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Chairman: Mr. Harry MORRIS (Liberia).

AGENDA ITEM 83

Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board
 (A/6674, A/6708)

1. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in its report (A/6674) the Advisory Committee referred to the long-standing problem of a reconciliation, in values, between the investment account of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund and the statements prepared by the Fiduciary Trust Company of New York, as depository of the Fund's portfolio. The statements in question served different purposes, and reconciliation would result in unnecessary expense to no real advantage. The Advisory Committee noted that it had been suggested that a study be undertaken of the feasibility of commissioning the depository with full accounting responsibilities under the supervision of a certified public accounting firm.

2. The Advisory Committee noted with satisfaction that the Secretary-General, in his capacity as the custodian of the Fund's investments, was now taking steps to ensure the reconciliation of the statements. The Advisory Committee was certain that those steps would help to clarify and solve a problem which had for too long been a source of misunderstandings.

3. Mr. ALBAN (Colombia) pointed out that since 22 May 1964^{1/} the Board of Auditors had been drawing attention to the discrepancies between the two statements. In view of the study mentioned in paragraph 5 of the Advisory Committee's report, he would like to know whether it would not be possible to invite the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-third session on the results obtained.

4. Mr. McCRAW (Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) said that the parties concerned had held consultations on the need for a reconciliation in values between the investment account of the Pension Fund and the statements prepared by the depository of the portfolio. They gave grounds for thinking that the problem should be solved fairly soon. He hoped that the parties would reach complete agreement and that it would be possible to inform the General Assembly at its twenty-third session that the consultations had borne fruit and that the problem had been solved.

5. Mr. LYNCH (New Zealand) said that his delegation had noted with satisfaction that the Secretary-General had taken steps to ensure the reconciliation of the statements. Considering that they served different purposes, his delegation doubted whether there was any real advantage in seeking to impose an arbitrary reconciliation. It would therefore be desirable for the parties concerned to continue their consultations. His delegation noted that the fact that the study was being undertaken should not prevent the Board of Auditors itself from applying customary audit techniques to the examination of the component factors of the statement of assets and liabilities of the Fund, particularly the investment portfolio.

6. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should take note of the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board and its annexes (A/6708) and that the Committee should request the Rapporteur to transmit that report directly to the General Assembly.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 80

Implementation of the recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies: reports of the Secretary-General (continued)* (A/6666 and Corr.1, A/6803, A/6853, A/6887/Rev.1, A/6905, A/C.5/1121 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1122, A/C.5/L.902)

^{1/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Nineteenth Session, Supplement No. 8, annex II, para. 5.

*Resumed from the 1185th meeting.

Form of presentation of the budget and the budget cycle of the United Nations (A/6887/Rev.1, A/C.5/1121 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1122)

7. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that the Advisory Committee had decided to submit in a single report (A/6887/Rev.1) its comments on the form of presentation of the budget and the budget cycle of the United Nations. In paragraph 8 of that report the Advisory Committee recommended that, to the extent that the Secretary-General considered it feasible, the presentation of sections 2 (Special meetings and conferences), 4 (Common staff costs), 5 (Travel of staff), 6 (Payments under annex I, paragraphs 2 and 3, of the Staff Regulations; hospitality) and 11 (Printing) in the budget estimates for 1969 should follow that of section 3 (Salaries and wages) in the budget estimates for the financial year 1968 (A/6705 and Corr.1); in other words, they too should provide a breakdown by main organizational unit of the Secretariat. The Advisory Committee was of the view that the other changes suggested by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1121 and Corr.1) should not be made at the present juncture. Before reaching that conclusion, the Advisory Committee had taken into account the extent of the changes already made to the budget, the desirability of maintaining comparability of the budgets over the years, and the fact that a great deal of the information was already provided in the annexes to the budget estimates.

8. The Advisory Committee had kept in mind the wishes expressed in the various United Nations bodies for bringing the programmes and their budgetary resources closer together. It had considered that the changes already made and those it was recommending for further distribution of the estimates by main organizational unit of the Secretariat would facilitate comparison of programmes and their budgetary requirements. Accordingly, it felt that, pending further progress in programme formulation, the determination of priorities in the various activities of the Organization, and the definition of the programme of annual and special meetings and conferences, additional changes in the form of presentation of the budget should not be introduced.

9. The Advisory Committee also recalled the statement made by the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies in paragraph 70 of its second report^{2/} that there was no conflict between programme budgeting and traditional budgeting, since the latter was essential within each organization for exercising financial control, and that the two methods could and should operate in a complementary manner.

10. The Advisory Committee had issued a revised text of its initial report (A/6887) because it felt that the original text might have conveyed the impression that it concurred in all the suggestions made by the Secretary-General, including the suggestion that the budget for 1969 might reflect in one table the combined expenditures under sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11, accompanied by a supplementary text justifying the

requirements for each main department and subsidiary organizational unit. The Advisory Committee felt that more experience should be gained with the form of presentation introduced for section 3 in the budget estimates for 1968, extended in the estimates for 1969 to cover also sections 2, 4, 5, 6 and 11, before embarking on further changes. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee was concerned that there might have been some lack of precision in the instructions to the Secretary-General as to the extent of the measures he was expected to undertake in preparing the budget estimates for 1969.

