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

**TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. ABDIRASHID ALI
SHERMARKE, PRESIDENT OF THE SOMALI
REPUBLIC**

1. The CHAIRMAN asked the Somali delegation to convey to the Somali Government his own and the Committee's condolences on the death of Mr. Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, President of the Somali Republic.

On the proposal of the Chairman, the members of the Committee observed a minute's silence.

2. Mr. OUATTARA (Ivory Coast), Mr. RODIONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Miss FORCIGNANÓ (Italy), Mr. GINDEEL (Sudan), Mr. SEN (India), Mr. CHMELA (Czechoslovakia), Mr. MINKOV (Bulgaria), Mr. EL BAHI (Libya), Mr. ROGERS (Canada) and Mr. A. EL-ATTRASH (Syria) offered the condolences of their respective Governments to the Somali delegation on the occasion of the death of Mr. Abdirashid Ali Shermarke.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

3. On behalf of the President of the General Assembly, the CHAIRMAN informed the members of the Fifth Committee that the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences wishes to draw the attention of delegations to operative paragraph 7, sub-paragraph (b) and paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 2239 (XXI) on the pattern of conferences, and he asked members to bear in mind the provisions of those paragraphs.

POINT OF ORDER RAISED BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF BELGIUM CONCERNING THE DOCUMENTATION OF THE COMMITTEE

4. Mr. DE FACQ (Belgium), speaking on a point of order, expressed concern that, as in the past, there was con-

siderable delay in the issue of the documents for the Committee's various agenda items.

5. His delegation attached great importance to personnel matters and therefore hoped that the Secretariat would do everything possible to ensure that the documents for agenda item 83 were circulated by 15 November so that delegations would have enough time to study them and would not be compelled, as they had been in past sessions, to take a hasty decision on questions involving expenditure accounting for more than half the Organization's budget.

AGENDA ITEM 74

**Budget estimates for the financial year 1970 (*continued*)
(A/7606, A/7608, A/7716, A/C.5/1230, A/C.5/1231 and
Corr.1 and 2, A/C.5/1233, A/C.5/1234, A/C.5/L.990)**

General discussion (continued)

6. Mr. GINDEEL (Sudan) said that as the Organization's twenty-fifth anniversary approached it became more urgent than ever to evaluate its work and to draw lessons from the past. Some delegations had called for a period of consolidation of United Nations activities before branching out in new directions. His delegation would welcome the consolidation of activities, provided that that term was not construed to mean holding those activities at the current level. Satisfying ever-increasing needs with limited resources was indeed a formidable problem, and criticism of the rise in the budget level together with efforts to curtail the growth of the budget was a persisting phenomenon. His delegation considered that the budget of the Organization was not an end in itself but a tool for achieving a series of objectives derived from the United Nations Charter, with due regard to the financial abilities of the Member States. Other delegations might have a different outlook, but it was the General Assembly, and it alone, which ought to have the final word on administrative and financial matters.

7. In the budget estimates for the financial year 1970 (A/7606), the Secretary-General had submitted a gross expenditure of \$164,123,200—an increase of approximately 6 per cent over that approved for the preceding financial year. The Secretary-General pointed out that 4 per cent of that increase related to the added cost of carrying forward into 1970 the authorized establishment for 1969, plus an increase in prices, while only the remaining 2 per cent represented new programmes or an expansion of existing activities. The Secretary-General had also stated that, in preparing the estimates, he had been mindful of the concern expressed by many Members during the course of the twenty-third session of the Assembly and the undertaking he had given at that time to keep the level of expenditure in 1970 at an absolute minimum.

8. While he fully appreciated those considerations, they should not become the deciding factors in the future budgets of the United Nations. The fundamental consideration should be the programmes of work evaluated and decided on by the programme-formulating bodies concerned. As for the problem of reconciling the paucity of resources with work programmes, the only constructive approach would lie in the implementation of the recommendation¹ of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies calling for the adoption of a system of long-term planning, programming and budgeting especially in the economic and social fields. Only through the implementation of that recommendation would it be possible for the General Assembly, by establishing a closer link between the programmes and the budget, to take the proper decisions on both the programmes of work and the necessary funds to finance them. Any attempt to impose arbitrary budget restrictions on the work programmes irrespective of their merits or order of priority could not be condoned by the developing countries.

9. In his introductory statement at the forty-sixth session of the Economic and Social Council (1591st meeting), the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs had expressed his concern that at the same time that the confidence placed in the United Nations by both the developing and the developed countries was reflected by the steady growth of technical co-operation activities financed from extra-budgetary resources, efforts were evidently being made to impose restrictive budgetary policies which necessarily contrasted with the reasonable hopes and expectations associated with the coming Second United Nations Development Decade and the promise it held for the expansion of international co-operation.² In his delegation's view, such attempts were tantamount to imposing a budget ceiling on the funds allocated to the programmes irrespective of their merits or order of priority, and were therefore contrary to the spirit of General Assembly resolution 2370 (XXII), which his delegation had supported only after the assurances given by the sponsors that they had no intention of imposing a ceiling for the budget of the United Nations.

10. It was therefore clear that the planning estimate should only be regarded as providing broad, general guidance for the preparation of the budget estimates, and not as a rigid ceiling. It was on the basis of that understanding that his delegation looked forward with interest to the first planning estimate which the Secretary-General was to submit in pursuance of resolution 2370 (XXII).

