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MEETING**

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*Chairman:* Mr. Harry MORRIS (Liberia).

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. HAROLD HOLT,  
PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

1. On the occasion of the death of Mr. Holt, the CHAIRMAN offered the Committee's condolences and his own to the Australian delegation, to the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia and to the family of the deceased.
2. Mr. LYNCH (New Zealand) and Mr. FENSOME (United Kingdom) paid a tribute to the memory of Mr. Holt, and offered their condolences to the Australian delegation, the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia and Mr. Holt's family.
3. Mr. KELSO (Australia) thanked the Chairman and the New Zealand and United Kingdom representatives, and said that he would convey their messages of sympathy to the Australian Government and to the deceased's family.

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 (concluded)\*

DRAFT REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (A/C.5/L.937)

*The draft report (A/C.5/L.937) was adopted.*

AGENDA ITEM 73

Supplementary estimates for the financial year 1967 (concluded)\*\*

DRAFT REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (A/C.5/L.910)

4. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the draft resolution on the supplementary estimates for the financial year 1967 contained in the draft report (A/C.5/L.910, para. 15). He invited the Committee to vote on part A of the draft resolution, relating to the revised estimates for the financial year 1967.

*Part A of the draft resolution was adopted by 53 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.*

5. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee adopt part B of the draft resolution, relating to the revised estimates of income for the financial year 1967.

*Part B of the draft resolution was adopted unanimously.*

6. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the draft report as a whole.

*The draft report (A/C.5/L.910) was adopted.*

AGENDA ITEM 75

Pattern of conferences (A/6991 and Corr.1):  
(a) Report of the Committee on Conferences;  
(b) Report of the Secretary-General

7. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that, as the Secretary-General had submitted his reports to the Committee on Conferences in accordance with the requirements of General Assembly resolution 2239 (XXI), there would be no separate report by the Secretary-General on the item under consideration at the current session.

8. Mr. LYNCH (New Zealand), speaking as Chairman of the Committee on Conferences, introduced that Com-

\*Resumed from the 1219th meeting.

\*\*Resumed from the 1226th meeting.

mittee's report (A/6991 and Corr.1). In the absence of precedents, the Committee had been obliged as a first step to determine its status in regard to the other main bodies of the General Assembly, and to acquaint itself with the procedures prescribed in General Assembly resolution 2239 (XXI). It had received valuable assistance from the Secretariat, and had based its views to a large extent on the comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The Committee on Conferences, in paragraphs 9 to 12 of its report, had outlined the principles which it had used as a basis for its work. In paragraphs 13 to 18, it had explained the problems involved in servicing conferences and had expressed its views on the subject. It had not been able to examine all the problems exhaustively and its recommendations were, of necessity, only preliminary. Most of the Committee's recommendations, contained in paragraphs 20 to 25, were directed to certain aspects of the problem, relating to procedures and machinery. They did not constitute a final list of basic principles to be used in establishing a rational conference programme.

9. The main task of the Committee on Conferences had been to establish a balanced programme, paying due regard both to the wishes of Member States and to the resources available for servicing conferences and meetings. In paragraph 39 the Committee had expressed some misgivings about the programme of conferences and meetings scheduled for 1968, and had associated itself with the grave concern expressed by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee. In paragraph 35 it had stated that its discussions with the Secretariat officials responsible for conference services had confirmed that 1968 would indeed be an extraordinarily difficult year from the servicing point of view. It had not recommended any reductions in the programme for 1968 because, at that late stage, there had been little possibility of proposing changes; and it had therefore concluded that, if it were to be able to fulfil its mandate, it should in future begin its work with a detailed consideration of the calendar of regular meetings. But, as it was doubtful whether the three months of the General Assembly's regular session were enough for a serious consideration of that kind, the Committee's members had agreed—as indicated in paragraph 40—that they should meet outside, as well as during, the General Assembly's regular session. The Committee had considered the question of the definition of the term "major special conference". Its comments on the subject—in paragraphs 26 to 34—were preliminary, and it had recognized that the question would have to be studied in greater detail before it could submit a final recommendation.

10. Mr. FRANCIS (Canada) commended the Committee on Conferences for producing a very useful report and congratulated it on the manner in which it had dealt with the difficult task assigned to it. His delegation was disappointed that the Committee had not been able to recommend reductions for 1968, but it fully appreciated that that would have been a difficult step to take with a programme which was already firmly established. It agreed with the Committee on Conferences that the programme of meetings for 1968 should be regarded as exceptional

and that Member States should be asked to cooperate in measures to ensure a more reasonable distribution of conferences and meetings in future years.

