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Chairman: Mr. Max H. WERSHOF (Canada).

AGENDA ITEM 73

Budget estimates for the financial year 1971 (continued)* (A/7822, A/7937, A/7968, A/7987 and Add.1, A/8006, A/8008 and Add.1, A/8032, A/8033, A/8072, A/8122, A/8133, A/C.5/1296, A/C.5/1298, A/C.5/1302 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1303, A/C.5/1305, A/C.5/1307, A/C.5/1309, A/C.5/1310, A/C.5/1315, A/C.5/1317, A/C.5/1319, A/C.5/L.1041)

General discussion (continued)*

1. Mr. MAROOFI (Afghanistan) said that, in view of the interest it had always taken in the Organization's plans and programmes, his delegation could not but express its deep concern at the 9.5 per cent annual growth in the expenditures of the United Nations. The developing countries would find it difficult to increase their contributions to the Organization without diverting funds from development projects already under way and consequently impeding their economic progress. His delegation therefore endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that gross expenditure be reduced; the proposed reduction should not, however, adversely affect the Organization's programmes of assistance to developing countries, particularly those designed to promote human rights and economic, social and cultural development.
2. His delegation attached particular importance to the appropriation under section 18 of the budget estimates for the financial year 1971 (A/8006) for the international protection of refugees. Section 10 of the budget estimates merited close attention and efforts should be made to keep general expenses as low as possible. In view of the Organization's financial difficulties, expenses relating to the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea and the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea aggravated the financial difficulties facing the Organization. Priorities must be established if the best use was to be made of available resources.
3. Turning to the question of the allocation of posts within the Secretariat, he said that little progress seemed to have been made in applying the principle of equitable geographic distribution. In that connexion,

* Resumed from the 1372nd meeting.

it was to be hoped that greater attention would be paid to bridging the gap between the over-represented and the under-represented countries. Standards of efficiency must no longer be used as an excuse for providing further employment for members of over-represented and highly developed countries. His Government did not wish to suggest that the standards of the Secretariat should be lowered; on the contrary, it set great store by competence and integrity and took great care to ensure that only the best qualified of its nationals were recommended for service with the Secretariat. In order to achieve a more equitable geographic distribution of posts, the Secretariat should give consideration to the candidatures of nationals of under-represented countries for fixed-term contracts, particularly in the middle and high professional grades.

4. It was to be hoped that the Secretariat would continue its efforts to reduce the volume of documentation.
5. The fact that the Office of Public Information disseminated its information in European languages meant that large sections of the populations of many countries were unaware of United Nations activities. Steps should therefore be taken to disseminate information in the indigenous languages of the developing countries and thus publicize the achievements of the Organization.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/8147 ON AGENDA ITEM 84 (continued)*** (A/C.5/1314 and Add.1)**

6. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/C.5/1314/Add.1 containing the information relating to the estimated cost of the 1971 session of the International Law Commission requested by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at the Fifth Committee's 1371st meeting.
7. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to the information tabulated in document A/C.5/1314/Add.1, noted that whereas a ten-week session of the International Law Commission would involve expenditure of \$59,000 under section 3, an additional four weeks in session would involve expenditure of \$91,000 under the same section. What was the reason for that difference of almost 30 per cent?

** Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its twenty-second session.

*** Resumed from the 1371st meeting.

8. Mr. COIDAN (Director of the Budget Division) said that meetings at Geneva were, as far possible, serviced by permanent staff, and the Commission's 1971 session had been fitted into the calendar of conferences on that basis. If extended by the four weeks, as recommended in the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee (A/8147, para. 126), it would overlap with sessions of ECE and the Economic and Social Council and consequently entail the engagement of some 60-70 additional temporary staff. For that reason, expenditure in respect of each additional week the Commission was in session would be some three times greater than that for each week of the planned regular session.