11. His delegation was gratified to note the growing interest on the part of the Secretariat in the question of improving the financial and administration machinery of the Organization and, consequently, in increasing its overall efficiency. The Committee on the Reorganization of the Secretariat (Committee of Seven) had apparently achieved notable progress in the staff utilization survey recom-

mended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Inasmuch as the findings of the Committee of Seven might lead to the adoption of decisions regarding the staff situation, it would be useful for the report to be made available to members of the Fifth Committee for consideration. In that connexion, there should be no recurrence of the situation which had arisen at the twenty-third session, when the Fifth Committee had had before it recommendations on documentation and conferences presented as part of the recommendations of the Committee of Seven, whereas it had not had an opportunity to consider those recommendations in their entirety.

12. He was also gratified to learn that the Secretary-General had decided to set up a new Administrative Management Service, whose main task would be to improve the administration of the Secretariat. Likewise, the recommendation of the Committee of Seven³ to the effect that an internal budget review committee should be set up in the Secretariat under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, should facilitate the Secretary-General's task.

13. Another problem urgently requiring solution was the overlapping and duplication in areas of responsibility of some of the organs. On that subject his delegation fully concurred with the views of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee: those organs should not become an instrument for defeating the very purposes for which they had been created. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee should be asked to investigate the matter fully, in consultation with the organs concerned, and report its findings and recommendations to the Fifth Committee at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

14. Many members of the Fifth Committee had long hoped that the Committee would give the Office of Public Information all the attention it deserved. It was time for that office to be strengthened so that it could effectively discharge its responsibilities, which were steadily increasing in scope. The Secretary-General had pointed out the increasing importance of information activities and had welcomed the interest being shown in them. He had also expressed the hope that the various reports on information problems which had recently been transmitted to Member States would provide an opportunity for a major rethinking of the problem of United Nations information activities and for prompt action in that connexion. His delegation fully shared that view and regretted the fact that a lack of staff, facilities and resources had so far prevented the Office of Public Information from discharging its functions adequately. To cite one example, the Arabic broadcasting services from New York and Geneva had not had the impact that they might have had on the more than 100 million people who spoke Arabic. The broadcasts were allotted insufficient time and also had limited appeal to Arabic-speaking audiences.

15. At the twenty-third session, the Fifth Committee had been informed that the results of the Secretariat's review of information policies and activities were to be considered by the Advisory Committee at its summer session in 1969. His

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 80, document A/6343, para. 73.

² *Ibid.*, *Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3*, para. 547.

³ *Ibid.*, *Twenty-third Session, Annexes*, addendum to agenda item 74, document A/7359, annex, para. 51.

delegation had hoped that the Fifth Committee would have before it a blueprint for revitalizing United Nations information services. In paragraph 88 of its main report (A/7608), the Advisory Committee stated that it had received a document and had discussed it with the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information. In paragraph 89, however, the Advisory Committee expressed the view that, before submitting the report to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General might wish to obtain an independent appraisal of past and present information programmes, so as to help him establish essential priorities and ensure that the proper emphasis was given to the various media available to the United Nations. That suggestion on the part of the Advisory Committee introduced an element of mystery into the situation and seemed to prejudice the technical aspect of the problem. In the absence of the Secretariat report, the Fifth Committee could not judge whether the Advisory Committee's recommendation was valid.

16. His delegation therefore proposed formally that the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information should be asked to address the Fifth Committee and present his views on information problems.

17. Another question which merited attention by the Committee was the precarious position of ECA. In his statement during the general discussion (1305th meeting), the Nigerian representative had informed the Committee of the extent and urgency of ECA's needs. His own delegation fully shared Nigeria's views in that regard, as did all the representatives of African States. There was an urgent need to re-examine, in the light of the decisions taken by ECA at its ninth session, in February 1969, not only the question of the resources available to that body but also its functions, organizational structure and institutional machinery.

18. In conclusion, his delegation wished to state its opinion that the budget estimates for 1970 were realistic and had been carefully prepared. The funds requested by the Secretary-General represented the minimum required in order to meet the urgent needs of the Organization. His delegation would have been prepared to vote for the estimates initially submitted by the Secretary-General; however, since the Secretary-General himself had stated that the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee would not adversely affect the work programme approved for 1970, his delegation would support that Committee's recommendations, provided that the Secretary-General was given full freedom to employ in a flexible manner the resources made available to him.

19. Mr. A. EL-ATTRASH (Syria) said he shared the Sudanese representative's view that the question of increasing the effectiveness of the Office of Public Information was of the utmost importance and urgency; he supported the proposal that the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information should be asked to address the Committee in order to present his views on the problem.

20. Mr. SOW (Guinea) congratulated the Secretary-General on the efforts he made to keep the expenses of the Organization from going beyond what was strictly essential, thus taking account of the concern expressed by numerous delegations at the twenty-third session and of the pledge which he had then made in that regard.

21. However, his delegation wished to emphasize its view that the large increase in the budget was wholly attributable to the many so-called peace-keeping operations carried out by the Organization at such great cost. That additional expenditure had been undertaken on the initiative of the imperialist Powers, and they should, in all justice, assume the full cost of the operations.

22. It should also be noted that the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea, an illegal body whose dissolution had been repeatedly urged by his Government, was a substantial budgetary item. Accordingly, one of the first steps which must be taken to put the finances of the Organization back on a sound basis was to dissolve that Commission, which, far from defending the interests of the Korean people, was fostering and perpetuating the division of the country.

