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Chairman: Mr. Najib BOUZIRI (Tunisia).

AGENDA ITEM 76

Budget estimates for the financial years 1965 and 1966 (continued) (A/5799 and Corr.1, A/5805, A/5807 and Corr.1, A/5940 and Corr.1, A/5969, A/5995, A/6007 and Corr.1, A/6050, A/6137, A/6138 and Corr.1, A/6144; A/C.5/1009 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1011, 1014, 1025 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1027, 1035-1038, 1040, 1042, 1046; A/C.5/L.833, L.836, L.855)

Budget estimates for the financial year 1966 (continued) (A/5799 and Corr.1, A/5805, A/5807 and Corr.1, A/5940 and Corr.1, A/5996, A/6005, A/6007 and Corr.1, A/6050, A/6137, A/6138 and Corr.1, A/6144; A/C.5/1009 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1027, 1035-1038, 1040, 1042, 1046; A/C.5/L.833, L.836, L.855)

First reading (continued) (A/C.5/L.833)

SECTION 18. OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (continued) (A/6005, A/6007 AND CORR.1, A/6138 AND CORR.1)

1. Mr. MORALES QUEVEDO (Cuba) drew attention to the references in paragraph 12 of the report (A/6138 and Corr.1) of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on section 18 of the budget estimates for 1966 and in paragraph 18.8 of the estimates themselves (A/6005) to the influx of refugees into Spain. Speaking in the Third Committee—at the 1359th meeting on 30 November 1965—on the work of the Office of the High Com-

missioner for Refugees, his delegation had noted that the High Commissioner in paragraph 41 of his report^{1/} had stated that the obtaining of asylum was the basic requirement of the refugee and the prerequisite to the enjoyment of any rights and benefits. It had cited the general principles laid down in annex I to the Constitution of the International Refugee Organization, annexed to General Assembly resolution 62 (I), and particularly those contained in paragraph 1, sub-paragraphs (d), (e) and (g). With those principles in mind, his delegation could not agree that persons who left their countries of their own free will, without being subject to any pressure and without any obstacles being placed in their way, should be called refugees. In particular, it was opposed to provision being made in the budget for aid to persons who had left Cuba in such circumstances and had since undertaken subversive activities against that country in collaboration with the United States of America.

2. The CHAIRMAN observed that the Fifth Committee was not concerned with the substance of the High Commissioner's work, but with its financial aspects.

3. Mr. MORALES QUEVEDO (Cuba) said that the fact that the Office of the High Commissioner was financed by means of voluntary contributions did not entitle it to deviate from the normal standards governing United Nations policy. The office would lose prestige if it allowed its work to benefit individuals who engaged in aggressive activities. However, because of the general humanitarian nature of the work of the Office of the High Commissioner, his delegation would not wish to vote against the appropriation recommended and would therefore vote for it, with the reservation he had indicated.

4. Mr. WEI (China) paid tribute to the work of the Office of the High Commissioner, especially the assistance given to Chinese refugees in Hong Kong and Macao, and to Tibetan refugees in Nepal, India, Switzerland and the United States of America. He thanked the various government authorities and private organizations in those countries for their invaluable efforts on behalf of refugees. His delegation was encouraged to learn from the High Commissioner's report^{1/} that greater attention would be given to the needs of refugees in those particular areas. He hoped, however, that more urgent consideration would be given to new projects and that those already approved would be put into effect more rapidly. While agreeing with the Advisory Committee's recommendations for economy, therefore, his delegation hoped

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twentieth Session, Supplement No. 11.

that any reduction would have no negative effect on the speeding up of relief to the refugees.