9. Mr. CLELAND (Ghana) said that, in accordance with operative paragraph 4 of the Sixth Committee's draft resolution, the General Assembly would recommend that the International Law Commission should continue its work in various fields. New members were due to be elected to the Commission in 1971 and, assuming that the four-week extension was not granted, it would take least three years for the draft articles now under consideration by the Commission to be finalized if they were referred to a newly constituted Commission. His delegation attached the greatest importance to the further codification and development of international law and, since it believed that it might cost the Organization more if the uncompleted work of the Commission as presently constituted were referred to a new Commission, he approved the statement of financial implications in documents A/C.5/1314 and Add.1.

10. Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the Fifth Committee's report to the General Assembly should make it quite clear that an extension of the International Law Commission's session would cost \$107,000 and that an allocation for that amount had already been included in the 1971 budget estimates. His delegation had reservations with regard to any such extension and had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution in the Sixth Committee.

11. The CHAIRMAN said that the position to which the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania had referred would be made quite clear to the General Assembly.

12. Mr. ASHWIN (Australia) said that the Fifth Committee's report to the General Assembly should state clearly that the Commission's decision to request the Secretary-General to prepare new editions of the publication entitled *The Work of the International Law Commission* would entail additional expenditure of \$17,200. Alternatively, it should indicate that, if the book was not published, savings in the same amount would be achieved under section 10. His country strongly supported the Commission's work and believed that it should be adequately publicized, but it objected to a decision to reissue the publication in question little more than three years after it was first published, at a time when there was great pressure on the United Nations budget and when all the material to be included was readily available from other sources. He asked that the Fifth Committee's report should indicate that

some delegations had expressed the opinion that expenditure for reprinting the publication was unwarranted.

13. Mr. MEYER PICON (Mexico) recalled that, in his statement at the Committee's 1371st meeting, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had indicated that, in that Committee's opinion, the \$17,200 required under chapter III of section 10 for the publication entitled *The Work of the International Law Commission* could be absorbed by a rearrangement of priorities in the publications programme. The whole question of those priorities was extremely delicate. Who was to say whether a publication was entitled to priority? The Sixth Committee would do well to ponder whether the publications to be prepared pursuant to operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution (A/8147, para. 126) really did warrant the highest priority or could be postponed until 1972.

14. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation, too, felt that it was unnecessary to reissue the publication entitled *The Work of the International Law Commission* so soon after the publication of the first edition. Furthermore, it could not be argued that no additional expenditure was involved if the costs were absorbed by a structuring of the printing programme: additional resources would inevitably be required. The General Assembly should be told what the relevant costs would be.

15. He asked whether it was correct that the whole of the \$150,000 estimated cost under Section 3 related to the engagement of additional temporary staff for the 1971 session.

16. The CHAIRMAN drew the USSR representative's attention to paragraph 3 of document A/C.5/1314, in which the Secretary-General had estimated the additional cost of the publication entitled *The Work of the International Law Commission* at \$17,200: \$16,100 for printing and \$1,100 for translation. Neither the representative of the Secretary-General nor the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had said that there would be no additional cost; the Advisory Committee had recommended only that the Secretary-General should find the necessary amount within the regular budget.

17. Mr. COIDAN (Director of the Budget Division) said that, although the United Nations Office at Geneva made every effort to use its regular staff to service meetings such as those of the International Law Commission, it was compelled to recruit temporary staff when it could not. The estimates of \$59,000 and \$91,000 to which the USSR representative had referred did indeed represent the cost of additional temporary personnel: the two figures differed so substantially because with other bodies meeting concurrently, there would be fewer regular staff available during the additional four-week period and more temporary personnel would have to be recruited.

18. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled that, when the Advisory Committee had

examined the initial budget estimates in June, it had recommended that the International Law Commission should hold its proposed additional four-week session, not as a separate session, but as a prolongation of its regular session and the Commission had acceded to that recommendation. The Advisory Committee had therefore recommended the appropriate reductions, which had been accepted by the Secretary-General. Consequently, the additional cost of the four-week extension of the session would be \$114,000. Since \$107,000 of that amount had already been included in the budget estimates for 1971, the Advisory Committee had felt that the remaining \$7,000 could easily be absorbed within the regular budget under section 11.

19. In commenting on the Commission's proposed publication entitled *The Work of the International Law Commission* at the 1371st meeting, he had said that, if the General Assembly adopted the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee and considered the publication of the new edition as a priority item, the Secretary-General should rearrange the programme of publications of the Office of Public Information under section 10, chapter III, to accommodate the new edition without the need for an additional appropriation. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee had recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that no additional appropriation would be necessary under the 1971 budget estimates.

20. The CHAIRMAN, noting that the Committee was required under rule 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to inform the General Assembly of the financial effect on the budget of any proposal involving anticipated expenditure and that the Committee had no other proposals before it, suggested that the Committee might take the following course of action.

21. The Committee should decide to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution of the Sixth Committee the expenses entailed by extending the International Law Commission's session by an additional four weeks in 1971 would amount to \$114,000, of which \$107,000 had already been included in the initial estimates for 1971. Further, the costs of producing up-to-date editions of the two publications mentioned in operative paragraph 5 of the draft were estimated to be \$17,200. The Fifth Committee accepted the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the additional cost of the Sixth Committee's proposals over and above the amount of \$107,000 included in the initial estimates—namely \$24,200, consisting of \$7,000 for the additional four-week session and \$17,200 for the two publications—should be met from the appropriations to be voted for the financial year 1971, without further provision.

22. He also proposed that the Rapporteur should be requested to submit for the approval of the Fifth Committee a draft report in which he would summarize the views of those delegations taking part in the discussion of the matter and would include the financial data given in document A/C.5/1314/Add.1. In that way, the General Assembly would be in possession of all the

financial data and would be aware of the positions of some delegations before it took a decision on the Sixth Committee's draft resolution.

23. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, since his delegation had some misgivings about the wording of the Chairman's proposal, it would like to see the text in writing.

24. Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania), supported by Mr. SANU (Nigeria) suggested that the Committee should defer a decision on the Chairman's proposal until it had been distributed in writing.

25. Mr. TARDOS (Hungary) said that he supported that suggestion because his delegation might wish to submit an amendment to the text proposed by the Chairman.

26. After a procedural discussion, in which Mr. ALWAN (Iraq), Mr. GUPTA (India), Mr. MEYER PICON (Mexico), Mr. LAWRENCE (United States of America), Mr. KEENLEYSIDE (Canada), Mr. REFSHAL (Norway), Mr. KAWAH (Liberia), and Mr. RAMBISSOON (Trinidad and Tobago) took part, the CHAIRMAN said that he would distribute a written text of his proposal. He wished to make it quite clear that, by adopting his proposal, the Fifth Committee would deliberately refrain from expressing any opinion on the wisdom of the Sixth Committee's decision, as was its practice in such cases.

27. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether, when the Chairman's proposal was distributed in written form, delegations would be able to submit amendments to it.

28. The CHAIRMAN said delegations would of course be able to submit in writing any proposals they might wish to make. However, since he had submitted his proposal only because there were no other proposals before the Committee and since he considered it inappropriate for a Chairman to submit proposals which were subject to amendment, he would withdraw his proposal if any amendments were made to it. Delegations could then submit whatever proposals they might wish to make on the subject.