23. Mr. SEN (India) observed that in the last few years the major contributors to the United Nations budget had sought to focus attention on the non-availability of resources, which, they suggested, made it imprudent to continue to consider the budget in terms of the expanding needs of the world community. It was also apparently being suggested that, if the expansion of the United Nations budget could be curbed, that would miraculously ensure better administrative management of the Secretariat. His delegation did not feel that sound and economical management was incompatible with programme expansion and consequent budgetary expansion. An attempt was being made to use the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies as the basis for imposing budgetary restrictions. In the course of the current session, numerous delegations had recalled the move made during the summer of 1969 by some of the major contributors to suggest to the Secretary-General that an arbitrary figure should be fixed as the upper limit for the budget estimates for 1970 and 1971. His delegation shared the view expressed by a number of other delegations—including those of Norway, Yugoslavia, Brazil and Nigeria—that such restrictions could not be imposed without abandoning the ideals proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.

24. It might be of interest, in that connexion, to recall the views expressed by the representatives of the great Powers at certain earlier sessions of the General Assembly. In 1949, for example, the French and United Kingdom representatives had stated in the Fifth Committee that it would be unwise to reduce the budget of the Organization, since expenditure for the United Nations was a necessity, not a luxury. In 1960 the representative of the United States of America had said that the Committee should recognize the need to expand United Nations activities in the economic and social fields and that the budget was growing because the United Nations itself was developing and had added that Member States had to be willing to pay the price if they wished the United Nations to survive and attain the objectives of the Charter. In 1961 the United Kingdom representative had stated that if Member States were not prepared to support the United Nations and make the necessary sacrifices, the Organization would not survive for long; he had emphasized that what was involved was not so much a financial issue as the willingness of Member States to support the Organization.

25. The idealism demonstrated by the great Powers in those earlier years had apparently given way of late to a concern with economy at any price. Speaking in the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination in April 1969, the representative of the United States of America had stated that it would be illusory to suppose that the commitments entered into by Governments with regard to United Nations activities in the economic and social fields were as deep as their commitment to their own national programmes. He had added that the voters could not be expected to agree indefinitely to the expansion of United Nations programmes at a constantly growing cost and would inevitably try to check that process. At the same session of CPC, the Soviet Union representative had said that it was time to re-examine the so-called "dynamic" which was causing the Organization to expand its activities with a resulting loss of effectiveness. He had expressed his opposition to a disorganized increase in activities, staff and budgets.

26. The Organization would soon be celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary, and was now engaged in preparatory work for the Second United Nations Development Decade. It was thus time to pause and consider what had been achieved in the field of international co-operation. At the end of the Second World War, the Organization as a whole had taken into account the effects of the war on the economies of Member States. It should now consider the effects of the colonial period on the economies of the 60 newly independent countries that had joined the Organization. It was generally agreed that those countries should be helped to benefit from advances in science, technology, industrialization and economic development through the co-operation of all, and particularly of those that had benefited from colonial rule. It was therefore a great disappointment for the Indian delegation to note that, in the name of budgetary prudence, co-ordination and streamlining, an attempt was being made to hamper the discussion and solution of problems concerning trade, the utilization of resources and the application of science and technology to developing countries. Even slight changes in policy by the developed countries could enable the developing countries to increase their foreign exchange earnings by several billions of dollars. Discussions on that subject were thus far more essential to the developing countries than certain types of operational activity carried out by various organizations or the provision of advisory services.

27. In the economic and social field, the Organization should not confine itself to implementing a limited number of projects; it should take up the great issues of the modern age, since it was on their solution that the future of international co-operation and the maintenance of peace and security ultimately depended. The obsessive preoccupation of the major Powers with strictly budgetary matters was one of the great dangers facing the Organization. It made it extremely difficult to consider issues and proposals on their merits and resulted in disastrous delays that could be avoided. For example, on 6 June 1969 the Economic and Social Council had adopted its resolution 1426 (XLVI), requesting substantially increased resources for the consultative and technological services related to the exploration and utilization of natural resources, taking into account the increasing needs of the developing countries in technical assistance and pre-investment programmes. How-

ever, it had not so far been possible to implement that resolution because of budgetary restrictions. The Indian delegation would take a keen interest in the measures taken in that connexion, as the utilization of non-agricultural natural resources was a major factor in the economic development and industrial progress of the developing countries.

28. In order to have a proper idea of the future needs of the Organization and of the developing countries, it would be necessary to assess in real terms, rather than in dollar terms, the expansion of the budget over the past two decades. In doing so, account must be taken of inflationary pressures on all currencies, the expansion of various government establishments, the increase in defence expenditure by the great Powers, the growing number of Member States, and the expansion of the Organization's fields of activity and, consequently, of its personnel requirements. The Indian delegation would therefore suggest that the Secretary-General should undertake a detailed study, through the Budget Division of the Secretariat, of the expansion, in real terms, of United Nations budgetary requirements over the past twenty-five years, taking account of all those factors and of any other relevant considerations.

29. He then gave some figures to illustrate what he meant by his proposal. Although the United Nations budget had increased from \$40 to \$165 million since 1948, it must also be recalled that, measured by the index of the GNP-price deflator, the rise in United States price levels during the period 1948-1968 had been in the region of 55 per cent. Moreover, the average annual growth rate in the national income of the industrialized countries had been 4.3 per cent during the period 1950-1967 and it was in that perspective that the growth rate of the resources for the United Nations regular budget must be viewed. It was also relevant to point out that the contribution to the regular United Nations budget by the United States of America, for example, had constituted in 1966 only 0.03 per cent of the federal budget and little less than 0.005 per cent of the gross national product of that country.