5. Mr. REZA-UR-RAHMAN (Pakistan) recalled that the High Commissioner had drawn attention to the fact that there was still considerable need for assistance to refugees in Europe. He had, however, also drawn attention to the growing need for refugee rehabilitation in Asia and Africa where large numbers of people had recently suffered from the political actions of various Governments. To add to their misery, the host countries were themselves too poor to do much more than merely accept the refugees. His delegation therefore felt that the Office of the High Commissioner should now turn its attention to refugees seeking sanctuary in the less developed nations. Whereas the High Commissioner maintained fifteen offices in Europe, there were only twenty offices in the rest of the world. His delegation therefore requested the High Commissioner to consider the possibility of re-allocating his offices and of giving special assistance to refugees in the less developed countries.

6. Given the situation in Africa and Asia, the High Commissioner's task was likely to become much more onerous than it had been in recent years. Under the circumstances, to recommend even a token reduction in the budget submitted by the Secretary-General would be tantamount to ignoring the changed situation. The High Commissioner might even find it difficult to meet his obligations within the budget as originally presented. His delegation accordingly believed that the Committee should consider rejecting the Advisory Committee's recommendation for a reduction in the estimate.

7. Mr. AL-RIFAE (Kuwait) said that, in his delegation's view, the High Commissioner had given a true picture of the difficulties faced by his Office. His delegation questioned the advisability of adopting the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning new staff for the Office and felt that the Committee should, rather, increase its support for the High Commissioner's work and allow him greater flexibility. If the Committee nevertheless decided to adopt the Advisory Committee's recommendation, it would need to bear in mind the opinions the High Commissioner had expressed.

8. Mr. RAHAL (Algeria) said that the value of the work done by the Office of the High Commissioner in protecting refugees of every kind was beyond question. The Office programmes were designed to meet the specific problems of refugees. While his delegation was willing to approve the Advisory Committee's recommendations, therefore, it considered, in view of the humanitarian nature of the High Commissioner's work, that considerable resources should continue to be devoted to assistance to the refugees and to their repatriation or resettlement.

9. Mr. FAKIH (Kenya) said that the refugee problem was a most important one. Everything possible should be done to help the High Commissioner, both morally and financially, and to avoid hindering his work.

10. The CHAIRMAN noted that no formal proposal to amend the Advisory Committee's recommendations had been made. He therefore invited the Committee

to recommend to the General Assembly the approval of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 38, 39 and 40 of its report (A/6138 and Corr.1) in regard to the formula by which the grant-in-aid to the regular budget of the United Nations from the voluntary funds in the custody of the High Commissioner would be established with effect from 1 January 1966.

The Advisory Committee's recommendations were approved by 61 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

The Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/6007 and Corr.1, para. 338 and A/6138 and Corr.1, para. 45) for an appropriation under section 18 in the amount of \$2,885,800 was approved, on first reading, by 60 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

11. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to endorse the action of the Advisory Committee in its report (A/6138 and Corr.1, para. 23) in commending to the attention of the High Commissioner certain observations on a number of specific administrative matters as summarized in annex I to that report.

The Committee decided to endorse the Advisory Committee's action.

AGENDA ITEM 82

Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency:

(a) Reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/5859, A/6122; A/C.5/1008 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1026)

12. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had before it, in connexion with agenda item 82, the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the current session (A/6122) and to the nineteenth session (A/5859). He also drew attention to the notes by the Secretary-General relating to the information annexes to the budget estimates for the financial years 1965 (A/C.5/1008 and Corr.1) and 1966 (A/C.5/1026).

13. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee (A/6122), acknowledged the co-operation of all the organizations concerned.

14. The terms of reference of the Advisory Committee, under which it was responsible for examining the administrative budgets of the specialized agencies, had been established in 1946 in response to the desire of Member States to have a clear picture of what they spent on international co-operation, and to ascertain that their contributions were used in the most effective and co-ordinated manner possible. Having entrusted the Advisory Committee with the review of those budgets, the General Assembly had seldom found time to probe the Committee's reports deeply. Whatever the reasons might have been, the Advisory Committee's responsibility had been enhanced rather than diminished by that state of affairs. Moreover, the administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the organizations belonging to the United Nations system had grown in importance during recent years.