11. The difficulties encountered by the Committee on Conferences at its first session could be mitigated considerably if it were to meet early in 1968 to begin its examination of the programme of conferences and meetings for 1969 and 1970. The Committee would then be in a position to propose changes before the programme had been finally established. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed the request contained in operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution proposed by the Committee on Conferences (A/6991 and Corr.1, para. 41). In that connexion, it would like to restate its view that it was for Governments of Member States, and not for the Committee on Conferences, to resolve the problem of the proliferation of conferences and meetings; and it agreed entirely with the comment made in the last sentence of paragraph 10 of the Committee's report. The recommendations contained in paragraphs 20 to 25 of the report would be useful, and should help a great deal to rationalize United Nations conference programmes in future years.

12. His delegation supported the views expressed in the fourth and fifth sentences of paragraph 23. If an order of priority could be established, the timing of conferences and meetings of lesser importance would depend on the availability of conference resources at any particular time in any given year.

13. His delegation hoped that the Committee on Conferences would give close attention to the location and dates of individual meetings and conferences, in order to avoid any unnecessary bunching in the conference programme. In that connexion, it agreed with the comment made in the last sentence of paragraph 20. With reference to the letter—quoted in paragraph 38 of the report—which the Committee had decided to address to the President of the General Assembly, it would be helpful if all resolutions establishing new conferences were to include a paragraph requesting the organ responsible to seek the advice of the Committee on Conferences with regard to the timing and location of the proposed conference. His delegation would support the draft resolution submitted by the Committee on Conferences and hoped that that Committee would be able to make some firmer recommendations in regard to the 1969 calendar of conferences and meetings.

14. Mr. CAHEN (Belgium) commended the report of the Committee on Conferences, which contained—for example in paragraph 7 to 25—a number of observations which would be highly valuable for the future. He regretted, however, that the report, no doubt because of the unfavourable circumstances in which the Committee on Conferences had been obliged to work and, especially, the period during which it had met, contained hardly any specific recommendations for improving the calendar of conferences.

15. His delegation believed that the Committee on Conferences should carry out a critical review of the programme of conferences and meetings at the be-

ginning of the year, with a view to making a reasoned recommendation for the retention, cancellation or postponement and, possibly, the conditions and date and place of each meeting or conference. The Committee's report should be considered at the start of the General Assembly's session by the Fifth Committee, which would approve it with two considerations in mind: to respect the authority of organs calling for the meeting or conference, and to prevent the anarchic proliferation of meetings. The Committee's judgements and recommendations, as endorsed by the Fifth Committee, would be transmitted early in October to the appropriation organs, which would be requested to reconsider their decisions accordingly and inform the Fifth Committee of their final decision. Any disagreements between the organs concerned and the Fifth Committee which could not be overcome would be drawn to the attention of the General Assembly by the Fifth Committee. The Committee on Conferences would submit additional reports on conferences and meetings decided on during the session of the General Assembly.

16. For the moment his delegation would endorse the report of the Committee on Conferences and vote for the draft resolution contained in it.

17. Mr. FENSOME (United Kingdom) paid tribute to the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences for the leadership he had given the Committee.

18. The United Kingdom Government regretted the proliferation of conferences and meetings, and was concerned about the fact that despite the terms of paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 2116 (XX) eight special conferences were scheduled for 1968. Expenditure under section 2 (Special conferences and meetings) of the budget was mounting, and considerable manpower and financial resources were required for the preparation and servicing of meetings. In many cases, moreover, the representatives of States now had no time to prepare themselves adequately for the many meetings held.

19. Nevertheless, since the problem was clearly a very difficult one and the Committee on Conferences had had very little time, his delegation found it understandable that the Committee should have decided to confine its examination of the 1968 calendar of conferences and meetings to a review of proposals for new conferences and meetings. Much of the preparatory work for the conferences planned for 1968 had already been done, so that the Committee's freedom of action for the coming year had been very limited, but his delegation earnestly hoped that the Committee on Conferences would meet as early as possible in 1968 to begin examination of the schedule of meetings and conferences for 1969, and that it would thus be able to exercise a moderating influence on the programme. He would vote in favour of the draft resolution in the Committee's report, which contained a provision to that effect.

20. His delegation also attached considerable importance to the definition of the term "major special conference". Any definition would inevitably be somewhat arbitrary in nature, and should be subject to review in the light of experience. He felt certain, however, that it would be impossible to moderate

the calendar of meetings and conferences unless Member States were prepared to accept a measure of self-imposed discipline and self-denial.

21. Mr. SERBANESCU (Romania) said that in paragraph 19 of his foreword to the budget estimates for the financial year 1968 (A/6705 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General had observed that since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2239 (XXI) the conference programme and its attendant documentation needs had shown no signs of abatement. Although the Assembly had made it clear that there should be only one major conference a year, nine were planned for 1968. He believed that that situation arose from a kind of "conference fetishism" which saw the calling of a conference or meeting as the simplest way of solving all problems, whether the factors for success were present or not. And since every State tenaciously defended any meeting it had itself proposed, countries which had solemnly adopted a resolution to limit the conference programme could ultimately be found recommending, "in a spirit of compromise", that all the proposed conferences should take place. Although that situation was primarily due to the inconsistency of Member States, the Secretariat too was open to criticism for not using the objective information it had at its disposal to exert a moderating influence.