30. During the same period there had been a growth in international activities, and the needs of the international community had become more acute. From 58 countries in 1948, the membership of the United Nations had now risen to 126. The period had also witnessed a spectacular growth in world trade, or 350 per cent, as a result of the unparalleled prosperity in the industrialized countries. Lastly, problems such as increased urbanization, pollution of the environment, utilization of the resources of the sea, outer space and nuclear energy and the greater use of science and technology were increasingly calling for international solutions.

31. In the circumstances the Indian delegation considered that the resources available to the Organization were hardly adequate to the many tasks it had to accomplish. The expansion in institutional machinery of a multilateral nature was entirely justified by the economic, sociological and political evolution that had been taking place in recent years. While his delegation would not wish to be deemed ungrateful for the contribution made by the developed countries to the development effort, it felt bound to point

out that the expansion in international action should be matched by a real expansion in the resources allocated to the Organization. As the representatives of Sweden, Norway and Denmark had repeatedly emphasized, the current financial effort made by the developed countries could well bear some intensification.

32. He then briefly stated his delegation's position on a number of important matters already mentioned in the discussion. The increase in Secretariat staff in the previous ten years was not very striking when compared with the increase in national public services in countries like the United States of America; the introduction of a system of planning estimates, under General Assembly resolution 2370 (XXII) was intended to provide temporary guidelines with regard to future United Nations expenditure and not to place rigid restrictions on the budget; the inclusion of technical assistance expenditure under part V of the regular budget was quite justified, as was the financing of such items from mandatory assessments.

33. Recalling the efforts made to increase co-ordination and efficiency within the United Nations, he wished to warn against the dangers inherent in the radical reorganization and economy measures proposed by the major contributors. He also reiterated his proposal for a detailed analysis expressing, in real terms, the expansion in the United Nations budget over the past twenty-five years. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the developed countries would appreciate the need to participate, in their own interests, to the full extent of their capacity in the financing of the Organization's activities.

34. Mr. BERREZOUG (Algeria) said that he objected to the criticisms made by certain countries concerning the increase—in his opinion insignificant—in the total volume of the budget. The Organization's resources were far from excessive, considering the financial possibilities of the industrialized Powers and the immense needs of the developing countries.

35. He congratulated the Secretary-General on the improved presentation of the budget estimates and noted that the Committee was confronted with the same problems as in previous years, such as an increase in the staff of the Secretariat, a shortage of premises and proliferation of meetings.

36. On the subject of personnel, he thought that the Secretary-General should first fill the approved established posts which were still vacant before requesting new posts. However, so as not to impede the smooth functioning of the Organization, his delegation would agree to the allocation of funds for that item on the understanding that the Secretary-General would call for additional staff only to meet urgent needs and that recruitment would be undertaken on the basis of competence, linguistic balance in the Secretariat and equitable geographical distribution among Member States.

37. So far as the shortage of accommodation was concerned, his delegation had reservations at the prospect of an expansion of Headquarters in New York. In its view, a more satisfactory solution would be to relocate some United Nations activities elsewhere: in Switzerland or Austria, for example.

38. Although he considered the relative increase in the budget a perfectly natural phenomenon brought about by the expansion of the Organization's activities, he was nevertheless in favour of applying strict financial discipline in order to avoid waste while devoting the maximum resources to United Nations programmes. It was for that reason that his delegation would support the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. To ensure sound and disciplined administration without recourse to exaggerated budgetary retrenchment, he stressed the need to improve the programme formulation process, to define the Organization's concrete objectives and to translate them into medium-term and long-term programmes. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination was the appropriate body for such work; it should, however, be enabled to continue its complex task of co-ordinating the various programmes and establishing an order of priorities.

39. He expressed his delegation's reservations about the appropriation for the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea and, in conclusion, voiced the hope that on the eve of the Second United Nations Development Decade the industrialized countries would demonstrate goodwill with a view to wiping out the Organization's budgetary deficit.

40. Mr. THOMPSON (Guyana) said that in examining the budget estimates the Committee was not performing an academic task but was making judgements which would affect the implementation of specific developmental projects and would consequently have great human significance. His delegation considered that United Nations activities in the economic, social and human rights fields were of vital importance and, in that connexion, he recalled that the Minister of State for External Affairs of Guyana, in his statement in the General Assembly on 6 October 1969 (1780th plenary meeting), had expressed surprise at the hardening of attitudes on the part of the developed world in regard to the normal expansion in developmental activities carried on the Organization's budget. In that same statement, the Minister of State had called on the developed countries to take up the challenge of international development in the interests of the international community as a whole.

41. His delegation urged continuing expansion of United Nations activities, conscious of the need for financial discipline. However, the efforts undertaken to that end must be prudent ones: the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies and the Committee on the Reorganization of the Secretariat had performed a necessary task—one which the new Administrative Management Service was to continue. His delegation also supported the adoption of the proposals by the Enlarged Committee for Programme and Co-ordination for the reconstitution of CPC and the broadening of its terms of reference. But that intention to improve the operation of the United Nations must go hand-in-hand with a proper expansion of United Nations programmes. Repeating the words used by the Secretary-General, he stressed that "it is essential that the review and reorganization processes should not impede the necessary growth of the Organization, in keeping with its responsibilities" (A/7601/Add.1, para. 19). The methods of achieving those allied aims were matters which, in his

delegation's view, ought to be openly debated in the Fifth Committee and not, as some Member States appeared to wish, in some smaller informal body.