15. The Advisory Committee's latest report on co-ordination (A/6122) should be read in conjunction with the report (A/5859) submitted to the General Assembly at its nineteenth session. The two reports covered the same subjects, but in their second parts, dealing with specific points of inter-organization co-ordination, there were differences of emphasis in the light of progressive developments. In its report on the agency budgets for 1965, the Committee had stressed the urgency of co-ordination in a new technical field, the use of electronic data processing equipment. In its report on the 1966 budgets, the Committee noted that some preliminary action in that regard had already been taken by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC). In the same report, the Committee recognized the importance and possible impact of resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its thirty-ninth session on the preparation and submission of agency budgets and the possibility of a more uniform layout, on the desirability of reducing the volume of documentation, on the reconstitution of the Council's Special Committee on Co-ordination, and on the work programme of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields and the budgetary requirements of that programme. The Committee also welcomed the closer co-operation in those fields between the organs and sub-organs of the Council concerned with programme co-ordination, and the Advisory Committee itself. With regard to the common system of salaries, allowances and personnel management, the Committee had thought it might be useful to reiterate the advantages of the system in paragraph 45 of its report (A/6122).

16. The detailed comments on the agencies' budgets, in part IV of the reports, were intended not only to provide detailed figures on the budgets, but also to show recent administrative developments in the respective organizational and secretarial structures.

17. There was one specific element of administrative and budgetary co-ordination in regard to which the Advisory Committee had made some important recommendations at its autumn session in 1964. In a report to the General Assembly at its nineteenth session (A/5842) the Committee had recommended new rates for the reimbursement of overhead costs by the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the Special Fund to the organizations implementing their projects. The Committee was satisfied to note that its recommendations had been accepted and put into effect by the respective governing bodies.

18. The Advisory Committee had not yet been able to perform a task it had been invited to undertake more than three years previously by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 900 A (XXXIV): to bring up to date studies which it had made in 1956-1959 on administrative and budgetary co-ordination between the United Nations and each of the specialized agencies separately, with particular reference to EPTA. In recent months, the Committee had received additional material from the agencies covering their participation in Special Fund operations as well. However, in the light of the agencies' increasing participation in the continually expanding

technical assistance activities of the Organization, the Committee had found that the material available to it was quickly outdated. Furthermore, the Committee's heavy agenda had made it impossible for it to visit any of the agency headquarters, which might be necessary for a thorough appraisal. The Committee had therefore felt that it should report more fully on those particular aspects of the agencies' activities in its annual co-ordination reports submitted under the present agenda item.

19. The Advisory Committee had kept in mind the merger of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the Special Fund, and its possible consequences on the administration of technical assistance programmes by the United Nations and specialized agencies. The study called for by the Economic and Social Council under resolution 900 A (XXXIV) could be of added importance once the United Nations Development Programme had acquired the necessary operational experience.

20. Mr. QUIJANO (Argentina) said that the Fifth Committee's recent debate on and adoption of the French draft resolution on the financial situation of the United Nations and the specialized agencies (A/C.5/L.843/Rev.1) made it unnecessary to go into the problem of co-ordination in detail at the present stage. There were, however, certain specific points which called for comment. His delegation was concerned over the fact that much of the increase in the expenditure of the specialized agencies was attributable to the cost of staff, offices and other administrative items and was not accompanied by a proportionate increase in operational activities. It was also perturbed by the fact that the existing co-ordination bodies had not yet given all the results hoped for and that it was necessary to keep trying new machinery in order to arrive at a better system. In that connexion, it noted that under Economic and Social Council resolution 1090 G (XXXIX) the Special Committee on Co-ordination had been reorganized to work in conjunction with ACC and hoped that under that arrangement better results would be achieved than in the past. Other factors affecting the administration of the United Nations family were the proliferation of local offices set up by the different agencies, referred to in paragraph 20 of document A/5859, and the growth of the conference programme, the dangers of which were discussed in paragraph 35 of document A/6122.