11. With reference to the United Nations budget cycle, the Advisory Committee noted that, while the members of the Ad Hoc Committee had reached the unanimous conclusion that all the specialized agencies having an annual budget should adopt a biennial budget cycle, there was a difference of opinion as to whether a biennial budget should be adopted by the United Nations. The Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1122) illustrated the complexity of the issues involved. The Advisory Committee was informed that much of the expenditure under the regular budget could be budgeted on a biennial basis, provided certain conditions were met. Foremost among them, in the Secretary-General's view, would be the establishment of a system of long-term planning and programme formulation. The Advisory Committee shared that view and felt that it would be advisable to give those organs responsible for programming the opportunity of developing longer-range planning before the General Assembly decided on the duration of a budget cycle.

12. The Advisory Committee had already suggested that early attention should be given to the question of the General Assembly resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses, since the effectiveness of any budget depended on the exercise of discipline by the various programme bodies.

13. The Advisory Committee felt that, before proceeding further with the consideration of the United Nations budget cycle, additional information should be provided on the following matters: the tentative timetable of the sessions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies over a two-year cycle; the question of where and how central control would be exercised if a two-year budget were adopted; and the question of transfers and supplementary estimates, as reflected in paragraphs 35 to 46 of the second report of the Ad Hoc Committee.

14. Mr. ULANCHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that his delegation had already expressed its support for the adoption of a biennial budget cycle for the United Nations. That system was used by many international bodies, in which it had proved its worth. A biennial budget cycle would have obvious advantages: it would facilitate the work and would avoid waste of time. Directors and heads of departments would be able to co-ordinate and plan activities better and the work of the programming organs would be improved. In addition, the agenda of sessions and meetings would be lighter. Member States would receive in advance all necessary information on the volume of budgetary resources which they were required to provide. It was well known

^{2/} Ibid., Twenty-first Session, Annexes, agenda item 80, document A/6343.

that over half the Organization's expenditure was on economic, social and human rights activities, and his delegation believed that the introduction of a biennial budget cycle would enable them to be better planned.

15. The Secretary-General had expressed very cautious support for the introduction of the system which, in his view, should be preceded by a transitional period. In paragraph 35 of his report on the subject (A/C.5/1122), he stated that, if the biennial system were to be adopted, a detailed work programme and budget would have to be prepared in 1968-1969 in the economic and social area, covering a period up to the end of 1972; once that work programme and its related costs had been examined and provisionally approved, the requirements would be incorporated in the budget document for 1971-1972. His delegation had been very surprised by the attitude of the Advisory Committee. It did not deal with the substance of the problem; it had simply identified and defined what it considered to be the prerequisites for the adoption of a biennial cycle. Admittedly, those prerequisites were essential to the success of the proposed system and his delegation did not deny that it would be necessary to draw up the time-table of the sessions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies over a two-year cycle as well as to review the question of the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. However, the Advisory Committee declined to clarify its position and retreated behind vague statements; in paragraph 20 of its report (A/6887/Rev.1), it expressed the view that, once the various implications had been clarified, it should be possible to make a clearer assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of a two-year budget cycle for the United Nations. The Advisory Committee was really being over-cautious. The Secretary-General had already made the assessment and he indicated the stages that would precede the adoption of the biennial budget cycle, for which he actually set a date.

16. His delegation hoped that the implementation of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee, particularly the one concerning the long-term planning of programme and budget, would not be hampered. All delegations, whatever their attitude towards the budget cycle, had advocated the implementation of those recommendations. In the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations, long-term planning did not depend on the budget cycle; nevertheless, the planning cycle could be subdivided into three periods of two years, which would facilitate the transfer to a biennial budget cycle. It was to be hoped that the Advisory Committee's suggestion that the Secretary-General provide additional information on the questions listed in paragraph 17 of its report would not impede the introduction of a biennial budget cycle in 1971-1972, if—as his delegation hoped—the General Assembly endorsed it.

17. His delegation had no objections or comments regarding the recommendations made by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on the form of presentation of the budget.

AGENDA ITEM 74

Budget estimates for the financial year 1968 (continued)* (A/6705 and Corr.1, A/6707 and Corr.1-3, A/6854, A/6861, A/6878, A/C.5/1113 and Corr.1 and 2, A/C.5/1114 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1115 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1118, A/C.5/1123 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1124, A/C.5/1126-1129, A/C.5/1132, A/C.5/1135, A/C.5/1136 and Add.1, A/C.5/1138, A/C.5/L.901, A/C.5/L.908 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.917)

First reading (continued)* (A/C.5/L.908 and Corr.1)

SECTION 3. SALARIES AND WAGES (continued)** (A/6705 AND CORR.1, A/6707 AND CORR.1-3, A/6854, A/C.5/1114 AND CORR.1, A/C.5/1136 AND ADD.1)

18. Mr. DIOSO (Philippines) said that, of the increase of approximately \$3,871,000 for salaries and wages of established posts, \$2,231,000 represented the cost of additional requirements in 1968. Of 292 new posts requested by the Secretary-General, 155 were for economic and social activities. Some of those activities, to which his delegation attached great importance, related to human rights, particularly the International Conference on Human Rights, the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and several economic and social projects.