42. His delegation noted that of the 6 per cent increase in the budget estimates for 1970 over the approved estimate for 1969, only 2 per cent was occasioned by new programmes or the expansion of existing ones. It hoped that when the revised estimates were before the Committee, it would find a level of expenditure reflecting a growth rate more in keeping with the legitimate expectations of the developing countries and the need for the United Nations to discharge its responsibilities under the Charter effectively.

43. With regard to the Secretariat staff, his delegation would support the Secretary-General's requests, taking into account the reductions proposed by the Advisory Committee: it considered that the Secretary-General had been prudent to request only a small expansion of the permanent establishment for 1970 and that he had also been right not to argue that since the results of the manpower survey were not yet known he must keep the size of the establishment scrupulously at the same level as in 1969—for which there had never been a consensus in the Committee.

44. In his delegation's view, the planning estimate which the Committee would be considering for the first time could provide no more than an outline for the future and ought not to set a ceiling on expenditure, since it would be inappropriate to try to control growth in programmes through limitations on the level of the budget. In that regard he shared the view expressed by the Secretary-General that "the emphasis should rather be on improving the programme formulation process, on establishing concrete objectives for United Nations action and on translating these into long-term and medium-term programmes for which, in turn, budgetary provisions can be made" (*ibid.*, para. 20).

45. His delegation looked forward with interest to the two reports which were to be submitted to the Committee: the report on the possibility of expanding the income-producing activities of the United Nations—which, like the Indian representative, he hoped would be as comprehensive as possible—and the report on the problem of accommodation at Headquarters. On the latter subject, his delegation would like the possibility of decentralizing the Organization and relocating its economic and social activities in one of the under-developed countries to be considered. It trusted that no commitments would be assumed until a complete report on the matter had been submitted to the Committee.

46. The delegation of Guyana, like that of Pakistan, would emphasize how useful it would be for the Committee to be given a report on the mid-year budget performance for the current year, a report which appeared to be available to the Advisory Committee each year. He would be grateful if the representative of the Secretariat would comment on the possibility of providing such a report for the Committee's consideration.

47. Mr. CHMELA (Czechoslovakia) said that the Secretariat's task was to ensure the most effective use of available resources: the more limited the resources, the greater the

significance of the task. In many cases the United Nations took the easiest way out—that of budgetary expansion—in attempting to make ends meet. That unfortunate tendency could not be corrected at the time when the budget estimates came up for examination; it was during the establishment of the Organization's work programme in the light of available resources and the order of priorities that Member States should redouble their efforts and their vigilance. In searching for a way out of existing financial difficulties, the Committee should place emphasis on effective control over budgetary expansion and on the use of resources primarily to finance priority tasks and should request the cancellation of certain programmes and the elimination of certain sections of the budget which no longer corresponded to current needs and, in some cases, actually violated the provisions of the United Nations Charter. The efficient operation of the Organization should likewise be ensured by the selection of highly qualified staff members, recruited in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

48. His delegation did not advocate "economy at any price". Nevertheless, after studying the budget estimates it was forced to conclude that the rate of growth of expenditures was too high and did not correspond to the expansion of the Organization's activities. It therefore had grave reservations about the proposed figures, even taking into account the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee—reductions which his delegation considered inadequate. In addition, the current total of the budget estimates would probably be increased by requests for supplementary appropriations in 1970, a practice which should be resorted to only for expenditure which was really unforeseen and extraordinary. That did not seem to be the case as far as the supplementary estimates for 1969 went.

49. He was convinced that during its discussions the Committee would find a way to achieve savings in the biggest and most controversial expenditure of the budget, staff costs, in order to ensure more effective utilization of resources.

50. His delegation believed that measures should be taken in two fundamental directions: towards the elimination of expenditures which did not belong in the budget and towards the reduction of sections where the proposed amounts did not seem justified.

51. The first thing that must be eliminated from the budget was illegal expenditure such as the amounts included under section 12, chapters I and IV, and section 17, chapter III; that would result in a saving of more than \$9 million. His Government refused to contribute to the financing of such items and would vote against the adoption of the corresponding appropriation. His delegation's position of principle in that regard was well known, and he would therefore confine himself to emphasizing that it demanded the dissolution of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea.

52. Likewise, the expenses connected with technical assistance activities involved the financing of operational activities which should not, as such, be charged to the regular budget of the United Nations, but should be financed from voluntary contributions. To do so would

lead not to a restriction of programmes of technical assistance to the developing countries, but to a restriction of the corresponding administrative costs, which hardly served their interest. The elimination from the budget of expenses connected with the regular programme of technical assistance would make possible a reduction of almost \$7 million.

53. He also proposed that staff costs should be reduced by the adoption of modern methods of management, organization and co-ordination. His delegation supported proposals in that spirit and welcomed some recommendations made by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee concerning the utilization of more modern techniques, the elimination of duplication in the work of control and co-ordination organs, a more detailed formulation of work programmes and the fixing of priorities. However, the introduction of new methods should lead without exception to a reduction, and not an increase, of budgetary expenditure.

54. He regretted the increasing use being made of experts and consultants, despite the large staff of the Secretariat. It was to be hoped that the current survey of staff utilization and deployment would yield positive results in that respect and also increase the efficiency of the Secretariat.