21. Against such negative aspects there could be set others which were more hopeful. The most striking was the preservation of the common system of terms of employment in the different branches of the international civil service. While sharing the Advisory Committee's view that a still higher degree of uniformity could be achieved, his delegation considered that the existence of a common system was a ground for satisfaction. The achievement of greater uniformity was a matter for the different administrations rather than for member States, and those responsible would surely do their utmost to improve the common system on the basis of the reports under consideration, which would be transmitted by the General Assembly to the corresponding agencies. At the 1102nd meeting, the Committee had heard

the representatives of WHO, FAO and the ILO express their agencies' interest in the problem of co-ordination and the importance they attached to the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and the Advisory Committee. A real joint effort was being made to achieve greater rationalization and co-ordination and it would be reinforced by the work of the Ad Hoc Committee proposed in the resolution adopted by the Fifth Committee on the proposal of France (A/C.5/L.843/Rev.1). The Ad Hoc Committee could not be expected to perform miracles but it would act as a catalytic element by defining, perhaps with a more political approach than the Fifth Committee usually took, the views of Governments on what they expected from the joint work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. Since it was generally agreed that it would not be advisable to set a ceiling on the budgets or activities of the various organizations, the only way to control expenditure was through rationalization, co-ordination and avoidance of duplication.

22. His delegation had found it useful to study at one time the co-ordination reports for two successive years and would suggest that the item might be dealt with on a biennial basis in future. In order to avoid an excessive accumulation of documentation, the budget estimates might continue to be considered annually, but comments of a general nature, and particularly the evaluation of the co-ordination process, might more profitably be made every two years. Some of the agencies held their general conferences every two years, while others prepared their budgets every three years, and one did so only every four years. The Advisory Committee itself lent some support to that suggestion when it said in paragraph 4 of its report (A/6122) that certain tabular material heretofore included on an annual basis would not lose its importance if it were incorporated every second or possibly every third year.

23. Mr. GREN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the constant rise in the budgets of international organizations, and particularly in their administrative expenses, the absence of a proper system of accounting and the frequent duplication in their work had aroused general concern. In view of the adoption of the French draft resolution (A/C.5/L.843/Rev.1) entrusting the study of such questions to an Ad Hoc Committee, his delegation would not go into the substance of the matter. It wished to point out, however, that the problem was not a new one. Many interesting suggestions had been made on administrative and budgetary topics at previous sessions, but they had not led to any concrete results. The Committee's discussion was usually limited by the fact that the Advisory Committee's report was not made available in time for thorough study, so that any decisions taken were normally of a formal nature. Moreover, what consequential action was taken by the executive heads of the agencies remained unknown.

24. He therefore suggested that the Ad Hoc Committee which was to examine the financial situation should be provided with full information on previous discussions of the subject by the General Assembly. In addition, the Fifth Committee should in future be

provided with a comprehensive report analysing the past activities of the organizations and making recommendations regarding the co-ordination of their future activities. It should receive the report in good time, so that Governments could obtain their experts' considered opinions. Finally, the executive heads of the agencies should be asked to report on the steps they took as a result of the Fifth Committee's recommendations.

25. Mr. MERON (Israel) drew the Committee's attention to Article 17, paragraph 3, and Articles 57, 58, 60, 63, 64 and 70 of the Charter of the United Nations, which governed the relationship between the United Nations and the specialized agencies, and to resolution 13 (III) of 21 September 1946 of the Economic and Social Council, which established ACC to ensure the effective implementation of the agreement between the United Nations and the specialized agencies under Article 57 and to facilitate the co-ordination of over-all activities. In terms of those Articles, the co-ordination of programme activities and the avoidance of duplication of functions were the responsibility of the Economic and Social Council, which was assisted by the regular reports of the agencies. In administrative and budgetary matters, the main procedure for co-ordination was the submission under Article 17, paragraph 3, of the administrative budgets of the agencies to the General Assembly, which had delegated its function of review, in the first instance, to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The reports of the specialized agencies and of ACC were submitted to the Economic and Social Council, which reported in turn to the General Assembly. The General Committee of the General Assembly referred such reports to the Second, Third or Fifth Committees and, in some cases, referred certain chapters directly to the Assembly in plenary session. However, the administrative budgets of the specialized agencies were communicated directly to the General Assembly and were then referred to the Fifth Committee for consideration and report with the assistance of the Advisory Committee.