22. His delegation had read the report of the Committee on Conferences with interest, but had been disappointed by the weakness of its conclusions and recommendations. It wondered whether that weakness was due solely to the circumstances in which the Committee had been obliged to work, or whether it was equally attributable to the deficiencies found in all bodies of that kind. His delegation hoped that at the twenty-third session the Fifth Committee would be able to record the first substantial results of the work of the Committee on Conferences.

23. The CHAIRMAN said that if there were no objections he would take it that the Committee endorsed the draft resolution proposed by the Committee on Conferences (A/6991 and Corr.1, para. 41).

*It was so decided.*

24. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would consider that the Committee approved the report of the Committee on Conferences (A/6991 and Corr.1) as a whole.

*It was so decided.*

*Mr. Esfandiary (Iran), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

#### 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/6922, A/6948, A/6953, A/6974, A/6978, A/6983, 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.5/1137, A/C.5/1138, A/C.5/1142, A/C.5/1143, A/C.5/1145-1147, A/C.5/1149, A/C.5/1153, A/C.5/1154, A/C.5/1155 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1157, A/C.5/L.901, A/C.5/L.908 and Corr.1,

A/C.5/L.917/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.922, A/C.5/L.927, A/C.5/L.932, A/C.5/L.935, A/C.5/L.938 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.939, A/C.5/L.940)

Draft resolution on the United Nations regular budget  
(continued) (A/C.5/L.917/Rev.1, A/C.5/L.940)

25. Mr. WALDRON-RAMSEY (United Republic of Tanzania) said that his delegation, which was concentrating its efforts on activities directly concerned with the economic and social development of the third world, found that the Fifth Committee's viewpoint did not always coincide with the wishes of the other organs of the United Nations. The four-Power draft resolution (A/C.5/L.917/Rev.1) was dangerous because it would limit the total financial resources available to United Nations organs and might thus disappoint the hopes which the developing countries placed in such organs as UNCTAD, UNIDO and UNDP. That was the reason why the Tanzanian delegation submitted amendments (A/C.5/L.940) to the draft resolution before the Committee.

26. Under the first of those amendments, the word "preliminary", in the sixth preambular paragraph, would be replaced by the word "provisional", which was more correct and better expressed the fact that approximate estimates could hardly be regarded as final.

27. The second amendment, under which the words "act thereon", at the end of the same paragraph, would be replaced by the words "be appraised by foreseeable expenditures of known programmes", was more in line with the goal sought by the draft resolution and would enable the General Assembly to be informed two years in advance that certain expenditures would be required for certain programmes.

28. The third amendment provided for the addition of a seventh preambular paragraph, which would read:

"Recognizing further that the nature of 'unforeseen and extraordinary expenses' in contemporary international affairs is likely to be manifestly different from what it was in earlier decades;"

The question of the definition of such expenses was extremely important; and, in that connexion, his delegation would not entirely agree with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, which in his delegation's view was clinging to a definition evolved at a time when the international picture had not been that of today. For example, the Advisory Committee in its main report, (see A/6707 and Corr.1-3, paras. 63 and 64) had criticized the establishment by the Commission on Human Rights<sup>1/</sup> of a group of experts composed of five jurists to investigate the ill-treatment of detainees in South African prisons; the Advisory Committee, unlike the Commission, thought that the existing definition of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses did not cover the creation of such a group. That being so, a new definition of that concept, reflecting the realities of contemporary international life, was essential. Events such as those which had occurred in Rhodesia and South West Africa showed

that unforeseen situations arose which might necessitate urgent measures; clearly, therefore, steps should be taken to ensure that they could be dealt with without delay.

29. The aim of the fourth amendment was to add an eighth preambular paragraph, which would read:

"Affirming that each session of the General Assembly is master of its own affairs;"

Both practice and experience and the rules of procedure showed that that was the case, and it would be constitutionally dangerous to authorize one assembly to take decisions which would tie the hands of another assembly which was not to meet until two years later.

30. The fifth amendment, to which the sponsors of the draft resolution should not have any objection, would make operative paragraph 4 paragraph 1. Clearly programmes were more important than any budgetary considerations, and if that obvious fact was stated at the beginning of the operative part of the draft resolution, the effect would simply be to stress that programmes should be regarded as the dominant consideration where budgetary provisions were concerned.

31. The sixth amendment, under which the words in paragraph 4 "bearing in mind the provisions of operative paragraph 1 and" would be deleted, was a consequence of that rearrangement.