55. Lastly, he considered that section 11 of the budget estimates clearly illustrated the need to check the proliferation and expansion of United Nations organs and committees, the multiplication of conferences and meetings, and the runaway growth of the resulting documentation. Efforts had been made to remedy that situation, but the results achieved had fallen short of expectations, as was clear from the reports of the Secretary-General (A/7579) and of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/7576 and Corr.1, annex), reports which he would comment on in connexion with the debate on agenda item 82, on publications and documentation of the United Nations.

56. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the Committee would recommend a reasonable budget which would nevertheless enable the United Nations to discharge its obligations in a satisfactory manner.

57. Mr. MINKOV (Bulgaria) observed that, despite the efforts made by the Secretary-General, the budget of the Organization was increasing every year and that increase was due mainly to personnel costs. Of course the needs of the Organization were growing every year too, but the major part of the increase in expenditure—4 per cent—was due to a general increase in rates and prices for the current volume of contractual services, supplies and equipment, while only 2 per cent went to new programmes. That was why his delegation stressed the need for seriously considering the possibility of decentralizing some services of the Organization in order to remove them from the effects of the constantly rising cost of living in New York.

58. A thorough analysis of the estimates for the financial year 1970 showed that once again the largest allocations were being requested for staff costs. Despite its reservations concerning the recruitment of additional staff, the Advisory Committee supported the Secretary-General's request for 74 new established posts and a further 234 posts on a

provisional basis. So many established posts should not be added until the desk-to-desk survey was completed. That had, moreover, been the view taken by the Advisory Committee, which the Bulgarian delegation had fully supported at the twenty-third session and which it still supported. It was only after the results of that survey were published that it would be clear whether or not the staff of the Secretariat should be increased. It was obvious that the efficiency of the Organization did not keep pace with the increase of staff.

59. In that connexion, there were still countries which were under-represented in the Secretariat, especially in the higher posts. It was high time that measures should be adopted to make the principle of equitable geographical distribution a reality.

60. His delegation also wished to protest the inclusion in the Organization's budget of the expenditure which in its opinion was illegal and constituted an additional burden on Member States, namely, the expenditure described in section 12, chapter I, relating to the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea, and section 17, chapter III, relating to the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea. His Government was not paying and would not pay the part of its assessment corresponding to such expenditure. It also refused to pay the amounts assessed upon it under section 12, chapter IV, relating to the United Nations bond issue. Its position on that subject remained the one it had stated at the twenty-second session of the General Assembly. With regard to part V, relating to technical programmes, his Government would pay its contribution in Bulgarian currency because it felt that those programmes should be financed by voluntary contributions and had no place in the regular budget of the Organization.

61. His delegation agreed with a number of other delegations that to enable the Organization to act as efficiently as possible in the political, social and economic fields, the number of seminars, conferences and meetings, and the expenditure on documentation, must be reduced. So many documents were printed daily that it was impossible for the smaller delegations to digest them. It was very important to avoid any overlapping of activities by different organs and bodies, a danger to which the Advisory Committee had drawn attention and on which it had issued a warning.

62. The co-ordination of the programmes of the Organization itself and the co-ordination of its programmes with those of most of the specialized agencies dealing with economic and social development left much to be desired. There was still a need for better co-ordination between the Economic and Social Council, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, and the Enlarged Committee for Programme and Co-ordination.

63. Mr. EL BAHI (Libya) recalled that, in his statement in the General Assembly on 7 October 1969 (1782nd plenary meeting), the Chairman of the delegation of the Libyan Arab Republic had expressed his Government's determination to honour its international obligations. Libya had contributed regularly within its capacity to the budgets of many United Nations agencies and would contribute to the budget of the Organization in the hope of furthering the

development of the under-developed countries. Anything the United Nations did to promote the economic and social development of the developing countries was a contribution to the cause of peace and of course required the financial support of Member States.

64. The increase in the Organization's indebtedness was a matter of serious concern to all States and would continue to be so unless the necessary steps were taken at the proper time. States could pave the way to a solution of that problem only by paying their contributions promptly and observing the established priorities. He reaffirmed his delegation's readiness to consider favourably any proposal to increase the income of the United Nations.

65. He noted with satisfaction that, thanks to the efforts of the Secretary-General, staff recruitment was now more in keeping with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The requirements of that principle did not necessarily conflict with the need for well-qualified staff if the under-represented countries were given the opportunity to recommend the right person for the right post.

66. His delegation welcomed the increased use of electronic equipment at the Secretariat.

67. One aspect of staff problems that must be taken into account was the rapid rise in the cost of living in New York, to which the representative of Saudi Arabia had drawn attention at the 1302nd meeting in connexion with his remarks concerning the lower grades of the Secretariat.

68. He believed that the activities of the Office of Public Information should be extended to the most remote countries of the world. It was important for the peoples of those countries, in Africa, Asia or the Pacific islands, to hear the voice of the United Nations and learn about the work it was doing for the good of mankind. In that connexion, the six points mentioned by the Iraqi representative at the 1305th meeting might provide a good starting-point for the planning of information programmes.

69. A number of delegations had criticized the increase in the budget, but he observed that the United Nations had not yet attained its objectives and would need more contributions in order to do so; the amount spent by the United Nations for all its activities was tiny in comparison with the amounts spent on armaments. While sharing the concern about the growth of the budget, his delegation believed that the solution of the problem did not lie in checking the expansion of vital United Nations activities.

70. His delegation was prepared to vote in favour of the appropriations requested for the financial year 1970, taking into account the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee, with the understanding that those reductions would not interfere with the vital activities of the Organization.

