nations system, the prevailing exchange rate was only 2.63 Swiss francs to the United States dollar. The difference would produce a shortfall of about $25 million, based on the total initial appropriations already approved, with a few exceptions, in first reading. Moreover, the shortfall would be greater when further appropriations of approximately $19 million were taken into account. The shortfall was therefore substantial, and while he himself deplored it, it was imperative that the final appropriations should reflect current financial realities.

45. With regard to inflation, a number of delegations had requested additional information on the reasoning that had led to the adoption of the initial assumptions for the average annual rate of inflation in 1976 and 1977. It would be recalled in that connexion that the instructions for the preparation of the 1976-1977 estimates had had to be issued as early as August 1974. At that time the average annual rate of inflation was in excess of 10 per cent at all of the main cities where the headquarters of various United Nations bodies were situated. The Secretariat had nevertheless based the estimates for 1976 and 1977 on more conservative assumptions as to future economic trends and the same attitude had been taken with respect to the revised estimates for 1975 submitted to the General Assembly at the preceding session.[2] In so doing the Secretariat had been fully aware that its approach was optimistic in the light of circumstances prevailing at the time.

46. The reasons for its decisions were given in the foreword to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (A/10006), in particular in paragraph 13, in which the Secretary-General stated that it was not appropriate to proceed on the assumption that the efforts of Governments to control inflation were unlikely to succeed, and also that further inflation was both difficult to assess with any degree of accuracy and entirely beyond his control.

47. It was, therefore, quite understandable that the Advisory Committee should have stated in paragraph 22 of its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2) on the initial estimates that it had been unable fully to satisfy itself of the accuracy of the Secretary-General's estimates of inflation in 1976-1977 and that it consequently viewed those assumptions as no more than working hypotheses. He did not disagree with that statement of fact, since in forecasting inflation there was no alternative to relying on a careful analysis of trends and expectations which might be invalidated to some extent by actual events.

48. Members of the Committee had asked whether the initial assumptions were still valid in the light of an examination of the most recent inflationary trends throughout the world. He and his staff had made a careful analysis of current forecasts. It was, of course, extremely difficult to find reliable sources offering conclusive data as a basis for such a forecast. The sources consulted in re-examining the assumptions were: the various national statistical services for consumer price indices and gross national product deflators; the forecast made by the LINK project, which was conducted by econometricians from national public and private institutions from 12 countries and from four international bodies; forecasts made by the economic departments of several prominent corporations engaged in international business; and forecasts made by banks. Some of those forecasts compared only portions of the year with the corresponding portions of the previous year and were consequently not sufficient for comparing full calendar years. That fact should be mentioned because the inflation figures mentioned by some sources for the third quarter of 1975 had been rather low. The figures for the last quarter, however, had again shown a marked upward trend.

49. On the basis of the information derived from those sources, the following forecasts of inflation could be made for 1976-1977: United States of America, 6 to 7 per cent for 1976 and 5.5 to 8 per cent for 1977; Switzerland, 6 to 7 per cent for 1976 and 8 to 9 per cent for 1977; Austria, 6.5 to 7 per cent for 1976 and 7 to 8 per cent for 1977. Without entering into any discussion of economic theories, he felt bound to observe that the current favourable exchange rate for the Swiss franc might result, in the context of international development, in higher inflation rates for 1976-1977 than those established on the purely economic data available at the moment.

50. Those new statistics probably had a bearing on the assumption of the budget submissions as to inflation rates for 1976. Those for 1977, on the other hand, should, in his view, be left unchanged because, contrary to earlier expectations, the latest evidence indicated that the forecasts on which the estimates for that year had been based might prove to be on the conservative side. If the new

2 *Ibid., Supplement No. 6.*

statistics were to be taken into account, the rates of inflation on which the budget estimates for the first half of the following biennium had been based might be reduced by two percentage points, a step that would substantially reduce the additional appropriations which would be required to compensate for potential losses as a result of unfavourable rates of exchange. He had provided the Committee with the most reliable evidence available, and it was for the Committee to judge whether it considered that evidence acceptable and whether it would be advisable for the appropriate adjustments to be made in the budget estimates at the current session.

51. He assured the Committee that every effort would be made to keep the pattern of actual expenditure during the following biennium under strict control. As in the past, appropriations would be allotted by programme and object of expenditure on an annual basis rather than for the biennium as a whole, and the allotments would constitute expenditure levels which could not be exceeded without prior approval and further allotment action by the Office of Financial Services. In view of the uncertain situation which would continue to prevail with regard to inflationary trends and currency realignments, it was natural to proceed on a tentative basis in the interest of good management. Accordingly, an unallotted reserve would be maintained. Further allotments would be made only as and when additional needs arose—for example, as a result of the granting of additional classes of post adjustment to staff in the Professional category or above, of increases in the basic emoluments of staff in other categories or of significant changes in rates of exchange. In that way it would be possible to ensure that appropriations were spent only for the purposes for which they were intended and that strict standards of economy were applied. Should any resources remain unutilized in certain sectors, as was the case in the current biennium, they would be kept available for the purpose of compensating any unforeseen and extraordinary requirements which might arise in other sectors, notably those which might stem from decisions taken by policy-making organs. In that connexion, he drew the attention of the Committee to the final performance report of the Secretary-General on the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975,[3] a document which illustrated the manner in which management procedures contributed to keeping to a minimum the net additional appropriations requested before a financial period ended.

52. In conclusion, he thanked those delegations which had recognized the need to include in the final appropriations additional funds to compensate for the difference between current rates of exchange and the rather unrealistic rates on which the estimates had been based so far. Whatever decision the Committee might take with regard to inflation, he would endeavour to continue to manage the total funds approved with the utmost care.

53. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, since delegations might wish to have further time to reflect on the statement just made by the Controller and to formulate proposals, the Committee should postpone a decision on the working paper until a future meeting.

It was so decided.

3 Document A/10035 of 13 November 1975.

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:*

***(a)* Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued)** (A/10009, A/10335, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1);**

***(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)** (A/10335, A/10374, A/C.5/1684 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1697, A/C.5/1729, A/C.5/1752, A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.2)**

54. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the second revised text (A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.2) of the draft resolution on the question of pension coverage for members of the Joint Inspection Unit; the Committee also had before it a statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1752) concerning the administrative and financial implications of the new text. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had nothing to add to the report that it had submitted (A/10374).

55. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that the text of the draft resolution introduced by the Algerian delegation at the 1751st meeting, on behalf of the sponsors, on pension coverage for the members of the Joint Inspection Unit, had been based on the Regulations and Rules of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund but, for the reasons explained by the Secretary-General in his report on the subject (A/C.5/1697), had envisaged the establishment of a separate system. The proposed system had certain shortcomings, in the view of some delegations; in particular, they believed that it would be difficult to administer a separate pension scheme for the Inspectors without giving rise to financial implications, and that the participation of the Inspectors in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund would be a more satisfactory arrangement. In addition, certain experts believed that, in the case of so small a group as the Inspectors, there was a much greater risk that unforeseen circumstances might invalidate the assumptions on which the forecasts of the actuarial costs had been based.

56. The sponsors had therefore concluded that the best course was for the Inspectors to participate in the Joint Staff Pension Fund and they were accordingly submitting another revised version (A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.2) of the draft resolution. Two major improvements had been introduced: first, the proposal would enable the members of the Joint Inspection Unit to participate in an established scheme which already covered 50,000 staff members and, secondly, it did not give exaggerated importance to specific provisions of the Regulations and Rules of the Joint Staff Pension Fund.

57. The sponsors had ascertained that the financial implications of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.2 would be lower than those in the preceding version. Since every effort had been made to reflect all points of view, the sponsors hoped that the new text would be adopted by consensus.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that Portugal should not be listed as one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.2.

* Resumed from the 1761st meeting.

59. Mr. MATHESON (Canada) said that his delegation had not been able to consider the full implications of the draft resolution and had some reservations about its timeliness. It therefore proposed that the matter should be deferred until the thirty-first session, when the question of extending the mandate of the Joint Inspection Unit was to be considered.

60. Pension arrangements were a vital element in the total relationship between an employer and an employee. The importance of a pension could not be over-emphasized; it provided a stronger link with the employer than a salary, an honorarium or any other form of contractual payment.

61. The task of determining the impact of pensions on the functions and performance of the Inspectors could not be studied satisfactorily at the current session. There was no time for such a study, and it would be inappropriate to raise the issues involved without the necessary background information. Moreover, the role, mandate and functions of the Unit were due to be reviewed at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. In particular, delegations would no doubt wish to assure themselves that the high degree of independence that the Unit currently enjoyed was maintained. The provision of pensions for the Inspectors might affect their institutional independence–a point which required very careful consideration and constituted the principal reason for his delegation's proposal for deferment.

62. The Joint Inspection Unit had been established on an experimental basis in 1968 and had not yet been accorded permanent status. It would be an unfortunate precedent to confer pension rights on the members of the Unit before its status had been clarified. Moreover, the financial implications of the draft resolution were substantial, and there was insufficient time left to give the matter the careful consideration it deserved.

63. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that, in view of the time factor and the extremely complex character of the subject, his delegation supported the proposal made by the Canadian representative. In any event, it was somewhat confusing to be faced at short notice with a proposal for a pension scheme that was entirely different from the one originally envisaged by the sponsors.

64. At the time of their appointment to the Unit, the Inspectors had not expected to participate in a United Nations-sponsored pension scheme. It was his delegation's understanding that many of the Inspectors were already fully covered by their national pension schemes. In any event, it seemed more prudent for the General Assembly to defer any action that might prejudge the outcome of the comprehensive review of the Unit's role that would be undertaken at the thirty-first session.

65. If the Inspectors were to carry out their tasks with the requisite objectivity and detachment, their conditions and length of service should be such as to ensure that they did not become yet another group of bureaucrats with a built-in personal interest in length of service. It could be argued that the provision of a pension for members of the Unit would tend to have precisely that effect, thus impairing the effectiveness and integrity of the Unit and discouraging the necessary rotation of membership. If compelled to vote on the revised draft resolution, his delegation would abstain.

66. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) expressed support for the proposal by the delegation of Canada. His delegation would prefer consideration of the matter to be deferred, although it had a completely open mind on the question of pension coverage for the Inspectors. It was supporting the proposal for postponement simply because the Committee should not act in haste. Pension coverage was only one part of the total remuneration package for any group of employees, the Inspectors included. The General Assembly should not therefore contemplate the extension of pension benefits without at the same time considering whether other items of the package should be altered to balance that benefit. Moreover, operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution might create constitutional difficulties, inasmuch as it proposed the granting of pension benefits "equal to those to which they [the Inspectors] will become entitled when final action will have been taken by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session". The wording appeared to constitute a commitment by the General Assembly at its thirtieth session to action at the thirty-first session, and that was surely incompatible with the rules of procedure.

67. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) supported the motion for deferment for the reasons that had been ably explained by the Canadian delegation. The independence of the Inspectors might be jeopardized, however marginally, if they became participants of the Joint Staff Pension Fund. Furthermore, problems might arise if the age-limit of 60 years was dropped, as it would have to be if the Inspectors were to become participants. Similarly, article 21 of the Regulations of the Fund, which referred to "every full-time member of the staff of each member organization" would have to be amended, and such action might open a Pandora's box in the form of applications from other non-members of the United Nations staff to become participants. Finally, the cost to the United Nations, which was estimated by the Secretary-General at about $306,000, should not be added to the budget without further reflection. If the Committee was unable to agree to the motion for deferment, his delegation would find it necessary to vote against the draft resolution.

68. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) expressed gratitude to the Canadian delegation, which had considerably facilitated his task.

69. The Advisory Committee had reached the very sound conclusion that it would be premature to take a position on the matter at the current session. The sponsors of the draft resolution had not had sufficient time to take into consideration all the implications, and it would be wrong for the Fifth Committee to take any action until that had been done. Of particular importance was the basic principle set forth in the second report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies concerning the establishment of the Unit,[4] that the independence of the Inspectors should be preserved at all costs. The members of the Unit were not Secretariat staff; indeed, if they were, they would not be qualified to perform inspection duties. No matter as important as the one under consideration could be hastily disposed of. He therefore appealed to the sponsors to agree

4 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 80, document A/6343, para. 67, B.

that consideration of the draft resolution should be deferred until the thirty-first session, when the Committee would be in a position to debate it more thoroughly. For the foregoing reasons his delegation was unable to support the draft resolution.

70. Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone) expressed support for the views of the Canadian delegation and the Advisory Committee. The issue was very complex and required careful consideration. His delegation was not opposed to the idea of granting pension coverage to the Inspectors; it simply felt that there was a need to assess the role of the Unit before taking a decision on the matter. That was why his delegation felt that the approach recommended by the Advisory Committee was the sensible one.

71. Mr. OH (Singapore) said that his delegation had a completely open mind on the question before the Committee. However, it supported the Canadian proposal because it agreed with the Advisory Committee that it would be premature to take a decision at the current session.

72. Miss VRECH (Argentina) said that her delegation had sponsored the draft resolution in the firm belief that pension coverage should be provided for a group of people who had contributed so significantly and efficiently to ensuring the better functioning of the Organization. The same reasoning had led her delegation to support the adoption of General Assembly resolution 3354 (XXIX), which had authorized the Secretary-General in collaboration with the other members of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, to explore alternative methods of providing coverage for the Inspectors, and to report to the Assembly at its thirtieth session. The reports prepared as a result of those studies—the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/10009, chap. IV, sect. E) and the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1697)—contained alternative proposals for pension coverage, a careful analysis of the merits and short-comings of each of the options, and details of their cost. Those proposals had greatly facilitated the sponsors' task.

73. There was no need to dwell on the Inspectors' entitlement to pension coverage, the rationale for which had been explained by the delegation of Algeria. It should be borne in mind, too, that there was complete agreement among the various bodies concerned regarding the validity of that entitlement and the moral obligation of the Organization to provide pension benefits.

74. Her delegation disagreed with the views expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/10374) for a number of reasons. First, the future of the Unit and entitlement to pension coverage were entirely separate matters. The right to pension benefits should be regarded as a just reward for services rendered and should not be made to depend on the General Assembly's decision on the Unit's future. To treat the one circumstance as a *sine qua non* of the other would mean that, should the Assembly decide to disband the Unit, its members would be deprived of a benefit that they had earned.

75. The General Assembly had decided in 1974 that the question of pension coverage for the Inspectors should be taken up at the thirtieth session. Expenditure having been incurred for the preparation of reports, it would be irrational to postpone consideration of the matter until 1976, thereby incurring further expenditure, when all were in agreement that the Inspectors should receive pension benefits. Furthermore, the substantive question of the Unit's future would leave little or no time at the thirty-first session for a study of the pension issue. Her delegation therefore hoped that the Committee would take the logical action of making a decision at the current session.

76. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said his delegation welcomed the proposal by the Canadian delegation to defer the question of pension coverage for the members of the Unit until the thirty-first session. It was too late in the current session to embark on detailed consideration of a complicated issue, the financial implications of which were substantial. His delegation shared the reservations expressed by other delegations about giving pension coverage to a body such as the Unit, which had been established on a temporary basis, but that issue could be examined thoroughly in conjunction with the discussion of the role and future of the Unit. His delegation appealed to the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.2 to defer their proposal until the thirty-first session.

77. Mr. SETHI (India) said that the argument, adduced by a number of delegations, that since the mandate of the Joint Inspection Unit would be reviewed in 1976 the Fifth Committee should defer consideration of pension coverage of its members, was not consistent with the decision taken at the previous session. Other delegations had stated that the Inspectors had no expectation of pensions; that was not entirely accurate because ACC had examined the question as far back as 1967 and the Inspectors had been led to believe that they might receive pensions. The special and peculiar position of the Inspectors should be borne in mind, as should the fact that their functions had evolved and their conditions of employment had changed. A pension was a deferred remuneration for services rendered, and should in no way alter or compromise the honesty and independence of its recipient.

78. The Algerian representative had explained why the draft resolution had been revised. As for the arguments about lack of time, the Secretary-General had had a year in which to study possible alternatives to a fairly simple matter like a pension scheme, and his delegation felt that that was sufficient. The Inspectors, after all, had been waiting for 10 years; they should be made eligible for pensions and the gap in the system should be closed. It seemed discriminatory to award pensions to the staff members of UNRWA and not to members of the Unit. His delegation believed that if the Fifth Committee decided to defer the matter it would be abdicating its responsibilities. Consequently, his delegation was unable to support the Canadian proposal.

79. Mr. EKONG (Nigeria) expressed his delegation's support for the Canadian proposal and said that the Committee should not be stampeded into taking a decision on one aspect of a question which would be considered in its entirety at the following session. Moreover, it would be an unfortunate precedent to incorporate persons who were not staff members into the Joint Staff Pension Fund. If the

Canadian proposal was put to the vote, his delegation would vote in favour of it, and if the draft resolution was put to the vote it would vote against it.

80. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that the General Assembly had decided to deal separately with the question of pension coverage for members of the Joint Inspection Unit at the current session, although it had been fully aware that action on the future of the Unit would not be taken until the thirty-first session. The report of the Secretary-General had been before the Committee for some time and delegations had had sufficient time to study it. In his view, if other delegations disagreed with the draft resolution they should vote against it, but they should not confuse the issue by introducing extraneous arguments. Accordingly, his delegation would oppose the proposal by Canada.

81. Mr. PONCE (Peru) said that his delegation would support the draft resolution because it considered it to be fully justified and equitable.

82. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution and opposed any kind of postponement.

83. Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark) said that his delegation considered the Canadian proposal to be sound and would vote in favour of deferment.

84. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) said that his delegation could not support the Canadian proposal.

85. Mr. CHANDLER (Barbados) said that the Canadian proposal seemed to be designed to defer the issue indefinitely and his delegation could not support it.

86. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the Canadian proposal to defer consideration of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.2 until the thirty-first session.

The proposal was adopted by 44 votes to 28, with 13 abstentions.

87. Mr. BAMBA (Upper Volta) said that his delegation's vote in favour of the Canadian proposal did not prejudge its position on the substance of the matter.

AGENDA ITEM 103

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly *(continued)*:

***(d)* Investments Committee: confirmation of the appointments made by the Secretary-General *(concluded)* (A/10154, A/C.5/L.1284)**

88. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) felt that the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1284) submitted by his delegation was a constructive and reasonable one, which he hoped could be adopted by consensus.

89. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) pointed out that his delegation had suggested that it might be useful for a representative of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board to express its views on the draft decision submitted by the Dominican Republic.

90. Mrs. TSIEN (Chairman of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) said that the Board would study the question and report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

The draft decision (A/C.5/L.1284) was adopted without objection.

91. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had accepted the consensus because of its confidence in the Pension Board to carry out the review in question fairly. He had had some doubts, however, because membership of the Investments Committee demanded special expertise which was not easy to find. He believed it should not be tied strictly to the principle of geographical distribution although equitable geographical distribution should, of course, be applied wherever possible.

92. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that the draft resolution should have indicated the reasons for the need to apply equitable geographical distribution and to increase the membership of the Investments Committee; he hoped that those who would be reviewing article 20 of the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund would take those reasons into account.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10430 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 31* (A/C.5/1731)

93. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General, in the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1731) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee in its report (A/10430, para. 7), had requested an amount of $112,000 under section 2C of the programme budget for 1976-1977 for the travel, subsistence and fees of 14 experts ($100,000) and for one consultant for a six-month period ($12,000), all to be employed on updating the report entitled *Economic and Social Consequences of the Arms Race and of Military Expenditures*, as requested in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution.

94. In response to inquiries, the representatives of the Secretary-General had informed the Advisory Committee that the request included provision for fees at the rate of $60 per day. The Advisory Committee noted that no uniform policy existed for determining whether experts should be paid a fee and, if so, what the amount should be. The Advisory Committee questioned the need for the payment of fees to the experts as proposed in document A/C.5/1731. It accordingly recommended that the provision for fees, $33,000, should be deleted and that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution, an additional appropriation of $79,000 would be required under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

* Economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security.

95. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) said that he did not agree with the deletion of the provision for fees for experts in view of the effect it would have on other requests by the Secretary-General for expert services.

96. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the First Committee, an additional appropriation of $79,000 would be required under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10447 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 122* (A/C.5/1744)

97. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1744) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee in its report (A/10447, para. 8) the Secretary-General had indicated that the adoption of the draft resolution would not require an additional appropriation at the current session, but that potential additional requirements of up to $109,100 might arise if he were unable to provide from within approved resources the conference servicing staff whom he would have to make available for the negotiations called for in the draft resolution. The Secretary-General stated that, because of other major conferences being held in May 1976, there could be no certainty that all the necessary staff could be recruited for a negotiating session to be held in that month.

98. The Advisory Committee trusted that every effort would be made to accommodate the conference servicing requirements for the negotiations in question within the approved resources. On that basis, it recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that the adoption of the draft resolution would have no financial implications for the programme budget for 1976-1977.

99. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that the adoption of the draft resolution of the First Committee would require no additional financial appropriation under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10431 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 34** (A/C.5/1745)

100. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled that the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee in its report (A/10431, para. 7) called for a study, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3254 (XXIX), on military budgets.

101. In the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1745) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution, the Secretary-General had estimated that the preparation of the report called for would cost $192,000, but that he was not for the moment requesting the component of conference servicing costs—estimated at $110,000—actual requirements for which would be reported in the context of his 1976 progress report. The balance of $82,000, which, in the Secretary-General's view, would have to be appropriated at the current session, comprised: $66,000 for the travel, subsistence and fees of 10 experts, who would meet at Geneva for three series of meetings for a total of 4 weeks; $8,000 for 4 months of consultant services; and $8,000 for the travel and subsistence of staff. For the reasons explained in the discussion on document A/C.5/1731 (see para. 94 above), the Advisory Committee recommended that no fees should be paid to the experts, with a consequential reduction in requirements of $24,000.

102. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution, an additional appropriation of $58,000 would be required under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. The Advisory Committee expected that the conference servicing would be provided from within approved resources at no extra cost to the United Nations.

103. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) drew attention to the fact that the draft resolution had been adopted by the First Committee by a vote of 91 to 2. He deeply regretted that the Advisory Committee had recommended the deletion of the provision for fees for experts to assist the Secretary-General in preparing the report on the reduction of military budgets. The saving recommended seemed modest when compared with the amount spent annually on military expenditures which, according to the introduction[5] to the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, amounted to $300 billion. What was being requested was an addendum to the 1974 report on the reduction of military budgets;[6] the Fifth Committee, when it had considered the question during the twenty-ninth session (1681st meeting), had not raised any objection to paying fees to experts for that report. He suggested that the Fifth Committee follow the same procedure as it had in the case of the earlier report.

104. He requested that a vote should be taken on the amount proposed by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1745.

105. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) said that he had no objection to the statement of financial implications circulated as document A/C.5/1745. As many of the financial

* Conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests.

**Implementation of General Assembly resolution 3254 (XXIX): report of the Secretary-General.

5 *Ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 1A*, sect. VIII.

6 Document A/9770/Rev.1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.I.10).

implications before the Committee seemed to involve the services of consultants, however, he drew attention to the decisions taken by the General Assembly concerning the amount of resources to be spent on experts and consultants, and to paragraph 66 of the Advisory Committee's first report (A/10008 and Corr.2) which indicated that the amount to be spent on experts and consultants in the biennium 1976-1977 was less in real terms than the amount spent in the previous biennium. In that connexion, he asked the Secretariat whether account was being kept of the amounts being approved for experts and consultants during the current session of the Assembly.

106. Mr. WANG Lien-sheng (China) said that if a vote was taken on the statement of financial implications (A/C.5/1745), his delegation would vote against it.

107. Mr. RUEDAS (Budget Division) said, in reply to the United Kingdom representative, that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 contained a smaller total appropriation than the 1974-1975 budget for consultancy services. The Secretary-General was continuing to monitor the amounts approved for experts and consultants. If the Committee wished, a statement indicating the amounts approved for that purpose by the Fifth Committee through its decisions on financial impliations would be provided during the second reading of the proposed programme budget.

108. Mr. BERG (Sweden) drew attention to the context of the draft resolution of the First Committee, of which his delegation had been a sponsor. Arms expenditures throughout the world were enormous, and his country was working with others to initiate real disarmament in order to bring about peace and security and to free human and material resources for more beneficial purposes. It had been proposed that States should reduce their military budgets, but before that proposal could be applied realistically, it was essential to have some kind of basis for comparing the military budgets of States having different economic systems. That was why his delegation had proposed that the experts who had worked in 1974 on a report on the subject should continue their work on analysing military budgets. The subject was an extremely complicated one and members of the group would have the very great responsibility of reporting as objectively as possible; accordingly, the Secretary-General should not be prevented from engaging the best experts available. He pointed out that in 1974 the Fifth Committee had approved the amounts requested for experts by the Secretary-General. He supported the Mexican proposal that a vote should be taken on the amount proposed in the statement of the Secretary-General.

109. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that it was customary for the Committee to vote first on the proposal of the Advisory Committee.

110. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee, at the request of the Mexican representative, to vote on the Secretary-General's estimate of $82,000 in his statement of financial implications (A/C.5/1745).

The Secretary-General's estimate was rejected by 20 votes to 19, with 34 abstentions.

111. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the General Assembly should be informed that $58,000 would be required under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 if the draft resolution of the First Committee were adopted.

The Advisory Committee's recommendation was approved by 38 votes to 2, with 33 abstentions.

112. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that the adoption of the draft resolution of the First Committee would require an additional appropriation of $58,000 under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, the resources required for conference servicing being provided from within approved resources at no extra cost to the United Nations.

It was so decided.

113. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said that, had she been present at the time of the vote, she would have voted in favour of the Secretary-General's estimate of $82,000.

114. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) invited the Secretariat in future to indicate more clearly the subject of statements of financial implications submitted to the Committee.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10432 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 35* (A/C.5/1746)

115. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1746) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee in its report (A/10432, para. 7), the Secretary-General had requested $5,400 for travel and subsistence under section 2C of the programme budget for 1976-1977 to enable him to send observers to the Conference of Government Experts to be held at Lugano under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and to the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts. The representatives of the Secretary-General had subsequently informed the Advisory Committee that part of the request, namely, the $3,100 relating to the Diplomatic Conference was being withdrawn since it duplicated a provision already included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 (see A/10006, para. 2.36).

116. The Advisory Committee believed that the balance of the request, relating to travel to the Lugano Conference, could be absorbed within approved resources for the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs or through the dispatch of a qualified observer from the United Nations Office at Geneva. Accordingly, the Advi-

* Napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of their possible use: reports of the Secretary-General.

sory Committee recommended that the Committee should inform the General Assembly that the adoption of the draft resolution of the First Committee would have no financial implications under the programme budget for 1976-1977.

117. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that the adoption of the draft resolution of the First Committee would have no financial implications under the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A SUBMITTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10441 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 44* (A/C.5/1747)

118. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1747) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution A submitted by the First Committee in its report (A/10441, para. 9), the Secretary-General had requested $21,000 under section 2C of the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 to cover the cost of printing in six languages the comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects, as requested in paragraph 7 of the draft resolution. The Advisory Committee believed that a reduction could be made in that amount through the use of more economical printing methods and by making certain that the number of copies printed did not exceed requirements.

119. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that the adoption of the draft resolution of the First Committee would require an additional appropriation of $15,000 under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

120. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that the adoption of draft resolution A of the First Committee would require an additional appropriation of $15,000 under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

121. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he had gone along with the consensus, but that he believed that the printing costs were unduly high. He was sure that the comprehensive study could have been published without additional appropriations.

The meeting rose on Thursday, 11 December at 12.20 a.m.

* Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

1767th meeting

Thursday, 11 December 1975, at 8.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1767

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10459 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS 113* AND 29 (A/C.5/1733 AND CORR.1)**

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1733 and Corr.1) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee in its report (A/10459, para. 7), the Secretary-General had indicated that the provisions of the draft resolution could be implemented within the approved resources for the Department of Conference Services and the Office of General Services. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that adoption of the draft resolution would not require any additional appropriations under the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

2. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) said that his delegation had no objection to the convening of the Committee established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3349 (XXIX) from 17 February to 12 March 1976. In connexion with paragraph 2 of document A/C.5/1733 and Corr.1 he said that, although the Secretary-General understood that that Special Committee would meet at Headquarters, a Member State might invite it to meet elsewhere and offer to defray the expenses; if the session was included in the calendar of conferences, that information concerning the venue of the meeting should be indicated.

3. Mr. RUEDAS (Budget Division) said that paragraph 2 of document A/C.5/1733 and Corr.1 meant that the Secretary-General would use the cost of convening the meeting at Headquarters as a base for calculating the cost of

* Report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Charter of the United Nations.

** Strengthening of the role of the United Nations with regard to the maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security, the development of co-operation among all nations and the promotion of the rules of international law in relations between States: reports of the Secretary-General.

holding it elsewhere, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV).

4. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that adoption of the draft resolution of the Sixth Committee would not involve any additional appropriation under the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10462 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 109* (A/C.5/1749)

5. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1749) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee in its report (A/10462, para. 10), the Secretary-General had indicated that adoption of the draft resolution would involve the convening of a conference of plenipotentiaries in 1977 to consider the draft articles on succession of States in respect of treaties. The Secretary-General had estimated that the financial requirements would be approximately $476,000. As the conference was scheduled in 1977, the Secretary-General had not wished to request that amount at the current stage but intended to submit revised estimates to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

6. The Advisory Committee had noted that the preliminary estimates had assumed there would be no input in conference servicing from Headquarters, and accordingly it expected that the Secretary-General, in submitting revised estimates the following year, would give more precise information on the contribution to be made by Headquarters staff to servicing the conference. If summary records were to be provided for the Conference, the Advisory Committee recommended that the procedure approved by the Fifth Committee in connexion with the item on publications and documentation should be followed, whereby summary records would be issued only in provisional form, subject to corrections for serious errors and omissions only. Bearing in mind the foregoing, the Advisory Committee considered that the revised estimates to be submitted by the Secretary-General in 1976 should be less than $476,000, as some of the conference servicing might be provided from within approved resources.

7. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution, supplementary appropriations of up to $476,000 might be required under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, but that the precise requirement would be considered by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the basis of revised estimates to be submitted by the Secretary-General.

8. Mr. NAUDY (France) drew attention to paragraph 3 *(a)* of document A/C.5/1749 which indicated that the conference was to meet in New York pursuant to General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV) which stipulated that United Nations bodies were to meet at their established headquarters; he wished to know why a conference was considered a body.

9. Mr. RUEDAS (Budget Division), replying to the representative of France, said that the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV) were usually interpreted as meaning that a meeting would be held where the secretariat which would service it had its headquarters.

10. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that, in the Sixth Committee, his delegation had opposed the holding of a conference of plenipotentiaries on the ground that it was premature and that the work could be done by the International Law Commission, which could then submit a draft convention to be considered and approved by the Sixth Committee without convening a conference, a procedure which would result in considerable savings. Accordingly, although the Advisory Committee had indicated that the financial requirements were subject to review, he considered the conference superfluous and would not be in a position to support the estimate in the statement of financial implications in document A/C.5/1749.

11. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) recalled that Bulgaria had been a sponsor of the draft resolution, which had not called for the convening of a conference of plenipotentiaries; it was an amendment to the draft resolution which had called for the convening of such a conference. His delegation had not voted in favour of that amendment, on the ground that a conference would be premature. Accordingly, if a vote was taken, his delegation would vote against the estimate in the statement of financial implications in document A/C.5/1749.

12. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that, as a matter of principle, all expenses to be incurred during the biennial budgeting period should be approved at the beginning of the period. In that connexion, he asked why the estimate for the conference was not to be approved until the second half of the budgeting period.

13. Mr. RUEDAS (Budget Division) fully agreed with the representative of Turkey that expenses to be incurred during the biennium should be approved at the beginning of the biennium when those expenses could be clearly defined. In the case of the conference, however, no information had been provided on the duration or dates of the conference and the pattern of conferences for 1977 had not yet been drawn up. Accordingly, the Secretary-General had estimated the financial implications on the basis of assumptions which he considered reasonable but which might be invalidated at the thirty-first session through the recommendations made by the Sixth Committee. At the thirty-first session more information on the timing and duration of the conference would be available, as would the full pattern of conferences for 1977. Therefore, the Secretary-General had felt unable to request any specific appropriation for the conference at the current session.

14. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that the explanation provided was not acceptable to his delegation. If the

* Succession of States in respect of treaties: report of the Secretary-General.

conference was to be held in 1977, the appropriation for it should be approved at the current session. If the conference was not to be held until 1978, however, the explanation provided by the representative of the Secretary-General would be acceptable. He hoped that in future the Advisory Committee would give consideration to the principle that appropriations should be approved at the beginning of the budgeting period.

15. Mr. GHAFOURZAI (Afghanistan) said that his delegation considered the convening of the conference premature for reasons it had stated at the 1580th meeting of the Sixth Committee, on 4 December 1975, and accordingly would not be able to support the financial implications of the proposed 1977 conference.

16. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Sixth Committee, supplementary appropriations of up to $476,000 would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, but that those appropriations would not be requested until the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, when information regarding the timing and duration of the conference and other necessary data would be available.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10394 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 60* (A/10008/ADD.19, A/C.5/1735)

17. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1735) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10394, para. 9), the Secretary-General had estimated that an appropriation of $626,500 in the form of advances from the United Nations regular budget for 1976-1977 would be needed, which would be repaid by the International Fund for Agricultural Development as soon as possible after it had been established and resources became available to it. Of that total, $22,000 would be for servicing the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, and the Advisory Committee accepted that estimate. The balance of $604,500 consisted of $445,000 for conference servicing costs, $139,500 for personnel costs and $20,000 for general expenses for the Preparatory Commission. The conference servicing costs had been calculated to cover a total of five sessions costing $89,000 each. For reasons stated in paragraphs 6 and 7 of its report (A/10008/Add.19), the Advisory Committee recommended that at the current session provision should be made for two sessions at a cost of $178,000. In paragraphs 9 and 10 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the appointment for one year of 1 legal adviser (P-5), 1 administrative officer (P-3) and 1 local-level post, and did not recommend approval of the other P-5 post or the other local-level post. The financial implications of the Advisory Committee's recommendation were set out in paragraph 10 of its report. The Advisory Committee recommended that the estimate for general operating expenses be reduced by half, consequential on the recommendations on the number of sessions and the secretariat.

18. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it approve the draft resolution of the Second Committee, an additional appropriation of $294,000 would be required under section 1, and an appropriation of $20,000 under section 25 of the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, and that the estimates under income section 1 and income section 2 would have to be increased by $20,000 and $294,000, respectively.

19. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) reaffirmed the position taken by his delegation in the Second Committee on the draft resolution, and maintained that the Preparatory Commission would require no more than two sessions to complete its work. Moreover, his delegation could not support the estimates for additional personnel. If a vote was taken, he would vote against the statement of financial implications for those purposes.

20. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Second Committee, additional appropriations of $294,000 and $20,000, respectively, would be required under sections 1 and 25 of the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and that the estimates under income sections 1 and 2 should be increased accordingly, by $20,000 and $294,000, respectively.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION CONTAINED IN DOCUMENT A/L.782 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 30* (A/10008/ADD.23, A/C.5/1738 AND CORR.1)

21. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1738 and Corr.1) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution in document A/L.782, the Secretary-General had estimated the cost of servicing further sessions of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea to be convened in 1976, the fourth session of which was scheduled to take place in New York from mid-March to early May, at $2,731,200; that amount included services costing $1,434,300 which would be provided from within resources already recommended for approval under section 23 of the programme budget. The additional amount which would have to be appropriated was thus $1,296,900.

22. In its report (A/10008/Add.23), the Advisory Committee made observations on conference servicing in paragraphs 5 to 8, and in paragraphs 9 to 12 dealt with the Secretary-General's estimates for the secretariat of the Conference. In addition to maintaining the current estab-

* Food problems:
(a) Report of the World Food Council;
(b) Report of the Secretary-General.

* Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

lishment of 1 Under-Secretary-General, 15 Professional and 12 General Service staff members, the Secretary-General had requested 2 new posts: 1 P-4 post for a specialist on the legal aspects and political and economic problems of land-locked and geographically disadvantaged States—a post the Advisory Committee recommended for approval—and 1 P-2 post for a librarian, which the Advisory Committee did not recommend for approval as there was a vacancy at that level among the currently approved posts in the Conference secretariat. The Advisory Committee also found itself unable to support the Secretary-General's request for the reclassification of the post of Executive Secretary of the Conference from D-1 to D-2, because of insufficient justification and bearing in mind the over-all recommendation on reclassifications contained in paragraph 62 of the Advisory Committee's first report (A/10008 and Corr.2) on the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977.

23. The Secretary-General had not requested any appropriations at the current stage for the fifth session of the Conference and the meeting for the purpose of signing the Final Act, on the understanding that, should the need arise, he would seek the concurrence of the Advisory Committee to enter into commitments under the terms of the General Assembly resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium.

24. He drew attention to paragraph 13 of the Advisory Committee's report, in which it recommended that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/L.782, additional appropriations in a total amount of $2,265,400 would be required under various sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

25. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said that his delegation had been one of the sponsors of the resolution in document A/L.782 and regarded the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea as an event of major interest. The Secretariat was providing very considerable assistance in the intensive consultations now being carried out with a view to arriving at a consensus on the future international law of the sea. That being so, he wondered why the Advisory Committee had not seen fit to approve the amount requested for the reclassification of the post of the Executive Secretary of the Conference, bearing in mind that the Executive Secretary acted on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General of the Conference when the latter was absent. He asked what criteria the Advisory Committee followed when considering the Secretary-General's requests for reclassification of posts.

26. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the criteria followed by the Advisory Committee in regard to reclassification of posts was set forth in paragraph 61 of the Advisory Committee's first report. In brief, all the Secretary-General's requests for reclassification to the P-4 level and some of his requests for reclassification to the P-5 and D-1 levels had been approved. However, the Advisory Committee had dealt on an individual basis with the proposed reclassifications to the D-2 and Assistant Secretary-General levels. In some of those cases it had felt that the Secretary-General's requests were not adequately justified and were simply accelerating "grade creep" in the higher echelons. The Advisory Committee had recommended that no further reclassification of posts in the Professional and higher categories should be requested by the Secretary-General until the International Civil Service Commission had looked into the matter. In keeping with that thinking, the Advisory Committee felt unable to approve the Secretary-General's request for a reclassification of the post of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

27. Mr. VANDERGERT (Sri Lanka) said that he must regretfully contest the Advisory Committee's assertion that there was insufficient justification for the reclassification of the post of Executive Secretary. The United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea was the largest international diplomatic conference ever held and was of particular importance to the developing countries. The Executive Secretary played a pivotal role and was the next-ranking official after the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. If the post was to be commensurate with the responsibilities it entailed, it should most certainly be at the D-2 level. Notwithstanding the Advisory Committee's general approach to reclassifications, he believed that the case in question called for special treatment. His delegation therefore proposed that the Committee should be asked to vote on the sum requested by the Secretary-General, namely, $2,283,200.

28. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the Advisory Committee had been quite generous in its treatment of the Secretary-General's proposals and indeed had left untouched certain estimates that appeared to be unjustified. He noted that the next session of the Conference on the Law of the Sea would be held from 15 March to 7 May in New York. Yet in paragraph 7 of document A/C.5/1738 and Corr.1, the Secretary-General was asking the General Assembly to approve funds to strengthen temporarily the Office of Public Information by 1 editor and 3 reporters. As he recalled it, the Committee had already approved in first reading appropriations for some 700 information officers under the regular budget. He wondered, therefore, whether it was really necessary to recruit any temporary personnel for OPI. Similarly, it seemed debatable whether the sum of $106,200 for supporting staff was really necessary. As far as he knew, there were no other major conferences being held at the same time as the Conference on the Law of the Sea.

29. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the supporting staff were needed because the Secretariat would have to service the meetings of some 10 other bodies at the same time as the Conference on the Law of the Sea, all of which were very demanding in terms of staff. OPI would be in a similar situation.

30. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) supported the proposal made by the delegation of Sri Lanka. Any pruning of the Secretary-General's estimates might place the Secretariat in a difficult position and undermine the success of the Conference.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) took the Chair.

31. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that although his delegation attached the

utmost importance to the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and would vote for the draft resolution in document A/L.782, it felt that the estimates of the Secretary-General, even as modified by the Advisory Committee, were extremely high. Unfortunately, he had not had sufficient time to scrutinize the documentation and therefore could not advance any detailed criticism. It did seem, however, that the amounts requested for, *inter alia*, the preparation of documents and supporting staff were unduly high. In view of the large amount involved, his delegation proposed that a vote should be taken on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

32. Mr. LINDSTRØM (Norway) supported the proposal made by the representative of Sri Lanka. His delegation was particularly anxious that the Secretary-General's proposal to reclassify the post of the Executive Secretary to the D-2 level should be upheld.

33. Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation would vote for draft resolution A/L.782 and regarded any proposal that might diminish the success of the Conference as conflicting with its views. His delegation would therefore vote for the Secretary-General's estimates and against the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

34. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that it was the duty of the Fifth Committee to suggest some guidelines to the Secretary-General in order to help him to establish objective criteria governing the reclassification of posts. Such guidelines might include the following: first, reclassification should not be an attempt to improve promotion prospects; secondly, no reclassification was justified simply because the officials in question were required to deal with senior officials in the United Nations system or senior members of delegations; thirdly, reclassification was justified when it was apparent that an official was performing functions equivalent to the responsibilities of officials of a higher grade, especially when there was a genuine increase of responsibilities in a given post; once the post was reclassified, experience and seniority, as well as competence and ability, should be taken into consideration when an appointment was made; finally, priority should be given to the reclassification of a post if it would result in savings in the budget. His delegation noted that the Secretary-General had already adopted a selective approach towards reclassification and it was confident that he would take the right decisions in that respect.

35. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) said that his delegation attached the greatest importance to the Conference on the Law of the Sea and therefore supported the proposal made by the representative of Sri Lanka. It wished to move closure of the debate under rule 117 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and to propose that the Committee should vote on the Sri Lanka proposal forthwith.

36. Mr. OH (Singapore), explaining his vote before the vote, said that his delegation would support the Sri Lanka proposal.

37. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation would vote against the Secretary-General's estimates. The Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the reclassification of the post of Executive Secretary of the Conference was justified because the responsibilities of the post had not been altered since it had been originally set at the D-1 level by the Fifth Committee. Moreover, a very important principle was involved, namely, the need to arrest the pernicious phenomenon of "grade creep".

38. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that his delegation would vote for the Sri Lanka proposal, which was designed to ensure that the Conference was successful. Having been stripped of their land resources, the developing countries were surely entitled to a fair share of the resources of the sea.

39. Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone) requested a recorded vote on the proposal of the representative of Sri Lanka that the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1738 and Corr.1) should be restored.

At the request of the representative of Sierra Leone, a recorded vote was taken on the Secretary-General's estimates.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Greece, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Mozambique, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Yugoslavia, Zaire.

Against: Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany (Federal Republic of), Hungary, Iran, Israel, Italy, Mongolia, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Barbados, Ghana, Japan, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey.

The Secretary-General's estimates were approved by 66 votes to 17, with 8 abstentions.

40. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/L.782, additional appropriations amounting to $2,283,200 would be required under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 in accordance with paragraph 16 of the Secretary-General's report *(ibid.)*.

It was so decided.

41. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that if the Committee had voted on the Advisory Committee's recommendations, as he had proposed, his delegation would have abstained. It did not

approve of the hasty way in which the recommendations in document A/10008/Add.23 had been brushed aside.

42. Mr. SEALY (Trinidad and Tobago) observed that his delegation was one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.782. It would have voted for the recommendations of the Advisory Committee if they had been put to the vote.

43. Mr. DJEKILAMBERT (Chad) said that his delegation had voted for the Secretary-General's proposals in the hope that the Conference would give the land-locked countries the right of access to the sea.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS B AND D SUBMITTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10438 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 41* (A/10008/ADD.22, A/C.5/1748, A/C.5/1750)

44. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General, in his statement (A/C.5/1748) of the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution B submitted by the First Committee in its report (A/10438, para. 15), had estimated that the adoption of the draft resolution would give rise to expenditures in the amount of $479,000. He had indicated, however, that resources already provided in first reading would be used for that requirement, but that he would request an amount of $34,500 for contractual printing and translation. The Advisory Committee, as indicated in paragraph 3 of its report (A/10008/Add.22), was of the opinion, however, that resources already recommended for the Department of Conference Services should cover the latter amount and, on that basis, it recommended to the Fifth Committee that it should inform the General Assembly that the adoption of the draft resolution would not give rise to any additional appropriation under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

45. Referring to the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/1750) of the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution D of the First Committee (A/10438, para. 15), he said that, according to the provisions of that draft, the Secretary-General would be requested to take appropriate steps to strengthen the Disarmament Affairs Division. In paragraph 6 of its report, the Advisory Committee indicated that the staff requested by the Secretary-General were not linked to any new activities arising from the provisions of the draft resolution. The Advisory Committee also pointed out that at the time it had been considering proposals of the Secretary-General in the initial estimates, the Secretary-General had already indicated that the requests he was making were for the purpose of strengthening the Disarmament Affairs Division. The current estimates were again being submitted for the purpose of strengthening that Division without indicating any increase in activities. The Advisory Committee was rather uneasy at that somewhat unorthodox approach and, in paragraph 8 of its report, it made a fundamental point of principle which it believed the Fifth Committee should take into account. It felt that regardless of the merits of the case under consideration, there was danger in a practice whereby individual delegations or groups of delegations made a habit of requesting the strengthening of particular departments when there was no specific evidence provided by the Secretary-General to indicate that the kind of strengthening called for was required. It should be noted that the normal practice was for delegations to adopt resolutions on programmes which the Secretary-General costed and inform the Fifth Committee in a statement of administrative and financial implications as to how the particular decision adopted by the Committee concerned would be implemented. In the current case, no programme decision was being taken; it was a simple, straightforward statement that a particular division should be strengthened, and the Advisory Committee wished to stress that such a practice might expose delegations to growing pressures from heads of organizational units whose requests had not been approved by either the Secretary-General or the Advisory Committee. He believed that the Fifth Committee should take care to prevent that from happening because, if that practice increased, it might jeopardize the entire budgetary and programme-formulation process.

46. Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee in paragraph 9 of its report had recommended that, bearing in mind its observations, 1 P-3 post and 1 General Service post should be approved, but with effect only from 1 January 1977, at a cost of $35,000 under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

47. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) recalled that his country had been one of the sponsors of draft resolution D of the First Committee, which aimed at strengthening the Disarmament Affairs Division. He felt that the implementation of its provisions would provide an excellent opportunity to achieve as wide a geographical distribution in the Division as possible. His delegation understood that currently the Division had 11 officials, 5 of whom were from the group of Western European and other States, 3 from the socialist countries and only 3 from the third world, to which more than 100 Member States belonged. The strengthening of the Disarmament Affairs Division would provide the Secretary-General with an opportunity to redress the balance. His delegation felt that the views expressed in paragraph 8 of the report of the Advisory Committee were exaggerated and he would therefore like a vote to be taken to restore the original estimates of the Secretary-General, which had appeared in document A/C.5/1750.

48. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) felt that the principle of geographical representation applied to the Secretariat as a whole and not to individual units. Its application to individual sections of the Secretariat should be left to the Secretary-General and should not be the subject of legislation by a Committee.

49. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) observed that disarmament was an international rather than a regional question. In his view, it was essential for the third world to be adequately represented in the Disarmament Affairs Division.

* General and complete disarmament:
(a) Report of the Conference on the Committee on Disarmament;
(b) Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency;

50. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) noted that annual expenditure on armaments was now approaching the level of $300 billion, i.e. almost 1,000 times the regular budget of the United Nations and as much as the total income of the countries in which the poorer half of mankind lived. Disarmament was one of the major objectives of the United Nations and the agenda of the First Committee at the current session had included 19 items connected with disarmament matters. However, the achievements of the Organization in that direction had so far been less than satisfactory. His delegation had been one of several representing all the geographical regions which had sponsored draft resolution D. By that draft the Secretary-General would be requested to take appropriate steps for the strengthening of the Disarmament Affairs Division. Before adopting it, the First Committee had been fully informed of the financial implications of the draft, which at that time had been essentially the same as in document A/C.5/1750. His delegation regretted that the Advisory Committee was unable to approve fully the requests made by the Secretary-General, which it regarded as an absolute minimum to meet the increased responsibilities of the Disarmament Affairs Division. He therefore proposed that the estimates of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1750 should be restored and put to a vote.

51. Mr. MURG (Romania) said that his delegation endorsed the views expressed by the delegations of Mexico and Sweden.

52. Mr. SETHI (India) said that while hundreds of millions of dollars were spent on armaments, only very limited resources were devoted in the United Nations to halting the arms race and the manufacture of weapons. His delegation believed that the United Nations should play a central role in disarmament and for that reason India had been a sponsor of draft resolution D.

53. There had been some criticism that the Secretary-General's proposals were not sufficiently well-founded because they were not linked to a well-defined programme. In that regard, the statement submitted to the First Committee[1] had been much more complete than document A/C.5/1750 and had contained a list of the bodies which the Division would have to service. The list also indicated how much the activities of the Division had expanded.

54. His delegation wished to assure the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that it had taken note of paragraph 8 of that Committee's report and that it did not entirely disagree with its contents. The normal procedure was for the Main Committees of the General Assembly to define certain activities and assign certain tasks to the Secretary-General, who subsequently submitted administrative and financial proposals concerning them. In the case before the Committee, his delegation felt that the First Committee had been concerned by the fact that the problem of disarmament had taken on more importance and had felt that the Division should be strengthened. In a sense, the draft resolution was linked indissolubly with the statement submitted by the Secretary-General. Moreover, in adopting that draft, the First Committee had implied the adoption of budgetary proposals by the Secretary-General. Hence the First Committee, in a way, approved the measures defined by the Secretary-General. If the Fifth Committee took a decision which could bring that earlier decision into question there would be, at the plenary level, a contradiction between the two Main Committees. While his delegation did not reject the arguments advanced by the Advisory Committee, it felt that it would be preferable to adopt the proposal of Mexico. His delegation would therefore support the Secretary-General's proposals, on the understanding that such a decision would be compatible with the decision already taken in the First Committee.

55. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on both draft resolutions and would like to draw attention to the extreme importance of paragraph 8 of that Committee's report. His delegation would regard it as a tragedy if the United Nations was to become infected with the canker of corruption. His delegation would have preferred the words "rational allocation of resources of the United Nations programme budget" rather than "co-ordinated growth of the United Nations programme budget", so as to avoid prejudging the issue.

56. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that his delegation fully subscribed to the views expressed by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. It would be putting the cart before the horse to strengthen the Disarmament Affairs Division before having the views of the proposed *ad hoc* committee to review the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field. His delegation would vote against the proposal made by the Secretary-General.

57. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) said that his delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposals. It attached the highest importance to disarmament and felt that the Advisory Committee had followed criteria that were too abstract. The States Members of the United Nations had already made known in the First Committee their views in favour of strengthening the Disarmament Affairs Division. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of the Mexican proposal.

58. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation wished to associate itself with the Netherlands delegation. It also noted that in the view of the Advisory Committee the resources recommended for the Department of Conference Services were sufficient to cover the costs envisaged. His delegation wished to thank the Advisory Committee for the courage it had shown in making the comments it had made in paragraph 8 of its report.

59. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that he had the impression that the Secretary-General himself was not entirely convinced of the need to strengthen the Disarmament Affairs Division in the manner contemplated in document A/C.5/1750. The Secretary-General's earlier assumptions about the workload of that Division during the forthcoming biennium had led him to ask for 1 additional P-5 post, which had already been approved, and the Committee could hardly fail to notice that his description in paragraph 8 of document A/C.5/1750 of the additional posts that would be required to give effect to the provisions of draft resolution D was prefaced by the observation that the level of activity reached in 1975 in the part of the

[1] Document A/C.1/L.752 of 4 December 1975.

Division concerned would be maintained for a number of years. It was therefore hard to argue that more people were needed to carry out the same work. For those reasons, his delegation would abstain in the vote on the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General.

60. Mr. HENČIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation supported the Mexican proposal.

61. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) felt that the views put forth in paragraph 8 of the report of the Advisory Committee were somewhat tendentious; the budgetary principles of the United Nations had to be brought into line with its political and economic objectives, not the reverse. Paragraph 4 of document A/C.5/1750 stated that there had been a sharp increase in the workload of the Disarmament Affairs Division from 1971 to 1975 and the sponsors of draft resolution D had merely wished to ensure that the Secretary-General had the means to carry out his task. His delegation would therefore support the proposals made by the Secretary-General rather than those made by the Advisory Committee.

62. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that should it adopt draft resolution B of the First Committee, no additional appropriation would be required under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

63. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the proposal by Mexico and Sweden that the original estimates of the Secretary-General concerning the provisions of draft resolution D should be maintained. Those estimates were contained in paragraph 11 of document A/C.5/1750.

The proposal was adopted by 56 votes to 9, with 25 abstentions.

64. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that should it adopt draft resolution D of the First Committee, additional appropriations of $149,200 would be required under section 2C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, with consequential requirements of $31,600 for staff assessment under section 25, offset by the same amount under income section 1.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.30 p.m.

1768th meeting

Friday, 12 December 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1768

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION II SUBMITTED BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10469 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 65* (A/C.5/1756)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had considered the statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1756) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution II submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10469, para. 17); paragraph 4 of that statement provided a breakdown of the total estimated cost of $18,900. It was to be noted that the summary in paragraph 6 did not correspond to the breakdown in paragraph 4: the subtotals should be $15,000 and $3,900 respectively.

2. The Advisory Committee recommended that the translation and editing component estimated at $3,900 should be absorbed within the resources already recommended for approval under section 23. The Committee had no objection to the balance of the request, namely, $12,000 for contractual services and $3,000 for travel.

3. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution, an amount of $15,000 would be required under section 5A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

4. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should the draft resolution of the Second Committee be adopted, an additional appropriation in the amount of $15,000 would be required under section 5A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

5. Mr. BACHE (United States of America) said that, had there been a vote, his delegation would have abstained for the reasons explained at the 1706th meeting of the Second Committee, on 27 November 1975.

* Mid-term review and appraisal of progress in the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS II AND IV SUBMITTED BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10344/ADD.1 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 123* (A/C.5/1757 AND CORR.1, A/C.5/1758)

Draft resolution II (A/C.5/1757 and Corr.1)

6. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had considered the statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1757 and Corr.1) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution II submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10344/Add.1, para. 26). Included in the total estimate of $27,600 was a sum of $19,750 for consultant's services and temporary assistance in connexion with the preparation of a preliminary report on the extent to which women participated in fields such as agriculture, industry, trade, and science and technology.

7. The information provided orally to the Committee by the representatives of the Secretary-General showed that the reference to "consultant's services" was inaccurate, since the Secretary-General would not be seeking any expertise not already available in the Secretariat. His request was, in fact, motivated by his conclusion that the staff resources in the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs already recommended for approval for 1976-1977 might prove inadequate for the performance of the additional tasks requested of them. The Advisory Committee was not convinced that the established staff would be unable to furnish at least some assistance in the performance of those tasks. Recognizing, however, that some temporary addition to staff resources would be called for, the Committee recommended that an amount of $10,000 should be approved to provide temporary assistance in the Professional and General Service categories.

8. The Advisory Committee recommended that the component for language services, estimated at a total of $7,850, should be absorbed within the resources already recommended for approval under section 23.

9. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution II of the Second Committee, an amount of $10,000 would be required under section 5A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

10. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution II of the Second Committee, an additional appropriation of $10,000 would be required under section 5A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. A further amount of $1,000 would be required for staff assessment under section 25, offset by an increase in the same amount under income section 1.

It was so decided.

* Development and international economic co-operation: implementation of the decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventh special session.

Draft resolution IV (A/C.5/1758)

11. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), referred to the statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1758) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution IV submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10344/Add.1, para. 26), said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the $30,000 for travel requested by the Secretary-General in connexion with the implementation of the provisions of the draft resolution should be approved.

12. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should draft resolution IV of the Second Committee be adopted, an additional appropriation in the amount of $30,000 would be required under section 5A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

13. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, had there been a vote, his delegation would have voted against the proposal, for the reasons already given in the Second Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 100

Pattern of conferences *(continued) (for the previous documentation, see the 1763rd meeting; A/C.5/L.1289):**
***(b)* Report of the Secretary-General (A/10348 and Corr.1, A/10454, A/C.5/L.1289)**

Inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences (A/10348 and Corr.1, A/10454, A/C.5/L.1289)

14. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that although the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10454) was entitled "Inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences", it dealt with the narrower question whether the United Nations should accept the offer of Tower A-2, which was deemed not to be needed for the medium-term requirements of IAEA, for which it had initially been intended.

15. In paragraphs 4 to 12 of its report, the Advisory Committee discussed how much of the space being built would be needed for UNIDO and IAEA not only in 1979, when they moved in, but also over the following 8 or 10 years. It concluded that some 330 staff members belonging to other units could be accommodated in the Donaupark centre in 1979 and that there would still be enough vacant space left for expansion of the new units over a number of years.

16. Paragraphs 13 to 15 were less detailed because the Advisory Committee lacked the necessary comparable data to determine the relative cost-effectiveness of the Donaupark centre as against New York or Geneva. In paragraph 14 the Advisory Committee recommended that such details

* Resumed from the 1763rd meeting.

should be furnished to the General Assembly at the thirty-first session.

17. In paragraphs 16 and 17, the Advisory Committee linked the acceptance of Tower A-2 with the need for the General Assembly to determine how the space was to be used.

18. The Advisory Committee had concluded that in order to avoid costly under-utilization of space at Vienna, acceptance by the General Assembly of Tower A-2 should be linked with a commitment to utilize space in the tower before additional space was acquired in New York, Geneva or elsewhere. Further, it had concluded that there would be advantages in considering the question of the location or relocation of additional units at Vienna in the broader context of accommodation questions as a whole, and that the financial implications of the assumption by the United Nations of responsibility for Tower A-2 should be considered in detail at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

19. Mr. KLESTIL (Austria) said that with the report of the Secretary-General on the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences (A/10348 and Corr.1), the Secretariat had discharged in a fair manner the task entrusted to it under General Assembly resolution 3350 (XXIX). Since 1955 it had been Austria's declared aim, in accordance with its policy as a neutral State, to do everything possible to serve the international community. His Government's endeavour to develop Vienna into an international meeting-place and the headquarters of international organizations was its contribution to understanding, coexistence and peace in the world, and the expression of its policy of security and neutrality.

20. The construction of the international headquarters and conference centre at Vienna was the fulfilment of an Austrian commitment to the United Nations. In 1966 UNIDO decided to establish its headquarters at Vienna on condition that Austria would make a headquarters and conference building available to that part of the United Nations Secretariat. Similarly, IAEA, which had come to Vienna 10 years earlier, had likewise expected to have its own headquarters building. It was clear therefore, that Austria had not decided on its own and without reaching agreement with the United Nations to construct the international centre at Vienna with its existing capacity.

21. It had, of course, been Austria's intention to build the Donaupark centre, but not on such a large scale. The project had been planned in close co-operation with IAEA and the United Nations and, after protracted negotiations, Austria had obtained a reduction of the demands for office space. Construction was going ahead for the capacity on which agreement had been reached in 1972 in an exchange of letters between the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary-General. His Government was accordingly complying with the United Nations requirement, and the size of the project had not been determined by any concept of its own—hence the responsibility of the United Nations for the practical and rational use of the project.

22. It could, of course, be argued that that did not hold good for the IAEA office tower, since IAEA was an organization in the United Nations system. It was clear, however, from documents A/10348 and Corr.1 and A/10454 that the United Nations would eventually need the space and that the one-time cost of the transfer of personnel would be offset by the fact that Austria was making the whole centre available rent-free, whereas in New York and Geneva extra space would have to be rented or constructed at United Nations expense. The Donaupark buildings would practically be owned by the United Nations since they were being offered for 99 years for a nominal rent of about 5 cents a year. In that context, it should be noted that the total cost of the Donaupark centre amounted to some $700 million, which would be borne entirely by Austria. Thus, every Austrian citizen would be making a special contribution to the United Nations of about $100.

23. Since the member States of IAEA were also Members of the United Nations, they would not escape the burden of an under-used IAEA headquarters in the Donaupark centre. The United Nations had much greater scope than IAEA, and it seemed desirable that the United Nations should take over Tower A-2. His Government had advised the United Nations of the availability of the tower, which was not required by IAEA.

24. Paragraph 22 of document A/10348 and Corr.1 indicated that by 1979, based on the estimates of the Joint Inspection Unit in 1974, the requirements for rental space in New York would be on the order of 26,022 square metres. At Geneva, recent and anticipated acquisitions of the former ILO space and that to be vacated by GATT would provide sufficient facilities for normal growth up to the end of 1980 only. The space offered at Vienna would therefore be needed by the United Nations.

25. The report of the Secretary-General also made it clear that, in addition to the savings in rental costs, general personnel costs, as matters stood, were lower at Vienna than in either of the two other major United Nations headquarters cities. Staff transfer costs would therefore be compensated in a relatively short period by the savings in rental costs and in continuing personnel costs which would result from a transfer of units to Vienna.

26. With regard to the Secretary-General's specific suggestions concerning the principles to be applied in considering the establishment of new units of the Secretariat or the transfer of existing units to Vienna, he stated that Austria had never intended to enter into competition with anyone or to entice anyone to Vienna. Its friendly relations with the other States where United Nations headquarters were situated should certainly not be affected in any way by the Donaupark project. Moreover, Austria fully understood that the transfer of old-established organizations would be difficult for their host countries to accept. It also understood the interest of the developing countries in decentralizing United Nations activities. However, it asked for understanding of its own position. What Austria was building at the request of the United Nations and at its own expense should be most economically used in the interest of all Member States. It was from that point of view that his Government was considering the many interesting suggestions in paragraphs 31 to 35 of document A/10348 and Corr.1. A number of Secretariat units mentioned as

examples for a possible transfer would fit well into the organizational pattern.

27. The Advisory Committee had agreed that the Secretary-General needed guidance before he could proceed any further in selecting units for possible location in or transfer to Vienna. His Government therefore hoped that the Advisory Committee's report would be approved and that the Secretariat would be requested to proceed in the way suggested in it, so that more detailed proposals could be considered at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, together with a full statement of all administrative, financial and social implications, taking into consideration the comments and suggestions made by the delegations during the current session. A considerable time-lag could be expected between the decision to transfer a given unit and the transfer itself. For that reason also, an early decision on the potential use of the space available was desirable. On the subject of the administrative and technical problems of accommodating a large number of international civil servants at Vienna, he was authorized to assure the Fifth Committee that a solution to such problems was absolutely guaranteed.

28. By building and making the Donaupark centre available, Austria was investing in the future of the Organization. Because of the potential savings and because of the geopolitical location, neutral Austria seemed to be an ideal site for organizations of the United Nations system.

29. Introducing draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289, he said that the text was the result of numerous consultations and serious efforts to reach a compromise, and already enjoyed broad support in the Committee. The operative paragraphs stated the purposes of the draft resolution. More detailed information on the costs involved would be presented subsequently. The sponsors were anxious to ensure the rational and economic use by the United Nations of its available premises and he hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

30. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that his delegation recognized Austria's tradition of hospitality. It appreciated the efforts of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289 to reach a compromise and wished to become a sponsor of it.

31. The CHAIRMAN announced that Zambia, Canada, Indonesia and Senegal had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289.

Mr. Matseiko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

32. Mr. HENČIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that the report of the Secretary-General did not contain the expected information, proposals and recommendations or the data on administrative and financial implications requested in General Assembly resolution 3350 (XXIX); his delegation found it interesting, however, because it raised the very important question of Vienna's becoming a third major centre of United Nations activities. The Committee was therefore considering a broader question than the transfer of Secretariat units to Vienna: the question of decentralizing United Nations activities and services, to which Member States, especially the developing countries, attached great importance. For that reason, the report should be given careful consideration by the General Assembly. Questions that had to be considered included the savings which the United Nations might make by transferring some of its services and bodies to Vienna and the Secretary-General's difficulties in finding accommodation, particularly in New York, where the shortage of office space placed an increasing financial burden on the Organization.

33. It was regrettable that the report of the Advisory Committee had not been issued early enough to permit Member States to consider it carefully before being required to make a decision at the current session. Paragraphs 32, 33 and 34 of the Secretary-General's report did not provide a sufficient basis for a decision. It was not enough merely to mention the possibility of transferring to Vienna only departments and units located at Geneva, where the situation, in any event, was satisfactory at the moment; that suggestion did not take into account the problem as a whole or the possibility or necessity of transferring some departments and units from New York. In his delegation's view, the question of decentralization could not be satisfactorily resolved by the availability of office space in the Donaupark centre in 1978; it should be resolved on the basis of the real needs which necessitated the transfer of various departments and units from their current locations. To that end, the Committee needed a report describing in detail the existing situation with regard to the utilization of office space so that Member States could assess the extent to which any proposed transfer would improve the performance and efficiency of the United Nations. Account should also be taken of the fact that Member States would be called upon very shortly to decide on two very important questions: the conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency and the restructuring of the United Nations. The decisions taken on those questions would have a direct bearing on the commitments the United Nations should make with regard to the utilization of office space in the Vienna international conference centre. Accordingly, his delegation believed that all decisions concerning the transfer of United Nations bodies should be deferred until the thirty-first session of the General Assembly and taken up then in conjunction with the JIU reports on utilization of office accommodation.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) resumed the Chair.

34. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation was firmly opposed to any transfer of Secretariat units. Such transfers were costly in themselves, and also entailed invisible costs such as reduced efficiency and morale. It was difficult to see what useful purpose they could serve or what need there was to move units from locations in which they had become well integrated. Moreover, if no units were to be located at the United Nations Office at Geneva, a use would have to be found for any premises vacated there, and, as the Advisory Committee stated in paragraph 18 of its report, at a time when the structure of the United Nations was under scrutiny, it would be difficult to decide which additional units could be located at Vienna. In addition, the General Assembly was to consider the whole question of the utilization of office accommodation at the thirty-first session, and, as the representative of Yugoslavia had pointed out, the possible conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency would have repercussions on the question.

35. The report of the Secretary-General did not satisfy the requirements of General Assembly resolution 3350 (XXIX), paragraph 4, and consequently the Advisory Committee's comments were less clear than usual. The administrative and financial implications had not been studied carefully enough for the Fifth Committee to be able to take a decision. It would be both illogical and dangerous to take a hasty decision, because the expenditures involved were substantial. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee acknowledged, in paragraph 14 of its report, with regard to the operating and maintenance costs of the Donaupark centre, that it had been unable to obtain comparable data for the office space currently occupied in New York and Geneva, and it recommended that such data should be furnished to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The Advisory Committee likewise considered that it was impossible to predict relative staff costs in New York, Geneva and Vienna over a long-term period. His delegation was somewhat confused by the estimates and projections made in the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee concerning the size of the space which might be reserved for the United Nations in Tower A-2 and in the UNIDO towers without prejudicing the normal expansion of IAEA and UNIDO. It needed to know how many staff members could be accommodated in the UNIDO towers so that it could take an informed decision with regard to Tower A-2.

36. His delegation was not, of course, questioning the generosity of the Austrian offer, but it felt that the Committee had not sufficient information to be able to take a decision. It paid a tribute to the Austrian delegation for including in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution a request for the submission of detailed information to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. His delegation would make its decision when all the information was available.

37. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that at the twenty-ninth session his delegation had expressed its gratitude to the Austrian Government for its offer of rent-free premises at the international conference centre. Vienna was the capital of a country which had a constructive policy of neutrality and maintained friendly relations with the majority of Member States; Vienna was therefore a good site for international organizations. His delegation was prepared to support a decision to approve the Austrian offer in principle, but it agreed that it would be advisable to discuss practical questions relating to the more effective utilization of office space at the thirty-first session, together with the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit. It would also be useful to consider the possibility of the use of office space at Vienna by organizations financed from extra-budgetary funds. His delegation proposed that the words "including extra-budgetary funds" should be added after the words "services of the United Nations" in operative paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289.

38. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) stressed that the effect on the morale of staff members, which had been referred to by the representative of France, applied to staff members from the developing countries as well as to those from the United States of America and Western Europe. On the other hand, given the efficiency of modern communications, the proposed transfers would not disrupt the work of the units involved to any great extent. Of course any process of decentralization involved costs, but the proposals would certainly relieve the pressure on office space at Headquarters. The Secretary-General was right to support the Austrian offer and the Committee should do likewise.