19. In paragraph 178 of its main report (A/6707 and Corr.1-3), the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve, in the Professional category and above, a total of 40 new established posts, as against the 150 requested, i.e., less than one third of the number required to execute the work programmes approved for 1968. In the General Service category, the Advisory Committee recommended the approval of 46 new posts, as against the 142 requested. Several delegations had expressed concern over what they considered to be excessive reductions. In support of the cuts it was recommending, the Advisory Committee maintained that the vacancy situation alone would seem to indicate that there was a substantial margin which had not as yet been utilized. The Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs had explained in great detail at the 1202nd meeting the adverse effects of inadequate staff resources on the work programmes approved for 1968 in the economic, social and human rights fields. The Under-Secretary had also stated that most of the vacancies in his Department had already been filled and that recruitment for the remaining vacancies was under way. The Philippine delegation associated itself with the delegations of developing countries which had stressed the importance they attached to the work programmes in question, and it would have preferred the Advisory Committee not to have made such drastic cuts in the number of new posts requested.

20. In connexion with the Secretary-General's note on the reorganization of the top echelon in the Secretariat (A/C.5/1128), he recalled that the last reorganization had been undertaken in 1955 and that the Secretariat had since expanded and acquired additional responsibilities. In the discharge of his duties, the Secretary-General had to rely heavily on the assistance

*Resumed from the 1208th meeting.

**Resumed from the 1207th meeting.

of his immediate subordinates, the Under-Secretaries. Some of them had heavier tasks and responsibilities than others, depending on their personal aptitudes, their training and their experience. Considering the varying level of responsibility of those officials, all of whom were at present of the same rank in the Secretariat of the United Nations, his delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that it was reasonable to conclude that such an equation of rank was somewhat unreal and less than fair to some of the senior officials on whom a heavy load of responsibility rested. Since the ultimate responsibility for the efficiency, competence and integrity of the Secretariat lay with the Secretary-General, he should be given a free hand to carry out his plan of reorganization. At the same time, it was gratifying to note from paragraph 9 of document A/C.5/1128 that the Secretary-General intended to apply the principle of equitable geographical distribution to both levels in the top echelon. The Controller had already indicated at the 1202nd meeting that, so far as salaries were concerned, the financial implications of the reorganization could be covered within the appropriation for section 3.

21. It was also gratifying to note that the Secretary-General proposed to appoint a small team of experts to consider the problem of reorganization of the Secretariat at other levels. That should make it possible to achieve a better and more rational deployment of staff within the various departments. At the same time, in order to improve staff efficiency and morale, deserving staff members should be promoted. A number of General Service staff were discharging functions and responsibilities normally entrusted to Professional staff. Their promotion to the Professional category would be a step in the right direction. In any event, that was a question which the team of experts might usefully consider.

22. In the discussion on equitable geographical distribution of staff, one or two delegations had mentioned the Philippines as among over-represented countries. While that was so in numerical terms, the posts occupied by Philippine nationals were of relatively minor importance, not one of them being above the Senior Officer level. On the other hand, there were Member States which were not only numerically over-represented but seemed to have monopolized the higher-level posts. Qualitatively speaking, the Philippines was still under-represented. Moreover, since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1852 (XVII), relating to more equitable geographical distribution, particularly at the Professional and higher levels, there had been virtually no change in the number of Philippine nationals at those levels. It was in that context that his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.913 and Add.1, which was similar to General Assembly resolution 2241 A (XXI).

23. Mr. ESFANDIARY (Iran) said that his delegation had studied with care the Secretary-General's note on the reorganization of the top echelon in the United Nations Secretariat and had followed with great interest the Committee's debate on that highly important subject. Since the last reorganization of the Secretariat in 1955, the membership of the United Nations had more than doubled and the Organization's activities had considerably expanded. His delegation

therefore welcomed the present initial step towards a comprehensive reorganization of the Secretariat.

24. In reintroducing the concept of two levels at the top echelon, the Secretary-General had been guided by two basic principles. First, by taking account of the responsibility factor, he had complied with the requirements of any sound reorganization plan. He had thus envisaged a higher rank for some of the senior officials, commensurate with their responsibilities. In paragraphs 6 to 10 of his note the Secretary-General had stressed the importance not only of the inherent responsibilities involved but also of the relationship between those officials and their counterparts in the specialized agencies. Secondly, he had taken into account, if only partially, the principle of geographical distribution. That principle, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirmed by many General Assembly resolutions, remained one of the objectives to be fulfilled at all levels of the Secretariat.