26. There was, therefore, a division of responsibilities between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and among the Main Committees of the General Assembly, with regard to both the consideration of programmes and the consideration of administrative and budgetary questions. That division existed not only in matters concerning both the United Nations and the specialized agencies, but also in the economic and social activities of the United Nations itself; for their substantive aspects were considered by the Second or Third Committee, while their administrative and budgetary implications were studied by the Fifth Committee. That division of responsibilities had always been a major problem: programmes and administrative and budgetary questions were two sides of the same coin and could not be considered in isolation. In that connexion, he recalled the suggestion of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that programmes and budget should be presented in a consolidated and integrated manner (A/C.5/1038, para. 23).

27. The present agenda of the Fifth Committee included certain chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly at its twentieth session^{2/} but did not include chapter XV entitled "Questions of co-ordination and relations with specialized agencies", which was referred directly to the plenary meetings. An examination of that chapter by the Fifth Committee would enable it to have a better understanding of the close relationship between substantive aspects of co-ordination and the budgetary and administrative aspects. He therefore suggested that at future sessions of the General Assembly that chapter should be placed on the Committee's agenda and that a paragraph to that effect should be included in the Committee's report on the present item.

28. Mr. LYNCH (New Zealand) agreed with previous speakers that the item before the Committee had not in the past always been given the detailed consideration warranted by its importance. That had frequently been due to lack of time and the late receipt of documentation. At the present session, the discussion of the French draft resolution proposing the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee (A/C.5/L.843/Rev.1) had shown that Member States recognized the need for positive measures to be taken and for the activities of international organizations to be coherently related to one another and to the international community. The application of a rational scale of priorities would be facilitated by a single consolidated budget and programme, but the question of a consolidated budget had very wide implications and co-ordination of the work of international organizations must be sought within the framework of their respective constitutions. The increasing emphasis on integration and co-operation at every level had brought into being a complex co-ordinating machinery and it was essential that machinery, like programmes and policies, should be subject to constant review in order that its effectiveness might be maintained. That task had been very ably performed by the Advisory Committee and the two reports before the Committee (A/5859 and A/6122) were an important contribution to work in the field of co-ordination.

29. With reference to those reports, his delegation was encouraged to note the steps that had been taken, particularly by the Economic and Social Council, to improve the existing machinery for co-ordination. It was also encouraged by the success of the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development in reaching agreement with the specialized agencies concerning an integrated programme of action. His delegation agreed that if the responsibilities of ACC were to be increased it should have a permanent secretariat. It shared the Advisory Committee's concern at the disparity in the growth rates of the different agencies and agreed with the emphasis placed on the need for a more coherent selection of programmes on a long-term basis. His delegation was also pleased to note that the Advisory Committee was persisting in its efforts to secure a more uniform budget presentation and fully shared that Committee's concern that there should be a strengthening of the common system. It

also recognized the importance of co-ordination and effective use of staff and facilities in the field and the need to maintain the authority and leadership of the resident representatives.

30. The work of the Advisory Committee could not be expected to yield rapid and spectacular results. In such a complex field as co-ordination, progress must inevitably be gradual, for otherwise chaos would ensue. The idea of a simple solution, such as a single legislative body, was deceptive; for, even if it were possible, it would not necessarily mean that duplication and waste would disappear. Co-ordination was not, however, an end in itself. Studies and comparisons could lead to economies and increased effectiveness. The chief benefit to be derived from co-ordination would be the development of a broad, consistent approach to problems, with a clear sense of direction.