AGENDA ITEM 77

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions (*continued*) (A/8011 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

29. Mr. PHILON (Greece) said that in past debates on the question of the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations many delegations had suggested that, in view of the many changes that had occurred both in the membership of the Organization and in the economic situation of Member States, the guidelines established by the General Assembly for drawing up the scale of assessments should be modified in order to ensure that the scale faithfully reflected the capacity to pay of Member States. Although no new guidelines had been produced as a result of the

debates in the Fifth Committee, new ideas on the problem had been expressed and it was gratifying to note that they had been taken into account by the Committee on Contributions. The new scale of assessments for the years 1971, 1972 and 1973, and the very complete explanations of the manner in which they had been established, revealed a thoroughness and a sense of equity on which the Committee was to be commended. It had managed not to increase the percentage contributions of most developing countries while at the same time reducing the rates of some industrialized countries; that was no mean achievement.

30. It was not the task of the Committee to supervise the collection of statistics and the working out of a mathematical scale; that work could be entrusted to the Secretariat. Rather, the Committee's task was to use its discretionary powers in applying the guidelines established by the General Assembly for the establishment of an equitable scale of assessments. Moreover, the Fifth Committee had requested the Committee on Contributions to keep those guidelines under review. The Committee on Contributions had complied with that request. It had, for instance, refined many techniques in establishing the net taxable product of Member States and endeavoured to evaluate the significance of changes in the net national product arising from changes in price levels and exchange rates as contrasted with changes in the quantity of output. The Committee was to be congratulated in particular on its attempts to adjust the rates of countries with low *per capita* income. Despite the absence of new directives from the General Assembly, the Committee had been right to exercise wider discretion for the concession of relief to that group of countries and in adjusting the statistical rates for countries with *per capita* income below \$1,000. It was gratifying to note, too, that the Committee was aware of the difficulties faced by some countries in securing foreign currency and had therefore taken into account available data on the servicing and amortization of external debts when making adjustments in individual assessments. As suggested by the Hungarian, Romanian and Peruvian delegations, allowance should also be made for the temporary dislocation of economies resulting from natural disasters.

31. As it stood, the low *per capita* allowance formula did not fulfil the purpose for which it had been established, namely, to reduce the taxable income of countries with low *per capita* income. The Committee should, as it had suggested, continue to examine the different elements of the formula. Indeed, at its next session, it should undertake a full review of the question and report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session.

32. In conclusion, he said that his delegation endorsed the scale of assessments proposed by the Committee on Contributions in its report (A/8011 and Corr.1).

33. Mr. MWIHIA (Kenya) said that in reviewing the scale of assessments, the Committee on Contributions had been guided by the criteria established by the General Assembly. The criterion of the capacity to pay of Member States was the most important in assess-

ing the amount Member States should contribute to the budget of the United Nations. It was unfortunate therefore that that criterion was being compromised because a ceiling had been fixed for the highest contributor. The Committee on Contributions should make a further study of the factors that affected, positively or negatively, the capacity to pay of Member States. The economies of some developing countries had improved, but so had those of the major contributor and other rich countries. In fact, if account was taken of other factors, such as ability to secure foreign currency, the situation of the rich countries had improved much more significantly than that of the poor countries. For those reasons, his delegation reiterated its appeal that the Committee on Contributions should make a thorough study of the advisability of giving effect to the provisions of paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 1137(XII). The financial advantages accruing to the major contributor by virtue of the fact that it was the host country of the United Nations and that contributions were paid in United States dollars should be taken into account when assessing its contribution.

34. His delegation endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on Contributions that the Secretary-General should be authorized to continue the arrangements for the payment of part of Member States' contributions in currencies other than United States dollars. It hoped, however, that the developing countries would be given priority whenever the Secretary-General had to use currencies other than United States dollars.

35. The Committee should continue its efforts to relieve the burden on developing countries, which were required to spend much of the earnings from their increased productivity on developing resources which had been neglected for so long. His delegation had listened carefully to the explanation given at the previous meeting by the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions to the representative of Upper Volta and wished to add only that it was very difficult to study the question of the so-called "subsistence income" of rural areas. Should the Committee on Contributions decide to examine that problem, it should determine how it could take those areas into account when deciding on the relief to be given to developing countries.