25. Although significant progress had been made over the years towards obtaining wider representation, the situation at the top policy-making level of the Secretariat did not faithfully reflect the United Nations as it was at present. There was of course value in having nationals of the permanent members of the Security Council assist the Secretary-General, but the time had come to re-examine the situation in the light of changing circumstances and to see whether it was still advisable to have entrenched posts for the nationals of any particular group of countries. As the Pakistan representative had aptly observed, the scheme envisaged 9 posts of Under-Secretaries-General, apart from the heads of UNCTAD and UNIDO. Of those posts, 4 were held by the nationals of four of the permanent members of the Security Council, and the remaining 5 were held by officials from the five geographical units of Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Western Europe. Europe was thus in the privileged position of being represented by 4 officials at the top echelon. Including the post of Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Europe held more than 50 per cent of the posts. By custom, that particular post had always been held by a European. Despite the obvious advantages of such a choice, the advisability of keeping that post as an exclusive privilege of a particular geographical region should be re-examined. In speaking of European representation he had not made the distinction between Eastern and Western Europe, which was drawn solely on political lines. When the principle of geographical distribution was applied to lower-level posts, Asia was divided into Asia and the Far East on the one hand, and the Middle East on the other; but when it was applied to the higher-level posts those two regions were taken together as Asia.

26. His delegation was fully aware of the difficulties the Secretary-General faced in departing from past practice, and it fully recognized that the organization of the Secretariat was left to his discretion. In fact, it would warn the Committee against the temptation of venturing into areas which under the Charter came within the prerogatives of the Secretary-General. Moreover, it believed that the Secretary-General was in the best position to pass judgement on the

relative importance of the top echelon posts in the light of the situation as it was and not as it ought to be. It was therefore in a constructive spirit that his delegation presented its comments, hoping that the Secretary-General would take them into account when making a final decision in the matter.

27. The stress laid on the importance of the post of the Legal Counsel undoubtedly stemmed from genuine concern for the role of law in the United Nations. In emphasizing both its symbolic significance and its place in international relations, some delegations had argued that a downgrading of the post might impair respect for the rule of law in international relations. His delegation found it difficult to see the connexion between the classification of the post and the actual functioning of the law in international affairs. In any event, it believed that the matter should be left to the discretion of the Secretary-General, who would not fail to consider the views expressed in the Committee when taking a decision.

28. His delegation had noted with interest the comments concerning the Executive Director of UNICEF in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's note. It earnestly hoped that the same considerations would be applied to the head of an equally important humanitarian organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

29. His delegation agreed with others that the top echelon posts should continue to be held on a fixed-term basis so as to allow representation in the high posts on as wide a basis as possible. It expressed the hope that the group of experts to be appointed to study the problem of reorganization of the Secretariat would be constituted on the basis of equitable geographical distribution.

30. In supporting the proposed reorganization of the top echelon in the Secretariat, his delegation wished to reiterate its full confidence in the judgement and integrity of the Secretary-General.

31. Mr. RIHA (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation generally supported the Secretary-General's intention of undertaking a reorganization of the top echelon in the Secretariat in view of the changes which had occurred since 1955, when the last reorganization had been carried out, and of the enlargement of the tasks and responsibilities of the Secretariat. It was clear, however, that the reorganization should generate greater efficiency and permit the better application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

32. In paragraph 11 of document A/C.5/1128 the Secretary-General announced his intention of combining the posts of Controller and Director of Personnel. His delegation wished to know what exact title the incumbent of the new post would have; paragraph 11 spoke of an "Under-Secretary-General in charge of Finance and Management", while annex III mentioned "Director of Administration". What mattered was not the title itself—a minor point—but the concept of the new unit which was to result from the proposed merger.

33. His delegation held that the projected reorganization should make possible a streamlining of the

administrative processes of the Secretariat and hence a reduction in some costs. There was a certain diffusion of functions in the administrative departments of the Secretariat. With respect to the Office of General Services, for instance, the document entitled Organization of the Secretariat^{3/} attributed certain specific functions to the administrative sections. It was not clear whether those functions would be suited to the new department of administration. Finally, his delegation wished to know whether the decision to combine the existing Office of the Controller and Office of Personnel was the result of a thorough study. If it was, his delegation would like to believe that the concentration of the administrative management of the Secretariat in one department would lead to a reduction in costs and personnel while the same level of efficiency was maintained.

34. Mr. TURNER (Controller), replying to the representative of Czechoslovakia, said that the designation about which the latter had asked for clarification was Under-Secretary-General in charge of Finance and Management. The function of the administrative sections of the Office of General Services consisted solely of servicing and did not involve control or management.

35. Mr. FENSOME (United Kingdom) recalled that during the general discussion on the budget estimates his delegation had said that the United Kingdom Government would support the Secretary-General's proposals for the reorganization of the top echelon of the Secretariat. If the Secretary-General decided to revise those proposals in the light of the comments made in the Committee, his delegation would give most serious consideration to any new suggestions.