39. Mr. MURG (Romania) said that Romania supported the idea that United Nations meetings should be held in different member countries and that there should be a broader geographical distribution of regional organizations, and his delegation accordingly endorsed the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences. Such a step would increase the participation of Member States in the Organization's activities and enhance its prestige. There should be a headquarters office in each of the geographical regions; as well as establishing political and diplomatic centres throughout the world, that would contribute to the democratization of the United Nations and make its activities better known. His delegation supported the policy of decentralization and hoped that it would include the socialist as well as the developing countries. However, caution had to be exercised with regard to the move to Vienna so as to ensure that the effectiveness of the bodies concerned was maintained and costs were kept to a minimum. Consultations should be held among the bodies concerned. His delegation appreciated the efforts of the Austrian Government with regard to working and living conditions, but it agreed with the Advisory Committee that it was difficult to decide which additional units could be located at Vienna at a time when the structure of the United Nations was under scrutiny.

40. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that in considering the use of the Donaupark facilities by the United Nations his delegation had taken into account the following factors: first, office space could be made available in 1979 to accommodate some 330 staff members; secondly, relative staff costs at Vienna would probably continue to be considerably lower than in New York and Geneva; thirdly, it would cost less to use Tower A-2 than to use a comparable amount of space in New York or Geneva; and fourthly, existing facilities in New York and Geneva would be inadequate by the 1980s if current trends continued. There was therefore a good case for deciding that some 300 to 330 staff members should be accommodated in Tower A-2 in 1979 and that, on the completion of the Donaupark centre, the United Nations should not seek additional space in New York or Geneva until consideration had been given to use of space in Tower A-2. His delegation did, however, endorse the request for detailed information made in paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289. It could not make specific proposals as to which units might be moved to Vienna, but it believed that an effort should be made to maintain or improve the geographical proximity of functionally related units and that the Secretary-General should take into account the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. As matters stood, there seemed to be no reason why the Joint Inspection Unit and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal should not be located at Vienna, and there was a good case for transferring the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament because IAEA headquarters were at Vienna. Likewise, there was merit in the idea of transferring units concerned with energy or industrial development

because of the presence of IAEA and UNIDO at Vienna. A good practical reason for retaining the International Law Commission at Geneva was that it was essential for the Commission to have access to the United Nations Library. When discussing functional groups the Secretariat should also bear in mind the relationship between various international organizations and non-governmental organizations; it might find arguments both for and against the transfer of certain units to Vienna.

41. His delegation would support the draft resolution.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Marcuard (Permanent Observer of Switzerland to the United Nations) took a place at the Committee table.

42. Mr. MARCUARD (Permanent Observer of Switzerland to the United Nations) said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/10348 and Corr.1) had a number of implications for the United Nations Office at Geneva and for the organizations which worked in conjunction with it. Switzerland considered itself honoured by the long-standing presence of the United Nations at Geneva, since it viewed international co-operation as a lasting and certain basis for peace. His Government had always tried to fulfil scrupulously its duties as host country by fully respecting the independence of the organizations established in Switzerland and by providing them with the necessary physical facilities. The Federal and local authorities were constantly attentive to the problems of the international organizations and were in constant touch with their executive heads and with the missions accredited to them. His Government did a great deal more than was legally required of it by the headquarters agreement to create at Geneva the best possible conditions for the United Nations Office and the other international organizations. It had provided assistance for the construction of at least 10 headquarters buildings, and the Federal and municipal authorities had also created at their own expense the infrastructure required by the international community.

43. His country had never sought to secure a monopoly of international organizations. As the community of nations grew, it was natural that other States should wish to serve as host countries to international organizations. For that reason, his Government was not seeking to attract new organizations to Geneva. It was difficult, however, to understand why transfers should be made which were not justified by considerations of efficiency and economy and which did not take into account human and social factors that had an influence on the smooth functioning of any organization. Switzerland and the United Nations had concluded headquarters agreements. Consequently, to the extent that the decisions of the General Assembly or the proposals of the Secretary-General would bring about, either directly or indirectly, a change in the *status quo,* his Government believed that it should be consulted about and associated with those proposals and decisions.

44. All the necessary conditions for the effective functioning of international organizations were present at Geneva. Geneva, indeed, was a unique example of what might be termed the organic growth of an international centre, a growth which had come about gradually, as requirements emerged, over more than half a century. The network of professional and human relations between the organizations which had been built up was an invisible but important component of international co-operation. It would be regrettable, therefore, if that co-operation machinery was disrupted for no good reason.

45. His Government and the Geneva authorities were prepared to do everything in their power to facilitate the smooth running of the organizations at Geneva. Such difficulties as had arisen in the past had always been of a temporary nature. Switzerland would do its utmost to enable Geneva to continue to fulfil its international mission.

46. With regard to the office space and facilities available at Geneva, which were the subject of paragraph 22 of the Secretary-General's report, he had additional information which might be of interest to the Committee. In the view of his Government, sufficient land and rental space for normal growth did exist at Geneva. Approximately 1,000 to 1,200 additional offices would be available in the buildings in question during the following five years. While it was true that the situation regarding office space in the United Nations Office at Geneva would be temporarily difficult—until the renovation of the former ILO building was completed—the Swiss authorities had already taken measures to expedite the work and to advance the date of completion to April 1977, or even the end of 1976, from the original date, i.e., 1978. Moreover, the rate of staff growth in most international organizations, including UNIDO and IAEA, had recently slowed down and the earlier growth forecasts for those organizations in the 1970s had not been borne out. Consequently, a margin of safety for five years of normal growth would in fact probably cover the needs of six or seven years.

47. In paragraph 15 of its report (A/10454), the Advisory Committee had referred to the impossibility of predicting the relative staff costs in New York, Geneva and Vienna over a long-term period, since they depended on several factors such as currency exchange rates, relative rates of inflation and relative local rates of pay. In that connexion, he pointed out that the Swiss authorities had taken measures to bring inflation under control and that, thanks to the Government's strict price control policy, the annual rate of inflation in Switzerland would probably be slightly under 7 per cent for 1975 and approximately 5 per cent in 1976.

48. Similar difficulties arose in making comparisons of overhead and maintenance costs; the figures given in paragraph 29 of the Secretary-General's report for the Donaupark centre and for other United Nations office space did not seem, therefore, to be directly comparable. The Advisory Committee had taken a similar view.

49. His delegation fully endorsed those sections of the Secretary-General's report which emphasized the significant costs for a host country of establishing itself as a major centre for international organizations. The cost of establishing an administrative and conference servicing unit at Vienna, referred to in paragraph 48 of the Secretary-General's report, would no doubt be even greater than the cost of acquiring additional office space. Because those two questions were closely linked, the Committee should obtain

the most accurate and detailed estimates of costs possible before taking any decision.

50. His delegation concurred in the Advisory Committee's view that any decision regarding the transfer of Secretariat units should be taken only after careful consideration of the possible implications, taking fully into account the structural reforms of the United Nations which were under consideration. It also shared the view that the location or relocation of additional units in Vienna should be considered in the broader context of accommodation questions as a whole.

51. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289 took account, to a large extent, of the views of his Government.

52. Mr. SIBAHI (Syrian Arab Republic) said that since a large number of United Nations organizations and bodies already had their headquarters in New York, any new organizations established in the future should, ideally, have their headquarters elsewhere, in countries in which a climate conducive to international co-operation prevailed. The rate of inflation was higher in New York than in many other countries and delegations accredited to the United Nations in New York experienced many problems and much annoyance, particularly with regard to housing and security. Vienna was a suitable choice for a headquarters city because IAEA and UNIDO were already established there. For those reasons, his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289 and the oral amendment submitted by the Soviet delegation.

53. His delegation did not share the views of some delegations which had stressed the costs of implementing the draft resolution and the problem of morale which might be occasioned by transfers of staff to Vienna.

54. Mr. EKONG (Nigeria) said that his delegation appreciated the generous offer made by the Government of Austria and would have no difficulty in voting in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289, should it not be adopted by consensus. His delegation supported in principle any steps taken to decentralize the United Nations and enhance its effectiveness. Because of Austria's neutrality, Vienna offered the non-partisan atmosphere which was vital to the proper functioning of the United Nations.

55. When deciding upon the location of new bodies, the United Nations should not limit itself to the existing choices, namely, New York, Geneva and Vienna, but should take decentralization to its logical conclusion by establishing their headquarters in other places, especially in the developing countries. Accordingly, while his delegation supported the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences, it believed that certain aspects of that decision required closer examination. Many of the developing countries had no permanent missions at Geneva, and the situation would be further complicated by the establishment of a third major conference centre. Moreover, the fact that Vienna was in a German-speaking country created problems for some delegations, since German was not an official language of the United Nations. The Secretary-General should take into account the views expressed in the Committee when preparing his report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the possibility of relocating certain services and the optimum utilization of the office space offered by the Austrian Government.

56. Mr. LASCARRO (Colombia) said that he had recently been to Vienna and could assure members of the Committee that he had experienced no moral or psychological problems. On the contrary, he had found the city's hospitality and facilities to be completely satisfactory. His delegation wished, therefore, to become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

1769th meeting

Friday, 12 December 1975, at 5.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1769

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT DECISION I SUBMITTED BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10344/ADD.1 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 123* (A/10008/ADD.24, A/C.5/1742)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.24) on the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/1742) of the administrative and financial implications of draft decision I submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10344/Add.1, para. 27), the subject of which was the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System,[1] said that the Secretary-General had requested an additional appropriation of $85,800 under section 4 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 for a series of meetings of the *Ad Hoc* Committee.

2. Paragraph 2 of the Advisory Committee's report contained a breakdown of the request. In paragraph 3 of its

* Development and international economic co-operation: implementation of the decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventh special session.

1 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 5.*

report, the Advisory Committee noted that the Secretary-General had indicated that certain conference servicing resources would be provided from within the appropriations already recommended for approval under section 23. However, as noted in paragraph 4, the costs of documentation had been overstated by $16,300, with a consequential reduction in the amount requested by the Secretary-General to $69,500.

3. With regard to the conference-servicing component of the request, as adjusted, namely, $61,000, the Advisory Committee recommended that it be absorbed within the credits available under section 23. It had been informed that the balance of $8,500 included provision of $5,500 for temporary assistance and $3,000 for travel. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of an additional appropriation in the amount of $8,500 under section 1, together with an amount of $1,500 under section 25 for staff assessment, the latter amount to be offset by an increase in the same amount in the estimate for income section 1.

4. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) welcomed the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, particularly those in paragraph 6 of its report.

5. He requested an explanation of the $3,000 requested for travel.

6. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the amount of $3,000 was intended to cover the travel expenses of the Chairman of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, who was based at Geneva.

7. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to inform the General Assembly directly that, should it adopt the draft decision of the Second Committee, additional appropriations in the amounts of $8,500 and $1,500 would be required under, respectively, sections 1 and 25 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. The estimate under income section 1 would be increased by $1,500.

It was so decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS A AND C SUBMITTED BY THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10461 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 52* (A/10008/ADD.25, A/C.5/1751, A/C.5/1755)

8. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introduced the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008/Add.25) on the Secretary-General's statements (A/C.5/1755 and A/C.5/1751) of the administrative and financial implications of draft resolutions A and C, respectively, submitted by the Special Political Committee in its report (A/10461, para. 9). Paragraphs 6 and 11 of the Advisory Committee's report contained a breakdown of the Secretary-General's estimates of the costs which would arise from the implementation of the provisions of the two draft resolutions.

9. In paragraph 7 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A, additional appropriations of $108,000 and $14,000 would be required under sections 18 and 23, respectively, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. In paragraph 13 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution C, an amount of up to $89,500 would be required under section 18.

10. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that he wished to make a number of observations on paragraph 7 of the statement of administrative and financial implications (A/C.5/1751) of draft resolution C submitted by the Special Political Committee, in the light of the tasks which were to be performed in connexion with the survey referred to in the draft resolution and the developments to date in that regard.

11. He recalled that, under General Assembly resolution 3240 C (XXIX), the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, with the assistance of the Secretariat, had taken steps to secure the expert services required for the fulfilment of the mandate prescribed in that resolution. After consultations with expert institutions, the Special Committee had examined the qualifications of a number of candidates, had selected an expert and requested him to undertake a preliminary survey and to advise the Special Committee on the best manner in which it could obtain a report on a number of specific points decided upon by the Special Committee. That had been brought to the attention of the General Assembly in the report of the Special Committee, which had been considered by the Special Political Committee at the current session.[2] By draft resolution C of the latter committee, the Special Committee would be requested "to continue its efforts to undertake a survey of the destruction in Quneitra and to assess the nature, extent and value of the damage caused by such destruction".

12. It was therefore the understanding of the Secretariat that, as far as paragraph 7 of document A/C.5/1751 was concerned, the survey envisaged was the one determined by the Special Committee under its mandate as contained in General Assembly resolution 3240 C (XXIX), which would be continued under the terms of draft resolution C. The financial estimates in document A/C.5/1751 were designed to enable the Special Committee to fulfil that mandate in the light of its responsibilities and to provide personnel engaged by the Secretary-General at its request. The Special Committee had in fact determined, at its last series of meetings, how the survey would be conducted. The provisions of paragraph 7 of the estimates would therefore become operative only if the Special Committee had to decide on alternative methods of action and to call on the Secretariat for such assistance as might be required for that purpose.

* Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.

2 Document A/10272 of 27 October 1975.

13. Mr. LADOR (Israel) requested that a vote be taken on the estimates in the statements of administrative and financial implications in documents A/C.5/1751 and A/C.5/1755. Explaining his vote before the vote, he said that his delegation had made its position clear in the Special Political Committee during the debate on draft resolutions A and C and would vote against the estimates relating to these draft resolutions in the Fifth Committee.

14. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution C of the Special Political Committee, an additional appropriation in the amount of $89,500 would be required under section 18 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. He invited the Committee to vote on that proposal.

The proposal was adopted by 64 votes to 2, with 17 abstentions.

15. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his statement related solely to the financial implications calculated by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1741) concerning draft resolution C and the comments made thereon by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/10008/Add.25). The draft resolution provided for the continuation of a project begun earlier in the year pursuant to a resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session. The Secretary-General had given no indication of what had actually been done by the expert hired for the project in question at a cost to the United Nations of $16,800. Accordingly, the Fifth Committee did not know the results achieved by that expenditure. Furthermore, there was no indication that the Secretary-General had made any effort to ensure that the funds now being requested would be expended only in so far as performance was actually rendered. That was an extremely loose arrangement and his delegation regretted that the Advisory Committee had not drawn that fact to the attention of the Fifth Committee. His delegation had therefore voted against the financial implications of the draft resolution.

16. He wished to emphasize that the position which his delegation had just taken was entirely separate from that which it had adopted in the Special Political Committee on the substance of the draft resolution, on which it had abstained.

17. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A of the Special Political Committee, additional appropriations of $108,000 and $14,000 would be required under sections 18 and 23, respectively, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. A further amount of $3,000 would be required under section 25, for staff assessment, offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1. He invited the Committee to vote on that proposal.

The proposal was adopted by 66 votes to 1, with 17 abstentions.

18. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) said that his delegation had voted in favour of both proposals. It was only logical that those who had committed a crime and those who had supported the criminal should pay for the crime.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS II AND III SUBMITTED BY THE THIRD COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10474 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS 75* AND 76** (A/C.5/1753, A/C.5/1754)

Draft resolution III (A/C.5/1753)

19. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) referred to the statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1753) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution III submitted by the Third Committee in its report (A/10474, para. 30) and noted that under the terms of paragraph 20 of the draft resolution the General Assembly would decide to convene in 1980 a world conference to review and evaluate the progress made in implementing the objectives of the International Women's Year as recommended by the World Conference of the International Women's Year. The Secretary-General indicated that on the basis of a number of assumptions, mentioned in paragraphs 2 to 5 of his statement, and bearing in mind the estimates approved for the 1975 conference, it would appear that the cost for the 1980 conference would be in the order of $700,000. The Advisory Committee regarded that figure as a very provisional guess of the estimates required.

20. The Secretary-General was not requesting any additional appropriations at the current stage. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Third Committee, no additional appropriations would be required in the biennium 1976-1977, but that estimates for the preparatory work for the conference would be considered by the General Assembly in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979.

21. The Advisory Committee had been informed by representatives of the Secretary-General that any expenditure involved in implementing the provisions of paragraph 10 of the draft resolution would be met from extrabudgetary resources. With regard to paragraph 17, however, the Advisory Committee had been informed that potential requirements might arise in the form of revised estimates to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The Advisory Committee trusted that the Secretary-General would be able to attain the objectives specified without requiring supplementary appropriations.

22. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the

* International Women's Year, including the proposals and recommendations of the World Conference of the International Women's Year.

** Status and role of women in society, with special reference to the need for achieving equal rights for women and to women's contribution to the attainment of the goals of the Second United Nations Development Decade, to the struggle against colonialism, racism and racial discrimination and to the strengthening of international peace and of co-operation between States.

General Assembly that, should the Assembly adopt draft resolution III of the Third Committee, no additional appropriation would be required for the biennium 1976-1977, but that estimates for the preparatory work for the proposed conference would be considered by the General Assembly in the context of its consideration of the programme budget proposals to be submitted by the Secretary-General for the biennium 1978-1979.

It was so decided.

23. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that his delegation's reservations concerning any financial implications of the draft resolution had been explained in detail in the Third Committee (2174th and 2181st meetings).

Draft resolution II (A/C.5/1754)

24. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in the statement he had submitted (A/C.5/1754) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution II submitted by the Third Committee in its report (A/10474, para. 30), the Secretary-General had estimated those implications at $24,800, net of staff assessment. The Secretary-General estimated the total cost of the comprehensive report that he was requested to prepare under the terms of paragraph 6 of the draft resolution at $33,000; but, as he expected that the cost of the preparation of the final report, set at $8,200, could be absorbed within the appropriations already requested, the net amount requested was $24,800.

25. In the Advisory Committee's opinion, the $2,000 for the preliminary translation into English of about 100 pages of Government replies could similarly be accommodated within the resources already recommended for the Department of Conference Services.

26. The balance of the request consisted of $19,800 for personal services and $3,000 for travel. In paragraph 3 of document A/C.5/1754, the Secretary-General indicated that the cost of personal services included $15,000 for six man-months of consultant's services and four man-months of General Service temporary assistance. Information provided orally to the Advisory Committee by the Secretary-General's representatives indicated that the preparation of the report—which would be based on information received from Governments in response to a questionnaire—would not require any special expertise that was not already available in the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and that the request for the services of a consultant had been motivated by the Secretary-General's conclusion that the regular staff resources would be unable to absorb the extra workload that preparation of the report would impose. While the Advisory Committee accepted the need for a temporary strengthening of the regular staff resources for the preparation of the report, it believed that the regular establishment could make a contribution. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee was of the opinion that the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs would require Professional and General Service temporary assistance—and not a consultant's services—and that an amount of $10,000 should suffice for that purpose. The Committee was also of the view that such travel costs as might arise should be absorbed within the resources already recommended for section 5A.

27. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution, an additional amount of $10,000 would be required under section 5A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. An additional $1,500 would be required for staff assessment under section 25, offset by a similar amount under income section 1.

28. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that his delegation would vote against the estimates submitted in document A/C.5/1754.

29. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should the Assembly adopt draft resolution II of the Third Committee, an additional appropriation in the amount of $10,000 would be required under section 5A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. A further amount of $1,500 would be required for staff assessment under section 25, offset by the same amount under income section 1. He invited the Committee to vote on that suggestion.

The proposal was adopted by 68 votes to 3, with 13 abstentions.

30. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation had opposed the financial implications of the draft resolution for the reasons already stated by it in the Third Committee.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS VI AND IX SUBMITTED BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/10467 CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 12* (A/10008/ADD.20, A/C.5/1736, A/C.5/1759)

Draft resolution VI (A/10008/Add.20, A/C.5/1736)

31. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008/Add.20) on the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/1736) of the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution VI submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10467, para. 57), recalled that the draft resolution dealt with publicity for the United Nations Water Conference scheduled for 1977. In paragraph 3 of his statement, the Secretary-General indicated that the activities contemplated would require additional appropriations of $140,000. The breakdown of that figure could be found in paragraph 4 of the Advisory Committee's report.

32. The Advisory Committee had inquired as to the amount of $81,000 included for travel and subsistence costs for an "encounter" for journalists and editors, and had been informed that the proposed expenditure was intended to facilitate the participation of journalists and editors from developing countries. The Advisory Commit-

*Report of the Economic and Social Council.

tee had concluded that that objective could be achieved by appropriating slightly less than the amount requested by the Secretary-General. Accordingly, in paragraph 6 of its report, it drew attention to the need to take steps to ensure that funds would be provided only for journalists and editors who could not otherwise attend and whose presence would contribute to publicizing the work of the Conference. On the basis of those selective criteria, the Advisory Committee felt that the objective could be attained with an allocation of $50,000.

33. Paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 of the Advisory Committee's report dealt with the other items of expenditure. Lastly, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Second Committee, an additional appropriation of $90,600 would be required under section 4 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

34. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) totally disagreed with the position of the Advisory Committee. He could not accept the reasons stated in paragraph 6 of its report for reducing the amount recommended by the Secretary-General for the "encounter" for journalists and editors from $81,000 to $50,000. Such a reduction would reduce the number of participants from 40 to 25. It was not asking for charity to request funds to enable journalists from developing countries to attend the "encounter", and it was inappropriate for the Advisory Committee or a legislative body to attempt to judge which journalists and editors would contribute to publicizing the work of the Conference. Most developing Member States faced acute water problems, and the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee would not be an economy. He therefore proposed that the original amount requested by the Secretary-General, namely, $81,000, should be maintained.

35. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) reaffirmed his delegation's position on the question, as stated in the Second Committee. He expressed surprise that the Second Committee had not been given detailed information regarding the financial implications when it had considered the draft resolution. He was also somewhat puzzled that undertakings such as the journalists' "encounter" should be financed from the regular budget of the United Nations. That budget should not be used indiscriminately. It should be possible to find some other source of financing to enable journalists from the developing countries to attend the "encounter". In that connexion, it was surprising that the representative of Iran, a very rich country, should refer to the difficulties which certain countries would be faced with in sending journalists to attend the "encounter".

36. His delegation felt that the original request for $81,000 should be not only reduced but eliminated altogether. The Advisory Committee had not taken a proper stand in that connexion. Consequently, he could not support the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and proposed that the question should be put to a vote.

37. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) supported the proposal made by the representative of Iran.

38. Referring to the observations made by the representative of the Soviet Union, he said that it was not true that the Second Committee had had no detailed information concerning the financial implications of the public information aspect of the Water Conference during its consideration of the draft resolution in question. Revised estimates for the Conference were contained in the Secretary-General's report of 3 November 1975 (A/C.5/1701), paragraph 36 of which specifically mentioned the figure of $140,000. Since November, all aspects of the question had been studied by various United Nations bodies, and the estimates regarding the public information component of the Conference had been referred to in the Fifth Committee.

39. The need for a budget for public information activities in respect of all conferences was well known. The method whereby journalists were brought from developing countries to United Nations conferences was a logical procedure designed to ensure adequate publicity, which was not always provided by the press. It was therefore essential to make provision for such journalists to attend the Water Conference.

40. Mr. TALIEH (Iran), referring to the observations made by the representative of the Soviet Union, said that, as had been stated in *The New York Times*, Iran had a deficit of $1 billion for 1975, possibly as a result of generous bilateral aid donations. In wealth and in gross national product, Iran could not be compared with the Soviet Union. The improvement in Iran's financial position was the result of changes in the prices of a few commodities. The Soviet Union and other large countries had been wealthy for a considerable time. It was predictable that, if current trends continued, within 50 years there would be at least 100 countries far richer than Iran.

41. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that his delegation supported the proposal of the representative of Iran.

42. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) agreed with the views expressed by the representatives of Iran and Argentina. The purpose of inviting journalists to attend the Conference was to provide world-wide publicity and to highlight the concerns felt with regard to the problem of water resources. The right to send journalists should not be restricted to those countries rich enough to do so.

43. Mr. CARRESSE (Uruguay) said that, for reasons already explained at the 1758th meeting, during the Committee's consideration of section 4 of the proposed programme budget, and in view of the importance of publicizing the Water Conference, his delegation wholeheartedly supported the original estimates of the Secretary-General.

44. Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark) supported fully the principle of enabling journalists from all countries to attend the Conference. At the same time, he had some sympathy with the point of view expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union. A compromise solution might be to provide from the $50,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee, 12 grants to finance some of the travel and subsistence costs of journalists and editors wishing to attend the Conference, the remainder to be financed by

other sources. In that way, United Nations expenditure would be limited, and it would be possible for more than the original 40 participants to attend.

45. Mr. SETHI (India), speaking on a point of order, moved the closure of the debate under rule 117 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

46. The CHAIRMAN said that, in the absence of any speakers and if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to close the debate on the item.

It was so decided.

47. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the proposal by the representative of Iran (para. 34 above).

The proposal was adopted by 60 votes to 18, with 11 abstentions.

48. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should the Assembly adopt draft resolution VI of the Second Committee, an additional appropriation of $121,600 would be required under section 4 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

It was so decided.

Mr. Akashi (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

Draft resolution IX (A/C.5/1759)

49. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that the Secretary-General, in his statement (A/C.5/1759) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution IX submitted by the Second Committee in its report (A/10467, para. 57), informed the Fifth Committee that, if that draft resolution was adopted, an additional appropriation in the amount of $68,200 would have to be provided under section 5A of the proposed programme budget for 1976-1977, and that a further amount of $15,000 would be required for staff assessment under section 25, offset by an increase of the same amount under income section 1. The Advisory Committee agreed with that estimate.

50. Mr. LADOR (Israel), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that his delegation had made its position clear during the consideration of the draft resolution in the Second Committee at its 1712th meeting. Consequently, his delegation would not be a party to the proposals contained in document A/C.5/1759 and would vote against them.

51. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to report directly to the General Assembly that, should the Assembly adopt draft resolution IX of the Second Committee, additional appropriations in the amounts of $68,200 would be required under section 5A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and $15,000 under section 25 for staff assessment, offset by the same amount under income section 1.

The proposal was adopted by 57 votes to 2, with 23 abstentions.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued) (for the previous documentation, see the 1759th meeting; A/10008/Add.14, 16, 17, 18 and 21, A/C.5/1715/Rev.1, A/C.5/1730/Add.1, A/C.5/L.1286)**

Revised estimates under section 1. World Food Council (A/10008/Add.21, A/C.5/1723)

52. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the revised estimates in document A/C.5/1723 had been submitted by the Secretary-General following decisions of the first session of the World Food council in June 1975. The Secretary-General estimated that requirements for the Council and its secretariat for 1976-1977 would amount to $1,441,400 under the regular budget. In addition, an amount of $779,000 was expected in extra-budgetary resources, $600,000 to be contributed by FAO and $179,000 by IBRD.

53. He recalled that, at its twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly had decided to establish the World Food Council and had requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Director-General of FAO, to set up a secretariat for the Council. In May, the Secretary-General had sought the concurrence of the Advisory Committee to enter into commitments for the initial expenses required for what he had described as a minimum interim secretariat. The Secretary-General had indicated to the Advisory Committee that the establishment of the secretariat had followed the conclusion of consultations between FAO and IBRD. As indicated in paragraph 3 of its report (A/10008/Add.21), the Advisory Committee had authorized the Secretary-General to enter into the necessary commitments.

54. During its consideration of the current proposals, the Advisory Committee had been informed that the administrative and financial arrangements governing FAO participation in the World Food Programme had not yet been formalized and that the $600,000 included in the current budget estimates as part of FAO's contribution had not yet been confirmed.

55. The staff to be provided by FAO and IBRD was described in paragraph 3 of the Advisory Committee's report. The Advisory Committee had examined the Secretary-General's request in the light of the considerations set out in paragraph 6 of its report. The Committee had concluded that, on the basis of the information before it, the granting of less than the 4 Professional and 4 General Service posts requested by the Secretary-General would be adequate to carry out the relevant programme. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee were outlined in paragraph 8 of its report.

56. For the reasons given in paragraph 13 of its report, the Advisory Committee had recommended a slight reduction in the amount of $408,400 requested for temporary assistance for meetings.

* Resumed from the 1766th meeting.

57. With regard to the use of Arabic as an official and working language of the World Food Council, the Advisory Committee believed that, before the necessary expenditure could be properly authorized, there was a need for the Fifth Committee to make a recommendation to the General Assembly on the question. The Advisory Committee had not recommended any reduction in the Secretary-General's estimate of the cost of Arabic language services.

58. Referring to paragraph 15 of the report, he said that the Advisory Committee had noted that funds related to travel which were expected from FAO and IBRD were linked to the travel of staff provided by those organizations. The Advisory Committee recommended that excessive travel should be avoided and that it should be carefully related to the needs of the programme of the World Food Council and its secretariat. It was also of the opinion that travel funds should be managed as a unit for the sake of better management and co-ordination.

59. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that the organization of food supplies to relieve food shortages in areas of natural disaster was a question of great concern to the Government of Kenya. Natural disasters occurred almost every year in Africa. Consequently, his delegation viewed the Advisory Committee's recommendations with grave concern. In view of the very recent establishment of the World Food Council secretariat, he did not understand on what basis the Advisory Committee had decided to reduce the Secretary-General's estimates. The financing and personnel recommended by the Advisory Committee were insufficient to enable the Council to meet the expectations of the third world. He expressed the hope that a way would be found to increase the funds intended for the Council.

60. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that his delegation attached the greatest importance to the food problem and believed that, in coming decades, the importance of the food sector was likely to increase. The international community must therefore also play an increasing role in efforts to solve the food problem. The World Food Council was one of the most important instruments for implementing the strategy adopted by the World Food Conference. Its task was clearly defined in General Assembly resolution 3348 (XXIX). The Council was to serve as a co-ordinating mechanism and was required to review periodically major problems and policy issues and to monitor the world food situation.

61. His delegation normally supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, whose work it valued highly, but felt that in the case under consideration the cuts recommended could not be supported.

62. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) recalled that the World Food Conference had been convened following a proposal by the United States delegation. He also recalled the provisions of General Assembly resolution 3348 (XXIX), which had established the World Food Council and its secretariat, and noted that the Assembly at its seventh special session had recognized that the food problem was a crucial factor of economic development.

63. His delegation had been deeply concerned that the necessary human resources to permit the United Nations to attempt to deal with the food problem had been totally inadequate. The staff resources currently available to the Executive Director of the Council's secretariat made his task all but impossible, and constituted a serious obstacle to the ability of the United Nations to carry out its mandate under resolution 3348 (XXIX).

64. The Secretary-General had properly recognized that short-coming; he had been perceptive in realizing that the world food problem could be tackled only with the input of additional human resources. Even if the Secretary-General's requests were to be approved, the Executive Director would be provided with a total staff of 30—still a woefully small number, given the magnitude of the task. The Secretary-General, in paragraphs 10 and 11 of his report on the revised estimates (A/C.5/1723), had presented clear arguments for the proposed additional posts. Consequently, his delegation, which in most instances had strongly supported the Advisory Committee's work, was extremely disappointed that that Committee had not adequately explained why it had rejected 6 out of the 8 additional posts requested.

65. His delegation believed, and was certain that others would share its view, that the initiative taken by the United States of America and subsequently endorsed overwhelmingly by the General Assembly deserved to be fully implemented, with all the human resources necessary. The hungry people of the world looked to the United Nations for help and expected much more from it. The Committee had the opportunity to correct that situation by supporting, without any hesitation and overwhelmingly, the full request of the Secretary-General concerning the staffing of the World Food Council.

66. Consequently, his delegation formally proposed that the Committee approve in full the Secretary-General's request for additional staffing for the World Food Council secretariat, along with the necessary budgetary credits.

67. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the debate might centre on the United States proposal.

68. He also wished to inform the Committee that the President of the General Assembly had just expressed his grave concern about the lack of sufficient progress by the Fifth Committee, and had urged its members to ensure punctuality and to exercise self-discipline in the length of statements.

69. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) emphasized the heavy volume of work carried out by the Fifth Committee, for which adequate recognition was not always given.

70. Mr. SETHI (India) said he also wished to express appreciation for the work of the Advisory Committee.

71. Mr. BELYAEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) moved the adjournment of the meeting.

72. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's reasoning. He therefore formally proposed that the Com-

mittee accept the reduction recommended, and requested that, under rule 131 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, priority be given to his proposal.

73. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt) expressed his delegation's dissatisfaction with the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee, which should have taken into consideration the importance of the World Food Programme for the developing countries. The World Food Council should have a small secretariat of a very high level of efficiency, and the Council's work would be seriously impaired by the proposed reductions.

74. His delegation therefore supported the United States proposal. It also supported the Council's recommendation concerning the use of Arabic in the sessions of the Council.

75. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the motion of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic for adjournment of the meeting under rule 118 of the rules of procedure.

The motion for adjournment of the meeting was rejected by 39 votes to 21, with 9 abstentions.

76. The CHAIRMAN noted the absence of a quorum for the purpose of taking decisions, but pointed out that there were sufficient members present for the debate to proceed.

77. After a brief procedural discussion, in which Mr. BEATH (New Zealand), Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta), Mr. SETHI (India) and Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) took part, Mr. TALIEH (Iran) moved the closure of the debate under rule 117 of the rules of procedure.

78. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom), supported by Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands), opposed closure of the debate. The Committee had heard only one side of the argument; in the interest of free speech, those delegations wishing to state a different point of view should be permitted to do so.

The motion for closure of the debate was adopted by 57 votes to 11, with 6 abstentions.

79. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the allocation of priority between the United States proposal for approval in full of the Secretary-General's request for additional staffing for the World Food Council and the proposal by the Federal Republic of Germany for approval of the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

The motion by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany that priority be given to its proposal was rejected by 41 votes to 10, with 22 abstentions.

80. The CHAIRMAN invited committee members to explain their votes before the vote on the United States proposal.

81. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had been surprised to hear the statement by the United States representative on the question of the secretariat of the World Food Council; that statement seemed a little out of character.

82. His delegation, for its part, saw the problem rather differently. In paragraph 11 of its resolution 3348 (XXIX), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to take immediate action for establishing a secretariat for the World Food Council, as set forth in resolution XXII of the World Food Conference. In accordance with the latter resolution, the World Food Council would serve as a co-ordinating mechanism and a policy-reviewing body within the United Nations system.

83. His delegation had the clear impression that the World Food Council and its secretariat were not intended to execute world food policies. The evidence cited by the representative of Pakistan confirmed that impression. If the World Food Council were responsible for execution, it would have to compete with other agencies, particularly FAO. In view of the problems posed by the proliferation of competing executing agencies, delegations should reflect on the question of structure. If structure was important to the efficiency of the United Nations—and the setting up of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System suggested that it was—delegations should not argue that every secretariat must be enlarged if it was to be effective; what had to be decided was the appropriate size of each organization, having regard to its intended function. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations. It had the fullest confidence in the World Food Council secretariat and believed that, with the additional staff recommended by the Advisory Committee, it would continue to deserve full confidence. Finally, his delegation was in favour of the provision of Arabic language services for the proceedings of the Council.

84. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that his delegation fully supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations, noting that the Council agreed that its secretariat should be small (A/10008/Add.21, para. 6 *(a)*). The Secretary-General's proposals for an increase were a surprising interpretation of the World Food Council's recommendation; such an increase in staff could lead to more bureaucracy and duplication, and could hamper co-ordination.

85. Those considerations, among others, had led his delegation to consider that the proposed International Fund for Agricultural Development should be established as a United Nations organ, not a specialized agency.

86. His delegation would therefore vote against the United States proposal.

87. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that, since the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly, the world had gained a clearer impression of the problems of food and raw materials. The United States proposal was interesting, but merely created a diversion. The basic problem was the control and marketing of raw materials by the developing countries: a country which produced sufficient raw materials would be able to meet its food requirements.

88. His delegation accordingly supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

89. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation supported the arguments put forward by the Advisory Committee, and would therefore vote against the United States proposal.

90. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said that she would vote in favour of the United States proposal. Her delegation was very pleased to note that the United States was in agreement with the developing countries.

91. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said that his delegation fully shared the views expressed by the British delegation and agreed with some of the points made by the delegation of Algeria. It therefore supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation and had decided that it would not participate in the vote on the United States proposal.

92. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the United States proposal, for reasons put forward by the United States and other delegations.

93. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation, which represented a Sahelian country, attached great importance to the question before the Committee. However, it could not support the United States proposal, which had nothing to do with the food problems of the Sahel.

94. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) said he would support the United States proposal for restoration of the full amount requested by the Secretary-General for the secretariat of the World Food Council. If that secretariat was not provided with the necessary resources, it would be unable to discharge its important functions. Restoration of the full amount requested for that purpose would be another step forward in efforts to feed the hungry millions all over the world.

95. Miss VRECH (Argentina) said that the World Food Council had become the highest political organ that concerned itself exclusively with the world food situation in all its aspects. Furthermore, new important functions had been assigned to it under General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), which requested the Council to continue intensive work in order to determine the size of the world food-grain reserve, and called upon the Council to monitor the implementation of the provisions under section V of the resolution.

96. In order to implement those decisions logically, it was necessary to strengthen the secretariat of the World Food Council in such a way that it possessed the means for seeking solutions to the world food problem, for which purpose the Council must have a highly qualified secretariat that did not carry out operative tasks. Those tasks would be the responsibility of other organs of the system, particularly FAO.

97. Her delegation did not accept the arguments adduced by the Advisory Committee for reducing the Secretary-General's request. Accordingly, it would support the United States proposal.

98. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt) said that his delegation would support the United States proposal, because the World Food Council needed the appropriation originally requested.

99. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the proposal of the United States of America, whereby $173,000 would be added to the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.21, para. 19), making a total amount of $1,245,000 under section 1.

The proposal was adopted by 44 votes to 20, with 11 abstentions.

100. The CHAIRMAN said that the amount approved would be appropriated under the regular budget for the biennium 1976-1977.

101. He also proposed that, bearing in mind the recommendation set forth in paragraph 25 of the report of the World Food Council on its first session,[3] and having noted the financial implications set forth in paragraph 12 of the Advisory Committee's report, the Committee recommend to the General Assembly that it authorize the World Food Council to adopt Arabic as an official and working language, beginning at its second session.

It was so decided.

102. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that her delegation had voted in favour of the United States proposal because of the important tasks to be performed by the World Food Council.

103. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that his delegation, which attached the greatest importance to the work of the World Food Council, would have voted in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendations if they had been put to the vote.

The meeting rose at 8.30 p.m.

3 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 19.*

1770th meeting

Saturday, 13 December 1975, at 2.05 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1770

AGENDA ITEM 98

Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency: report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions *(concluded)**

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1285)

1. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, said that the draft report of the Committee (A/C.5/L.1285) did not reflect the substantive discussions in the Committee on the item, but focused on procedural matters and on decisions and draft resolutions.

2. The CHAIRMAN said that he assumed the Committee wished to adopt the draft report without objection.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 104

Personnel questions *(concluded)*:**
(b)* Other personnel questions: report of the Secretary-General *(concluded)**

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly **(concluded)*** *(part II) (A/C.5/L.1283/Add.1)*

3. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introducing part II (A/C.5/L.1283/Add.1) of the draft report of the Committee, said that it dealt with the second part of the agenda item and concerned "other personnel questions". Again, the draft report contained draft resolutions and decisions and did not reflect the Committee's discussions.

4. The CHAIRMAN said that he assumed the Committee wished to adopt part II of the draft report without objection.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(continued)**

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (part IV) (A/C.5/L.1281)

5. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, said that the draft report (A/C.5/L.1281) corresponded to part IV of the report of the Committee on agenda item 107 and reflected the discussions which had taken place on the question, the preceding parts containing only the Committee's decisions. Paragraph 40 *(a)* of the draft report contained a recommendation concerning the principle of paying troop contributors for the usage factor for personal clothing, gear and equipment issued by Governments to their troops.

6. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) inquired when the report of the Board of Auditors which had been requested by his delegation at the 1748th meeting would be available.

7. The CHAIRMAN said that the report in question would be available on 15 or 16 December.

8. Mr. KAPLLANI (Albania) said that, if there had been a quorum, his delegation would have requested a vote on the draft report. However, his delegation wished to place on record its opposition to the creation of UNEF and UNDOF.

9. The CHAIRMAN said that the position of Albania had been reflected in the draft report.

10. He assumed that the Committee wished to adopt the draft report (A/C.5/L.1281) without objection.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 100

Pattern of conferences *(continued)** **(for the previous documentation, see the 1763rd meeting; A/C.5/L.1288, A/C.5/L.1289):**
(a)* Report of the Committee on Conferences *(continued)**

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (part I) (A/C.5/L.1288)

11. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, said that the draft report (A/C.5/L.1288) on the debate on the report of the Committee on Conferences reflected the procedural rather than the substantive part of the Committee's work. It also contained the recommendation of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly as well as the amendments to the report of the Committee on Conferences.

12. The CHAIRMAN said that he assumed the Committee wished to adopt the draft report without objection.

It was so decided.

* Resumed from the 1762nd meeting.

** Resumed from the 1763rd meeting.

(b) Report of the Secretary-General *(continued) (A/10348 and Corr.1, A/10454, A/C.5/L.1289)**

***Inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences* (continued)**

13. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy) expressed appreciation to the Government of Austria for its offer of the facilities in Donaupark.

14. She welcomed the introduction of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289, concerning the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences, which was the result of consultations between the sponsors and the headquarters host countries. Undoubtedly the Committee would be in a better position to take a decision in the matter when it had received the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General referred to in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution and was able to take into account the results of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System. Her delegation suggested that the Committee's decision at the thirty-first session should be taken on a case-by-case basis, with due consideration for the requirements of co-ordination and efficiency. Her delegation would have no hesitation in voting for the draft resolution.

15. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289; its adoption would enable the Fifth Committee to give the entire question of the use of spare accommodation at Vienna more thorough consideration at the thirty-first session. His delegation believed that the facts, once they had been clarified, would be a powerful advocate for accepting the Austrian Government's offer. In the meantime, it reserved its position on the substantive issues. It interpreted the statement by the delegation of France at the 1768th meeting as expressing support for draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289 with a view to obtaining a fuller picture of the issues at the thirty-first session.

16. Ideally, his delegation would have wished the Secretariat to prepare a conference room paper providing a clarification of some of the estimates relating to shortages of office space in New York and Geneva and availability of spare office accommodation in the Donaupark centre. However, it realized that the presentation of such a request at the current late stage of the session would hold up a decision. It would content itself therefore with suggesting that the Secretariat should carefully examine a number of points during the coming year in preparation for the thirty-first session.

17. The points on which his delegation would like further information were the following. First, there was the question of the latest estimates of office accommodation that would be required by the United Nations in New York at the time when spare accommodation at Vienna would become available. The report of the Joint Inspection Unit estimated that requirements for rental space would be of the order of 13,700 square metres,[1] and the Secretary-General's report (A/10348 and Corr.1, para. 22 *(a)*) gave a figure of approximately 26,000 square metres including space occupied in the United Nations Development Corporation building. He gathered that the two estimates were perfectly compatible, the point being that the space occupied in the UNDC building was rented and that the lease would be due for renewal in the 1980s, when various options would arise. It would be useful if the Secretariat could inform the Committee at the thirty-first session what the nature of the problem was and how many staff would be involved. He noted that office space in the Donaupark buildings was gauged in terms of staff and suggested that a similar measure should be used for New York and Geneva. Secondly, his delegation would be grateful if the report submitted by the Secretary-General at the thirty-first session could indicate the total number of staff currently based at Geneva and the estimated rate of natural growth there up to 1985. Thirdly, it would be helpful if the Secretary-General's next report could show whether he accepted the comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraphs 7 to 12 of its report (A/10454). He trusted that, if the Secretary-General disagreed with the Advisory Committee on any point, he would explain the grounds for his disagreement.

18. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289 appeared to meet with the approval of all delegations. The small amendment submitted at the 1768th meeting by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics seemed to be a clarification and, as far as his own delegation was aware, raised no difficulties. Since the Committee was so pressed for time, he suggested that the draft resolution, as amended, should be adopted by consensus without further discussion. He was not making a formal proposal, however, since he did not wish to guillotine the debate against the will of any delegation.

19. Mr. SETHI (India) said that the proverbial hospitality of the Austrian people was well known to all. During the preceding 30 years the people and Government of Austria had made an outstanding and very generous contribution to the United Nations. The new contribution now being made in the form of the Donaupark centre was costing $100 per inhabitant and the sum already spent by the Government amounted to $700 million.

20. In the light of the reports of the Secretary-General and of the Advisory Committee, it was clear that appropriate measures should be taken to make Vienna a third United Nations conference centre and to ensure optimum use of office space in the Donaupark centre.

21. His delegation had co-sponsored the draft resolution for the following reasons. First, it was necessary to gauge the amount of office space that would become available in the Donaupark centre over the next few years, bearing in mind the need for the United Nations to ensure optimum use of the space available while allowing an adequate margin for expansion of the IAEA and UNIDO staff. Secondly, it was necessary to distribute the staff of the United Nations, on the most economical basis possible, among the different cities where its organizations had their headquarters. Thirdly, every effort must be made to comply with the principle of decentralization, particularly by locating United Nations organizations in the developing countries.

* Resumed from the 1768th meeting.

1 See document A/9854 of 14 November 1974, para. 147.

22. Mr. McDONNOUGH (Jamaica) expressed his delegation's appreciation to the Austrian Government for its offer referred to in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289. He expressed reservations regarding the statement in paragraph 27 of the report of the Secretary-General that new units or organs of the United Nations might be located at Vienna. Discussions were currently under way on the establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development, and special units might be established for such matters as human settlements or the law of the sea. His delegation trusted that paragraph 27 of the Secretary-General's report would not prejudice the establishment of new units in developing countries. He sought clarification on that point from the representative of the Secretary-General.

23. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), expressing appreciation for the generous offer by the Government of Austria to act as host to United Nations organizations in Vienna, fully supported the proposal that the Organization should accept the offer and that measures be taken forthwith to ensure full utilization of the space available as soon as construction was completed. Studies showed that the United Nations would need more space in the future for various units and organs, and any initial expenditure involved in transferring units of the Secretariat to Vienna would be compensated for by the provision of rent-free space. The proposal, moreover, was in keeping with the current call for decentralization of United Nations activities. Accordingly, his delegation endorsed the views expressed by the Secretary-General in his report, in particular in paragraphs 46 to 49. He felt the United Nations should accept the small IAEA tower. He supported the proposal that the Secretary-General should transfer some independent and small units from New York and Geneva to Vienna; he also supported the functional grouping of United Nations activities and the establishment of an administration section at Vienna.

24. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) welcomed draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289, which had been submitted after consultations and which would permit a substantive debate the following year on the utilization of office space. The draft resolution adopted a cautious approach to the rather difficult question. In connexion with operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, he invited the Secretary-General to take into consideration the following comments: units to be established at Vienna should preferably be new units and their establishment there should be justified on the basis of efficiency and economy; transfers should be carried out only after very careful consideration of all aspects of the matter and consultations with all concerned, and ECE should not be transferred to Vienna; care should be taken to avoid establishing a third administrative infrastructure, as the New York and Geneva administrations were already a sufficient burden on the budget.

25. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289 and endorsed the views expressed by members of the Committee. The Government of Austria and the United Nations were bound by a mutual commitment to ensure efficient use of the Donaupark centre and he stressed the long-term practical advantages of United Nations use of Tower A-2. Intensive study was necessary, as indicated in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, before transfers could be effected. He agreed that the transfer of certain well-established bodies, such as ECE, would be difficult for the current host countries to accept. A functional approach should be taken to the question of transfers, and past experience should be studied. He trusted that the use of the IAEA tower would not preclude decentralization and the establishment of United Nations institutions in countries which were not part of the industrialized world.

26. Mr. KLESTIL (Austria) said that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289, after consultations, had agreed to accept the amendment suggested by the representative of the Soviet Union. It had been the sponsors' understanding that the words "organizations and services of the United Nations" included all services and offices, budgetary and extra-budgetary. For greater clarity, however, the sponsors agreed that in paragraph 4 the words "including those financed from extra-budgetary funds" should be inserted after the words "organizations and services of the United Nations".

27. The representative of France, in his statement at the 1768th meeting, had quite rightly stressed the social implications of the transfer of personnel. Responding to comments on housing and schooling, he said that the French, American and English schools had received financial assistance from the Austrian Government to enable them to expand their facilities, and a census of houses and apartments at Vienna showed that almost 27,000 first-class dwellings were vacant; foreign employees of international organizations could also move into subsidized apartments constructed by non-profit builders. He assured members of the Committee that Vienna had all the social, cultural, economic and technological facilities that an international organization would expect from a city.

28. The representative of France had also questioned the operating and maintenance costs for the Donaupark centre, which were higher than those for the prefabricated temporary buildings currently being used at Vienna. The maintenance costs at Vienna would be about $70 per square metre compared to about $140 per square metre in New York. While it was more difficult to estimate the space costs at Geneva, as most space occupied by the United Nations was owned by the Organization, he drew attention to the cost to Member States of constructing the new wing of the Palais des Nations and the cost of acquiring buildings from the ILO.

29. In conclusion, he reiterated that Austria had never intended to enter into competition with New York or Geneva. The Donaupark centre was not directed against the interests of the United Nations host countries, whose traditional merits in accomodating large segments of the United Nations system he certainly would not wish to dispute or to see disputed in the context of the Austrian Government's offer.

30. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), expressing appreciation to the Austrian delegation for its co-operation, said that his delegation would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289, as amended.

31. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) drew the attention of the

representative of France, who, at the 1768th meeting, had requested information on the space available in the two UNIDO towers at Vienna for non-UNIDO personnel, to annex II to the report of the Secretary-General indicating that, based on the 1976-1977 figures and an estimated 3 per cent growth rate, UNIDO would have 1,400 staff members in the centre as of 1979, mostly in the towers. He also drew attention to paragraph 9 of the report of the Advisory Committee, indicating that the space available in 1989 in the UNIDO and IAEA towers would accommodate between 260 and 400 staff.

32. Replying to the representative of Jamaica, he confirmed that paragraph 27 of the report of the Secretary-General did not in any way prejudice the location of new units of the Secretariat. The location of any new units established by decisions of the General Assembly would be decided by the General Assembly in the light of all relevant considerations. The reference to consideration of Vienna as the location of one or more new units was a reference to one way of utilizing space efficiently.

33. The three points raised by the representative of the United Kingdom at the current meeting would be dealt with in the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General at the thirty-first session. The Secretary-General had been asked to provide information on the total number of staff at Geneva in the United Nations system and estimated growth until 1985; while that was a complicated question, as it would depend on the various growth rates of the specialized agencies, the Secretariat would do its best to estimate the total numbers at Geneva.

34. Mr. NAUDY (France) thanked the representative of Austria for his reassurance as to the ability of Vienna to act as host to United Nations organizations, and explained that he had been speaking in general of the theoretical problems of the transfer of personnel and not of the advantages of any particular host country.

35. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his Government fully appreciated the generosity of the Austrian Government and had no doubt that Vienna would become a third United Nations host city. The United States had no hesitation in sharing its responsibility with its Swiss and Austrian friends. The Advisory Committee had submitted a prudent report on the study carried out by the Secretary-General. In conclusion, he said that his delegation would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289.

36. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289, as amended.

It was so decided.

37. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that he greatly appreciated the Austrian Government's offer and felt it was unlikely that the United Nations would have been able to acquire space on equally generous terms elsewhere in time to meet its requirements. He also endorsed consideration being given to the use of the IAEA tower by the United Nations over the long term. From annex III to the Secretary-General's report, he understood that the legal ties between the United Nations and IAEA were to be permanent. He considered it particularly appropriate that the General Assembly would be considering the transfer to Vienna in the context of the question of United Nations accommodation as a whole, in the light of the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit. He expressed reservations over the relocation of disarmament activities, which should remain in New York and Geneva. He requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session information on the conference facilities which would be available at Vienna, for that would affect the use of office space. The administrative infrastructure should be very carefully planned so that unnecessary costs would not be incurred. He suggested that the Secretary-General should report on which units should be recommended for transfer to Vienna.

38. Mrs. BASTOS SANDIFER (Portugal) said that she had supported the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289 and supported paragraph 4 of that draft resolution in particular. She appreciated the generous offer by the Austrian Government and was sure that it would not preclude the establishment of new United Nations offices in the developing countries.

39. Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark) welcomed the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289; he appreciated the generous offer by the Austrian Government and trusted that full use would be made of it.

40. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) said that he supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1289 because he believed in the decentralization of United Nations activities. He expressed appreciation to the Government and people of Austria for their generous offer.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1759th meeting; A/10008/Add.14, 16, 17, 18 and 21, A/C.5/1715/Rev.1, A/C.5/1730/Add.1, A/C.5/L.1286, A/C.5/L.1292)

Working paper submitted by the Controller* (concluded)

41. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that his delegation wished to submit a draft decision[2] by the terms of which the Secretary-General would be requested, in preparing the final revised estimates for the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977, to base his assumptions with regard to the rate of inflation in each year of the biennium on the latest available forecasts, and with regard to currency alignments, on the actual rates prevailing at the time the revised estimates were prepared.

42. The net effect of the draft decision would be an increase in the budget of the order of $14 million.

43. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) recalled that, in his foreword to the programme budget, the Secretary-General had drawn special attention to the fact that the potential

* Resumed from the 1766th meeting.

2 Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1293.

sufficiency of the initial 1976-1977 estimates largely depended on the extent to which the rates of inflation and of currency exchange on which they had been based would prove valid in due course (A/10006, para. 25).

44. The forecasting of rates of inflation and of currency instability over a period of two years was a hazardous undertaking at such a time of monetary instability. When preparing the programme budget, the best that could be done was to use the latest and most reliable information. If the forecasts proved to be wrong, the budget might have to be revised subsequently.

45. His delegation had noted with interest the statement by the Controller, at the 1766th meeting, that the working hypotheses upon which the budget had originally been formulated in August 1974 had changed considerably and that the budget had been drawn up on the basis of an exchange rate of 3.10 Swiss francs to the dollar and inflation rates of 8 and 7 per cent in 1976 and 1977, respectively, in New York, and 9 and 8 per cent in 1976 and 1977, respectively, in all other offices. The Controller had also said that, in view of the prevailing exchange rate of 2.63 Swiss francs to the dollar, the Secretary-General would have to request an additional $25 million in order to implement the programme for the forthcoming biennium. His delegation agreed that it was unrealistic to expect the Secretary-General to absorb that sum, since to do so might hamper the execution of important programmes.

46. The Committee had also been informed that the most recent and reliable forecast indicated that the inflation rates for 1976 would probably be 2 per cent lower than anticipated by the Secretary-General and that those new inflation rates could be taken into account in the programme budget for the next biennium. His delegation was of the opinion that a realistic programme budget should be based on the most reliable and most recent information.

47. For those reasons, his delegation supported the draft decision submitted by the New Zealand delegation.

48. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation had noted the emphasis placed by the Controller on the hypothetical nature of assumptions of future inflation rates. In view of the present instability of the world economy, one should be cautious about price-level forecasts. It was possible—and, in the view of some, very probable—that the relatively low level of government expenditure on which assumptions regarding lower inflation rates were based would not materialize. Furthermore, predictions about future price levels were implicitly based on assumptions regarding rates of production growth. Failure to predict accurately the emergence of specific capacity constraints might upset the forecasts of production growth and of inflation. The main reason, however, for questioning the wisdom of any proposal to adjust downwards the inflation element in the budget was the severe cash flow problem which the Secretary-General would face. He therefore proposed the deletion from the draft decision of the phrase "with regard to the rate of inflation in each year of the biennium on the latest available forecasts, and".

49. The Fifth Committee could have recommended the doubling of the Working Capital Fund, with the necessary proviso that it should be replenished at the end of each financial year. It now seemed that it would not be possible to reach a consensus on such a pragmatic step, and cash flow constraints would therefore force the Secretary-General to continue the unsound but unavoidable practice of borrowing from such sources as UNEF, UNDOF and the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus. That practice was not truly reflected in the budget. His delegation found unacceptable the argument that the purpose of the inflationary element in the budget was not to ease cash flow difficulties of the Organization; nor was that the purpose of UNEF, UNDOF and UNFICYP reserves or of trust funds.

50. His delegation also feared that cash flow problems would place constraints on the implementation of programmes. The Fifth Committee could not and should not deny the Secretary-General the possibility of some alleviation in the cash flow problem if current inflation assumptions proved to have been too pessimistic, particularly in view of the Controller's statement, at the 1766th meeting, that every effort would be made to keep the pattern of actual expenditure during the following biennium under strict control. His delegation also noted the Controller's statement that, in view of the uncertain situation which would continue to prevail with regard to inflationary trends and currency realignments, it was natural for the Secretariat to proceed on a tentative basis in the interest of good management and to maintain an unallotted reserve. His delegation's attitude was based on the premise that the statement by the Controller was a firm commitment on the question of inflation assumptions.

51. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said his delegation could support the draft decision submitted by the New Zealand delegation, with one small but important amendment: it wished to propose that the phrase "the latest available forecasts" should be changed to "his latest available forecasts".

52. His delegation understood the Controller to have said that the latest available forecasts appeared to indicate that inflation in 1976 in the main United Nations centres would be 2 per cent lower than had been estimated in the original programme budget proposals. Therefore, on the understanding that the Secretary-General's latest available forecasts would reduce the allowance for the first year of the biennium by 2 per cent, his delegation believed that the New Zealand draft decision would be acceptable and could command a consensus in the Fifth Committee. The latest available forecast would suggest a still lower figure. The Committee would recall the statement by the Observer for Switzerland at the 1768th meeting that his Government's forecast of inflation in Switzerland in the coming year was only 5 per cent. His delegation therefore suggested that the amount mentioned by the Controller was a compromise figure, which his delegation was prepared to accept in the interest of promoting a consensus.

53. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that the New Zealand draft decision was very reasonable, although it tended to proceed from the basis of the existing situation and current rates. His delegation could support it, but

would like to propose an amendment in the form of the following additional paragraph:

"Further decides that consequential adjustments shall be made in the reports on budget performance of 1976 and 1977 to take into account actual rates of inflation and currency fluctuations."

If that amendment[3] was acceptable to the New Zealand delegation, his country would be happy to become a sponsor of the draft decision.

54. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that his delegation was grateful to the Controller for having drawn to the Committee's attention the latest changes in the forecasts of rates of inflation. The estimates given by the Controller were based on certain rather optimistic assumptions regarding the future. It was important that budget decisions should be based on the latest available forecasts, so that the estimates would be as realistic as possible. For those reasons, his delegation was prepared to accept the New Zealand proposal, subject to acceptance of the Upper Volta amendment, which would ensure that the latest changes were taken fully into account in 1976.

55. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation was grateful for the explanations provided by the Controller. However, the Controller had said that it was necessary to increase the estimates by $25 million to cover fluctuations in exchange rates and he had also said that it was possible that the rate of inflation would be different in 1976. At the moment, his delegation was not quite clear whether the Secretary-General was making proposals or offering alternatives.

56. His delegation had no difficulty with the New Zealand proposal and could support it. It would seem, however, that if the Secretary-General had a new insight into the inflation situation, he would act upon it and make the corresponding adjustments in the budget as a matter of course.

57. He wished to receive clarifications as to whether his understanding was correct that the Controller was proposing a net increase in the budget estimates of approximately $13 to $15 million.

58. His delegation was firmly opposed to including contingency funds in the budget and would not, therefore, vote to approve them, whether they were explicit or hidden. The Committee should approve only that level of funding which seemed necessary for the implementation of approved programmes at the moment the budget was approved.

59. With regard to the comments of the representative of the Upper Volta, his delegation agreed that at first sight it might seem natural that, should the forecasts of inflation prove inaccurate the following year, the matter would have to be considered once again and that new funds might have to be appropriated. However, the amendment proposed by the representative of the Upper Volta seemed to imply that the Committee had to accept automatically that the effects of inflation and currency fluctuations must be compensated. His delegation disagreed with that view. Such important political considerations as whether the budget was being properly managed and whether a certain amount of absorption might not be possible counted for more than the purely technical consideration of whether the budget estimates were calculated accurately.

60. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy) observed that it was confusing to note that the previous budget estimates had been prepared on the basis of data derived from the same sources as those which the Controller had recently consulted to formulate his revised forecast of inflation. The representative of Greece, on the other hand, seemed to assume that Governments could be expected to contribute to inflation by putting more money into circulation, but her delegation felt that Governments might instead concentrate on productive investments. For those reasons, her delegation was willing to support the New Zealand draft decision.

61. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation was in favour of any economy measures which might be taken by the Secretary-General to absorb the effects of inflation. The amendment proposed by his delegation did not in itself preclude the adoption of such measures. For that reason, his delegation had not specified precise figures in its proposal. The Controller was currently forecasting that the inflation rate would be approximately 7 per cent in 1976 and 8 to 9 per cent in 1977. Should the Committee approve estimates on the basis of those forecasts and should the inflation rate in 1976 prove to be less than 7 per cent, the unused funds should not be left at the disposal of the Secretary-General. Appropriations made to compensate for inflation should not be used to solve the financial problems of the United Nations. If, however, the actual rate of inflation in 1976 should prove to be higher than that provided for in the budget, the Committee should make a commitment to provide the Secretary-General with the difference in order to avoid a reduction in programmes. That was the purpose of his delegation's amendment.

62. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the Controller seemed somewhat timid in estimating the possible reduction in the forecast of inflation. The budget estimates should be adjusted automatically on the basis of the most recent information on inflation and currency instability. His delegation wondered whether the Controller would be as timid if the indications were that the rate of inflation was going to be double the rate forecast in the budget or whether he would not in that case request additional funds.

63. With regard to the New Zealand proposal and the Upper Volta amendment, his delegation stressed that it was essential for the budget estimates to be based on the most reliable forecasts of inflation and currency instability. It would constitute an unacceptable precedent to pad the budget with funds not earmarked for specific purposes.

64. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said that her delegation felt it would be more serious to pare down the budget excessively than to pad it. The latest figures given by the Controller were based on a limited sampling of data and it was not possible to know whether the budget estimates would have to be revised again the following year. Her delegation had always supported full budgeting. In view of

[3] Subsequently circulated as document A/C.5/L.1294.

the limitations of time, the Committee should leave the situation as it was.

65. Her delegation would be willing to support the New Zealand proposal, provided that it was amended as proposed by the Greek delegation. It might, however, be preferable for the New Zealand delegation to withdraw its draft decision in view of the limited time available.

66. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that the New Zealand proposal merited close consideration and that some delegations needed more time for reflection.

67. The representative of the Upper Volta had explained admirably what course of action should be taken with regard to inflation and, consequently, it might be useful for the delegations of New Zealand and the Upper Volta, as well as any other interested delegations, to confer on a final text which might be considered at the following meeting.

68. Mr. MASCARENHAS (Brazil) said that the New Zealand proposal represented a good attempt to reach a common denominator. His delegation could not agree with the United Kingdom proposal to replace the word "the" with "his"; no one inside or outside the Secretariat should be given the power to take decisions regarding the performance of the Brazilian economy with respect to inflation and measures to combat economic recession. His delegation did not fully understand the proposal made by the Greek delegation and suggested that the Committee should wait until it had the written texts before taking a decision. Finally, many of the arguments put forth by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany were cogent and merited the attention of the Committee.

69. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that, while some delegations felt he was being too timid with regard to revising the forecast of inflation, others felt he was not being cautious enough. He himself felt that he had managed to take a middle course.

70. Fluctuations in currency exchange rates were a reality which the Organization had to face. It was also a fact that exchange rates would continue to fluctuate in the future, but to attempt to forecast those fluctuations was hazardous. The best course of action, therefore, was to base the budget estimates on the prevailing rates of exchange.

71. As he had already informed the Committee, he had based his forecast of inflation on all the reliable sources which came readily to hand. That did not, however, mean that better sources might not be found. In indicating to the Committee that the forecast of inflation might conceivably be reduced by 2 per cent, he had been seeking the guidance of the Committee on that matter.

72. The original forecast of the increase in the budget due to fluctuations in exchange rates had been $25 million. Because of gains in respect of certain currencies, that amount could be reduced to $23 million. Thus, to the potential total amount of appropriations of $737 million, $23 million should be added to compensate for currency instability, giving a total of $760 million. Assuming a rate of inflation 2 per cent lower than that originally predicted, it was possible to subtract $12 million from the budget, yielding a total of $748 million.

73. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that, since the United States dollar was the main currency for the purpose of United Nations budget estimates, information gathered by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics might be helpful in calculating the rate of inflation. Inflation was a reality which required a pragmatic approach. Accordingly, his delegation agreed with the view that contingency funds should be included in the budget.

74. His delegation also considered it necessary to take account of changes in currency values as fixed by IMF.

75. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that his delegation would be reluctant to accept the unamended New Zealand proposal because the data on which the forecast of a lower rate of inflation was based were too uncertain. However, the amendment proposed by the Upper Volta delegation represented a realistic approach and would ensure that, if the rate of inflation proved to be greater than forecast, the necessary adjustments would be made in the budget in order to avoid any reduction in programmes. His delegation could, therefore, support the New Zealand proposal if the Upper Volta amendment was incorporated.

76. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that the amendment proposed by the Upper Volta delegation was acceptable to his delegation and could, therefore, be incorporated in the text of the New Zealand draft decision. His delegation could also accept the United Kingdom amendment. In his delegation's proposal, the words "verified by him" should be inserted after the word "forecasts" in order to introduce an element of verification into the process of forecasting inflation. The words "the documents" should be replaced by the words "the revised estimates". His delegation hoped that its draft decision, as amended, could be adopted by the Committee without objection.

77. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) expressed his delegation's support for draft decision A/C.5/L.1293, as amended by the United Kingdom and the Upper Volta. He was not in a position to support the Greek amendment.

78. In connexion with the statement by the representative of Colombia on the limited sources of information available for determining the rate of inflation, he drew attention to the statement by the Controller indicating that four international sources for assessing inflation were used. Referring to the comment by the representative of Iraq that data produced by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics should be used, he said that the United Nations was an international organization and could not rely on government statistics provided by any one Member State.

79. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that, in view of the statement just made by the United States representative, he wondered why so many organizations, such as IBRD and IMF, used the data of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. Most of the administrative costs of the United Nations arose in New York, in dollars. If a government source was not reliable, what other guideline could the United Nations use to forecast administrative expenses?

80. Mr. NSUBUGA (Uganda) said that the revised estimates were the real issue and that, without wanting to

belittle the draft decision submitted by New Zealand, he regarded it as only a foot-note to the revised estimates.

81. Mr. SETHI (India) said that, although his delegation had not yet spoken of the problem in general, in view of the need to expedite work it would refer only to the draft decision submitted by New Zealand and the amendment proposed by the Upper Volta.

82. Only two approaches seemed possible for forecasting additional expenditures caused by inflation and currency instability: to make a sufficiently high estimate beforehand or to attempt to recoup losses by using supplementary estimates *ex post facto*. If a 5 per cent inflation rate was forecast, there would be no justification for using 9 per cent in the budget. Funds could not be made available when there was no certainty that they would be needed. In addition, funds could not be transferred from the inflation component to programme growth. Although the cash flow problem of the United Nations made it necessary to adopt a rather generous budget and although forecasts of the rate of inflation could not be disregarded, care should be taken to avoid doing anything that might jeopardize programmes. He therefore thought it would be a good idea to ask the Controller whether there was the least possibility of reducing the estimated inflation rate for the biennium and whether there was a possibility that programmes might be jeopardized. His delegation hoped that the 24-hour rule would be applied and that a decision would be postponed.

83. The CHAIRMAN said that it would be preferable to take a decision at the current meeting, since the Secretariat urgently needed the Committee's guidance in connexion with the revised estimates. Furthermore, rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly used the words "as a general rule" and did not make the 24-hour rule mandatory.

84. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) and Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) supported the view expressed by the Chairman.

85. Mr. SETHI (India) said that, since no delegation had formally invoked the 24-hour rule and in view of the pressure of time, his delegation would agree to a decision on the matter being taken at the current meeting.

86. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that, when he had submitted his amendment to the New Zealand draft decision, he had had three points in mind: the difficulty of predicting the rate of inflation, the need to safeguard the programmes in the budget and the possibility that a higher inflation element might ease the cash flow problem. Since the first two points had been covered by the amendments proposed by the United Kingdom and the Upper Volta, respectively, and in view of the need to expedite work he would agree to withdraw his own amendment. However, he stressed that his third point had not been covered in the draft decision and expressed the hope that his reservations in that regard would be reflected in the report of the Committee.

87. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Committee had already decided that the subject under consideration would not be covered in the report.

88. He invited the Committee to vote on the draft decision submitted by New Zealand (A/C.5/L.1293), as amended orally and by the insertion of the amendment submitted by the Upper Volta (A/C.5/L.1294).

The draft decision was adopted by 61 votes to 8, with 5 abstentions.