71. Mr. ROGERS (Canada) said that his Government shared the widely felt concern at ever-increasing expenditure of the United Nations and the proliferation of programmes and, like other Governments, recognized the need for better co-ordination of activities and more efficient use of resources. All Member States wished to

make the Organization more capable of carrying out its functions under the Charter; they wanted it not merely to engage in many activities but to take effective action. The Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, speaking in the General Assembly on 29 September 1969 (1769th plenary meeting) had warned against the danger of too much speech-making and too little action and had observed that a drift in that direction had already reduced the effectiveness of the United Nations and raised doubts about its ability to solve the problems of the world. The President of the General Assembly had herself brought up that problem in her reference at the 1753rd plenary meeting to the gradual decline of the United Nations in the eyes of public opinion.

72. A desire to see the United Nations take action meant a hope that it would achieve positive results. His delegation believed that the United Nations could be made more effective and, in particular, that the Secretariat could be made more efficient, since that was where a start had to be made. In that connexion, his delegation was awaiting with keen interest the staff utilization survey although it had been disappointed to learn that the survey was being conducted largely by Secretariat staff members rather than by outside management experts. He would be grateful if the representative of the Secretary-General would inform the Committee what qualifications the members of the survey teams possessed, whether each team had an outside consultant with expertise in modern techniques of management and whether their terms of reference authorized them to recommend radical changes in structure. He hoped that the character of the reports submitted would convince the Committee that the survey teams had done their work objectively even though their members belonged to the Secretariat. In addition, he wished to know whether the survey teams were authorized to recommend the termination of programmes which had achieved their objectives or had become of secondary importance. If that was not the case, the Joint Inspection Unit ought to be authorized to make the necessary investigation to determine which activities might be eliminated by reason of their reduced interest or usefulness.

73. He welcomed the establishment within the Secretariat of the Administrative Management Service and was gratified to learn that it would be directly responsible to the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management. He hoped that it would be staffed with people competent not only to oversee the effective implementation of reforms that might be recommended by the survey teams but also to apply the most modern techniques of management on a continuing basis throughout the Secretariat.

74. While his delegation sometimes criticized the organization of the Secretariat and expressed doubts regarding the competence of some of its members, its comments were always intended to be constructive. It was right for delegations to ask questions and express doubts or criticisms concerning some aspects of the work done by people who handled large sums of money derived from taxes paid by the nationals of Member States. At the same time, his delegation also recognized the excellent work done by many members of the Secretariat, particularly those who assisted the Fifth Committee. It realized that the General

Assembly and other United Nations bodies imposed heavy tasks on the Secretariat, which was expected to carry a steadily growing work load without any increase in staff or additional expense. It also knew that in most cases the Secretary-General and his closest associates were the ones who had to decide what activities should be given priority, since the various United Nations bodies seldom gave them clear instructions in the matter; sometimes they had to postpone some of the tasks entrusted to them, with the result that some Governments occasionally complained that the Secretariat was not doing its job. His delegation could only suggest that the Secretary-General should keep the General Assembly informed of his difficulties and take all steps necessary to ensure maximum efficiency. The Secretary-General should also report to the Assembly on his understanding of the priorities attached to those activities which did not fall within the competence of the Economic and Social Council. It would be particularly useful to have the Secretary-General's comments on projects and programmes authorized more than five years earlier; some of them might prove not to be worth the large amount of documentation devoted to them every year.

75. The volume of documentation was one factor impairing the Organization's efficiency, which, everyone agreed, would be improved by a reduction of paper work. There were too many documents, and delegations frequently received them too late to study them properly and take a useful part in the discussions. The situation was not hopeless, of course. Some progress had already been made: certain bodies had agreed to do without verbatim records, and many others without summary records; in that connexion, the Committee should reaffirm the decisions taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-third session regarding documentation and should stress the need to implement as soon as possible the excellent proposals made by the Joint Inspection Unit in its report (A/7576 and Corr.1, annex).

76. At that point, he wished to draw the Committee's attention to the question of duplication of documents, of which he cited two instances. On the one hand, it was the practice to issue certain statements, for example, by the Secretary-General, both as a press release and as an official document; in such cases, it should be possible to convert the press release into an official document by attaching an appropriate cover sheet. Another practice was the recording of debates both in summary records and in press releases; it was time that the latter were not issued in all the official languages, but surely, in the case of those languages in which they were issued, they could be converted—once again with the addition of a suitable cover page—into summary records. It should thus be simple to eliminate such duplications.

77. Meetings were so numerous that many Governments, including his own, could not arrange to be adequately represented at them. Everyone—both the United Nations and Governments—would benefit by a reduction in the number of meetings. The standard of documentation would also improve as a result; documents would be prepared earlier and could be studied more fully before meetings, and consequently the discussions would be on a higher level and more fruitful. The number of meetings held in New York and Geneva had doubled between 1960 and 1967,

chiefly because of the growing attention given to economic and social questions and matters concerning human rights; a start should therefore be made by reducing the number of meetings in connexion with those topics. The Economic and Social Council, which had already managed to reduce its documentation and meetings considerably, should be invited to take steps to ensure that the number of meetings of its subsidiary bodies were 20 per cent fewer by 1971. The secretariat of the Council had, a short time previously, submitted document E/L.1249,⁴ an excellent paper concerning measures which could be taken for that purpose. The Committee would be greatly helped in considering that matter if it had, in addition to that most useful document, information on the number of meetings held in New York and Geneva in 1968 and, if possible, in 1969.