AGENDA ITEM 82

Personnel questions:

(a) Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General (continued) (A/6860 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1140, A/C.5/L.900 and Add.1, A/C.5/L.913 and Add.1, A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.916, A/C.5/L.918);

(b) Other personnel questions (continued) (A/6877)

36. Mr. BACH-BAOUAB (Tunisia), introducing a revised text (A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1) of the draft resolution of which his delegation was a co-sponsor, said that the sponsors had taken into account the constructive changes proposed by some delegations since the original draft had been submitted, but had not incorporated those which they felt would have radically altered the spirit of the draft resolution.

37. The changes were in operative paragraphs 2 and 3. Several delegations had felt that the wording at the beginning of paragraph 2 did not give due recognition to the Secretariat's efforts to implement resolution 2241 B (XXI) of the General Assembly. The new wording should meet that objection. The Iranian delegation had considered that the generally accepted principle of equitable geographical distribution should be emphasized once again. Accordingly, the amendment it had formally submitted (A/C.5/L.918) had been incorporated at the end of paragraph 2.

^{3/} Document ST/SGB/131, p. 50.

38. Regarding operative paragraph 3, sub-paragraph (a), several delegations—especially that of the United States of America (see 1209th meeting)—had considered that the original text gave the Secretary-General directives which were so specific that they encroached on his prerogatives in the matter of recruitment. However, the sponsors of the draft resolution felt that the amendments suggested by the United States delegation would have completely altered the meaning of sub-paragraph (a). Moreover, that delegation's insinuations and allusions, bringing the discussion to a political level, were clearly unfounded. The sponsors of the draft resolution wished to confine themselves to statistics to emphasize the flagrant linguistic imbalance, without attempting to interpret figures or denouncing the reasons why some countries were allowed quotas universally recognized as excessive. In any case, the United States representative could rest assured that Tunisia and the other sponsors had incorporated the spirit of his suggestions. The sub-paragraph in question had been amended by deleting the reference to the Office of Personnel.

39. The sponsors of the draft resolution had not considered the proposals regarding paragraph 3, sub-paragraph (b), to be consistent with their own views on the subject. They believed they were entirely justified in seeking equitable treatment for all the working languages and that rigorous measures must be taken to rectify a situation which was generally recognized to be abnormal.

40. Mr. GANEM (France) said that draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1 incorporated three amendments to the original text, the first of which gave recognition to the efforts made by the Secretary-General to implement resolution 2241 B (XXI), of the General Assembly, while the second was in response to the concern expressed by the delegation of Iran, and the third consisted essentially of deleting the reference to the Office of Personnel in order to meet the wishes of the Secretariat and of some delegations, which had feared that the authority of the Secretary-General would be encroached upon. That fear was not justified in the case of the recruitment services, where a particularly well-balanced distribution of staff using the different working languages was obviously necessary. By drawing the Secretary-General's attention to that particular branch, the resolution did not encroach on the Secretary-General's authority.

41. The amendment of operative paragraph 3, sub-paragraph (a), should, in the sponsors' view, have met the wishes of the United States delegation. They had therefore been greatly surprised by the statement made by the United States representative at the previous meeting. Not wishing to go beyond technical considerations, which were the proper concern of the Fifth Committee, his delegation would let the responsibility for diverting the discussion to a political level rest with the United States representative since it was clear that the sponsors of the draft resolution, on the contrary, had based their proposals on considerations of legality, the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of procedure.

42. In connexion with operative paragraph 3, sub-paragraph (b), the United States representative had proposed, instead of a system of language bonuses,

a form of temporary provisional appointment on the basis of purely linguistic criteria. Such a measure which would radically affect the methods currently used in the recruitment of Secretariat staff, went far beyond the intention of the sponsors of the draft resolution, whose provisions in no way affected existing rules of recruitment, since they merely proposed an improvement in the scrutiny of applications and the introduction of a bonus for staff already recruited who took the trouble to learn a second working language. His delegation failed to see how the draft resolution would promote the formation and isolation of linguistic groups within the Secretariat, since its purpose was, on the contrary, to encourage use of the different languages without discrimination.

43. The introduction of a language bonus for staff in the Professional category would, of course, have financial implications. Pending the submission of a report by the Advisory Committee, which would enable his delegation to form a considered opinion on the subject, he wished to make some preliminary remarks. It would hardly be appropriate for the Secretariat to include in the financial implications draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1 the cost of expanding the language instruction programme, since such a measure had been under consideration by the Secretariat for some time, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report (A/6860 and Corr.1, para. 68), and involved an existing programme. It would therefore be unfair to place the responsibility for it on the sponsors of the draft resolution under consideration. The cost of expanding the language instruction programme should first be deducted from the total financial implications. Moreover, his delegation would like to know how the Secretariat had calculated the total annual cost of the language bonus. It seemed at first glance to have been fixed at a sufficiently high level to dismay the Fifth Committee and induce it to reject the draft resolution because of the sizable financial implications. In the opinion of the draft resolution's sponsors, the bonus should be a mere incentive and not a substantial part of the salary. As the bonus at present awarded to General Service staff was \$220 a year, a slightly higher bonus for Professional staff should be a sufficient inducement to use a second working language.