Revised estimates under section 12. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (A/10008/Add.26, A/C.5/1715/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1292)

89. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) introduced, on behalf of the sponsors, a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1292) concerning the revised estimates under section 12 submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1715/Rev.1), and reflecting the vital importance they attached to the Lima Declaration.[4] The sponsors considered it wiser to accept the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its related report (A/10008/Add.26) and to request the Secretary-General to submit revised estimates at the thirty-first session, taking fully into account all elements of the Lima Declaration and indicating clearly the resulting programme requirements and related resources. Another possible approach would have been to use the 1974-1975 estimates, revised upwards to take account of the inflation factor. That would have been impractical, however, in view of the statement in paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's report that the revised estimates took account of the restructuring of UNIDO which was considered as having taken place.

***Financial problems of the United Nations* (continued)* (A/C.5/1730 and Add.1, A/C.5/L.1240, A/C.5/L.1286)**

90. Mr. SARAMO (Finland) said that his delegation shared the concern about the long-standing financial difficulties of the United Nations expressed by the Secretary-General in the Fifth Committee and by 27 Member States in their note to the Chairman (A/C.5/L.1240). He commended those countries for their initiative and thanked the Secretariat for its answers (A/C.5/1730) to the questions contained in the 27-Power note.

91. The continued financial plight of the United Nations was incongruous when seen in the context of the important goals set for the Organization by the membership in the Charter and in national policy statements. Supporters of the United Nations and world public opinion found it increasingly difficult to understand why it had proved impossible to agree on the elimination of the liquidity difficulties. The reason could not be financial, because the amounts involved were minute. It was generally recognized that the remaining divisive elements were of a predominantly political nature and were thus difficult to surmount. However, in the current atmosphere of détente, the restoration of the Organization's liquidity was more than ever in the interest of all Members. The existence of the United Nations was jeopardized if all countries waited for others to do what had to be done. All Member States should therefore contribute within their means.

* Resumed from the 1764th meeting.

4 See document A/10112 of 13 June 1975, chap. IV.

92. It had been demonstrated in practice that it was possible to overcome political difficulties for the good of the Organization. In the previous three years a few countries had made unconditional cash contributions to the United Nations, and one State had also resumed payment in full of its current assessments without deductions for expenditure of which it did not approve. He did not think that anyone believed that the Governments of those countries had compromised their principles through those actions. As early as 1 September 1965, Finland and the other Nordic countries had made considerable contributions towards covering the deficit of the Organization. Since then Finland had on several occasions stated its readiness to co-operate in concerted efforts to solve the problem, in keeping with its consistent support of the principle of collective responsibility for the United Nations financing. However, it was not reasonable that Member States which had already made substantial voluntary extra contributions should perpetually be called upon to shoulder an inequitable share of the financial burden.

93. The elements of a comprehensive solution to the liquidity problems of the United Nations already existed in the suggestions made in the report of the Special Committee on the Financial Situation of the United Nations.[5] What was needed was the political will to derive encouragement from a generally favourable international situation and to implement the measures outlined in that report.

94. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) said that the deficit of the United Nations was not comparable with the sum which the world spent every year for military purposes. The note in document A/C.5/L.1240 rightly aimed to seek areas of understanding with a view to eliminating the permanent deficit of the Organization through voluntary contributions from Member States or by the cancellation of the financial obligations of the United Nations. Rigid positions and mathematical formulae assigning responsibilities must be forgotten, and an effort must be made to join the Secretary-General in seeking new criteria for tackling the financial problems of the Organization.

95. In order to initiate that effort, his delegation requested the Committee, or any subsidiary body it might agree to establish, to take into account four points. First, it should urge the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as the countries with the highest military expenditures in the world, to try through mutual agreement to make small transfers from their military budgets to the special account which was established by the General Assembly under the provisions of its resolution 3049 A (XXVII) in order to strengthen the United Nations. Reductions in the military budgets of those States had already been made in 1963 and 1964. The idea had been supported in a draft resolution adopted on 28 November 1975 in the First Committee[6] and, furthermore, the representatives of the United States and of the Soviet Union, in statements made in October 1971, during the twenty-sixth session (1431st and 1433rd meetings respectively), had expressed their willingness to co-operate in seeking a solution to the problem. Secondly, the Committee should urge highly developed countries which had not already done so to make substantial voluntary contributions in accordance with the consensus of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations reached by the General Assembly at its nineteenth session.[7] Thirdly, the Committee should reiterate the General Assembly's decision of 18 December 1973 in accordance with which it endorsed the suggestion of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 7 of his report on the financial situation of the United Nations,[8] to the effect that States Members which derived a windfall benefit as a result of the reduction in their dollar contributions or the re-evaluation of their national currencies in relation to the United States dollar should consider making a contribution of the amount of their saving towards the elimination of the deficit. Fourthly, the Committee should ask all Member States, regardless of their reasons of principle or declared policy, in an act of universal solidarity, to make efforts to pay their contributions in good time. No lasting solution could be attained except through persuasion and mutual consent. It was vitally important to strengthen the United Nations and prevent an increase in the deficit.

96. All States would have to make financial contributions as the developing countries were doing; their contributions to the regular budget of the United Nations, to peace-keeping operations and to the repayment of the United Nations bonds had been greater than it should be.

97. Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark) said that the question under consideration was of supreme importance for the unimpeded and harmonious work of the United Nations. The problem of securing a healthy and viable base for the Organization was not a new one and disquieting financial difficulties had existed throughout its existence, particularly during the past decade. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, the problem grew more serious every year. In their note in document A/C.5/L.1240, the delegations of 27 countries had appropriately stressed the inconsistency of that situation with the dignity of the United Nations and its aspirations. Those delegations had agreed with the Secretary-General that there must be a constructive discussion of the financial situation of the United Nations. His delegation concurred whole-heartedly with that view. At the same time, all were aware that it would be impossible in the short time that remained to study the situation in depth at the current session and evolve a comprehensive solution.

98. His delegation was particularly concerned about two of the depressing forecasts contained in documents A/C.5/1730 and Add.1. It was estimated that at the end of the current calendar year the United Nations would have a short-term deficit of $104.9 million and that, based on the pattern of withholding by certain Member countries, the deficit was expected to increase by approximately $10 million a year in future. In addition, around the middle of 1976 the Organization was expected to be faced with a cash shortage amounting to more than $53 million. As to the

5 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 29.*

6 Subsequently adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 3462 (XXX).

7 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Nineteenth Session, Annexes,* annex No. 21, document A/5916, para. 2; and *ibid., Nineteenth Session, Plenary Meetings,* 1331st meeting, paras. 3 and 4.

8 Document A/9444 of 11 December 1973.

short-term deficit, the Secretary-General had expressed renewed hope that a fresh approach would be considered by the General Assembly. With regard to the second and most pressing need–to solve the cash flow problem–the Secretary-General had outlined a number of emergency measures, including a doubling of the Working Capital Fund to $80 million. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to achieve a satisfactory solution to the latter problem and had an open mind with respect to any constructive solution based on collective responsibility for the legitimate expenses of the United Nations. Denmark firmly believed, however, that a solution to the financial problems of the Organization should be based upon a comprehensive concept covering all elements of the situation and felt that piecemeal emergency actions would provide no lasting cure.

99. At the current stage, 15 Member States were far behind in paying their lawfully assessed contributions to the United Nations. He wondered how national economies would work if individual citizens were allowed to decline to pay their assessed taxes because they did not agree with the budgetary policies of their Governments. Membership in the Organization obliged all Members to pay on demand their properly assessed contributions to cover expenses which had been approved and formally endorsed by the highest authority of the United Nations, the General Assembly. The task was a very difficult one and in essence political. His country belonged to the large group of smaller countries that had put their faith in a strong and vital United Nations and found it imperative that financial order should be achieved at the earliest possible time. Aware that a sound and lasting solution was dependent upon the goodwill of the large contributors, his delegation appealed to them to resume negotiations in a spirit of co-operation in order to achieve a sound financial basis for the United Nations in the years to come.

100. It was in the context of those observations that his country was among the sponsors of the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.5/L.1286). All aspects of the financial ills of the United Nations should be thoroughly examined by a negotiating committee appointed from among the members of the Fifth Committee and authorized to present to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session an equitable and constructive solution, based on the principle of collective responsibility.

101. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that the financial situation confronting the United Nations required the most serious attention of all Member States. Japan was well aware of the position of principle held by certain Member States, which had prevented them from participating fully in payment to the regular budget or to past peace-keeping activities, and did not believe that it was time to allocate responsibility for the precarious financial situation of the United Nations. It agreed with the Secretary-General that a new approach to the Organization's financial problems should be considered by the General Assembly and that appropriate action should be set in motion for the resolution of the problem as a whole. Only by reaffirming collective faith in the Organization and by proving such faith by concrete acts in the financial domain would a foundation be established for the sound growth of the United Nations.

102. As the third largest contributor to the regular budget, Japan had faithfully paid its full assessment in the first half of each year. It had also made the largest voluntary contribution, $12.5 million, towards solving the deficit of the Organization. It had actively participated in past endeavours to reach agreement on the financial situation. In 1973 the Government of Japan had made a voluntary contribution of $10 million to the special account established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3049 A (XXVII), and it hoped that other Member States would make voluntary contributions of sufficient size to solve the financial problems of the Organization. So far only the Government of the United Arab Emirates had made a similar contribution. At the same time, Japan was fully aware that only joint action of Member States based on sharing of the burden would make possible the final settlement of the financial problems.

103. With regard to the short-term cash shortage facing the United Nations, his delegation was not convinced that an increase in the Working Capital Fund could be anything other than a temporary palliative. It therefore favoured a comprehensive approach of which an examination of the level of the Fund would be one element. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286 was a good response to those preoccupations. His delegation was ready to join others in the search for a generally acceptable settlement to the critical financial situation; indeed, delegations must try to find a solution if they were truly determined to preserve and strengthen the Organization, in which the noblest aspirations of mankind were enshrined.

104. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286, said that Chad, Nigeria, the Philippines and the Upper Volta had joined the sponsors of the text. The draft resolution reflected the recognition by Member States that, if the United Nations was to play the role envisaged for it in the last quarter of the twentieth century, its finances must be placed on a sound footing.

105. The fact that the Organization was faced with a serious financial crisis was shown by the figures quoted in documents A/C.5/1730 and Add.1 relating to the short-term deficit and the persistent negative cash balance. The seventh preambular paragraph of the draft resolution spelt out the fundamental objectives of the text and was closely related to the preceding preambular paragraph. The sponsors considered that it was necessary to bear in mind that the financial problems of the United Nations had both short-term and long-term implications. The most striking aspect of the short-term problem was the cash shortfall due to late payments of assessed contributions, depletion of the Working Capital Fund and the withholding of assessed contributions on grounds of principle. The sponsors had come to the conclusion that temporary measures would not bring a lasting solution to the financial problems of the Organization and could give rise to even more serious problems in the future. They therefore believed that an earnest effort should be made to come to grips with the root of the financial problem, and they had accordingly given careful consideration to the genesis of the financial crisis of the United Nations.

106. Operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution was designed to overcome the cash flow problem and to avoid excessive reliance on the basically unsound policy of massive internal borrowing. With regard to paragraph 2, the sponsors envisaged a negotiating committee which would provide the necessary political climate for practical negotiations. They considered that a membership of 54 would be a manageable size. Paragraph 3 discussed the modalities for the selection of its members, and it was expected that regional groups would play a major role in the selection. The mandate of the negotiating committee was defined in paragraphs 4 and 5. Reference was made to paragraphs 11 and 19 of the report of the Special Committee on the Financial Situation of the United Nations,[9] concerning early payment of assessed contributions and the elimination of the deficit by means of voluntary contributions and the cancellation of debts owed by the Organization to Member States.

107. With regard to operative paragraph 4 *(c)*, he noted that two Member States had announced changes in their policy with regard to the regular budget which had resulted in considerable benefit to the Organization, and which the Secretary-General had noted with appreciation in document A/C.5/1730. Operative paragraph 4 *(d)* referred to the action taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session, when a decision had been taken to remove certain items from the regular budget. The negotiating committee would not be able to ignore the differences between Member States, which were largely responsible for the withholding of assessments from the regular budget. Although there was some overlapping in different parts of paragraph 4, it provided over-all guidelines for the negotiating committee. With regard to paragraph 5, the sponsors considered that, if no progress was made in the over-all solution of the question of the Working Capital Fund by the thirty-first session, the way would be open for consideration of the question on its own merits. The provisions of paragraph 8 would enable the General Assembly to consider the report of the negotiating committee and, it was hoped, to endorse and implement whatever solution might have been agreed on by that committee.

108. A solution of the financial crisis was in the interests of all States and in particular of the developing countries. At its seventh special session, the General Assembly had entrusted the United Nations with various programmes whose implementation would require a financially strong organization. Member States could not allow the United Nations to be at the mercy of differences between States that had arisen 15 years previously. If no agreement was reached in the proposed negotiating committee, the Fifth Committee would have to consider the item as the first item on its agenda at the thirty-first session. His delegation was confident that, given the necessary political will, a solution would be found.

109. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286. The sponsors had made considerable efforts to arrive at a draft which reflected a broad spectrum of opinion in the Committee, and the establishment of a negotiating committee would be particularly timely, since the financial situation could hardly continue to deteriorate further without paralysing the Organization. Circumstances were favourable for a resolution of the Organization's financial problems; Member States realized that, with the restructuring exercise and the momentum given to a new economic order at the seventh special session, it was necessary for the Organization to be financially healthy if it was to carry out its important new mandate. In addition, the political factors which had prevented compromise in the past had diminished in prominence and détente between east and west was increasing; that had been consolidated in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975. His delegation hoped that the negotiating committee proposed in the draft resolution would find a solution to the deficit problem; for it to do so, political will and momentum would be required, and a readiness to place a spirit of conciliation above rigid adherence to positions adopted long ago. It believed that the negotiating committee should be given a full and positive endorsement by the Fifth Committee and sufficient thrust to ensure that momentum was maintained.

110. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation wished to propose two amendments to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286. In operative paragraph 4 *(b)*, the words "the need to implement" would be added before "the consensus of the Special Committee" and the words "and the terms of General Assembly resolution 3049 (XXVII)" would be replaced by "on 1 September 1965 regarding the financial difficulties of the Organization". His delegation also proposed that the order of paragraphs 4 *(a)* and 4 *(b)* should be reversed. There should also be an additional paragraph which would read:

> "*(c)* The need to eliminate the causes in the United Nations budget leading to the annual increase of the sum of the financial deficit of the Organization".

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:*
(a)* Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued)*;
(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)*

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1287 and Corr.1)

111. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report of the Committee (A/C.5/L.1287 and Corr.1), said that the Committee's recommendations to the General Assembly appeared in paragraphs 37 and 38. They consisted of: a draft resolution on the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board; a draft resolution on investments in developing countries; a draft resolution on avoidance of losses on investments due to currency fluctuations; a draft decision concerning information on the nationality of members and alternate members of the Joint Staff Pension Board; and a draft decision on the question of pension coverage for members of the Joint Inspection Unit.

9 See foot-note 5.

* Resumed from the 1766th meeting.

112. Mr. SETHI (India) suggested that the draft report should reflect the wording of the draft resolutions introduced by the representative of Algeria at the 1751st and 1766th meetings (A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.1 and A/C.5/L.1261/Rev.2).

113. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, said that the texts of those draft resolutions had been omitted by mistake and would be added to paragraph 32.

114. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) requested that the Spanish version of the draft resolution relating to investment in developing countries, in paragraphs 22 and 37, should be brought into line with the English version.

115. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) noted that paragraph 27 of the draft report failed to reflect the views of delegations like his own which had voiced strong objections to the draft decision concerning the nationality of the members of the Pension Board, although it set forth the views of the sponsor. In order to remedy the lack of balance, he proposed the addition of the following two sentences at the end of paragraph 27:

> "The draft decision was questioned by a number of delegations on the ground that the procedure for appointment of members to the Board did not provide for account to be taken of the factor of nationality, and, accordingly, that the form in which the information had been supplied by the Board at the twenty-ninth and current sessions was adequate. It could not be expected that the members of the Board should be appointed or elected on any other basis than competence."

116. Mrs. DERRE (France) requested that the original wording of her delegation's amendment to the penultimate sentence of paragraph 11 in the French version of the draft report should be restored.

117. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked when the Committee might expect to receive the information requested in paragraph 38 *(a)*.

118. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, replying to the representative of the United States of America, said that the issue was a very delicate one and had required special treatment in the draft report. After some reflection, he had concluded that it would be best to refer briefly to the sponsor's introduction of his proposal and then simply to state that there had been a lengthy debate, leaving the reader to consult the summary records for a full picture of delegations' views. However, if the Committee agreed, he was willing to add the sentences proposed by the United States delegation at the end of paragraph 27.

119. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) welcomed the Rapporteur's concern for concision and said that, if paragraph 27 was deleted, he would not press his delegation's amendment.

120. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) requested that paragraph 25 should indicate the fact that his delegation had supported the oral amendments by the representative of Italy.

121. Mr. SETHI (India) noted that his delegation had also supported those amendments.

122. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, said that he was prepared to comply with the wishes of the representatives of Algeria and India. However, he would point out that some members of the Secretariat felt that it was preferable for a draft report to omit reference to the delegations which had supported an amendment.

123. The CHAIRMAN, summing up the discussion, observed that two questions were pending: the suggestion of the United States representative that paragraph 27 should be deleted and the request of the representative of the Soviet Union concerning information on the nationality of the members of the Pension Board.

124. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) suggested that the Committee should adopt the draft report subject to the possible deletion of paragraph 27.

125. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that it would be improper to take the action suggested by the representative of Belgium. He proposed that the adoption of the draft report should be postponed until a future meeting.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 7.25 p.m.

1771st meeting

Monday, 15 December 1975, at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1771

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(continued)*:
***(a)* Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(continued)*;**
(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(continued)

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly* (concluded) *(A/C.5/L.1287 and Corr.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that as a result of the consultations concerning paragraphs 26 and 27 of the Committee's draft report on the United Nations pension system

(A/C.5/L.1287 and Corr.1) it had been agreed that paragraph 27 would be retained as it stood and that it would be followed by a new paragraph 28 which would read as follows:

"28. The draft decision was questioned by a number of delegations on the ground that the procedure for appointment of members to the Board did not provide for account to be taken of the factor of nationality and, accordingly, that the form in which the information had been supplied by the Board at the twenty-ninth and the current sessions was adequate. It could not be expected that the members of the Board should be appointed or elected on any other basis than competence."

The subsequent paragraphs would be renumbered and the correction appearing in document A/C.5/L.1287/Corr.1 would no longer apply.

2. Several delegations had inquired about the status of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions concerning the arrangements for death and disability coverage of the members of the Joint Inspection Unit described in document A/C.5/1697, paragraph 4. Since the Advisory Committee had supported (A/10374, para. 2) the proposals of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination on that subject, the postponement to the thirty-first session of the question of pension coverage of members of the Unit did not apply to those proposals of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. He therefore suggested that a paragraph should be added to the Committee's draft report stating that it concurred with the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 2 of its report with regard to provision of death and disability coverage for members of the Joint Inspection Unit. If there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted the draft report (A/C.5/L.1287 and Corr.1), as amended.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1759th meeting; A/10008/Add.14, 16, 17, 18 and Corr.1, 21 and 26, A/C.5/1715/Rev.1, A/C.5/1730/Add.1, A/C.5/L.1286, A/C.5/L.1292)

Revised estimates under section 12. United Nations Industrial Development Organization* (concluded) *(A/10008/Add.26, A/C.5/1715/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.1292)

3. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that when the Advisory Committee had considered the Secretary-General's initial programme budget proposals, it had decided to defer consideration of the estimates under section 12 pending the submission of revised estimates which would take into account the effect of the Lima Declaration[1] on UNIDO's programmes and the structural changes required to implement the Declaration. The Advisory Committee had taken into account the request of the Executive Director of UNIDO to give him an opportunity to assess the programme and budget requirements for UNIDO in the light of the Lima decisions. The Advisory Committee had accordingly included in its first report (A/10008 and Corr.2) on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 the provisional amount of $43,870,000 under section 12, representing the revised 1974-1975 UNIDO appropriation, as recosted by the Secretariat at 1975 rates with provision for inflation in 1976-1977.

4. He wished to make two points clear, particularly with a view to avoiding possible confusion with regard to the Advisory Committee's recommendations. First, the Advisory Committee had not recommended any reductions in the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General for UNIDO beyond that of 2 posts at the level of Assistant Secretary-General. Second, it would be misleading to attempt to link the level of the Secretary-General's estimates with the conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency. UNIDO would become a specialized agency after the completion of the necessary constitutional changes and not because of the level of its budget estimates.

5. The report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.26) was more critical than its reports on the other sections of the programme budget. That criticism should not give the impression that the Advisory Committee was insensitive to the needs and importance of UNIDO as an organization charged with the task of assisting the developing countries in their efforts to achieve greater development in industry and related fields. On the contrary, it was precisely because of the Advisory Committee's awareness of the importance to UNIDO of the Lima Declaration that it had decided to postpone consideration of the initial estimates. Its criticism should therefore be regarded as an attempt to pinpoint areas of weakness in UNIDO's programme and budget process which would have to be corrected if UNIDO was to rise to the new challenges posed by the Lima decisions. The Advisory Committee had been disappointed by the revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General concerning section 12 (A/C.5/1715/Rev.1): they did not indicate the degree to which the estimates had been affected by the Lima Declaration, and no clear picture had emerged of the extent to which subsequent discussions in the Industrial Development Board and at the seventh special session of the General Assembly had affected the structural changes in UNIDO or the programmes formulated to implement the Lima Declaration. The Advisory Committee had been unable to assess from the revised estimates or the oral testimony it had been given how the reorganization exercise would promote the attainment of UNIDO's new objectives.

6. The Secretary-General's revised estimates represented an increase of $8,647,000 over the 1974-1975 revised appropriation. The Advisory Committee had found it almost impossible to analyse them in the same manner as the other sections of the programme budget. No information had been available as to how the reorganization of UNIDO affected the shifting of existing staff and other resources between the various organizational units and programmes, and no attempt had been made to justify the

1 See document A/10112 of 13 June 1975, chap. IV.

request for additional resources in terms of actual new tasks to be performed. He drew attention to the Advisory Committee's observations in paragraphs 8 to 13 of its report, in particular the conclusion reached in the last sentence of paragraph 13.

7. In paragraphs 14 to 24 the Advisory Committee dealt with requests for additional posts and with overhead and programme support costs for the delivery of projects financed from UNDP funds. The revised estimates gave the impression that UNIDO was confident that a higher rate of project delivery would be achieved in the coming biennium with fewer overhead posts financed from the 14 per cent reimbursed by UNDP and with a reduced volume of administrative back-stopping. In view of the fact that UNIDO had been implementing a large volume of small-scale projects which tended to require more overhead costs and administrative back-stopping than larger projects, it was difficult to see how UNIDO would achieve that objective unless there was a change in the nature of the projects it was requested to implement. The Advisory Committee appreciated the drive for economy and efficiency and hoped that UNIDO's expectation with regard to project delivery would be realized. But, as it commented in paragraph 18 of its report, on the basis of past experience and in the light of the programme budget performance for the biennium 1974-1975, the shifting of staff and other resources in UNIDO might have led to a reallocation of those requirements to areas where they were less needed than in the past. The Advisory Committee had great difficulty in understanding the rationale behind the request for 3 posts at the level of Assistant Secretary-General. It had received the impression that those posts were being requested as a package deal—in other words, that all three had to be granted or none at all. Neither paragraph 12.8 of the revised estimates nor the oral submission made in the Advisory Committee indicated why those 3 posts should be in the office of the Executive Director and what their specific areas of competence and responsibility would be. The Advisory Committee had seen merit in the argument that the Executive Director should be able to delegate some of his responsibilities in order to ensure increased efficiency in the management of UNIDO programmes, but it had seen no reason why that objective could not be met by granting only 1 post at the level of Assistant Secretary-General. Accordingly, it had recommended that 1 such post should be authorized for UNIDO.

8. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that his delegation was disturbed by the confusion in the report on the revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General, which did not come up to the normally high standard of work of the Budget Division. UNIDO must be given the resources to enable it to discharge the new responsibilities entrusted it at its Second General Conference, held at Lima in March 1975. His delegation asked that the Director of the Budget Division should explain how the confusion had arisen. It fully supported the statement made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

9. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation was disappointed with the revised estimates and with the report of the Advisory Committee, because neither document established a clear link between the revised estimates and the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action.

10. In different circumstances the reduction of 51 from the 57 additional posts originally requested would be welcome as an attempt to reduce the human resources requested for a specific programme, but the timing of the reduction was inappropriate. As was stated in paragraph 15.21 of the report of the Secretary-General on budget and programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1974-1975,[2] UNIDO had been compelled to charge against vacant regular budget posts staff whose posts should have been financed from overhead funds, had such funds been available. It seemed unwise therefore to reduce the regular staff until UNIDO's future had become clear. Provided that the decision taken by the Fifth Committee at the twenty-ninth session[3] was applied flexibly, the increased recourse to consultants and expert groups would not be a problem. In view of the statement in paragraph 15.22 of the Secretary-General's report to the effect that the savings in terms of consultancy and *ad hoc* expert groups were due to difficulties encountered in recruitment, the reductions in permanent staff seemed even less wise. Nevertheless, his delegation still had full confidence in UNIDO and it would go into greater detail on the question in the Industrial Development Board.

11. The Fifth Committee was not in a position to judge the extent to which the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action were reflected in the revised estimates; it could only endorse the Advisory Committee's recommendations. His delegation and the other sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292 were not concerned so much with the principle of growth as with the implementation of the Lima decisions. To that end, the Secretary-General would be justified in requesting a higher growth rate than the average for the 1976-1977 budget, because the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action had been endorsed by the General Assembly at its seventh special session and all Member States were therefore committed to them. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

12. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked whether the Secretary-General had reflected faithfully the amounts required by UNIDO for consultants and expert groups. He believed that the estimates were based on the annual standard cost per expert of $36,000, which would not remain constant even in 1975. Furthermore, he had difficulty in accepting that overhead costs would remain the same as in 1974. The revised estimates for overhead costs might not even be correct in view of the fact that UNDP was suspending some of the projects in connexion with which programme support costs were reimbursed to UNIDO. He asked for clarification of paragraph 35 of the revised estimates, which did not make it clear exactly what could be charged under direct costs. In particular, he wished to know whether projects relating to technical co-operation among developing countries could be so charged.

13. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the revised estimates were confusing, while the Advisory Committee's report merely asked questions, and its recommendations, given the comments it had made in paragraphs 6 and 7, were an act of faith. Since inflation was generally thought to be

2 Document A/10035 of 13 November 1975.

3 *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 73, document A/9960, para. 30.

abating, he agreed with the Advisory Committee's comment in paragraph 9 that the reason for the increase attributed to further inflation in 1976-1977 was unclear. It was apparent from paragraph 23 that project support overheads might well amount to almost 50 per cent of total project delivery; that was an enormous proportion.

14. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt) endorsed the comments made by the representative of Algeria; he regretted that the revised estimates did not reflect the importance which his delegation attached to the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action and looked forward to the Secretariat's comments.

15. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the Secretariat had done its best to present a document describing the way in which the new elements resulting from the Lima Conference were being incorporated in existing programmes, as well as the far-reaching restructuring which would be necessary. The work had been done in an extremely short time and the result was certainly inadequate. The Budget Division took full responsibility. There was, however, nothing to prevent the General Assembly from considering at its thirty-first session a document more in line with the expectations of the Member States.

16. The apparently modest growth of 1.2 per cent might seem inadequate for an industrial development programme, but it was dangerous to look at a global growth rate applicable to a whole section of the budget without also examining how that rate was broken down. In the revised estimates UNIDO had been given all the resources it had requested, with the exception of the funds for consultants and expert groups. That exception was due to the restrictions which the General Assembly had imposed on the use of consultants and expert groups. If a distinction was made between administrative costs and direct costs, it would be seen that the cost of decision-making organs had declined by 2.2 per cent and the cost of conferences by 3.7 per cent, while the amount of funds allocated to substantive programmes had increased by 5.6 per cent. Those figures were not exact because some of the costs which had been charged to administration in the previous budget came under substantive programmes in the current estimates. Nevertheless, it was clear that the growth rate for substantive programmes was far from negligible. The reduction in administrative costs might seem optimistic in the light of UNDIO's new commitments, but the Budget Division had merely complied with the wishes of UNIDO, which had judged it possible to implement increased programmes while maintaining support costs at the same or a lower level.

17. In reply to the question asked by the representative of the Philippines, he pointed out that the average cost for consultants per man-month in UNIDO was, as indicated in paragraph 30 of the Secretary-General's report, $5,000, a figure higher than that mentioned by that representative. As to the question of what became of appropriations for overhead costs if UNDP programmes to be executed by UNIDO were cut back, he said that corresponding reductions would, of course, be made in the estimates. He stressed, however, that the estimates had been prepared on the basis of the planned level of programme activity and it was safe to assume that the planned programmes would actually be implemented.

18. With regard to the methods for calculating overhead costs (A/C.5/1715/Rev.1, para. 35), there was no unanimity among the Secretariat, UNDP and the various executing agencies as to what should or should not be regarded as programme support costs.

19. With regard to the observations of the representative of Belgium regarding inflation, he explained that the considerable increase over appropriations approved for 1974-1975 in funds needed for the maintenance of 1974-1975 programmes was due to an error of judgement in the calculation of common staff costs. Information which had become available after the preparation of document A/C.5/1715 had led the Secretariat to revise those costs upwards.

20. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that the Director of the Budget Division had virtually acknowledged that the Secretary-General had had to patch up the revised estimates for UNIDO owing to lack of time. His delegation believed, therefore, that the Secretary-General had not given due attention to a new factor affecting UNIDO's activities, namely, the Lima Declaration. In the circumstances, draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292 came at the right time.

21. The Secretariat appeared to have taken too literally the decision of the Fifth Committee at the twenty-ninth session concerning the use of consultants. While his delegation had been among those which had in recent years criticized the excessive use of consultants, it also reproached the Secretary-General for not having applied the Committee's decision consistently. The Secretary-General had, for example, been quite generous regarding the use of experts of UNEP. Moreover, there was a contradiction between the view expressed in paragraph 26 of the Secretary-General's report and paragraph 27, in which the Secretary-General acknowledged that the only effective procedure for UNIDO would be to rely on consultants. The word "consultant" was perhaps inappropriate within the context of UNIDO and a new term was needed to refer to the use of contractual services by that organization. In short, the Secretary-General had not given sufficient thought to UNIDO's new requirements. Fortunately, the Advisory Committee had questioned certain aspects of his report and thus left the door open for the submission of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292, which would remedy the situation.

22. In conclusion, he asked how many staff members of the Budget Division had been assigned to study the implementation of the Lima Declaration. He suspected that the task had been assigned to subordinates who had not fully grasped the import of the Lima Declaration.

23. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked how the Director of the Budget Division had arrived at the figure of $5,000 per man-month for consultant costs. It was his understanding that the maximum amount allowable for consultants' fees was $40,000 per year, while the figure given by the Director of the Budget Division for UNIDO would yield $60,000.

24. Mr. SETHI (India) said that his delegation endorsed the provisions of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292. The Lima Declaration and Plan of Action marked a turning-point in

the efforts of the United Nations to promote the industrial development of the developing countries. It had been intended ever since UNIDO was created that it should become a specialized agency. At the two recent special sessions of the General Assembly the developing countries had reaffirmed that their salvation lay in industrialization, since their terms of trade had become increasingly unfavourable in recent decades and the existing international division of labour had become unacceptable.

25. His delegation noted that the Advisory Committee had not found certain necessary information in the report of the Secretary-General. In the view of his delegation, the two main questions were to what extent the proposed restructuring of UNIDO reflected the decisions of the Lima Conference and what approach should be taken in the matter of appropriations in order to get programme activities under way in the period until UNIDO became a specialized agency. The Director of the Budget Division had said that actual programme growth was not reflected in the over-all growth figure for UNIDO's budget. His delegation believed that when preparing UNIDO's revised estimates the following year, the Secretary-General should consult the relevant intergovernmental bodies such as UNIDO's Permanent Committee and the Industrial Development Board.

26. It was imperative that the implementation of the Lima Declaration should start as soon as possible. The total amount of appropriations for UNIDO could be determined only in relation to the desired level of programme activity, and accordingly, his delegation supported the provisional solution proposed in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292.

27. His delegation was well aware that the use of consultants had given rise to abuses in some cases. It recognized the need for restraint in the use of consultants, but it had reservations regarding the imposition of a ceiling for that purpose, especially in the case of UNIDO, since the use of contractual services was probably the only way that organization could carry out its activities.

28. Mr. PONCE (Peru) said that the increase in the budget of UNIDO did not seem to be commensurate with the new responsibilities placed on it by the Lima Declaration. The Declaration had been adopted by an overwhelming majority of Member States and had been endorsed by the General Assembly at its seventh special session. Everything possible should be done, therefore, to facilitate its implementation, and his delegation hoped that the estimates for UNIDO would be revised at the earliest possible date in order to take into account the importance which the developing countries attached to the Lima Declaration.

29. Accordingly, his delegation proposed the addition of a second preambular paragraph to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292, reading as follows:

> "*Reaffirming* its resolution 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 in which it endorsed the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation".

The purpose of the amendment was to have the international community, through the General Assembly, endorse the decisions of the Lima Conference.

30. His delegation also proposed that the words "taking fully into account" in operative paragraph 2 should be replaced by the phrase "providing a considerable increase, which would take fully into account".

31. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) said that his delegation found it strange that, in the light of the adoption of the Declaration and Plan of Action of Lima, the Secretary-General could still submit revised estimates which some delegations had characterized as poorly organized. The Advisory Committee had taken the only possible course, since it lacked information on which to base its assessment of the revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General. In the circumstances, his delegation had no choice but to support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292 and the amendments proposed by the Peruvian delegation.

32. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico), supported by Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia), endorsed the amendments proposed by the Peruvian delegation and hoped that the sponsors of the draft resolution would accept them.

33. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution, said that they accepted the first Peruvian amendment as the first preambular paragraph of their text. The second amendment was, however, not acceptable because the words "considerable increase" were open to varying interpretations. The revised estimates for UNIDO to be submitted at the thirty-first session would be acceptable only if they took fully into account all elements of the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action.

34. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution. It shared the sponsors' view of the Peruvian amendments.

35. The estimates submitted by the Secretary-General were on the conservative side since UNIDO was in a transitional phase. It was appropriate, therefore, for the General Assembly to request the submission at the thirty-first session of revised estimates fully reflecting the impact of the Lima Conference and other changes on UNIDO's objectives and programmes. The Secretary-General should continue to prepare UNIDO's budget until it became a specialized agency, and in so doing he should take full account of the observations of the Advisory Committee.