32. The seventh amendment provided for the addition of the words "and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination" after first mention of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in operative paragraph 1, and the replacement of the word "its", in the same paragraph, by the word "their". The planning estimate should be reviewed not only by the Advisory Committee but also by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, which, moreover, did in fact have responsibilities of that kind. At its first session, in 1967, that Committee had made a detailed review of United Nations activities in the economic, social and human rights fields. It had then held a joint meeting with ACC, and the results had been of great assistance to the work of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. Thus the only purpose of the amendment was to draw attention to a procedure which in any case actually existed.

33. The eighth amendment was the direct outcome of the seventh, providing for the addition of the words "and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination" after the second reference to the Advisory Committee, in the same paragraph. It also called for the addition of the word "provisionally" after the word "approve", in the same sentence. The approval had to be provisional, since one assembly could not take decisions binding a subsequent assembly.

34. The ninth amendment, under which the word "provisionally" would be added in operative paragraph 2 after the word "approved", was needed for the sake of coherence and logic.

<sup>1/</sup> See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 6, para. 268, resolution 2 (XXIII).

35. The tenth amendment merely took note of an obvious fact: that United Nations bodies were masters of their own decisions and their programmes. That being so, the words "to be guided by the planning estimate" at the end of operative paragraph 2 should be replaced by the words "to take into consideration, where necessary, the elements contained in the planning estimates approved provisionally by the General Assembly".

36. The eleventh amendment, calling for the addition of the words "and any relevant criteria" at the end of operative paragraph 4, needed no comment.

37. Under the twelfth amendment the words "bearing also in mind the fact that the realities of contemporary international experience do not permit any untoward restrictions on the activities of international organizations" would be added after the words "planning estimate" in operative paragraph 6. As he had already said, the Advisory Committee, when it sought in consultation with the Secretary-General to formulate an appropriate definition of "unforeseen and extraordinary expenses" should bear present realities in mind. The Advisory Committee tended to adopt a somewhat narrow approach when it came to applying that notion in emergency situations of the kind which might arise in the Middle East or Latin America, for example. In the economic sphere, similarly, UNCTAD might well one day have to provide immediate assistance to a Member State facing serious economic difficulties. Any recommendation made by the Advisory Committee would be referred to the General Assembly, which would have the final say. However, the Advisory Committee should be told in advance that it must show political understanding of the realities of the current world situation.

38. The thirteenth amendment provided for the deletion of the end of operative paragraph 6, after the words "unforeseen and extraordinary expenses". The question of the definition of those expenses was important enough to be dealt with in a separate paragraph. However, if the sponsors of the draft resolution believed that the end of the paragraph should be retained, his delegation would suggest that it should be covered by a new paragraph.

39. The fourteenth amendment, which called for the substitution of the word "might" for the word "shall" in operative paragraph 7, was prompted by the consideration that one Assembly could not impose a decision on a subsequent Assembly.

40. His delegation had felt obliged to submit the amendments he had just explained because, not having been consulted, it had felt free to express its views and submit proposals, and because the issues raised in draft resolution A/C.5/L.917/Rev.1 were very important and might have very dangerous consequences. It was undoubtedly important to ensure that available resources were used to the best possible effect, but it was no less true that existing realities had to be borne in mind, realities with which the developing countries were very familiar. Furthermore, the Tanzanian delegation felt that the question of drawing up a planning estimate was in no way urgent, and therefore suggested that it should be postponed to the twenty-third session of the General Assembly, so that the Secretary-General might meanwhile transmit draft resolution A/C.5/L.917/Rev.1 and any proposed amendments to the Governments of the Member States. Member States would then be able to express their views and make their comments after thorough study, which the small delegations could not do at the present time, since they had smaller staffs than the four great Powers sponsoring the draft resolution.

*Mr. Morris (Liberia) resumed the Chair.*

41. The CHAIRMAN said that, although he had never yet made a direct appeal to the members of the Committee to exercise a degree of restraint in proposing amendments to draft resolutions or in making statements, he now felt bound to do so in connexion with the amendments which had just been submitted by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania. He was doing so in order that the business of the Fifth Committee might be concluded on schedule, and in order that he, as a citizen of a developing country, might be able to take pride in the results of the several weeks of consultations which had led to the compromise between the developed and the developing worlds reflected in draft resolution A/C.5/L.917/Rev.1. He therefore asked the Tanzanian representative to agree to have his observations set out, in less controversial form, in the summary record of the meeting and the Committee's report, without obliging the Committee to pass judgement on last-minute proposals.

42. Mr. LOQUMAN (Mauritania) said that he attached great importance to the Tanzanian amendments and proposed that the meeting should be adjourned, to enable him to explain his views on them during the afternoon.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*