44. Moreover, his delegation thought that, whereas the Secretariat had stated the total financial implications of the draft resolution for a full year, it was hardly likely that a language bonus could be introduced with effect from 1 January 1968. The Secretariat would first have to work out administrative procedures; it would therefore seem reasonable to allow it an interval of six months or so, to prepare for the introduction of the bonus. Consequently, in view of the inevitable delay and the fact that not all Professional staff used two working languages, the financial implications of the draft resolution should be substantially lower than the total of \$858,600 given in document A/C.5/1140. He pointed out, furthermore, that, if the French-speaking countries had insisted on the effective and immediate application of existing rules, it would have been necessary to recruit 210 additional staff members, as stated by the Secretary-General in paragraph 62 of his report (A/6860 and Corr.1), with a resultant expenditure of well over \$2 million.

45. His delegation thought that a language bonus was the best incentive for learning a second working language. It had long been used as an inducement for General Service staff; why, then, should it be objectionable in the case of Professional staff? His delegation would be ready to consider any system which was more efficient and less costly. But it had already demonstrated the drawbacks of the system proposed by the United States representative; and, apart from that, no other system had been suggested. The amendments proposed to paragraph 3, sub-paragraph (b), by the representatives of the United Republic of Tanzania and Guinea at the 1209th meeting and Malta at the 1206th meeting were also unsatisfactory, since they would mean that the proposed incentive for the study of working languages would be optional, or that the Secretariat would be left to decide when an accelerated language instruction programme should be launched. He did not think that promotion advantages were any substitute for a language bonus. If that system had been workable, the Secretariat would have applied it in the case of General Service staff instead of giving them a language bonus. Furthermore, as the examination of the personal files of candidates for promotion was confidential and different criteria were used for recommending staff members for promotion, there was no guarantee that a knowledge of two working languages would be taken into account.

46. The language question was of major importance for all delegations, as it was related to the universality of the United Nations and the very spirit of the Charter. The provisions of draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1 would not weaken either the provisions of Article 101 of the Charter or the General Assembly's criteria concerning the composition of the Secretariat. Although his delegation was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution, it was not speaking merely on its own behalf or to gain some political advantage, but rather to support the case of the many delegations which did not normally use English and were hoping for a gradual restoration of a language balance more in keeping with the spirit and letter of the General Assembly's directives.

47. Mr. El BARADEI (United Arab Republic) noted with satisfaction the marked improvement which the Secretary-General had achieved in the composition of the Secretariat during the past few years.

48. On the subject of draft resolution A/C.5/L.913 and Add.1, he said that he was fully aware of the importance of equitable and balanced distribution of staff in the Secretariat, and was glad to note that the Secretary-General had reiterated in his report (A/6860 and Corr.1) that the goal he had in mind was a Secretariat consisting of nationals of all Member States and that every effort would be made towards the achievement of that goal. His delegation hoped that all States Members of the United Nations would be represented in the Secretariat, subject to the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity as prescribed in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter. As stated in the second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, those two factors were not incompatible, and the Secretary-General would undoubtedly be guided by them in his recruiting policy. In paragraph 9 of his report the

Secretary-General had stated that the arithmetical formula interpreting "the system of desirable ranges of posts" was not intended to be a substitute for the discretion inherent in good administration.

49. With regard to the fifth preambular paragraph his delegation had noted, from a careful study of table C in paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's report, that some regions were still below the desirable range while others were above it. In order to correct that imbalance, the words "within the various regions" in the fifth preambular paragraph should be replaced by the words "as between regions, and within each region".

50. His delegation shared the views of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1 and realized their difficulties. Nevertheless, he had some misgivings in regard to operative paragraph 3. Inviting the Secretary-General to ensure in particular the presence of staff using the different working languages of the United Nations in the services responsible for the recruitment of Secretariat staff—which was certainly desirable—was tantamount to giving the Secretary-General a directive in a field in which the Charter authorized him to exercise his discretion as chief administrative officer of the Organization.

51. With regard to the remarks by the representative of the Secretary-General on a language bonus for staff members in the Professional category, he thought that the financial implications of the language bonus would be excessively high in view of the high salaries already paid to such staff, and particularly in view of the fact that staff members had a duty to acquire the knowledge they needed for working in languages other than their mother tongue.

52. Mr. MARRON (Spain) said that his delegation was a sponsor of both draft resolutions—A/C.5/L.913 and Add.1 and A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1—because they were both important, they were closely interrelated, and their implementation would help to enhance the international character, independence and balance of the United Nations Secretariat. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.913 and Add.1 was designed to improve the geographical distribution of staff in the Secretariat, and draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1 supplemented it from the standpoint of language.