36. His delegation endorsed the scale of assessments recommended by the Committee on Contributions for the years 1971, 1972 and 1973. It hoped that the Committee would be able not only to raise the ceiling of the major contributor but also to consider the possibility of lowering the floor of those contributing the minimum.

37. Mr. FAROOQ (Pakistan) said that in determining the new scales, the Committee on Contributions had taken account of the views expressed by members of the Fifth Committee during the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly on such matters as the capacity to pay of Member States, the burden imposed on certain countries by the need to service and amortize external debts, and the ability to secure foreign currency. The scale of assessments had been criticized

because developing countries encountered difficulties in securing foreign exchange and it would continue to be criticized so long as there was a gap between the rich and the poor countries. While economic realities were on the side of one group of countries, political realities were on the side of the other group. It was not surprising, therefore, to learn that there had been a divergence of opinion among the members of the Committee on Contributions as to the best method of giving due attention to the developing countries in drawing up the scale of assessments. Nevertheless the report showed that the Committee had endeavoured to meet the points raised by the Fifth Committee during the twenty-fourth session, and the scale of assessments recommended was as equitable as possible in prevailing circumstances. The comparative tables in paragraph 21 of the Committee's report showed that sixty of the 109 Member States with *per capita* income below \$1,000 had been assessed at the minimum rate of 0.04 per cent and that special attention had been given to countries with *per capita* income below \$300. His delegation had no hesitation, therefore, in endorsing the scale of assessments recommended by the Committee.

38. His delegation had been glad to learn that the Committee based its calculations on statistical data obtained from official sources, and was confident that the Committee would bear in mind the substantive as well as the political aspects of statistics. It was also gratifying to note that the Committee had recommended that the Secretary-General should be authorized to continue in 1971-1973 the arrangements for the payment of part of Member States' contributions in currencies other than United States dollars. That concession should be extended primarily to those countries whose currency was required by the United Nations.

39. In conclusion, he endorsed the comments of the representatives of Hungary (1372nd meeting), Philippines (1373rd meeting) and Romania (1370th meeting) concerning the dislocation of economies resulting from natural disasters. The Committee should consider the question as a matter of urgency with a view to reviewing the assessments of those countries and others in a similar situation.

40. Mr. KHALIL (United Arab Republic) said that the Committee on Contributions had exercised its discretion judiciously and had drawn up an equitable scale

of assessments for the years 1971, 1972 and 1973. It was gratifying to learn that none of the countries with *per capita* income below \$300 showed an increase in assessment, that many showed reductions and that, in many cases, the assessments of countries with *per capita* income between \$300 and \$1,000 had been reduced. The Committee was also to be congratulated on having taken into account data on the servicing and amortization of the external debts of Member States in making small downward adjustments in individual assessments.

41. His delegation endorsed the Committee's recommendation that the Secretary-General be authorized to continue, in 1971-1973, arrangements for the payment of part of Member States' contributions in currencies other than United States dollars. Priority in that regard should be given to Member States whose currencies were required by the Secretary-General. His delegation also subscribed to the view that, in keeping with the spirit of General Assembly resolution 1927 (XVIII), the "subsistence income" of the rural population should not be included in national product figures. It was satisfying to learn, therefore, that the Committee on Contributions would take account of the views expressed on the matter by members of the Fifth Committee.

42. His delegation endorsed the scale of assessments recommended by the Committee on Contributions.

43. In conclusion, he said that his delegation and others wished to submit a recommendation, which they hoped the Fifth Committee would adopt and include in its report as a decision. The recommendation was to the effect that, in the context of the factor regarding the ability of Member States to secure foreign currency, and taking into account the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2291 (XXII), priority for payments in currencies other than the United States dollar should be given to countries whose currencies were needed by the Organization.

44. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the proposal should be submitted in writing for discussion at a later meeting.

*It was so decided.*¹

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

¹ See document A/C.5/XXV/CRP.2, subsequently circulated.