78. He deplored the fact that the Committee could not yet consider the report to be issued by the Secretariat on the Office of Public Information; he assumed that it would be further delayed so that it might take account of the results of the staff utilization survey being conducted. His delegation would like the report to give a clear analysis of arrangements for marketing United Nations publications; apparently, Office of Public Information rarely if ever engaged in market surveys to ascertain potential demand for those publications. There was no doubt that a more energetic sales promotion programme would result in a wider dissemination of information about United Nations activities, not to speak of increased revenues, which was a not insignificant factor.

79. With regard to the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/7611 and Corr.1) he recalled that at the twenty-third session his delegation had stated (1266th meeting) that it did not support the idea that the Committee on Contributions should conduct a review of the criteria it used in establishing the scale of assessments in view of the fact that that review had already been made. It was gratified to note, however, that after reviewing those criteria and its own terms of reference, the Committee had reaffirmed earlier conclusions that the existing criteria and guidelines for the establishment of the scale of assessments were by and large satisfactory. The Committee had noted that those principles had withstood the test of time and permitted the establishment of a balanced and equitable scale based primarily on the principle of capacity to pay. It was also gratifying to note that as it now had two members from the African group, the Committee on Contribution could speak for all geographical regions. The Canadian delegation consequently supported the conclusions contained in paragraph 47 of the report.

80. With regard to language training, he recalled that his delegation had played an active part in the formulation of General Assembly resolution 2480B (XXIII), which was designed to achieve a linguistic balance in the Secretariat. The language training programme was the tool for implementing that resolution and he trusted that the Secretariat was providing the necessary classroom facilities, instructors and support staff for that purpose. He would welcome information from the Secretary-General regarding the equipment and facilities which had been made available to the participants in the programme during the year 1969.

⁴ Mimeographed.

81. His delegation was glad to note that greater use was being made within the Secretariat of electronic data-processing equipment and computer services because it felt that they would undoubtedly enhance the effectiveness of the Secretariat and enable it to bring about economies in paperwork and staff.

82. With regard to the budget itself, he wished to say that he shared the concern expressed by the Secretary-General at the 1299th meeting (A/C.5/1233, para. 33) about the deteriorating cash position of the Organization, which was due primarily to delays by Governments in the payment of contributions. He deplored the fact that the Secretary-General had to borrow in order to meet current expenses.

83. His delegation also shared the concern expressed by other delegations about the increasing costs of the United Nations and its associated agencies. It was reassured to hear that the Secretary-General had kept it in mind in preparing the budget estimates for 1970 and that he had endeavoured to keep the level of expenditure down to a minimum. The Canadian delegation did not agree with those who would arbitrarily set maximum growth rates or ceilings on the budget. It felt that savings should be made and that the reforms it had proposed would result in such savings. However, since it was primarily concerned with effectiveness, it was suggesting a period of reorganization and consolidation of existing resources. Accordingly, it had reservations concerning the funds requested for 234 provisional staff during 1970. It was illogical to add more staff when a survey was under way to determine the appropriate number and distribution of existing staff. His delegation would welcome further justification of that request by the Secretary-General, particularly since there were 200 vacancies in the Secretariat when it was put forward. Since then the number of vacant posts had been substantially reduced so that the need for additional staff was no longer as urgent.

84. The Canadian delegation had supported the decision to undertake a survey of staff utilization because it believed, as did the Advisory Committee, that there was "an unevenness in the intensity of the use of posts and that savings might be achieved either by a reorganization of work within the Secretariat or by a redeployment of staff" (A/7608, para. 65). It trusted that the Secretary-General would administer his staff as flexibly as was necessary, that is, that he would not tolerate rigid compartmentalization. No unit should have a fixed number of posts and the staffing pattern must reflect changing conditions and allow for a rearrangement of responsibilities.

85. He noted that a practice had developed over the years in some units of the Secretariat of recruiting specialists for periods of less than a year and charging the costs to resources allocated for programmes rather than to personnel appropriations. He had the impression that some individuals had been employed almost continuously under short-term contracts for many years. While it did not question the legality of that arrangement, his delegation feared that it had the effect of concealing real personnel costs.

86. The Canadian delegation had consistently supported reasonable rates of growth in programmes and budgets, but it shared the concern expressed by the developing countries that only 2 per cent of the budget increase was attributable to new programmes.

87. He looked forward with much interest to receiving the Advisory Committee's report on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. He hoped that the Committee would recommend a tightening of the rules governing the Secretary-General's authority to incur such expenditure. The Secretariat had sometimes had recourse too easily to that authority instead of taking the necessary steps to operate within the approved budget.

88. With reference to the financial implications of decisions taken by other Committees of the Assembly, he expressed the desire that the Secretariat should give the Fifth Committee a list by the end of October of the known or probable additional sums which would have to be included in the budget under that heading. The Committee should be given revised lists by mid-November and thereafter once a week until the end of the session. In that way, the Committee would be able to keep abreast of the situation and would be forewarned of the possible magnitude of the additional expenditure which would have to be included in the budget. Moreover, it would be enabled to determine the relative importance of new projects. His delegation would welcome comments from the Controller on that proposal.

89. Subject to the reservations he had made with regard to the request for provisional posts, he considered the budget estimates for 1970 to be reasonable and was prepared, in principle, to approve them. His delegation would consider the revised estimates resulting from decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions and any other revised estimates which might be submitted during the current session with an open mind, but it would wish to scrutinize them carefully.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.