53. His delegation whole-heartedly supported the ideas underlying the two draft resolutions and thought that the approach reflected in them should be approved unanimously by the Fifth Committee, although scope should be left for any adjustments which might be called for in the light of practical experience. The reservations expressed by certain delegations related not so much to the substance of the proposals as to problems of implementation. But, in his delegation's view, such problems should not prevent the Committee from approving the two draft resolutions. By doing so, it would merely strengthen the provisions of earlier resolutions of the General Assembly and reinforce the measures which the Secretariat had been applying for several years. That the Secretariat had made an effort was clear from the figures given in the Secretary-General's report (A/6860 and Corr.1). For instance, from 1 September 1966 to 31 August 1967, appointments to new posts subject to geographical distribu-

tion had totalled 211, or 12.8 per cent of the total number of posts existing as at 31 August 1966. At the same time, due account had been taken of regions which had been under-represented in relation to the desirable number of posts, as Eastern Europe had obtained 24 per cent more posts, and Africa 19 per cent more. For countries of Latin America and of the Middle East, which had had more than the desirable number of posts, the increase had been 6 per cent; for Western Europe, 11 per cent; for North America and the Caribbean, also 11 per cent; and for Asia and the Far East, 13 per cent. Over a longer period, from 1961 to 1967, the total number of posts had increased by 41 per cent, while the respective increases for each region had been 120 per cent for Africa, 53 per cent for Eastern Europe, 49 per cent for Latin America, 21 per cent for the Middle East and 18 per cent for Western Europe.

54. His delegation considered that the steps envisaged in draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1 would certainly be beneficial to the functioning of the Organization. The international character of the United Nations meant that its staff must be able to fulfil their duties using means of communication common to the people represented in the Organization, to wit the working languages. The steps proposed were one way of broadening the linguistic basis of the Secretariat, as the Austrian representative had urged at the preceding meeting. His delegation was in partial agreement with the views expressed by the representative of the United States of America at the same meeting, inasmuch as the institution of a language bonus would appear to encourage an activity which should be part of the staff's normal work. Private enterprises now required their staff to have a knowledge of two or three foreign languages, and the requirements should be even stricter in the case of the United Nations Secretariat. Current conditions must, however, be taken into account, although that should not rule out the possibility of future changes in the qualifications required for recruitment. If the solution of the problem was not to take years, some system of encouraging the study of additional languages should be worked out. While the Secretariat would certainly be able to make such study obligatory, his delegation did not think that the Fifth Committee could suggest such a course. The solution to the problem should be sought in a system of bonuses or incentives, as the Tanzanian representative had suggested (1209th meeting). The Secretariat would be responsible for the application of the system, which would need to have the co-operation of the staff.

55. His delegation took the view that although the financial implications of draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1 varied between \$850,000 and \$1 million, they represented only 0.7 per cent of the regular budget. That cost was by no means prohibitive, particularly in view of the advantages which the Secretariat and delegations could not fail to derive from better mutual understanding.

56. Mr. FRANCIS (Canada) observed that, as a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1, his delegation had already expressed its views on the need for a better linguistic balance in the Secretariat. He would confine his remarks to a brief outline of his

delegation's views on the Secretary-General's role in recruitment and, in particular, on draft resolution A/C.5/L.913 and Add.1.

57. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General, who had stated in his report that:

"The principles endorsed by the General Assembly in 1962 and applied in the past five years in the recruitment of staff have advanced the achievement of the goal of an effective Secretariat enjoying the confidence of all Members of the United Nations." (A/6860 and Corr.1, para. 69 (a)).

Imbalances still existed, of course, but his delegation was convinced that the Secretary-General would continue to exercise his discretion in such a way that the composition of the Secretariat would accord as closely as possible with the principle of equitable geographical distribution, taking account of the paramount consideration of maintaining the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Since the quality of the Secretariat was fundamental to the truly international and impartial character of the Organization, it was not surprising that many delegations, while recognizing the substantial progress made by the Secretary-General, wished immediate redress of existing imbalances, so that every Member State would participate fully in the Organization's activities.

58. His delegation understood the desire of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.913 and Add.1 to develop a Secretariat in which posts were distributed equitably on the basis of level as well as number. Equitable distribution of senior posts was undoubtedly a factor which the Secretary-General should take into account in recruitment. His delegation, however, believed that any imbalances existing in the levels of posts could best be remedied by the Secretary-General in the exercise of his residual discretion. The General Assembly should not decree that the Secretary-General must remove imbalances according to a specific numerical scale. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.5/L.913 and Add.1, on the understanding that the request in operative paragraph 3 for the inclusion in future reports of an informational table based on a suitable weighted system to show geographical distribution of posts by nationality and level was consistent with those views. It could not, however, support the amendments submitted by Italy (A/C.5/L.916).

59. In paragraph 1 of resolution 2241 A (XXI), the General Assembly had stated its belief that "as a temporary measure and under the existing conditions, increased recruitment on the basis of fixed-term contracts, especially in the case of developing countries, might help to achieve a balanced geographical distribution". His delegation was pleased to note in paragraph 23 of the Secretary-General's report that, with the co-operation of Governments, it had been possible to grant contracts of longer duration to mitigate the adverse effects which an excessive proportion of staff serving on a temporary basis might have on the stability and efficiency of the Secretariat. His delegation continued to believe that 25 per cent was the most desirable proportion of fixed-term appointments. It was somewhat concerned to find that, as at 31 August 1967, the pro-

portion had been 30.6 per cent. However, it appreciated the importance of fixed-term contracts to developing countries until they were in a position to make their nationals available to the Secretariat on a permanent basis. In the meantime, the use of fixed-term contracts of longer duration would remove some of the disadvantages inherent in that system.