36. The high costs incurred for consultants were unavoidable in view of the special character of UNIDO's activities, which required it to have access to a wide range of expertise. His delegation endorsed the view expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 16 of its report that prudent management of funds appropriated for outside expertise and strict observance of General Assembly directives would make further requests for appropriations unnecessary.

37. In conclusion, his delegation hoped that there would be an improvement in UNIDO project delivery in future.

38. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt) said that his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292 and that it hoped that botn Peruvian amendments would be taken into account. The second Peruvian amendment should be taken

to mean that the growth of UNIDO's budget should be greater than the 1 per cent already planned, especially in view of the fact that the budgets of other bodies were increasing at higher rates; the effect would be to leave it to UNIDO to determine the desirable rate of growth.

39. Mr. PONCE (Peru) said that his delegation accepted the comments of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292 regarding the amendments proposed by his delegation and, in a spirit of co-operation, would withdraw its second amendment.

40. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) thanked the representative of Peru for his co-operation and announced that Chad had become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

41. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) said his delegation attached great importance to UNIDO's role in the implementation of the Lima Declaration. It regretted, therefore, that some confusion had arisen among the developing countries regarding the draft resolution. Had suitable budget proposals been submitted which reflected UNIDO's programme objectives, his delegation would have supported them. It had some difficulty, however, with operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, and for that reason proposed that a separate vote should be taken on each of the operative paragraphs.

42. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division), replying to the representative of the Philippines, said that the figure of $5,000 per man-month included $3,600 to $4,000 in fees for the expert himself and $1,000 to $1,400 for travel expenses. In the case of experts of exceptionally high calibre, the figure could be as high as $4,000 for 20 days.

43. Replying to the representative of Algeria who had asked what the Budget Division would have done if it had not been required to make a new submission in 1976, he drew attention to paragraph 12 of document A/C.5/1715/Rev.1; the Secretary-General emphasized in that paragraph that the revised estimates were to be regarded as applicable to a provisional programme to deal with responsibilities, the precise scope of which could not yet be finally determined. Should the estimates be approved and prove inadequate for performance of the functions of UNIDO as they evolved during the biennium, the Secretary-General might find it necessary to propose appropriate adjustments in his progress report on UNIDO to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. Similar reservations were expressed in paragraphs 25 and 31.

44. The Budget Division had been criticized for interpreting General Assembly recommendations concerning consultants over-literally. The recommendations applied to all kinds of external expertise and the restriction was therefore general. In the light of the Lima Declaration, Headquarters was prepared to consider higher appropriations if the need for them was satisfactorily substantiated. The Budget Division felt that to a certain extent the justifications already given were acceptable, and it had increased the provision for consultants by approximately 25 per cent.

45. Doubts had been expressed about whether the Budget Division was co-operating fully with UNIDO. The Budget Division had sent an official of the appropriate rank to Vienna on the agreed date. That undertaking had been fruitless, however, since at the time the decisions which were required at Vienna had not yet been made. Several senior staff members had worked for almost a month on section 12; indeed, the Budget Division had never before assigned so many high-level staff to study a single section and, with its modest resources, could not have co-operated more fully.

46. Concerning the remarks made by the representative of the Upper Volta regarding the interpretation which the Secretariat might give to the term "considerable increase", he pointed out that what was important was the actual growth in the programmes themselves. UNIDO had at least two major programmes—industrial studies and operations and policy co-ordination—which were both action programmes.

47. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292, as amended; in accordance with the request to that effect, he put each operative paragraph to the vote separately.

Paragraph 1 was adopted by 82 votes to 1, with 8 abstentions.

Paragraph 2 was adopted by 84 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.

The draft resolution as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 83 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

48. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 12 (A/10008/Add.26, para. 25).

An appropriation of $45,167,000 under section 12 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in first reading by 82 votes to 7.

49. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation had had the same difficulties as the majority of delegations with the proposals concerning the programme budget of UNIDO. Since it was impossible to discuss the revised estimates properly, it had considered that the best course was to vote in favour of the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee and of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292.

50. His delegation understood that operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution did not necessarily mean that after careful scrutiny of UNIDO's budget in 1976 a considerable increase in appropriations would be approved. It was aware of the need to restructure UNIDO. Too often, however, such a term as "considerable increase" was not adequately defined. There was a tendency merely to consider figures and not the actual quality of growth.

51. The Secretary-General had been criticized for not co-operating sufficiently with UNIDO. It was to be hoped that 1976 would see greater co-operation on both sides. Until UNIDO was an independent agency, full responsibility for the preparation and submission of its budget should remain with the Secretary-General. However, the

need to prepare UNIDO to become a specialized agency should be borne in mind.

52. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292 because it believed that the Advisory Committee had submitted a very good report; its recommendations had been accepted in paragraph 1 of the draft resolution.

53. With regard to operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, he drew attention to paragraph 12 of document A/10008/Add.26, and said he hoped the Secretary-General would take full account of the comments therein when submitting revised estimates in future.

54. Had there been a separate vote on the preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution, his delegation would have been unable to support the first preambular paragraph of the original text for reasons already stated in the Second Committee.

55. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation regretted the uncertainty, discrepancies and confusion to which the submission of the revised estimates for section 12 had given rise. It was grateful to the Advisory Committee for its clarifications and approved the conclusions contained in document A/10008/Add.26. The difficulties could have been avoided if there had been a constructive dialogue between the Administration and the delegations of Member States in Vienna and New York.

56. His delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292 in order to demonstrate its support for UNIDO. It hoped that the recommendations in operative paragraph 2 would be followed.

57. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that it was regrettable that a decision on an issue as important as the budget of UNIDO should have to be taken so late in the session. No constructive dialogue had been possible between the Administration and delegations, although such a dialogue should form the basis of relationships between Governments and intergovernmental organizations. His delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292, which offered a way out of an unfortunate situation.

58. Mr. HART (Australia) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292 and the appropriations recommended by the Advisory Committee under section 12. Like other delegations, it was disappointed by the quality of the Secretary-General's estimates. It considered that there was a need for an effective procedure for co-operation and control during the period of transition in which UNIDO found itself. His delegation associated itself with the remarks made by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany.

59. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had voted on the appropriations under section 12 on the basis of its position of principle regarding the unwarranted expenditures contained in that section. It had been unable to support draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292.

60. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292 for reasons which were, in part, similar to those explained by the representative of France.

61. With regard to the overhead costs of project delivery, the United Kingdom would be prepared to support any fully justified proposal. At the moment, however, there was too much obscurity surrounding the proposals.

62. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) said that his delegation had intended to abstain in the vote on appropriations under section 12, but had accidentally pressed the "yes" button.

63. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the appropriations under section 12.

64. In connexion with operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1292, her delegation supported the Federal Republic of Germany; it did not take it for granted that the estimates submitted for UNIDO in 1976 would automatically be approved.

Revised estimates resulting from decisions taken by the Trade and Development Board at its sixth special session and the first part of its fifteenth session (A/10008/Add.17, A/C.5/1708)

65. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in his report (A/C.5/1708) the Secretary-General indicated that the decisions of the Trade and Development Board at its sixth special session and the first part of its fifteenth session involved expenditure estimated at about $835,000 for the forthcoming biennium. For reasons stated in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/10008/Add.17), the Secretary-General was requesting $240,000 only to implement resolutions 132 (XV) and 136 (XV) of the Trade and Development Board.[4]

66. In resolution 132 (XV) the Secretary-General of UNCTAD was requested to render assistance, in the manner indicated in the resolution, to developing countries experiencing debt problems, by convening meetings between creditors and debtors with a view to examining, at the international level, a debtor country's situation in a wider development context, prior to debt renegotiations in the customary forums. The Secretary-General estimated that the expenditure required would amount to $216,000, which included $100,000 for consultants, $25,000 for general temporary assistance, $15,000 for travel, and $76,000 for conference servicing. The meetings involved would be held and the related assistance would be given at the request of the country experiencing debt problems. Such being the case, the Advisory Committee believed that it was only after receiving such a request that the Secretary-General could determine the level and type of outside expertise required, and the nature of conference services that would have to be provided. Because of that element of uncertainty, the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 8 of its report, recommended that no provision for

4 *Ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 15,* part three, annex I.

additional appropriations should be made at that stage, and that the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into the necessary commitments initially under the terms of the General Assembly resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses, with the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee.

67. With regard to resolution 136 (XV), the Advisory Committee accepted the Secretary-General's request for $24,000 to cover travel costs.

68. The Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the assistance requested by countries experiencing debt problems did not imply that it was denying such assistance. It was simply recommending what it considered to be the best course in the circumstances. Should the Secretary-General of UNCTAD find himself confronted with numerous requests for assistance, there was nothing to prevent him from submitting the requests in the manner recommended by the Advisory Committee.

69. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) stated that UNCTAD had done crucial work on behalf of the developing countries. For that reason, her delegation regretted the Advisory Committee's decision not to recommend approval of the $216,000 required to implement resolution 132 (XV) of the Trade and Development Board. That resolution was aimed at helping the developing countries to overcome the external debt problems which were severely hampering their development.

70. She drew attention to the operative part of resolution 132 (XV) which authorized the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to convene meetings between creditor countries and debtor countries, to provide appropriate assistance to debtor countries in relation to the holding of such *ad hoc* meetings, and to keep the question of the debt problems of developing countries under continuous review.

71. She noted that $240,000 had been requested for conference services under section 23 and $140,000 under section 11 for consultants, general temporary assistance and travel. The sum for consultants was extremely important in the light of the activities of UNCTAD following the decisions taken by the Trade and Development Board at its sixth special session and the first part of its fifteenth session. Her delegation therefore formally proposed that the revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1708 should be approved.

72. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation was surprised to learn from paragraph 6 of its report that the Advisory Committee had concluded that medium-level outside experts were required rather than very high-level consultants. However, the consultants required in connexion with the implementation of resolution 132 (XV) of the Trade and Development Board were very high-level consultants on short-term contracts. Many developing countries were obliged to pay a high proportion of their export earnings back in interest and other debt service. It was certain that during the forthcoming biennium highly qualified consultants on short-term contracts would be needed to help those countries to tackle their debt problems. His delegation felt that the conclusions of the Advisory Committee derived from the way it interpreted what kind of experts were required. The Upper Volta would welcome some reaction from the Secretariat with regard to paragraph 6 of the Advisory Committee's report. Further, since the meetings envisaged in resolution 132 (XV) of the Trade and Development Board should be held during the forthcoming biennium, it would be desirable to try to determine the necessary appropriations.

73. Mr. SETHI (India) said that UNCTAD was the tribune of the developing countries and high-priority programmes should be given priority in its budget. The representative of Colombia had already outlined the problem facing the developing countries, which should not be at the mercy of unpredictable circumstances.

74. The meetings to be held to consider the indebtedness of the developing countries did not fall under the heading of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses; that was a point of principle. The problem of the indebtedness of the developing countries was of extreme importance; far from an influx of capital to those countries, there was in fact an outflow, and the burden of indebtedness was becoming intolerable. What was at stake was the implementation of Trade and Development Board resolution 132 (XV), which had been submitted on behalf of the entire Group of 77. Nothing should be done to prevent the implementation of the objectives of that resolution. For the reasons stated by the representative of Colombia, it would be preferable not to tie the hands of the Secretary-General by excessively rigid budgetary procedures. Certain *ad hoc* meetings might have to be convened on such short notice that the procedures described in paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report could not be used. The Secretary-General must be able to undertake the tasks entrusted to him by the developing countries as a whole. For that reason, while his delegation agreed that from the administrative and financial standpoint the views expressed by the Advisory Committee were well founded, it believed that an exception must be made in that particular case. His delegation therefore fully supported the proposal of the Colombian delegation.

75. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that economic development was the most crucial contemporary issue and noted with concern the gap between objectives and the means provided to achieve them. Algeria was deeply concerned about the considerable reductions in the appropriations requested for the Trade and Development Board. Such a reduction would be tantamount to an amputation which would paralyse the Board's work and particularly the programme for reordering the external debt, which was of vital significance for the developing countries. The reductions would also drastically curtail the studies to assess the progress and the difficulties of the least developed among the developing countries. For those reasons, his delegation could not accept the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. It supported the Colombian proposal and wished to make a formal request for a vote on the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General.

Mr. Matseiko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

76. Mr. GHAFOURZAI (Afghanistan) agreed with the views expressed by the delegations of Colombia, Algeria

and India concerning the report of the Advisory Committee. His delegation would support the proposal by Colombia and hoped that the representatives of the other developing countries would do the same.

77. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that it was his delegation's understanding that the delegation of Colombia had made its proposal because the Advisory Committee's recommendation would in effect make it impossible for the *ad hoc* meetings on debt problems to take place. He would like the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to comment on the matter.

78. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that he had the impression that the Advisory Committee was regarded as having rejected the request by the Secretary-General; that was a misunderstanding. The Advisory Committee had said that the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into commitments in the amounts indicated, but that he should do so under the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses since he did not know at that time how many countries would request the assistance in question. Secondly, it had been said that the Secretary-General of UNCTAD would request funds for preparing the meetings. However, to do so, he must know how many countries would request aid. The work involved was highly complex and required a selective approach. He could not, for example, envisage the Secretary-General of UNCTAD making preparations to hold meetings of all Latin American countries, all African countries and all Asian countries on the assumption that those countries would all request aid in the form envisaged by the resolution of the Trade and Development Board. Preparations along those lines would hardly prove effective. He would surely proceed on the basis of the requests submitted to him and, after the submission of requests, he would make the necessary preparations. One representative had said that the Secretary-General of UNCTAD would have to monitor the debt problems of the developing countries. He agreed with that statement but pointed out that very few countries would wish to indicate the extent to which they were experiencing debt problems until such time as they were ready to seek assistance from the Secretary-General of UNCTAD.

79. Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark) said that to inflate the UNCTAD budget by a further $216,000 for which there was no real justification would not be good budgetary policy. If the proposal by Colombia were put to the vote, his delegation would be unable to support it.

80. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) regretted the efforts again being made by certain delegations to reverse the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee gave deep and serious consideration to the questions submitted to it and had certainly not reached its decision without considering the views of the Secretariat. It might be useful to hear the views of the representatives of the Secretary-General.

81. Mr. SETHI (India) agreed with the Soviet representative that the Advisory Committee was in a position to study issues much more thoroughly than the Fifth Committee and felt that in general its conclusions should be respected. However, at times, delegations added a political element and arrived at conclusions which might be different from those of the Advisory Committee. His delegation was of the opinion that the restoration of the appropriations requested by the Secretary-General would be justifiable.

82. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that the Soviet delegation had not always shared the views of the Advisory Committee and should not expect other delegations to do so. His delegation was not satisfied with the clarifications given by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and would like to request the representative of the Secretary-General to tell the Committee on what basis and using which data the Secretary-General had made his estimates.

83. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) pointed out that the Group of 77 in its entirety had proposed and sponsored Trade and Development Board resolution 132 (XV) because of the urgency of the problem of indebtedness and the need for UNCTAD assistance. Her delegation greatly respected the members of the Advisory Committee but considered that they were not the final judges and that it was the function of the Fifth Committee to adjust the Advisory Committee's recommendations to political realities.

84. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) appealed to the delegation of Colombia not to press its proposal.

85. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said, with regard to the point raised by the representative of the Upper Volta, that there seemed to be some misunderstanding about the request for consultants and the kind of task which would be entrusted to them. UNCTAD intended to recruit 3 highly qualified consultants to carry out studies for a period of six months and might subsequently engage a further 18 experts, because it believed that it must prepare itself as quickly as possible and before any specific requests were received to undertake on a permanent basis a review and consideration of debt problems in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

86. Mr. MOLTENI (Argentina) moved the closure of the debate under rule 117 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

87. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to close the debate on the item.

It was so decided.

88. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) requested a recorded vote on her delegation's proposal.

89. Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom), explaining his vote before the vote, said that his delegation agreed with previous speakers concerning the importance of the role of UNCTAD in development and the seriousness of the problem of foreign indebtedness. The point at issue was not whether resolution 132 (XV) of the Trade and Development Board would be implemented: as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had explained, the meetings requested in the resolution would be held in due course and the Secretary-General would be able to avail himself of the necessary expertise. It had been suggested by some delega-

tions that the Secretary-General's estimates should be restored because the activity was a priority one. His delegation did not dispute that the activity was of a priority nature but believed that it was in the interests of all States that the United Nations should observe sound financial principles and follow the best financial and administrative advice in all circumstances; however great the priority, there should not be financial irresponsibility. That was why his delegation would vote against the estimates submitted by the Secretary-General and for the Advisory Committee's recommendation, if it were subsequently put to the vote.

90. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation intended to vote for the Secretary-General's estimates. In so doing, it did not regard itself as financially irresponsible. Admittedly, there was a foreseeable element—meetings would unquestionably be held—and an unforeseeable element—the number of meetings was as yet unknown. If the funds requested by the Secretary-General proved insufficient for all the meetings held, the Secretary-General would be empowered to follow the formula outlined by the Advisory Committee and to request additional funds under the terms of the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

91. He regretted that the debate had been closed before it had been possible for the Committee to ascertain whether the information given by the Director of the Budget Division had also been provided to the Advisory Committee or whether it had become available after the Advisory Committee's report had been issued.

92. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that, in keeping with his delegation's endorsement of the recommendation in paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report, he would vote against the Secretary-General's estimates. The Advisory Committee had followed the proper course in its report, as was clear from the statement made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

93. His delegation had been taken aback by the most recent statement of the Director of the Budget Division. He agreed with the representative of the Upper Volta that it was a pity that the Committee had been unable to establish whether the information in that statement had been provided to the Advisory Committee. Moreover, it was not the first time that the Secretariat had provided information to the Fifth Committee which differed from or even conflicted with that given to the Advisory Committee.

94. After a procedural discussion in which Mr. TALIEH (Iran), the CHAIRMAN, Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia), Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), Mr. SETHI (India) and Mr. ABRAHAMSON (Denmark) participated, Mr. RUEDAS (Acting Secretary of the Committee) reminded the Committee that, under the terms of the Colombian proposal, the Committee would vote on the additional appropriation of $240,000 requested by the Secretary-General under sections 11 and 23 of the proposed programme budget (A/C.5/1708, para. 5).

At the request of the representative of Colombia, a recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burma, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.

Against: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Denmark, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany (Federal Republic of), Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Liberia, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey.

An additional appropriation of $240,000 under sections 11 and 23 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved by 50 votes to 13, with 23 abstentions.

95. The CHAIRMAN said that the adoption of the Secretary-General's estimates required that an additional amount of $30,000 for staff assessment be included under section 25, offset by the same amount under income section 1.

96. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that the importance of the matter that had formed the subject of the discussion was not in dispute. His delegation attached as much significance to the proper and adequate financing of the activities referred to in the annex to document A/C.5/1708 as any of the delegations which had spoken in favour of the Colombian proposal. However, in the light of the explanation of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, it seemed to his delegation that the question at issue was of a technical rather than of a financial nature. While it agreed with the views expressed by the Advisory Committee, it had abstained in the vote because of the very great importance which many developing countries seemed to attach to a formal appropriation.

97. Mr. HART (Australia) associated his delegation with the statement made by the representative of Sweden and said that his delegation had abstained for the same reason.

98. Mr. OH (Singapore) said that his delegation, too, had abstained. While it was aware of the importance attached to the question by developing countries, it had been convinced after hearing the explanations of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that nothing in paragraph 8 of document A/10008/Add.17 would prevent the Secretary-General from requesting additional appropriations if they were needed.

99. Mr. NKIELE-ATYPO (Congo) said that his delegation had voted for the additional appropriation because it was increasingly apparent that UNCTAD constituted a platform for the developing countries.

100. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy) said that her delegation had abstained because, in its opinion, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had made it plain that the question to be resolved related simply to financial procedures, not to the substance of a question which was, of course, vitally important for developing countries.

Mr. Thomas (Trinidad and Tobago) resumed the Chair.

Financial problems of the United Nations* (concluded) *(A/C.5/1730 and Add.1, A/C.5/L.1240, A/C.5/L.1286)

101. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the 1770th meeting the representative of Pakistan had introduced draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286 and the representative of the Union of Soviet Union Socialist Republics had proposed two oral amendments to operative paragraph 4.

102. Mr. SCHMIDT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that it was in the overriding interest of all States to have a smoothly functioning and financially viable Organization. His delegation was prepared to participate in any effort that would restore the financial solvency of the United Nations. The problem was a political as well as a financial one and could not be solved simply by financing techniques. Three causes of the financial plight had been enumerated by the delegation of Pakistan: late payment of contributions, depletion of the Working Capital Fund and withholding of contributions. His delegation believed that, even though the early payment of contributions would make the problem far less acute, it could not provide a complete solution. The withholding of contributions was the root cause of the problem and could not be brushed aside, as the Secretary-General's answers in documents A/C.5/1730 and Add.1 demonstrated very clearly; past, current and future withholdings must be taken into account in any lasting solution of the financial problems of the United Nations.

103. Turning to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286, he said that the provisions laying down the mandate of the proposed negotiating committee referred in rather a restricted way to the problem of the withholding of contributions and the question of the Working Capital Fund. It would be noted that the reasons for the current plight of the Working Capital Fund had not been fully explained by the Secretariat either in statements to the Committee or in documents A/C.5/1730 and Add.1. That point would have to be examined by the negotiating committee before it suggested an appropriate level for the Fund. Furthermore, the negotiating committee, if it was to be successful in its work, would have to probe into the cash deficit situation, on which very little information had been provided in documents A/C.5/1730 and Add.1. Indeed, it was necessary to have full explanations concerning the current deficit, how it had been financed and the size of the cash problems in relation to that financing before any decision could be taken regarding a settlement. Such problems could not be glossed over by invoking the principle of collective responsibility, even though that principle was generally valid. His delegation could subscribe to the mandate of the negotiating committee as defined in draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286 because it was clear from operative paragraph 4 that the mandate could be broadened if necessary. It also subscribed to paragraph 7, which it understood to mean that any decision on a solution to the financial problems of the United Nations must be taken by the General Assembly.

104. In conclusion, he thanked the delegations which had submitted the questions contained in document A/C.5/L.1240 and the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286 for their initiative.

105. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that Ecuador had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286.

106. As a result of the sponsors' acceptance of one of the Soviet amendments to the draft resolution, operative paragraph 4 *(b)* would become paragraph 4 *(a)*, the words "The need to implement" would be added before the words "the consensus of the Special Committee" and the words "and the terms of General Assembly resolution 3049 (XXVII)" would be replaced by the words "on 1 September 1965 regarding the financial difficulties of the Organization". As a consequential change, the words "and the terms of General Assembly resolution 3049 (XXVII)" would be added at the end of former paragraph 4 *(a)*, which would now become paragraph 4 *(b)*. The sponsors had been unable to accept the second Soviet amendment, which would have added a fifth subparagraph to paragraph 4 reading:

> "*(e)* The need to eliminate the causes in the United Nations budget leading to the annual increase of the sum of the financial deficit of the Organization",

on the ground that the inclusion of such wording in the draft resolution might prejudge discussion of the question in the negotiating committee. However, in view of the fact that under paragraph 4 *(d)* the negotiating committee was required to address itself to "the elimination of certain differences between Member States as a result of supervening action by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session", he hoped that the delegation of the Soviet Union would not press its second amendment.

107. With regard to the size of the negotiating committee, he said that a membership of 54 appeared to be the best compromise between total representation and manageability. He hoped that interested non-members of the proposed committee would participate fully in the proceedings as observers but felt that an open-ended committee might present procedural problems. Since time was pressing, he suggested that Member States wishing to participate in the committee should make their desire known as soon as possible.

108. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) recalled that Greece was one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286, and stressed the need for negotiations to reach a lasting solution of the financial problems of the United Nations because it felt that a spirit of realism, conciliation and moderation was essential. A major financial crisis would undermine the common political will on which the United Nations was based. He trusted that the negotiating committee provided for in the draft resolution would bear those considerations in mind.

109. The negotiating committee, as well as seeking a comprehensive solution to the financial problems of the

Organization, would also examine the appropriate level of the Working Capital Fund and the financial regulations governing it in the light of the changing requirements of the Organization. Although the cash flow difficulties of the United Nations were a matter for concern, many delegations had reservations regarding an increase in the Fund. It was said that such an increase might be interpreted by some Member States as an attempt to make them pay contributions to cover deficits created by the withholding of assessed contributions on grounds of principle by certain Members. Another objection was that, if the problem of the accumulating deficit was not solved, even an increased Fund would soon be depleted. To overcome those two objections, he suggested that the Secretary-General might be requested to replenish the Working Capital Fund at the end of each financial year or at some fixed point during the year, the financial regulations and rules being amended accordingly. If that solution was adopted, it would become clear that replenishment of the Fund was not connected with the so-called uncollectable assessed contributions, and it would also allay fears that the Fund would be depleted.

110. Another objection to increasing the Working Capital Fund was that the Organization would survive anyway. Yet he did not take lightly the appeals of the Secretary-General, recently reiterated in document A/C.5/1730/Add.1. That document also showed that the Organization was trying to solve its cash flow problems by borrowing from trust funds and from UNEF, UNDOF and UNFICYP, which he felt should be considered trust funds even if not formally so described. While UNFICYP was not entitled to borrow from the Working Capital Fund, the UNFICYP reserves were being used as though they were part of the Working Capital Fund.

111. Yet another objection was that, under existing regulations, advances from the Working Capital Fund could not be used to liquidate obligations of the Organization, its main financial requirements. He hoped that the negotiating committee would take that objection, which might be valid, into account in studying and reviewing the regulations governing the Fund. The negotiating committee might also study ways and means of increasing the special account, including amendments to regulations pertaining to the balance of surplus accounts and miscellaneous income.

112. A final objection was that increasing the Working Capital Fund would adversely affect negotiations on a comprehensive solution to the financial problems of the United Nations. He felt, however, that an increase of the Fund within the framework of adequate measures would enable all Member States to alleviate the financial situation of the United Nations.

113. As the Secretary-General had indicated, the need to increase the Working Capital Fund was related to the size of the expenditure budget. In 1946 the Fund had been established at $20 million–roughly 103 per cent of the expenditure that year. In 1952, 1953, 1959 and 1960, the level of the Fund had been increased through the temporary transfer of the balance of surplus account not already applied against assessments. In 1960 and 1963, the Fund had been increased by direct additional advances by Member States. Yet, since 1963, although the budget had increased fourfold, the Fund had not changed, so that now the Fund represented only 17 per cent of the expenditure. He believed that the negotiating committee should take up that matter, although he did not underestimate the importance of paragraph 1 of the draft resolution calling on all Member States to pay contributions promptly.

114. As to the size of the negotiating committee, he felt it should be open to countries wishing to send observers who should be able to participate in its work without the right to vote.

115. In conclusion, he urged the Committee to adopt draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286, as amended.

116. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) said that the Controller had sent a letter dated 20 November 1975 to his Government–and, he presumed, to other Member States holding United Nations bonds–referring to the Organization's cash flow problems and proposing that Member States holding bonds agree to offset the principal and interest payments due to them on 15 January 1976 against their assessed contributions to the regular budget. His Government accepted that proposal and trusted that other Governments concerned would also accept it.

117. His delegation, a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286, intended to submit its proposals to the negotiating committee in 1976.

118. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had submitted amendments to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286 because of its concern over the financial situation of the United Nations and to ensure that the mandate of the proposed negotiating committee would be broad enough to allow it to give full consideration to the problems and make acceptable recommendations. He expressed appreciation to the sponsors for accepting his first amendment. He regretted that the second amendment had not been accepted, however, as he considered it very important to resolve the reasons for the continuing deficit; he had simply wanted to stress that the negotiating committee should deal with the main problem, as otherwise the Organization would be trapped in a vicious circle. He withdrew his second amendment in view of the sponsors' reaction to it. He could not, however, accept the draft resolution as it stood and intended to abstain in the vote on it.

At the request of the representative of Singapore, a recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.5/L.1286, as amended.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Ghana, Greece, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Benin, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Congo, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The draft resolution was adopted by 65 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.

119. Mr. WOLDE-AREGAY (Ethiopia) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution although it would have preferred the negotiating committee to be established on an *ad hoc* basis and to have fewer members than the number recommended by the representative of Pakistan. His vote in no way prejudged his delegation's position on the findings of the negotiating committee.

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.

1772nd meeting

Tuesday, 16 December 1975, at 10.40 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1772

AGENDA ITEM 100

Pattern of conferences *(continued)*:*
(b)* Report of the Secretary-General *(concluded)*

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (Part II) (A/C.5/L.1288/Add.1)

1. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introduced the second part (A/C.5/L.1288/Add.1) of the Committee's draft report, which dealt with the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences.

The draft report was adopted.

Letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee to the President of the Economic and Social Council

2. The CHAIRMAN, recalling that at the 1757th meeting he had informed the Committee about a communication addressed to him by the President of the Economic and Social Council, read out the following draft letter which he planned to send to the latter:

"Thank you for your letter of 11 November 1975 and the attached summary record of the 1981st meeting of the Council. As you requested in your letter, this summary record was brought to the attention of the Fifth Committee when it considered agenda item 100, concerning the pattern of conferences. Members of the Fifth Committee were fully aware of the competence of the Economic and Social Council in setting the dates of its meetings and, accordingly, the Committee left the dates of the Council in the report of the Committee on Conferences unaltered.

"During the discussion I informed the Fifth Committee that, in order to accommodate the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which, it was recommended by the Committee on Conferences, should meet from 15 March to 7 May 1976, the Council had agreed, in subparagraph *(b)* of its decision 125 (LIX), to reconsider and, if necessary, alter the dates of the sixtieth session of the Council, consequent on the decision of the General Assembly on the subject."

3. If there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed that he should send the letter to the President of the Economic and Social Council.

It was so decided.

4. Mr. SETHI (India) reserved his delegation's right to make a statement on the matter at a later meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council [chapters III (sections F, G and J to L), IV (sections G and H), V (sections A and B), VI (sections A to C, and F and G) and VII (section G)] (A/10003)

5. The CHAIRMAN recalled that certain parts of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/10003) had been referred to the Fifth Committee by the General Assembly. Some of those parts had been dealt with during consideration of relevant items, the exceptions being those which the Committee was to deal with at the current stage in connexion with agenda item 12.

6. If there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Assembly that it should take note of the relevant sections of the report of the Economic and Social Council.

It was so decided.

7. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation wished to reaffirm the positions stated by representatives of the Soviet Union in the relevant United Nations bodies concerning all the questions referred to the Committee for consideration in connexion with agenda item 12.

* Resumed from the 1770th meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1759th meeting; A/10008/Add.14, 16, 17, 18 and Corr.1, 21, 26, 27 and 28, A/C.5/1715/Rev.1, A/C.5/1730/Add.1, A/C.5/1737 and Corr.1)

Revised estimates under sections 1, 2, 3, 20, 21, 22, 25 and 26, and income sections 1 and 2 (A/10008/Add.28, A/C.5/1725)

8. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in its report (A/10008/Add.28), the Advisory Committee had recommended a total reduction of $1,218,400 in the revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1725). A summary of those recommendations could be found in paragraph 29 of the Advisory Committee's report.

9. The Advisory Committee had accepted without change the Secretary-General's requests under sections 20 and 21. The bulk of the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee related to sections 1, 22 and 26.

10. Under section 1, the Advisory Committee had been unable to accept the Secretary-General's request for 2 additional posts for the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs. On the basis of the initial estimates as already approved in first reading by the Fifth Committee, the Office would have a total of 15 posts in 1976-1977, including 2 Under-Secretaries-General, 1 D-2 and 2 D-1 posts. In the light of those facts, the Advisory Committee had not seen any justification for the requests for additional posts. In particular, the Advisory Committee indicated that the Secretary-General had not shown how requirements under the relevant section had changed in order to justify the requests.

11. Under section 22, the Secretary-General had submitted revised estimates totalling $1,516,400. The Advisory Committee had recommended a total reduction of $79,400. Of that amount, $57,400 related to the Secretary-General's request under section 22G for assistance towards the establishment and operation of a child day-care centre at Geneva. The Advisory Committee had been troubled by that request, for a number of reasons.

12. First, it had been concerned that a question of that nature should come before the General Assembly through the medium of revised estimates, since it was a new item of expenditure and did not strictly fall within the category of revised estimates. The Advisory Committee was of the view that its inclusion in the revised estimates at so late a date precluded detailed consideration by the General Assembly.

13. Second, the project referred to in the Secretary-General's report did not appear to have been formulated so as to provide for all the potential beneficiaries. The ILO, WHO and the United Nations Office at Geneva were not the only United Nations agencies located there, and the staff of other agencies had the same needs. Consequently, it was not clear how it would be possible to proceed on the basis of the participation of only two of the specialized agencies. The Advisory Committee felt that, if the possibility of the participation of other agencies had been explored, the objective of making the project self-financing might have been closer to realization.

14. Third, if the project was intended to be self-financing, it was reasonable to expect that it would have been formulated from the outset with that objective in mind. In his report, however, the Secretary-General referred to the "estimated operational deficit". If deficits were expected from the beginning, the project should not have been formulated.

15. Fourth, the Advisory Committee believed that, if the General Assembly decided to participate in any manner in such a project, its participation should not be limited to Geneva but should be extended to the staff of the regional commissions and those at Headquarters. Before endorsing such a request, the Assembly had a right to be informed of the potential number of other such claims for assistance from it. There was nothing in the Secretary-General's report to prevent the Geneva centre from declaring itself insolvent, even after receipt of the assistance requested.

16. Fifth, the project should not be viewed as an undertaking within the context of the International Women's Year. There should be no confusion of issues. The project should be designed to help parents, both men and women.

17. Finally, as stated in paragraph 14 of its report, the Advisory Committee believed that the area in question was one which could be examined by ICSC. Furthermore, the General Assembly would presumably wish to have the views of ICSC because the question had a direct relationship with the subject of conditions of service and the salary system, which were under review by that Commission.

18. Most of the remaining reductions in the revised estimates related to section 26, and were dealt with in paragraphs 22 to 26 of the Advisory Committee's report. With regard to the $300,000 requested by the Secretary-General for construction at ECA, the Advisory Committee had been informed that the building would not be ready for provisional acceptance by the United Nations until 1976 and that the final amount of $300,000 would not be payable until some time in 1977. Consequently, the Advisory Committee recommended that the request should be held in abeyance until 1976, when it could be considered by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

19. Information provided to the Advisory Committee indicated that only some $150,000 of the $756,000 requested in connexion with UNIDO's move to the Donaupark centre at Vienna would be required in 1976. The Advisory Committee had recommended an appropriation of that amount. The question of requirements in 1977 could be re-examined by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session in the context of such further decisions as it might take with regard to United Nations accommodation at Vienna.