31. Mr. FEKKES (Netherlands) expressed regret that the question of co-ordination should again have been taken up so late in the session that the Committee had neither the time nor the enthusiasm to give it the attention it deserved. However, a number of the problems touched upon by the Advisory Committee in its latest report (A/6122) would be considered by the Ad Hoc Committee to be established as a result of the adoption of the French draft resolution (A/C.5/L.843/Rev.1). Since the Second Committee, too, had before it two agenda items which were closely related to the problems of co-ordination, a less extensive discussion in the Fifth Committee might this year be acceptable.

32. With reference to the form of the budget, a matter dealt with in the Advisory Committee's reports, his delegation had suggested in the general discussion on the budget estimates for 1966 (1069th meeting) that a logical first step in the recommended review of programme and budgetary practices would be to undertake a study of the budget presentation evolving from the programme and budget policy, in the light of recent requirements. He was aware that the Office of the Controller had for some time been contemplating a change in the form of the budget, with a view to showing more clearly the connexion between programmes and appropriations, as did the budgets of FAO, WHO and UNESCO. In view of the complexities of such an exercise, his delegation did not wish to prejudice the outcome by pressing for information on the subject. However, it looked forward with interest to the results of the study presently being undertaken. If his delegation's idea commended itself to the Committee, he would be glad if reference could be made to it in the latter's report.

33. His delegation supported the Israel representative's suggestion that chapter XV of the report of the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly could be transmitted to the Fifth Committee in future years.

34. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the question of the lateness of the reports on co-ordination was a matter of great concern to the Advisory Committee. Under the present system,

^{2/} Ibid., Supplement No. 3.

the Advisory Committee heard representatives of the specialized agencies during its autumn session, while those representatives were in New York for the meetings of the ACC. Those hearings could not be held earlier because the agencies did not have their budget summaries ready before then. After the hearings, the secretariat of the Advisory Committee had to prepare drafts of the Advisory Committee's report to the General Assembly and those drafts had to be cleared with the specialized agencies. The entire process took several weeks, but every effort would be made to speed it up in the future.

35. Mr. MERON (Israel) said that, in view of the favourable response to his suggestion, he now proposed that the following paragraph be included in the report of the Committee on the item under consideration:

"The Fifth Committee expresses the hope that at future sessions of the General Assembly the chapter of the annual report of the Economic and Social Council entitled 'Questions of co-ordination and relations with specialized agencies' will be referred also to the Fifth Committee."

36. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly a draft resolution in the following terms:

"The General Assembly

"1. Takes note of the reports (A/5859 and A/6122) of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the administrative budgets of the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency for 1965 and 1966;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to refer to the executive heads of the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, through

the consultative machinery of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, matters arising under part II of those reports which call for its attention, as well as the records of the related discussion in the Fifth Committee;

"3. Further requests the Secretary-General to refer to the executive heads of the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency the observations of the Advisory Committee set forth in parts III and IV of its reports on their administrative budgets for 1965 and 1966 respectively."

It was so decided.

37. The CHAIRMAN also suggested that the paragraph proposed by the Israel representative should be included in the Committee's report.

It was so decided.

(b) Inter-organizational machinery for matters of pay and personnel administration: reports of the Secretary-General (A/5833, A/6098/Rev.1)

38. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the two reports of the Secretary-General. The report submitted to the General Assembly at its nineteenth session (A/5833), dealt with working arrangements agreed upon by the International Civil Service Advisory Board and the matters considered by the Board at its 1964 session. The report submitted at the current session (A/6098/Rev.1) covered the work of the Board at its thirteenth session. If there was no objection, he suggested that the Committee should take note of the two reports.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.