60. Mr. ZAITSEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he wished to state once again that the time had come to recognize Russian as a working language of the principal organs of the United Nations. As a number of delegations had pointed out, a great area of the world, which contributed 20 per cent of the Organization's budget, used Russian; moreover, that language was used by scholars and experts throughout the world, so that it helped to promote international understanding. As some delegations had already suggested that the question of the inclusion of Russian among the working languages of the principal organs of the United Nations should be studied, he proposed that the following recommendation should be included in the report of the Fifth Committee:

"In view of the fact that, in practice, the distinction between the working languages and the other official languages of the United Nations is gradually disappearing, the Fifth Committee requests the Secretary-General to study all questions relating to the inclusion of Russian among the working languages of the principal organs of the United Nations and to present a report on this subject to the General Assembly at its twenty-third session."

61. Mr. CISS (Senegal) said he wished to make some preliminary observations on the proposal submitted by the United Arab Republic and on the Secretary-General's note (A/C.5/1140) relating to the administrative and budgetary implications of draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1. He shared the view that draft resolution A/C.5/L.913 and Add.1 should be modified slightly with a view to restoring the balance between geographical regions, since Africa, in particular, was treated less favourably than other regions with regard to higher posts.

62. Briefly reviewing document A/C.5/1140 in the light of the suggestions made by the Secretary-General in his report (A/6860 and Corr.1), he noted that in paragraph 68 of that report the Secretary-General indicated that UNITAR had agreed to make its language laboratory equipment (twenty units) available to the Secretariat as soon as space for its accommodation could be found. The question of the cost of such accommodation was also mentioned in document A/C.5/1140. The Secretary-General also indicated in paragraph 68 of his report that plans were under way to establish intensive language courses so that staff could acquire a working knowledge of the language chosen in a much shorter period of time than usual. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1 also dealt with an accelerated language instruction programme. The Secretary-General, summing up his suggestions in paragraph 70, sub-paragraph (f), of his report, recommended that the language instruction programme within the Secretariat should be expanded. It was surprising that no statement of financial implications had been prepared with regard to that recommendation by the Secretary-General, which was repeated in

draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1, while credits of \$81,000 were requested—under section 4 (Common staff costs) of the budget estimates—for the regular language instruction programme at Headquarters. He would therefore like to know whether the accelerated language instruction programme would have financial implications, and if so, why a statement of those implications had not been submitted to the Committee.

63. Furthermore, it appeared from document A/C.5/1140 that from 900 to 1,000 Professional staff members might attend the courses. He wondered why the number was so high and what proportion of English-speaking officials, for example, would wish to learn French and Spanish, what proportion of French-speaking officials would wish to learn English and Spanish, etc. Document A/C.5/1140 was also too vague on that point.

64. Mr. TURNER (Controller), replying to the questions asked by the representatives of France and Senegal, said the Secretariat had done all that it could, in view of the inadequate data available to it, to submit a statement of financial implications. The number of staff members who might attend language courses would have to be adjusted later. The language bonus, which was \$224 per year, did provide an important incentive for locally recruited General Service staff, but could not be expected to in the case of Professional staff. In any case, the Secretariat was waiting until the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had considered the question before proposing other figures.

65. Mr. CISS (Senegal) thanked the Controller for his explanations but said that he still did not know whether the proposal calling for expansion of the language instruction programme within the Secretariat, made by the Secretary-General in paragraph 70, sub-paragraph (f), of his report and repeated in draft resolution A/C.5/L.914/Rev.1, would have financial implications, and if so, why the Secretariat had not submitted a statement of the implications to the Committee.

66. Mr. TURNER (Controller) said that the Secretariat had been unable to present a statement of the financial implications because it lacked precise information. If a greater number of staff were to be encouraged to attend language courses the situation would become more complex. Nevertheless, the Secretariat hoped that the Advisory Committee would recommend, as the Secretary-General had suggested, that as from 1968 the present instruction facilities should be improved.

67. Mr. LYNCH (New Zealand), Rapporteur, noted the request made by the representative of the Soviet Union that the Committee should include in its report a recommendation inviting the Secretary-General to study the question of the inclusion of Russian among the working languages of the principal organs of the United Nations. If there were no objections, he would consider that the Committee approved the recommendation.

68. Mr. MEYER PICON (Mexico) proposed that the wording of the Soviet recommendation should be amended to read:

"In view of the fact that, in practice, the distinction between the working languages and the other official languages of the United Nations is gradually disappearing, the Fifth Committee requests the Secretary-General to study questions relating to the elimination of the distinction between the working languages and the other official languages of the organs of the United Nations".

That proposal was logical, since the Secretary-General had indicated that the distinction was steadily diminishing.

69. Mr. O'CONNOR (United States of America) said that the Soviet Union proposal and the Mexican amendment merited consideration. It would be advisable to wait until the delegations had made their views on the subject known before deciding whether the text should be included in the Committee's report.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.