20. The other reductions stemmed from the Advisory Committee's belief that, with economies in various sections,

the amounts requested could be slightly reduced without impairing the Secretary-General's ability to perform the tasks in question.

21. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that his delegation disapproved of the Advisory Committee's observations in paragraph 14 of its report on the child day-care centre at Geneva. However, in view of the reasons given for the rejection of the Secretary-General's request, his delegation would reluctantly accept that part of the report. It might be helpful if the Secretariat, when reporting in 1976 on the conditions of service of women in the Secretariat, referred to the problems related to the establishment of day-care centres in Geneva and New York and possible solutions. He wondered whether the Secretary-General himself could be expected to raise the question with ICSC; if not, his delegation would make a formal proposal on the subject.

22. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that his delegation also disagreed with the Advisory Committee's conclusions concerning the establishment of a day-care centre at Geneva. In the debate on the employment of women in the Secretariat, his delegation had called for the establishment of such centres in both New York and Geneva. It saw nothing discriminatory in the Organization's assisting with the establishment of such facilities, in the first instance, at one place or for only a few agencies, and it supported the establishment of child day-care centres to enable more women to pursue careers in the United Nations. It therefore supported the Australian proposal.

23. Mr. SETHI (India) agreed with the views expressed by the representatives of Australia and Sweden.

24. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to the question put by the representative of Australia, said that it was for the General Assembly to invite ICSC to examine the principle involved.

25. Mrs. ABELE-EMICH (Austria) agreed with the views expressed by the representatives of Australia and Sweden concerning paragraph 14 of the Advisory Committee's report. Her delegation felt that the United Nations had an obligation to provide staff members with day-care facilities. Only in that way could the recommendations concerning the employment of women be properly implemented.

26. With regard to paragraph 25 of the Advisory Committee's report, she pointed out that both paragraph 26.3 of the Secretary-General's report and the annex to that report referred only to the accommodation of UNIDO at Vienna.

27. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he had considerable sympathy with the observations contained in the Advisory Committee's report. He was sure that the Secretariat, notably through the Staff Office of CCAQ, would not fail to bring the matter to the attention of ICSC.

28. Referring to paragraphs 22.1 to 22.9 of the Secretary-General's report, he said that his delegation, as it had already stated, would like a clearer insight into the bodies dealing with co-ordination between the organizations of the United Nations system. In the course of the coming year, it would like to know how ACC and its subsidiary bodies functioned, what their activities were and how much those activities cost. He noted that the CCAQ Staff Office was largely financed by the United Nations, and recalled that he had already commented on the need to share the costs between the regular budget of the Organization and voluntary contributions. He was not convinced that the regular budget should bear one third of the operating costs of the Staff Office, and he requested that that point should be taken into consideration in the next budget. The Fifth Committee was the only forum in which the financial implications of those bodies within the United Nations system that were financed jointly by a number of organizations were regularly discussed. It should not be forgotten that the expenditure of $126,000, referred to in paragraph 22.9 of the Secretary-General's report, in fact represented an expenditure of $379,000 for the system as a whole.

29. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said his delegation entirely agreed with the Advisory Committee that the proposal regarding the establishment of a day-care centre at Geneva involved consideration of the basic principle of the common system, for which purpose ICSC had been established. The basis of the common system was that common principles should be applied to all duty stations, without preference. A decision to subsidize the Geneva day-care centre would be contrary to that concept. However, if the Committee wished the proposal to be considered by ICSC, his delegation would not object.

30. While his delegation was not opposed to adequate child-care services for women staff members, it believed that application of the self-help principle would not be unreasonable. Most working women with children were married, which meant that the family income consisted of two salaries and it was reasonable to assume that such couples could afford to pay the normal commercial price for day-care facilities. Working mothers who lived alone could then be subsidized by the better-off members of the staff through a system of graded fees, which would make it unnecessary for the United Nations to subsidize the centre's operations.

31. Mr. LINDSTRØM (Norway) supported the Secretary-General's proposal concerning the establishment of a child-care centre at Geneva. Such a measure would be a good start to the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions. If there was a desire to see more women working, appropriate day-care facilities must be provided. Further proposals of a similar nature should be initiated.

32. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that the Secretary-General's proposal for the provision of assistance for the establishment of child-care facilities at Geneva was valid. It was not often that the United Nations acted in a truly social spirit. However, he was compelled to agree with the Advisory Committee that the proposal had not been examined in sufficient detail, particularly since such an undertaking must fall within the framework of an over-all policy approved by the General Assembly. He could see only advantages in requesting ICSC to make a more thorough study of the proposal.

33. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) said that her delegation fully supported the proposal to establish a day-care centre at

Geneva. The amount of the proposed subsidy was very small compared to the money already raised by the Geneva-based staff. Since the proposal did not concern the entire United Nations system, the only reason for referring it to ICSC appeared to be to delay action on it. The proposal represented a concrete step in favour of female staff members at Geneva and provided an opportunity for delegations to follow up with action their statements at previous meetings in support of greater participation of women in the United Nations.

34. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia), speaking on behalf of the delegations of Austria and Sweden as well as his own, introduced a draft decision which read as follows:

> "The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it invite the International Civil Service Commission to study the question of assistance in the provision of day-care facilities for staff of the United Nations, taking into account the observations of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 14 of its report (A/10008/Add.28), and to make proposals thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session".

The Commission's study would embrace all United Nations duty stations.

35. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that, while his delegation was favourably disposed towards the Australian proposal, it had some reservations, inasmuch as the Advisory Committee was of the opinion that any action must come within the framework of an over-all policy adopted by the General Assembly after a review by ICSC.

36. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that his delegation concurred with the Advisory Committee and would be willing to agree to the proposal made by the representative of Australia. Nevertheless, he would draw attention to the danger of a proliferation of day-care centres throughout the United Nations system. It was therefore necessary for ICSC to consider the matter from the point of view of the over-all policy of the United Nations system. Moreover, it was all very well to speak about fairness towards women, but very few of the female staff in Geneva came from developing countries. He might feel obliged at the thirty-first session to make a formal request that the Committee should be informed precisely which staff members were participating in the undertaking.

37. Mrs. DE ZEA (Colombia) proposed that the Committee should adopt the proposal made by the Secretary-General in paragraph 22.24 of his report (A/C.5/1725). She had been very disconcerted to hear the Kenyan representative's comments regarding the "danger" of an extension of day-care centres throughout the system.

38. Mr. SETHI (India) said he did not agree with the representative of Kenya that the proposed establishment of a day-care centre at Geneva should be viewed as an exception. His delegation was not in the least concerned at the prospect of such centres at all United Nations duty stations; indeed, it could only rejoice at the idea of the United Nations system's setting an example in that field. Whatever decision the Committee took, it was essential that it should not be influenced by the fact that most of its members were men.

39. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) was willing to support the draft decision proposed by the representative of Australia, provided that ICSC was invited to "examine the need for", rather than "study assistance in", the provision of day-care facilities.

40. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation was astounded at the attempt by the Secretariat to ram through under the section entitled "Administration, management and general services", a proposal relating to staff subsidies, which, as the Advisory Committee had pointed out, properly fell within the framework of salaries, allowances and working conditions. While the matter might merit attention, it should be dealt with under the appropriate section. His delegation therefore supported the Australian proposal, provided that the problem was considered in the context of the question of salaries, allowances and working conditions. The tendency to give a narrow interpretation to the general decisions taken within the framework of the International Women's Year was improper. Those decisions related to women throughout the world, and particularly in developing countries, and his delegation sympathized with the comments made by the representative of Kenya.

41. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation could agree to the Australian proposal. However, it should be reworded to refer to "day-care facilities for children of the staff of the United Nations".

42. Mr. BAMBA (Upper Volta) said that the provision of day-care facilities seemed a logical sequel to the decision to increase the number of women in the Secretariat. However, the Advisory Committee was quite correct in wishing to place the matter within the context of the United Nations system as a whole. His delegation fully supported the Australian proposal, with the amendment proposed by the United Kingdom representative.

43. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the draft decision, accepted the amendment proposed by the representative of the Philippines. The sponsors could not accept the United Kingdom amendment, since they believed that the need for day-care facilities had already been established, and they urged the United Kingdom representative not to press his amendment. They would have no strong objection to the Soviet proposal that the study should take place within the context of the question of salaries, allowances and working conditions, on the understanding that the Committee still wanted a separate report on the question to be submitted to the General Assembly at the thirty-first session.

44. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) concurred with that interpretation of his amendment.

45. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that his delegation's amendment was crucial because, without it, the draft decision would prejudge the question of a subsidy before it had even been examined. It was unlikely that all staff members would need a subsidy. Accordingly, even if ICSC established that there was a need for day-care facilities, the

question of a subsidy from the budgets of organizations in the United Nations system would have to be considered separately.

46. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) moved the closure of the debate.

The motion was adopted.

47. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the United Kingdom amendment (see para. 39 above) to the draft decision.

48. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America), explaining his vote before the voting, said that his delegation would support the draft decision, with the amendment proposed by the United Kingdom. While recognizing that there might be a need for day-care facilities, his delegation did not agree that assistance from the budget was necessarily required or was necessarily the best approach.

The United Kingdom amendment was adopted by 45 votes to 16, with 29 abstentions.

49. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) said that, as amended, the draft decision read as follows:

> "The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it invite the International Civil Service Commission, in the context of the study on salary, allowances and working conditions, to examine the need for the provision of day-care facilities for children of the staff of the United Nations, taking into account the observations of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 14 of its report (A/10008/Add.28), and to make proposals thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session."

50. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said he wondered, in view of the fact that priorities had already been established for the work of ICSC, whether the Committee would not be burdening that Commission unduly by adopting the draft decision. Unless his delegation received assurances to the contrary, it would abstain from voting.

51. The CHAIRMAN replied that there was no way of providing such assurances at the current stage.

52. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that his delegation would cast an affirmative vote on the draft decision, as it had on the United Kingdom amendment. In its view, the United Nations system must be considered in its entirety. It should be clearly understood that his delegation had nothing against the proposal to facilitate working conditions for women but was simply against any selectivity in the matter.

The draft decision, as amended, was adopted by 91 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

53. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the Colombian proposal (see para. 37 above) that the appropriation requested by the Secretary-General under section 22G should be restored in the amount of $57,400.

54. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on a point of order, said that the decision just adopted by the Committee ruled out the possibility of voting on the Colombian proposal.

55. After a brief discussion in which Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta), Mr. SETHI (India), Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), the CHAIRMAN and Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) participated, the CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to signify by a vote whether it wished the Colombian proposal to be put to the vote.

The Committee decided by 51 votes to 17, with 20 abstentions, not to vote on the Colombian proposal.

56. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.28, para. 29) that an additional appropriation totaling $2,020,000 under sections 1, 2, 3, 20, 21, 22, 25 and 26 should be approved.

A total additional appropriation of $2,020,000 under sections 1, 2, 3, 20, 21, 22, 25 and 26 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved by 79 votes to 10, with 1 abstention.

57. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to the estimates under income sections 1 and 2 in the amounts of $45,000 and $220,000, respectively.

It was so decided.

58. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he had voted in favour of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee. It was his understanding that the questions he had raised earlier regarding the status, operations and activities of ACC and its subsidiary bodies, and the costs relating thereto, would be considered by the Secretary-General.

59. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) assured the representative of Belgium that the concerns which he had expressed would be given serious consideration by the Secretariat.

Revised estimates under section 1. International Fund for Agricultural Development (A/10008/Add.18 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1722)

60. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in his report (A/C.5/1722) the Secretary-General had submitted a request for additional funds in the amount of $111,000 under section 1 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. That amount was for conference servicing costs for the third session of the Meeting of Interested Countries on the Establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development. In paragraph 2 of the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/10008/Add.18 and Corr.1), it was recalled that the General Assembly, by its resolution 3348 (XXIX), had requested the Secretary-General to convene a meeting of interested countries to work out details for an International Fund for Agricultural Development.

61. The initial meetings had taken place in May and October 1975. The additional appropriation of $111,000 requested by the Secretary-General would be applied in the manner indicated in paragraph 4 of the Advisory Committee's report. As could be seen from that paragraph, provision was made for an expenditure of $72,000 for interpretation in five languages, including Arabic. However, as indicated in paragraph 6 of the report of the Advisory Committee, the General Assembly had yet to approve the inclusion of Arabic among the official and working languages of the Meeting of Interested Countries, and the related $20,000 should not have been included in the estimates.

62. The Fifth Committee, in considering a recommendation to the General Assembly, might wish to bear in mind that the Meeting of Interested Countries was an *ad hoc* working group. Accordingly, the Committee might consider whether it wished to apply the same kind of criteria as had been followed when it had decided to recommend the inclusion of Arabic as an official and working language of the World Food Council and whether it was necessary to include additional languages, given the limited number of participants in the Meeting.

63. In paragraph 7 of its report, the Advisory Committee called for economies in the areas of documentation, temporary assistance, overtime and night differential, which would lead to some savings in the estimates requested for those items. In paragraph 8 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of $42,000 in the estimates proposed by the Secretary-General, from $111,000 to $69,000. Should the General Assembly approve the use of Arabic as an official and working language of the Meeting of Interested Countries, the amount of $69,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee would have to be increased by $20,000, making a total of $89,000.

64. Mr. ALKAFF (Democratic Yemen) proposed that the Committee should recommend that the General Assembly should approve the use of Arabic as an official and working language of the Meeting of Interested Countries on the Establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development and that the appropriation for the third session of the Meeting should be increased by an amount of $20,000, for a total of $89,000. That proposal reflected the recommendations of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee in their respective reports.

65. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the proposal to include Arabic among the languages to be used at the Meeting of Interested Countries.

66. The revised estimates covered expenditures for servicing the Meeting over and above those which would arise from the inclusion of Arabic among the official and working languages. However, the General Assembly, in its resolution 3348 (XXIX), had not called for those expenditures. The Secretary-General's request was not in keeping with that resolution, and his delegation could not, therefore, support the request.

67. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should recommend that the General Assembly should approve the use of Arabic as an official and working language of the Meeting of Interested Countries on the Establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development and that the appropriation for the third session of the Meeting should be increased by an amount of $20,000, for a total of $89,000.

An additional appropriation of $89,000 under section 1 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved by 72 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

68. The CHAIRMAN said that the estimates just approved would appear under section 1 in second reading.

69. He suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision along the following lines:

"The General Assembly, having noted the financial implications indicated by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of its report (A/10008/Add.18 and Corr.1), authorizes the Meeting of Interested Countries on the Establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development to include Arabic as an official and working language."

It was so decided.

Revised estimates under section 4. United Nations cartographic conferences, 1976 and 1977 (A/10008/Add.27, A/C.5/1728)

70. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introduced the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008/Add.27) on the additional appropriation of $160,700 requested in his report (A/C.5/1728) by the Secretary-General under section 4 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 to cover the cost of printing externally the final reports of the four cartographic conferences planned for the coming biennium. In paragraph 2 of the report of the Advisory Committee a breakdown of the estimates was provided. Paragraph 3 indicated that the Advisory Committee had been informed that it had taken approximately three years to print the proceedings of earlier conferences.

71. The Advisory Committee recommended that the request for additional appropriations of $160,700 under section 4 should be deferred until 1977, when the General Assembly would be in a better position to determine whether the amount would be required. There would be nothing to prevent the Secretary-General from indicating to the Advisory Committee in 1976 that its belief that it would be premature to include in the programme budget for 1976-1977 the cost of printing the proceedings of the conferences to be held in that biennium had proved incorrect; the Advisory Committee could then examine the requirements in the context of the progress report to be submitted in 1976.

72. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that, first, it was unfortunate that an estimate had not been included in

section 4 for the printing of the final reports of the cartographic conferences to be held during the biennium, particularly since it had been known at the time of the formulation of section 4 that those conferences would be held in 1976 and 1977.

73. Secondly, with regard to the Advisory Committee's conclusion that it would be premature to include in the programme budget for 1976-1977 the cost of printing the proceedings of the conferences to be held in that biennium, he wondered whether it could not in fact already be foreseen that the Secretariat would have to submit the reports of the First United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas and the report of the Eighth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Far East to the Economic and Social Council at its spring session in 1977.

74. Thirdly, he felt that it would have been more appropriate to indicate in document A/C.5/1728, paragraph 1 *(c)*, that the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, which was scheduled to be held at Athens in 1977, might have been held at one of the established headquarters of the United Nations if the Greek Government had not invited the Conference to meet at Athens. His delegation wondered how General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV), paragraph 10, applied to that Conference; his Government was prepared to consult with the Secretary-General regarding the applicability of that provision.

75. Mrs. REMON (Panama) pointed out that an appropriation had been requested to cover the cost of printing the final report of the First United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas, which was to be held at Panama City in March 1976. She felt that the purpose of the Conference would not be well served if it was necessary to wait an unduly long time for its final report.

76. Mr. MILLS (Budget Division), replying to the representative of Greece, said that the Secretariat regretted the oversight as a result of which no estimate had been included in section 4 for the printing of the final reports of the four cartographic conferences to be held in 1976 and 1977.

77. With regard to the timing of the reports and their availability for printing, he said that, in the case of the First United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas, volume I (report of the Conference) would be available within three months after the Conference and volume II (technical papers) six months after the Conference. Accordingly, if sufficient funds were included in the printing budget, the two publications would be available for the spring 1977 session of the Economic and Social Council. In the case of the Eighth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Far East, volume I would be ready for printing by the end of 1976 and volume II by April or May 1977. He had been informed that only volume I of the reports of those conferences would be required for the spring 1977 session of the Economic and Social Council. As to the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, volume I of the report could be submitted for printing by November 1977. It was unlikely that funds would be required to print volumes I and II of the latter report in the biennium 1976-1977.

78. Replying to the third point raised by the representative of Greece, he agreed that the language of all the subparagraphs of paragraph 1 of document A/C.5/1728 could have been clearer. The intention had been to indicate that the conferences would have been held in the cities indicated in parentheses if invitations had not been issued to hold them elsewhere. The venue of a conference was normally the city in which the substantive body servicing the conference was located. Provision had originally been made to hold two of the conferences at Geneva because that had been preferable in view of the over-all pattern of conferences. With respect to the Conference to be held at Athens, under the terms of General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV), paragraph 10, the additional amounts required would have to be negotiated with the Secretariat in due course; they represented the extra costs—essentially for staff travel—of holding the Conference away from Headquarters.

79. With regard to the statement by the representative of Panama, he said that the Secretariat had indeed requested provision for the printing of the final report of the First Conference for the Americas in order that the documents should be available as soon as possible.

80. Mr. RINDORINDO (Indonesia) observed that the Advisory Committee's report indicated that it took approximately three years to publish reports of the type in question, whereas the representative of the Budget Division had indicated that no more than six months would be required in the case of the reports of the conferences to be held in 1976 and 1977. It would not take more than six months to a year to print such documents in developing countries, and he wondered what kind of printing facilities were used. If it was possible to print the documents in question by 1977, then the amount requested by the Secretary-General for that purpose should be included in the programme budget for the biennium.

81. Mr. HART (Australia) said he would like to know why it had taken three years to publish the reports mentioned in paragraph 3 of the Advisory Committee's report; the representative of the Budget Division had merely indicated that in future it would be possible to print reports in a shorter period of time.

82. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) said that, in principle, under the programme budgeting system, budget estimates for programmes, activities and projects which would be implemented in a given budgeting period should be prepared, and the required appropriations should be requested by the Secretary-General, at the beginning of that period. Supplementary appropriations should not be deferred to the second half of the budgeting period; the latter approach could be justified only in the case of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. He hoped that in the future the Advisory Committee would have time to consider that point.

83. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) agreed with the remarks made by the representative of Turkey.

84. Mr. MILLS (Budget Division) said he regretted that at the moment the Secretariat was not in a position to reply to the points raised by the representatives of Indonesia,

Australia and Turkey. It would endeavour to reply as soon as possible, if the Committee so desired.

85. Mr. FELLAH (Algeria) said that he was extremely puzzled by the Advisory Committee's decision not to recommend acceptance of the request for appropriations for printing and by the explanation which the representative of the Budget Division had given for the delay in printing the reports of earlier conferences. As a result of such delays, the information in the reports was likely to be out of date. He therefore requested clarification of the reasons for the delays.

86. Mr. MILLS (Budget Division) said that the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was scheduled for August 1977, and its report would be ready for submission in November 1977. Accordingly, the Secretary-General would not press for any provision to be made for the printing of the report of that Conference in the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. However, at least volume I of the reports of the Conference for the Americas and the Conference for Asia and the Far East would have to be printed.

87. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in view of the delay in printing the reports of cartographic conferences, a decision was not required at the current stage. He therefore supported the conclusions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee in its report.

88. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to take note of the Advisory Committee's report (A/10008/Add.27), in which no appropriation was recommended.

It was so decided.

89. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that his delegation objected to the fact that the Advisory Committee had not recommended an appropriation for the printing of the reports in question. As the representative of Turkey had aptly stated, the budget for the forthcoming biennium should cover all foreseen expenses which would be incurred during the biennium. Accordingly, it should provide for the printing of the conference reports, for it was now clear that all four of them could be printed during the biennium 1976-1977.

90. Mr. HART (Australia) said that his delegation had supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on the understanding that the Secretary-General would explain why it had not been possible for previous reports to be printed on time, so that the Committee could make an objective evaluation of the funds required.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

91. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) said that all the figures required for the second reading of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 could be found in document A/C.5/1737, and the Committee might wish to proceed to the second reading at its following meeting on the basis of that document.

92. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that document A/C.5/1737, paragraph 1, did not accurately reflect the decision taken by the Committee at its 1770th meeting.

93. The CHAIRMAN said that the necessary change would be made.

94. If there were no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to begin the second reading of the proposed programme budget at its next meeting on the basis of document A/C.5/1737.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

1773rd meeting

Tuesday, 16 December 1975, at 8.30 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1773

AGENDA ITEM 100

Pattern of conferences *(concluded)*:
(a)* Report of the Committee on Conferences *(concluded)*

Statement by the Chairman of the Group of 77

1. Mr. RAMAMONJISOA (Madagascar) said that he had not had an opportunity to make a statement when the Committee had considered its draft report on the pattern of conferences. As Chairman of the Group of 77, he had been asked to convey to the Committee the Group's wish that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the Department of Conference Services that it consider the possibility of allowing the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination to meet for four weeks to enable it to complete its task.

* Resumed from the 1770th meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 107

Financing of the United Nations Emergency Force and of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Secretary-General *(concluded)**

* Resumed from the 1770th meeting.

Statement by the Controller

2. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) drew the Committee's attention to the cost estimates for UNEF for the period from 25 October 1975 to 24 October 1976 inclusive contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/10350 and Corr.1). In paragraph 14, the Secretary-General indicated that those estimates did not provide for the costs of operation and maintenance of the additional aircraft and naval vessels which would be required. In a report submitted to the Security Council,[1] the Secretary-General had estimated those costs at $10 million. In paragraph 19 of its report (A/10378), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions stated that it had been informed that, if provision for those aircraft and vessels was to be made in the budget of UNEF and UNDOF, there would be need for an additional appropriation of approximately $10 million in 1975-1976. At the current stage, the Secretary-General was reasonably confident that sizable voluntary contributions of equipment or cash would be made to meet those unbudgeted needs. However, since it was unlikely that the full facts would be known in time to be presented to the General Assembly at the current session, no additional estimates were being submitted and the Secretary-General might be required to incur expenses for that purpose. He must therefore reserve the right to submit supplementary estimates in due course if the necessary voluntary contributions were not forthcoming.

AGENDA ITEM 95

Programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975: report of the Secretary-General *(continued) (A/10035 and Add.1, A/10499, A/C.5/1710, A/C.5/1732)**

3. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew attention to paragraph 2 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/10499) in which it was stated that the Committee had been prevented by pressure of work from studying the Secretary-General's report (A/10035/Add.1) on programme evaluation for the biennium 1974-1975. However, that document should provide other bodies, particularly the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Economic and Social Council, with the kind of information which they could use in formulating guidelines as to how the Secretariat should approach the problem of programme evaluation. Although the Advisory Committee did not feel that programme evaluation fell within its competence to any great extent, it intended, as stated in paragraph 2, to take it into account in the context of its programme of work for 1976. It was to be hoped that CPC and the Economic and Social Council would be able to study the document submitted by the Secretary-General so that they could offer him the necessary guidance. He drew attention to the plea contained in paragraph 3.

4. Turning to the performance report (A/10035), he said that the Secretary-General had indicated that the appropriation of $606,033,000 for the biennium 1974-1975 had proved insufficient and that a supplementary amount of $6,517,000 would be required for that period. However, since income would be $409,000 less than the approved estimate, the estimated supplementary requirement would be $6,926,000. In paragraph 16 of the Advisory Committee's report it was indicated that estimated supplementary requirements of $14,078,300 were partly offset by under-expenditures totalling $7,657,300. The remaining $6,421,000, together with the additional $96,000 requested by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1710) under section 12 and the $409,000 shortfall in income made up the estimated supplementary requirement of $6,926,000 to which he had referred earlier. The Advisory Committee hoped that the Secretary-General would take its observations into account in his preparation of future performance reports. He drew attention to paragraph 3, of the Advisory Committee's report, in which it was stated that document A/10035 often failed to provide a link between programme changes in the biennium and the related proposed revisions to the appropriations. Examples of that failure were given in paragraphs 4 and 5. Paragraphs 10, 12, 15 and 17 referred to the manner of presentation of the performance report, and he hoped that the Secretary-General would take the points made into account in the future.

5. As stated in paragraph 6, the Advisory Committee agreed with the recommendation (A/10035, para. 7) that future performance reports concentrate on outputs and on a discussion of the causes of differences between planned and actual outputs, and that evaluation of benefits be excluded, on the understanding, however, that the report would also provide links between output changes and the related revisions to budgetary requirements. On the basis of those observations, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of total revised estimates of $612,550,000 gross.

6. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation had unfortunately not had time to study document A/10035/Add.1 in full. However, it had read enough to conclude that it was a stimulating study which deserved attention. It therefore shared the view of the Advisory Committee expressed in paragraph 2 of its report, and hoped that the study on programme evaluation would not be forgotten but would be given the attention it deserved by bodies such as CPC and the Advisory Committee.

7. Mr. RHODIUS (Netherlands) said that the most salient conclusion to be drawn from document A/10035/Add.1 was probably that the evaluation capacity of the organs in the United Nations system should be strengthened. The same conclusion had been reached by many bodies, most recently the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery and the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System. The topic might perhaps be discussed in the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System and by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session under the item on the Joint Inspection Unit. A report along the same lines as document A/10035/Add.1 might help the discussions and the decision-making.

8. Another point which emerged from the report was that the extent to which programmes were reviewed and

1 *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirtieth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1975*, document S/11849, para. 24.

* Resumed from the 1730th meeting.

evaluated varied from programme to programme. Consideration should be given to simplification and streamlining in some areas and the introduction of review procedures in others. The Secretary-General had concentrated on the evaluation function of intergovernmental organs and expert bodies; but he and the Secretariat were responsible for bringing to the attention of those bodies certain facts which might be of interest to them. The Secretary-General should play an active role and make appropriate recommendations, for example with respect to ineffective and/or outdated programmes. A constructive dialogue between the executive and legislative branches of the United Nations system would certainly lead to a strengthening of evaluation capacity.

9. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that it would be difficult and sometimes even impossible to introduce the techniques of cost/benefit and cost/effectiveness analysis in the new system. However, an attempt to do so could be both useful and rewarding. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's view that he should make further efforts to adapt existing evaluation techniques to the peculiarities of the United Nations system.

10. In conclusion, his delegation welcomed the report and hoped that similar reports could be submitted by the Secretary-General to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination.

11. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) recalled that his delegation had spoken at length on the subject of programme evaluation earlier in the current session and at the previous session of the General Assembly. He would therefore merely endorse the statements made by the representatives of France and the Netherlands.

12. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) asked whether the last sentence of paragraph 2 of the Advisory Committee's report required any action by the Fifth Committee or whether the addendum on programme evaluation (A/10035/Add.1) would automatically be brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary organs.

13. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that it was his understanding that the Secretary-General would include the addendum on programme evaluation in the documentation before CPC. The Advisory Committee would take into account the comments of the latter on that document when considering it in the context of its work for 1976.

14. Mr. SETHI (India) associated his delegation with the remarks made by previous speakers on paragraph 2 of the Advisory Committee's report and endorsed the comments made on paragraph 6 of that document. In his delegation's view, greater stress should be placed on the ultimate objectives and on output rather than on the means and services to be used. Budgetary appropriations should be made in the light of those objectives, and efforts should be made to evaluate the extent to which funds were used to good effect. Such an analysis could also be instrumental in establishing a link between the orientation and objectives of the programme, the volume of work involved and the budgetary appropriations required.

15. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that there was unfortunately not sufficient time to consider document A/10035 in depth. However, he wished to raise two questions regarding income section 3, on revenue-producing activities. Referring to the table in paragraph 3.6, he asked why the revenue from ticket sales for the garage in 1974 showed an increase of $3,000 compared with 1973 when only four more cars had parked there during the year. Furthermore, he would like some explanation of the fact that the revenue from ticket sales for 1974 was the same as for 1975 although the number of cars was not the same. Secondly, he pointed out that, according to paragraph 3.10, the average guide months had not decreased since 1973 in the same proportion as the number of visitors to the United Nations.

16. Referring to the report of the Advisory Committee, he asked what non-convertible currencies the United Nations had to hand.

17. Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) said that the apparent discrepancies in the figures given in the table in paragraph 3.6 concerning garage operations arose from the differences in the charges for day and night parking. Therefore, the volume of revenue and the number of cars did not necessarily correspond exactly. The figure for revenue from ticket sales for 1975 was the same as that for 1974, because it was an estimate and, since the number of cars was estimated to increase by only four, no change had been made in the estimate of income.

18. With reference to paragraph 3.10, on guided tours at Headquarters, he pointed out that the average guide months in 1974 had in fact decreased more than the number of visits. A study on the question had been implemented in 1973 and 1974 and the staff had been reduced. However, it was true that the estimates for 1975 showed that the average guide months had been reduced less than the number of estimated visitors. It was in fact impossible to reduce the number of guides in exact proportion to the reduction in the number of visitors, because a minimum of public services for the different languages must be maintained even though fewer visitors came to the United Nations. That situation would continue as long as the number of visitors continued to decline.

19. In answer to the question raised by the representative of Algeria concerning non-convertible currency, he said that it was his understanding that the currency concerned was the rouble or the currencies of the socialist countries. He was not certain whether the term "non-convertible" was strictly correct, since those currencies were convertible to a certain extent in specific geographical areas.

20. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) thanked the Director of the Budget Division for that information and asked why, if the currencies were not in fact non-convertible, they were referred to as such. It would be more accurate to state that they could be used in certain areas.

21. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) agreed with previous speakers that the report on programme evaluation was valuable. The conclusion his delegation drew from it was that, in the vast majority of cases, evaluation must be a process which proceeded by value judgement and not by exact measurement. His delegation therefore disagreed with the statement in paragraph 5 of document A/10035 that document A/10035/Add.1 gave an extended analysis of costs and benefits for selected activities. It gave an analysis of costs and a description of benefits in a qualitative, not a quantitative, manner. However there were occasions when a true cost/benefit analysis, or even a post-investment appraisal, could have been undertaken, such as the project involving a survey of geothermal resources in El Salvador referred to in paragraphs 108 to 116 of the addendum. A certain amount of quantitative analysis had been carried out, but there was no post-investment appraisal calculating the exact return on the investment; where possible, that should be done. However, most United Nations projects could not be measured exactly, and decisions on priorities must rest on value judgements which, in his delegation's view, must be taken by legislative bodies, other than the Fifth Committee, which were responsible for policies. His delegation found the report of the Secretary-General on the revised estimates for 1974-1975 satisfactory and would vote in favour of the estimates.

22. Mr. KIVANÇ (Turkey) regretted that the Committee did not have time to consider document A/10035/Add.1 and hoped that the General Assembly could review the subject at its thirty-first session and answer the three questions raised in paragraph 3.

23. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the revised estimates for the biennium 1974-1975 (A/10035, annex I), amounting to $612,454,000, plus a supplementary appropriation of $96,000 requested by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1710 for section 12.

24. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) suggested that the Committee vote on the total expenditures, rather than considering them section by section.

It was so decided.

A total revised appropriation of $612,550,000 for the biennium 1974-1975 was approved by 70 votes to 9.

25. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had voted against the total revised appropriation because it was opposed in principle to the proposed additional expenditure to cover inflation and changes in rates of exchange.

26. That question of principle had been decided by the General Assembly in resolution 2150 (XXI) of 4 November 1966, in which it had approved the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies. They included a recommendation that increases in expenditure due to inflation should be financed by savings, reassessment of priorities, redeployment of resources and other adjustments within the budget.

The total revised income estimate of $100,110,000 for the biennium 1974-1975 was approved.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(continued)* (for the previous documentation, see the 1759th meeting; A/10008/Add.14, 16, 17, 18 and Corr.1, 21, 26, 27 and 28, A/C.5/1715/Rev.1, A/C.5/1730/Add.1, A/C.5/1737 and Corr.1)

Revised estimates of expenditure and income: rates of inflation and rates of currency exchange (A/C.5/1737 and Corr.1)

27. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the Secretary-General's final substantive report (A/C.5/1737 and Corr.1), which contained the revised estimates of expenditure and income for 1976-1977, incorporating changes in the rates of inflation and rates of currency exchange.

28. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that a new element had been introduced in the report by the Secretary-General: as indicated in paragraph 5, the revised estimates had been based on adjusted assumptions as to the average annual rates of inflation during the biennium. In addition, as indicated in paragraph 6, the revised estimates had been based on revised rates of exchange for various office locations. The Advisory Committee had taken note of those changes, and recommended approval of the revised estimates of expenditure and income set forth in the Secretary-General's report.

29. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) recalled that, in a decision adopted by the Fifth Committee at its 1770th meeting (*ibid.*, para. 1), the Secretary-General had been requested to base his assumptions with regard to the rates of inflation on the latest available forecasts. In that connexion, he wondered whether the Secretary-General could confirm that he could not improve on his forecast for 1977 by reducing the assumed rates of inflation for 1977 given in paragraph 5.

30. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the forecast had been based on the most recent data available, which indicated that the estimated rates of inflation could be reduced by two percentage points for 1976. Even very conservative forecasts indicated that in 1977 the rate of inflation might be two percentage points higher than in 1976. In general, a decrease in the rates of inflation, indicating some degree of recession, was followed by further inflation as soon as the recession period was over.

31. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that his delegation would vote in favour of the revised estimates of the Secretary-General based on the revised inflation rates as set forth in paragraph 5 of his report. The Controller's estimates were very realistic, being based on current forecasts resulting from research carried out by many firms and economists.

32. At the same time, he wished to introduce a note of caution: an optimistic assumption helped in the recovery itself, and was therefore not necessarily optimistic. In the case of a pessimistic assumption, the reverse might be true.

33. He also wished to add that, given excellent conditions, an "institutional" inflation rate of 5 per cent must be expected as an absolute minimum. He also wished to point out that the forecast of a 6 per cent inflation rate was based on the assumption of good harvests in the major grain-producing areas of the world; in the absence of such harvests, the rate might be higher. The Committee should therefore bear in mind the possibility that the Secretary-General's estimates might be higher in the following year.

34. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation could accept the Controller's assumptions with regard to the expected rates of inflation. On the other hand, his delegation would have reservations if the rates concerned were regarded as fixed rates, since they depended mostly on supply and demand in the international market, which could not be forecast for the biennium 1976-1977. He agreed with the representative of Pakistan that the Committee should be prepared to accept a higher rate of inflation, should there be a change in demand.

Second reading of individual sections of the programme budget

35. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, since the Committee would be proceeding to the second reading of the programme budget, it should take note of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1737 and Corr.1) and the comments made orally by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee concerning an estimated reduction of $12,815,000 in respect of inflation and an increase of $22,899,500 in respect of exchange rates, resulting in a net increase of $10,084,500 in expenditure. The income estimates would be increased by $2,240,700 in respect of rates of exchange and reduced by $1,540,400 in respect of inflation, resulting in a net increase of $700,300.

It was so decided.

36. Mr. AKASHI (Japan), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that, in the course of the first reading, his delegation had expressed its views on various sections of the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. Its position in the second reading was subject to the comments and observations which it had expressed on various occasions, particularly in its general statement on the proposed programme budget and in its statements on sections 3, 5A, 7, 12, 14, 21, 22 and 23.

37. In the light of the reservations which he had expressed on section 14, concerning international narcotics control, his delegation would abstain in the vote on that section. However, it would vote in favour of the proposed programme budget as a whole.

38. Mr. HSING Sung-yi (China), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that his delegation endorsed all expenses which were in conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and conducive to the defence of national independence and sovereignty, to the struggle against colonialism, imperialism and hegemonism and to the establishment of the new international economic order and the promotion of the economic development of the third world. In its efforts to achieve equal rights and to break super-Power monopoly and control, it was justifiable for the third world to demand an adequate readjustment of the United Nations structure and an appropriate increase in staff members from the third world countries so as to broaden their role in the United Nations.

39. In recent years, however, United Nations budget expenditure had been increasing at an alarming rate. Between 1971 and 1974, expenditure had increased over 70 per cent. Furthermore, the budget estimates for the biennium 1976-1977 represented an increase of 22.7 per cent over the revised appropriations for the biennium 1974-1975, and a 38.6 per cent increase over the initial budget estimates.

40. While one of the reasons for such an increase was the inflation in the capitalist world, the overlapping of departments, the empire building, overstaffing, extravagance, waste, inefficiency and bureaucracy constituted serious problems for the United Nations. The current number of staff paid out of the regular budget was already 50 per cent more than the total for 1971. The additional posts requested by the Secretary-General for the biennium 1976-1977 would bring the total number of staff to 10,412, or 63 per cent more than the total for 1971.

41. Such a huge increase in budget expenditure and staff was unreasonable and hampered efficiency. During the current session, many representatives had put forward a number of useful proposals, and some unreasonable expenses and unnecessary additional personnel had been eliminated. Such efforts were praiseworthy, but had failed to solve the serious underlying problems mentioned.

42. In his delegation's opinion, the United Nations should economize in its expenditure, simplify its administration and reduce its personnel as far as possible, so that the existing manpower and material resources could be put to the fullest use. Furthermore, it was imperative to avoid overlapping departments and the creation of unnecessary posts; otherwise, the Secretariat would become a heavy burden for Member States.

43. His delegation had noted that the expenditure for the United Nations bond issue was still included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977. As was known to all, that expenditure was the result of United Nations interference in the Middle East and in the internal affairs of the Congo. His delegation had stated on many occasions that it would never share such expenditure, and demanded its deletion from the budget.

44. His delegation attached importance to the United Nations budget. Since the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China, it had paid in good time all the contributions due from it. However, in view of the failure to handle and solve properly the serious problems to which he had referred, his delegation would not participate in the vote on the grand total of budget appropriations.

45. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to proceed to a second reading of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 on the basis of the revised estimates of expenditure and income in document A/C.5/1737 and Corr.1.

EXPENDITURE SECTIONS

SECTION 1. OVER-ALL POLICY-MAKING, DIRECTION AND CO-ORDINATION

An appropriation of $20,674,800 under section 1 was approved in second reading by 70 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

SECTION 2. POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS; PEACE-KEEPING ACTIVITIES

An appropriation of $41,730,600 under section 2 was approved in second reading by 78 votes to none.

SECTION 3. POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TRUSTEESHIP AND DECOLONIZATION ACTIVITIES

An appropriation of $8,057,000 under section 3 was approved in second reading by 77 votes to 1.

SECTION 4. POLICY-MAKING ORGANS (ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES)

An appropriation of $1,816,200 under section 4 was approved in second reading by 72 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

SECTION 5A. DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

An appropriation of $41,728,100 under section 5A was approved in second reading by 71 votes to 8, with 2 abstentions.

46. Mr. NSUBUGA (Uganda) said that, if the Committee had had more time to consider the matter, he would have preferred a thorough examination of the ways in which the programmes were likely to be affected by changes in inflation rates and currency exchange rates. Perhaps it would have been possible to rearrange the priorities within the whole framework of the budget estimates.

47. The CHAIRMAN replied that the second reading incorporated the estimates considered in first reading and approved by the Committee, together with revised estimates arising out of decisions taken by other Main Committees.

SECTION 5B. INFORMATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE ON TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS

An appropriation of $1,215,500 under section 5B was approved in second reading by 80 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

SECTION 6. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

48. Mr. OCOKOLJIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation, which had frequently expressed its views concerning the significant role played by the regional commissions, wished to stress the need to devote more attention, when considering the sections of the programme budget dealing with their activities, to the aspirations and preoccupations of countries members of those commissions. His delegation regretted that, when considering section 6 in first reading, at the 1718th meeting, the Fifth Committee had not adopted the Secretary-General's proposal aimed at enabling ECE to assume very important tasks for the further development of regional economic co-operation, in keeping with the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975.

49. His delegation shared the concern of the majority of countries in the European region that ECE might not be able, on the basis of the appropriated resources, to carry out its important tasks—a concern also expressed by the Director of the Budget Division with regard to the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. His delegation therefore proposed that the Fifth Committee's report on section 6 of the programme budget should include a paragraph authorizing the Secretary-General to submit, if need be, to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session a request for supplementary appropriations.

50. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) asked whether the total revised estimate in fact amounted to over $14 million for ECE.

51. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) replied that he believed that ECE had available to it more than the amount indicated in the Advisory Committee's report, since the staff needed for conference servicing of ECE was included in the permanent establishment of the United Nations Office at Geneva.

52. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed that, since the Committee was in the process of voting, the representative of Yugoslavia might raise the matter again during the consideration of the draft report at the following meeting.

It was so decided.

An appropriation of $14,855,800 under section 6 was approved in second reading by 78 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

53. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on section 6 because it believed that the revised appropriation indicated only a portion of the resources at the disposal of ECE. That Commission enjoyed a very high growth rate and functioned on behalf of a large number of affluent States. The resources made available to it must be stabilized.

54. In the light of the proposal made by the representative of Yugoslavia, his delegation wished to state its opinion

that it was inadvisable to make arrangements for further appropriations in 1976.

55. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that in fact ECE was involved in activities which benefited the world as a whole, such as the trade facilitation studies currently being made available to UNCTAD. His delegation had voted in favour of the appropriation.

SECTION 7. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

An appropriation of $15,478,900 under section 7 was approved in second reading by 72 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

SECTION 8. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

An appropriation of $17,979,300 under section 8 was approved in second reading by 73 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

SECTION 9. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

An appropriation of $18,243,000 under section 9 was approved in second reading by 73 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

SECTION 10. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

An appropriation of $8,674,800 under section 10 was approved in second reading by 72 votes to 1, with 9 abstentions.

SECTION 11. UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

An appropriation of $45,211,900 under section 11 was approved in second reading by 73 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

SECTION 12. UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

An appropriation of $45,157,000 under section 12 was approved in second reading by 73 votes to 8, with 1 abstention.

SECTION 13. UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

An appropriation of $7,080,500 under section 13 was approved in second reading by 73 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

SECTION 14. INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL

An appropriation of $4,317,100 under section 14 was approved in second reading by 71 votes to none, with 10 abstentions.

SECTION 15. REGULAR PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

An appropriation of $20,092,900 under section 15 was approved in second reading by 69 votes to 9, with 2 abstentions.

56. Mr. TALIEH (Iran) said that his delegation had intended to vote in favour of the appropriation under section 15.

SECTION 16. OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

An appropriation of $15,509,100 under section 16 was approved in second reading by 73 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

SECTION 17. OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR

An appropriation of $1,563,000 under section 17 was approved in second reading by 74 votes to 8.

SECTION 18. HUMAN RIGHTS

57. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America), explaining his vote before the vote, said that the United States had always firmly supported all aspects of the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination—an important Programme on which all Members of the United Nations had been able to agree. That was no longer the case. Certain delegations, spurred by motivations entirely extraneous to the effort to eliminate racial discrimination, had succeeded in making it impossible for the United States of America and other countries to continue to support that important Programme. His delegation had stated in the Third Committee that, if the Programme were changed to include zionism as a form of racism, the United States would not support the Programme in the future. His Government would no longer support the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Consequently, his delegation would vote against the appropriation under section 18, which included that Programme, and strongly urged other delegations which shared its view on that fundamental issue to do likewise.

58. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy), speaking on behalf of the countries in the European Economic Community, said that the nine countries had voted in favour of the appropriation under section 18 in first reading. That vote was consistent with their support for human rights. Subsequent developments, however, had brought about a change in their attitude, as had been explained in the appropriate committees. Consequently, the members of that Community would abstain in the vote on the appropriation under section 18.

59. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that, on the occasion of the first reading of section 18, his delegation had affirmed its opposition to racial discrimination and stressed the need for financial support for the human rights programme. However, since the General Assembly had described zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination, his Government's

position had changed. Sweden totally rejected the idea that zionism was a form of racism and was unable to vote in favour of the appropriation under section 18.

60. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that, had the General Assembly resolution determining that zionism was a form of racism and racial discrimination been adopted at the time of the first reading, his delegation would have advocated an increase in the appropriation under section 18 with a view to implementing the resolution. He requested a recorded vote on section 18.

61. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt) associated his delegation with the views expressed by the representative of Algeria.

62. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that his delegation had supported the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination as well as the General Assembly resolution determining zionism to be a form of racism. Nevertheless, section 18 included subsections containing unwarranted expenditures and excessively high appropriations which his delegation could not endorse. Accordingly, it would abstain in the vote on that section.

63. Mr. WOLDE-AREGAY (Ethiopia) said that his delegation maintained the position it had taken in the Third Committee with regard to section 18.

64. Replying to a question put by Mrs. BASTOS SANDIFER (Portugal), Mr. LAVAU (Director of the Budget Division) explained that the item for the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, since deleted, had been included under section 18 because the $8,000 had originally been provided for travel expenses in connexion with the session of the Commission on Human Rights. However, since it had later been decided that the Conference on the Law of the Sea should meet in New York, the Commission's session would take place at Geneva.

65. Mr. BASSAM (United Arab Emirates) requested separate recorded votes on headings (b) and (f) of section 18 (see A/C.5/1737 and Corr.1, annex).

At the request of the representative of the United Arab Emirates, a recorded vote was taken on heading (b) (Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination).

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Egypt, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire.

Against: Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Romania, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

An appropriation of $11,100 under heading (b) was approved in second reading by 57 votes to 2, with 18 abstentions.

At the request of the representative of the United Arab Emirates, a recorded vote was taken on heading (f) (Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories).

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Egypt, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire.

Against: Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Romania, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

An appropriation of $98,300 under heading (f) was approved in second reading by 60 votes to 2, with 17 abstentions.

At the request of the representatives of Algeria and the United Arab Emirates, a recorded vote was taken on section 18 as a whole.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Burma, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire.

Against: Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Denmark, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany (Federal Republic

of), Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

An appropriation of $5,943,600 under section 18 was approved in second reading by 57 votes to 2, with 21 abstentions.

SECTION 19. INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

An appropriation of $5,229,100 under section 19 was approved in second reading by 72 votes to 8, with 1 abstention.

SECTION 20. LEGAL ACTIVITIES

An appropriation of $7,866,500 under section 20 was approved in second reading by 73 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

SECTION 21. PUBLIC INFORMATION

An appropriation of $30,619,400 under section 21 was approved in second reading by 70 votes to 1, with 10 abstentions.

SECTION 22. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL SERVICES

An appropriation of $128,534,400 under section 22 was approved in second reading by 70 votes to 8, with 2 abstentions.

66. Mr. KUMBU (Zaire) said that his delegation's affirmative vote on the appropriation under section 22 had not registered on the machine.

SECTION 23. CONFERENCE AND LIBRARY SERVICES

An appropriation of $107,247,700 under section 23 was approved in second reading by 70 votes to 9, with 2 abstentions.

67. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote because it felt that the appropriation could have been substantially reduced.

SECTION 24. UNITED NATIONS BOND ISSUE

An appropriation of $17,297,000 under section 24 was approved in second reading by 65 votes to 13, with 2 abstentions.

SECTION 25. STAFF ASSESSMENT

68. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve without objection the appropriation of $99,973,100 under section 25.

It was so decided.

SECTION 26. CONSTRUCTION, ALTERATION, IMPROVEMENT AND MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF PREMISES

An appropriation of $13,717,500 under section 26 was approved in second reading by 71 votes to 8, with 1 abstention.

TOTAL ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE

69. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said that his delegation had sought to be discriminating in its analysis of the 1976-1977 programme budget. As tempted as it might have been to oppose every section because of its conviction that further economizing was possible and necessary, it had not done so. Where, in its view, programmes were important and reasonable efforts had been made to trim the budget, it had cast an affirmative vote. In those sections where it had significant doubts about programme content or the standards of economy and efficiency applied, it had abstained. Finally, in four sections where matters of important principle were involved or there appeared to be excessive padding, it had cast a negative vote.

70. There were several reasons why his delegation could not vote in favour of the programme budget as a whole. First, it could not ignore the fact that $746 million, compared to the initial figure of $540 million for the 1974-1975 budget, represented an extraordinary increase at a time of world-wide austerity at every governmental level, from municipalities to national governments. His delegation saw very little evidence that the need for retrenchment was fully appreciated within the Secretariat. Secondly, it did not accept the premise that projected additional costs for inflation and currency fluctuations had to be met entirely by additional appropriations. The United Nations should react to those developments by looking for savings, deferring non-essential expenditures and establishing strict priorities, rather than by assuming that the money would always be forthcoming to cover the entire extra cost. In any case, his delegation was strongly opposed to the concept of budgeting for inflation more than a year ahead. It was hard enough to estimate reliably the probable inflation rate 12 months ahead. The imponderables became still more numerous in the subsequent 12-month period, and the United Nations method of handling the inflation problem threatened to remove all incentive for the Secretary-General to economize.

71. The bloated nature of the programme budget before the Fifth Committee could perhaps be seen most clearly in terms of the number of new posts which would be authorized. The revised estimates once again had raised that figure until it was in excess of 300, in addition to which 200 posts had been converted from temporary to permanent and 100 posts transferred to the permanent establishment for Arabic language services. As the representative of Italy had stated, in spite of economic difficulties and growing unemployment in many Member States, the international bureaucracy proceeded unperturbed on the familiar path of swelling its ranks. Adding staff was seldom a means of solving problems. An improvement in the quality and effectiveness of programmes could unquestionably be obtained without additional staff resources

through increased productivity and improved management. Most important, his delegation still awaited definitive action by the Secretary-General to weed out obsolete and unnecessary programmes and to redeploy the human resources released to new or expanding priority activities.

72. While the Fifth Committee had properly devoted considerable attention to the problem of excessive documentation, so that the Secretariat would have the licence to begin to ease the load of meeting records, the over-all magnitude of documentation and related conference servicing workload was still staggering. It was magnified by the potential further proliferation of official languages. His delegation was more convinced than ever of the need to place the cost of language utilization on a user basis: every country should pay its proportionate share of the cost of whatever language or languages it chose to use in its participation in the United Nations system. The financial burden, to say nothing of the administrative difficulties of the existing arrangement, were excessive and potentially overwhelming.

73. His delegation was surprised that such a large programme budget had been submitted to the Fifth Committee by the Secretary-General in the same year that he had drawn attention to the extraordinarily grave financial situation of the United Nations. The United States had always met its financial obligations to the Organization. However, the fact that some Member States had not paid their assessments in accordance with their Charter obligations should prompt the Secretary-General to be more prudent in formulating his budget proposals.

74. For the reasons stated, his delegation had given long and serious consideration to the option of casting a negative vote on the Secretary-General's programme budget proposals for 1976-1977 as a whole. However, it had cast a negative vote on only a few of the individual sections. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee had, for the most part, made an effective and conscientious review of the programme budget and had in most cases received firm support from the Fifth Committee. That factor, coupled with the willingness of the Secretary-General to scale down his inflation estimates in the light of new facts, had led his delegation to decide to abstain in the vote on the proposed programme budget as a whole.

75. Miss FORCIGNANO (Italy), speaking on behalf of the nine members of the European Economic Community, said that all those countries would vote in favour of the total estimates of expenditure, as revised. Their common position would be explained at a subsequent plenary meeting of the General Assembly.

At the request of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a recorded vote was taken on the total estimates of expenditure.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire.

Against: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Abstaining: Cuba, Romania, United States of America.

A total budget appropriation of $745,813,800 for the biennium 1976-1977 was approved in second reading by 71 votes to 8, with 3 abstentions.

76. Mr. SERRANO AVILA (Cuba) said that his delegation had not participated in the votes on the various sections and had abstained in the vote on the total because the measures to deal with inflation and currency instability had not been submitted separately. His delegation did not consider that they should form part of the budget.

INCOME SECTIONS

77. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the income estimates, amounting to a total of $118,292,300, should be approved without objection.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 106

United Nations pension system *(concluded)*:*

(a)* Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board *(concluded)*;

(b)* Reports of the Secretary-General *(concluded)*

Letter from the Chairman of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board to the Secretary-General (A/C.5/L.1295)

78. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) suggested that the Committee should take note of the letter from the Chairman of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/C.5/L.1295), which had just been circulated in conformity with a decision taken by the General Assembly. The document showed that the membership of the Board did not represent the United Nations as a whole. Although there was a total of 52 members and alternates, only 7 developing countries were represented. In contrast, there were 12 members and alternates from the United States and 6 from the United Kingdom. The procedure which had led to those results should be reviewed, since it was within the power of the Secretary-General to try to remedy that geographical injustice. Of the members or alternates representing the Secretary-General himself, 1 was from the Federal Republic of Germany, 2 were from the United States and 1 was from Israel. The Soviet delegation had been quite justified in requesting that information, since it

* Resumed from the 1771st meeting.

showed that something was very amiss in the selection procedures. Perhaps the Fifth Committee, which had had a lengthy debate on the pension system, should take more care in future to ensure that there was greater geographical balance in the Board. He requested the Secretariat to provide further information on the procedure by which the members and alternates were selected.

79. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) pointed out that the plenary had already concluded its consideration of the pension system for the current session. He wondered, therefore, whether the debate should be reopened.

80. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) agreed with the representative of New Zealand and did not consider it appropriate to take up the question again. However, in view of what the representative of Algeria had said, he himself wanted to raise two points. He had been surprised to see document A/C.5/L.1295 circulated to the Committee and felt that the General Assembly decision had not in fact called for the submission of such a document at the current time. In addition, he disagreed whole-heartedly with the attempt by the Algerian representative to politicize a non-political issue. The Pension Fund belonged to those who participated in it, United Nations staff members. The latter could elect anyone they wanted to represent them. That was a freedom of choice which his delegation would never want to deny to the participants of the Fund.

81. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he did not agree with the United States representative that document A/C.5/L.1295 should not have been submitted. It was a very necessary document since the decision adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session and reaffirmed at the current session had not yet been implemented. He hoped that in future the Board would comply with the decisions of the General Assembly and present clear information on its membership, so that the Fifth Committee would be able to ascertain whether the membership of the Board properly reflected the membership of the United Nations. The Board of the Joint Staff Pension Fund was a part of the United Nations structure, was designed to serve the international staff, and was financed from the regular budget. It was therefore anomalous to maintain that the Fifth Committee should have no say in its membership, which was heavily slanted in favour of one geographical group. He supported the view of the Algerian representative that the Secretary-General should take measures together with the specialized agencies to achieve a more balanced representation. The Board belonged not to one group of countries but to the United Nations as a whole.

82. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that, since the United States representative had reacted so violently to his statement, his remarks had perhaps hit home. He was not challenging the election of members, but stressed that the Secretary-General did not have the right to appoint representatives from the developed countries alone. Why was it that the representatives of the Secretary-General always seemed to be from developed countries?

83. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that document A/C.5/L.1295 had been submitted in strict compliance with the Secretary-General's interpretation of the General Assembly's decision at the current session. The Secretary-General had understood the Assembly to have endorsed the recommendation by the Fifth Committee that the Assembly should request the secretariat of the Joint Staff Pension Board to submit at the current session information on the nationality of its members and alternates in the same form as had been used at the twenty-eighth session. A great deal of care had been taken to determine the exact form in which the information had been presented at the twenty-eighth session, on an unofficial basis, to the Soviet delegation and the current document corresponded precisely to the form which had been used then.

84. As to the comments made by the Soviet representative, the Secretary-General considered that, in submitting its reports to the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions, the Board had complied with the General Assembly decision that information should be included in those reports as to the nationality of the members and alternate members of the Board. That information had not been presented in the same form as in document A/C.5/L.1295 but in a manner which was in accordance with the request by the General Assembly at the twenty-eighth session.

85. With regard to the question by the representative of Algeria, he drew attention to the Regulations and Rules of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, which had been in existence for a very considerable period of time and set out a complex method for constituting the Board: 6 members were appointed by the United Nations Staff Pension Committee; 2 of them were selected from the members and alternate members elected by the General Assembly, 2 from those appointed by the Secretary-General, and 2 from those elected by the participants in service in the United Nations; 15 members were appointed by the staff pension committees of the other member organizations in accordance with a table fixed by the Administrative Rules; 5 of them were from the members and alternate members chosen by the bodies of the member organizations corresponding to the General Assembly—namely, the legislative bodies—5 from those appointed by the chief administrative officers of the member organizations, and 5 from those chosen by the participants in service. The selection—by election or appointment—of those blocks of members was the responsibility of the staff groups concerned or the chief administrative officers concerned or the legislative bodies concerned. The result was inevitably a complex made up of the results of all the different procedures by which the members were chosen or elected by the respective bodies and was not predictable, any more than results in the Fifth Committee were predictable.

86. The members and alternate members selected to represent the Secretary-General were not chosen by the Secretary-General himself but by the United Nations Staff Pension Committee from the group of members appointed by the Secretary-General to serve on that Committee; 2 of them represented the Office of Financial Services, which had a very substantial interest in the proper administration and management of the Fund; 1 represented the Office of Personnel Services, which had a very legitimate interest in the pensions provided for the members of the Secretariat;

and the remaining member represented the Office of General Services, which was one of the largest departments of the Secretariat in terms of the number of staff members employed. The selection had been made for the purpose of ensuring that adequate account would be taken of the interests of the staff and of the financial implications of the Fund's activities and that there would be adequate representation of one of the largest departments in the Organization; it had not been made on the basis of geographical considerations.

87. He would be the first to agree that, in terms of the totality of the representation on the Pension Board, there was an overwhelming preponderance of individuals from certain regions of the world. Nevertheless, that was the result of the *manner* of selection or election prescribed by the Regulations and Rules of the Fund as they stood currently and as they had been established by the General Assembly itself. As long as those Regulations and Rules remained in their current form, it would not be possible to predict the geographical composition of the Board from year to year.

The meeting rose at 11.40 p.m.

1774th meeting

Wednesday, 17 December 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS (Trinidad and Tobago).

A/C.5/SR.1774

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA

1. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria), speaking on a point of order, drew the attention of the Committee to an interview which the President of the General Assembly had given to representatives of the press, in which he had stated that the General Assembly had exhausted its agenda and there remained only some financial reports of the Fifth Committee which would have no effect on the Assembly's work. Such lack of understanding of the workings of the General Assembly demonstrated by so senior a person would do nothing to help to maintain cohesion among the Main Committees.

2. The CHAIRMAN assured the Committee that he had not been associated in any way with the statement by the President of the Assembly. He had received a message from the latter indicating that he (the President) was fully aware of the importance of the final plenary meeting of the General Assembly, dealing with the work of the Fifth Committee, and that he would make that clear at the end of the plenary meeting currently in progress.

AGENDA ITEM 95

Programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975: report of the Secretary-General *(concluded)*

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1291)

3. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report on agenda item 95 (A/C.5/L.1291), reminded the Committee that it had decided not to reflect the debate on the item in its report.

4. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the draft resolution contained in paragraph 9 of the draft report.

Part A was adopted by 69 votes to 10.

Part B was adopted by 80 votes to none.

The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 70 votes to 10.

AGENDA ITEM 96

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 and medium-term plan for the period 1976-1979 *(concluded)*

Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (A/C.5/L.1290 and Add.1)

5. Mr. ABOUL GHEIT (Egypt), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report, recalled that the Committee had agreed at an early stage that its debate on item 96 should not be reflected in its report. Part I (A/C.5/L.1290) of the draft report contained the draft resolutions and decisions already adopted by the Committee in connexion with the programme budget, and part II (A/C.5/L.1290/Add.1) contained a summary of the first and second readings of the budget estimates and the draft resolutions relating to the programme budget. Some estimates were not indicated, but the appropriate figures would be inserted before the report was submitted to the General Assembly.

6. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the preceding meeting the representative of Yugoslavia had proposed the inclusion in the report on section 6 of the programme budget, concerning ECE, of a paragraph, similar to the formulation adopted by the Committee with regard to sections 7 and 8 of the programme budget, authorizing the Secretary-General, if need be, to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session a request for supplementary appropriations.

7. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation would have serious difficulties in accepting that

proposal, because ECE had a higher rate of real growth of expenditure than any other regional commission. The Committee had included such a paragraph–paragraph 14 of document A/C.5/L.1290–in the case of ESCAP as a compromise measure, because some delegations had felt that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had been less generous in its recommendations under section 7 than under other sections of the budget. If the Yugoslav proposal was accepted, his delegation would have to propose similar action in respect of all the regional commissions, and that would be counterproductive at the current stage.

8. Mr. BEATH (New Zealand) pointed out that an exception had been made in the case of ESCAP because of the particular circumstances regarding the recruitment factor, as was clearly spelt out in paragraph 14 of the draft report. Unless the representative of Yugoslavia could give a reason for his proposal, New Zealand would have difficulty in supporting it.

9. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that there seemed to be a fundamental misunderstanding concerning the nature of the decision in paragraph 14. It was the understanding of his delegation that, when the delayed recruitment factor was applied to appropriations, the intention was not to force the Secretary-General to live within those appropriations, for if that was the case he would be instructed not to recruit for certain posts. In fact, the Secretary-General was expected to make efforts to recruit persons for the authorized posts throughout the two-year period, and the delayed recruitment factor simply took account of the fact that, since he was unlikely to be immediately successful, not all the money would be needed. The decision concerning ESCAP had therefore been superfluous, and so was the Yugoslav proposal, because the purpose behind it would be achieved in any event.

10. Mr. BRANKOVIĆ (Yugoslavia) reminded representatives of the implications of the implementation of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975. In that connexion, a heavy burden would be placed on ECE, which would require support, possibly including financial support. His delegation's proposal concerning section 6 should therefore be adopted.

11. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said he agreed with the United Kingdom representative that the Yugoslav proposal was superfluous. It was his understanding that, if additional funds were required, the Secretary-General could always request them from the General Assembly; the Advisory Committee would review his request and report to the Fifth Committee. He asked the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management to state whether that was the case.

12. Mr. GEORGESCU (Romania) said that his delegation was prepared to support the draft decision proposed by Yugoslavia.

13. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that he agreed with the representative of Yugoslavia. If, however, what the representative of the United Kingdom had said was correct, he wondered whether it might not be possible, instead of incorporating in the Committee's report the decision proposed by the representative of Yugoslavia, to include a statement to the effect that it was the Committee's understanding that the Secretary-General would proceed along the lines proposed by the representative of Yugoslavia.

14. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that such a statement would be valid for all sections of the budget, and he questioned whether it should be included under section 6 alone.

15. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that, if during the biennium the Secretary-General found that he was unable to keep within the budget approved by the General Assembly for a given section, and if he could not absorb potential over-expenditures elsewhere in the budget by requesting transfers of funds, he could come back to the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly with a request for supplementary appropriations.

16. With regard to the effect of reductions proposed by the Fifth Committee and approved by the General Assembly on the administration of the budget appropriations for a particular section, he said the Advisory Committee could recommend that certain posts requested by the Secretary-General should not be included in the budget, and deductions would then be made, in respect of those posts, from the funds requested by the Secretary-General. When posts were actually eliminated from the budget, the Secretary-General could not recruit individuals to fill them. Alternatively, the Advisory Committee could approve the inclusion of posts in the manning table while estimating that the Secretary-General would be unlikely during the biennium to fill the posts for the entire two-year period and that he would not therefore require all the funds requested to finance the posts for the whole period. In the latter instance the Advisory Committee applied a delayed recruitment factor, whereby the posts were retained in the estimates and in the budget, and the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to proceed to fill them, but some of the funds, representing the delayed recruitment factor, were deducted from the appropriation on the ground that the Secretary-General would be unlikely to require all the funds for the biennium. Despite the deduction of that amount, the Secretary-General was free to recruit for all the posts approved in the budget. Thus, in the case of the manning table for ECE, the Secretary-General could proceed to recruit for the posts approved by the General Assembly and would be free, without specific instructions from the Assembly, to request supplementary funds should a shortfall occur.

17. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) said that, if the Yugoslav proposal was put to the vote, his delegation would vote against it. As the explanation given by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management had demonstrated, the proposal was entirely superfluous.

18. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation would also vote against the Yugoslav proposal. The Committee was currently reviewing decisions already adopted, and it was not the time to introduce new proposals. If, however, the proposed decision was to be

included under section 6, he would insist that it should also apply to all the other regional commissions, and indeed that it should be incorporated in the report for all sections of the budget. It was not reasonable to include the decision in the case of a regional commission that had already received its due.

19. Mr. SETHI (India) said that he would vote in favour of the Yugoslav proposal. At best, it would leave the Secretary-General an option which could be exercised on the understanding that any recommendation he might make must be approved by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee. At worst, even if the proposal was superfluous, it was realistic to include it under section 6. Although there was merit in the argument of the representative of the Upper Volta, he hoped that the latter would not press for the inclusion of the decision under every section of the budget.

20. Mr. LELLKI (Sweden) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the inclusion of the decision proposed by the Yugoslav delegation. Every effort should be made to ensure that ECE would have the necessary resources to discharge the new responsibilities entrusted to it at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

21. Mr. DJEKILAMBERT (Chad) said that his delegation would vote against the Yugoslav proposal. The international community had set itself a course and should not lightly depart from it. If the Committee decided that the Secretary-General should be given some freedom of action in the matter, he should have the same freedom with respect to all sections of the budget.

22. Mr. HAHN (Canada) said that, although Canada was a member of ECE, his delegation would have to abstain on the Yugoslav proposal, which presented difficulties of principle for it.

23. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that, while his delegation was somewhat sympathetic towards the Yugoslav proposal, it would have to abstain if it was put to the vote, in view of the stage which had been reached in the Committee's work.

24. Mr. BOUAYAD-AGHA (Algeria) said that he failed to see why so much importance was being attached to the issue. He assumed that the Yugoslav representative wished to ensure that ECE, which would be meeting in Yugoslavia in 1976, should receive increased support. That was no reason for reviewing the budgets of all the regional commissions. He urged the representative of Yugoslavia to withdraw his proposal and to raise the matter in 1976 so that the Secretariat could consider how it might accommodate his delegation.

25. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) said his delegation could not agree that in any instance the Fifth Committee should explicitly call on the Secretary-General to submit supplementary estimates. First, the Secretary-General had the authority to do so if necessary and, secondly, it would be inappropriate at the closing stage of the Committee's work to add a paragraph along the lines proposed by Yugoslavia under section 6 or anywhere else in the report, since the Committee had already taken logical decisions on the programme budget proposals. His delegation could not, therefore, support the Yugoslav proposal.

26. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that he had just consulted with the representative of Yugoslavia, who had authorized him to state that, in the circumstances, his delegation would not press for a decision on the matter it had raised, on the understanding that it would be possible to raise the matter again if need be at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

27. The CHAIRMAN said he assumed that the Committee had no objection to that procedure.

It was so decided.

28. Mr. STOTTLEMYER (United States of America) expressed dissatisfaction at the fact that, owing to lack of time, the Committee had not had the opportunity to give the draft report the careful attention it deserved.

Part I (A/C.5/L.1290) of the draft report was adopted without objection.

29. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the draft resolutions contained in part II (A/C.5/L.1290/Add.1) of its draft report.

Draft resolution I A was adopted by 83 votes to 8, with 3 abstentions.

Draft resolution I B was adopted without objection.

Draft resolution I C was adopted by 84 votes to 9, with 2 abstentions.

Draft resolution I as a whole was adopted by 83 votes to 9, with 3 abstentions.

Draft resolution II was adopted by 85 votes to 9, with 2 abstentions.

Draft resolution III was adopted by 87 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.

COMPLETION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

After an exchange of courtesies, the Chairman declared that the Fifth Committee had completed its work for the thirtieth session.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.