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*Chairman: Mr. Vahap AŞIROĞLU (Turkey).*

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A SUBMITTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE IN DOCUMENT A/6529 ON AGENDA ITEM 27\* (A/C.5/1089)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that, by the terms of draft resolution A submitted by the First Committee in part I of its report (A/6529, para. 22), the Secretary-General would be requested to prepare a report with the assistance of experts-consultants. In his note (A/C.5/1089), the Secretary-General estimated that the cost of that proposal would amount to \$75,000 in 1968, and that, if the General Assembly should endorse it, provision would have to be made for an additional appropriation in that amount under section 3 (Salaries and wages), chapter III (Other temporary assistance), heading (iii) (*Ad hoc* expert groups), of the budget estimates for 1967.

2. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) remarked that the Advisory Committee had examined the Secretary-General's note and was fully aware of the importance of the report to be prepared. However, in the absence of more precise indications as to the sectors to be included in the report, the Advisory

Committee had not been in a position to appraise the character and extent of the work involved. Where the request for 12 or 15 consultants was concerned, the Advisory Committee understood that it was a provisional estimate only. The report was to be submitted in September or October 1967, and that would allow the consultants a period of preparation of not more than eight or nine months. Naturally they would have to be highly qualified and would be expected to devote most of their time to the task. Taking into account those limitations, the Advisory Committee was of the opinion that it would be more realistic to fix the number of consultants between 9 and 12. The Advisory Committee did not question the Secretary-General's estimates of the cost for travel, subsistence and possible consultants' fees. It hoped, however, that fewer consultants than had been requested would be engaged and took the view that the additional provision under section 3, chapter III, heading (iii), could be limited to \$60,000 without jeopardizing the work.

3. Mr. TARDOS (Hungary) observed that the experts who were best acquainted with the effects of nuclear weapons and the possible economic implications of their use were employed by Governments. The Secretary-General might therefore consider asking the Governments concerned to second some of their experts to carry out the proposed study. Their services could then be secured without extra cost.

4. Mr. KIRKBRIDE (Secretariat) said that in view of the importance the Secretary-General attached to the question, he would endeavour to secure the services of such experts. However, he would prefer to be given latitude to recruit experts from the private sector if need be. It would also be necessary to ensure a certain geographical balance.

5. As to the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee, the Secretary-General would endeavour to do his best with the funds at his disposal. However, it should be noted that the reduction applied to a section of the budget where a reduction had already been made and had not yet been contested by the Secretary-General. Some difficulty might therefore arise if the appropriations were still further reduced.

6. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should inform the General Assembly that adoption of the First Committee's draft resolution would require an additional appropriation of \$60,000 under section 3, chapter III, heading (iii), of the budget estimates for 1967 and should request the Rapporteur to report that recommendation directly to the General Assembly.

*It was so decided.*

\*Question of general and complete disarmament; report of the Conference of the Eighteen-nation Committee on Disarmament.

## AGENDA ITEM 81

Personnel questions (continued):

(a) Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General (continued) (A/6487 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.872 and Add.1, A/C.5/L.879/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.881, A/C.5/L.882/Rev.1)

7. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran) said that the second revised text (A/C.5/L.879/Rev.2) of the draft resolution before the Committee was in substance identical with the initial text; only a few lines had been deleted to take into account the comments of the representative of the Secretary-General. His delegation had also had consultations with several groups of countries.

8. The preamble of the new text was more realistic than the original in that it recalled the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the resolutions of the General Assembly in regard to personnel, and recorded the sponsors' agreement in principle with the Secretary-General with respect to the ratio of permanent to fixed-term contracts. The changes in the operative part of the resolution were intended to make it more flexible. The text, which was now quite clear, could perhaps be criticized only as being too moderate. Concessions had been made, it was true, but the final text was self-sufficient and left the Secretary-General the necessary latitude. If delegations which still had doubts about the draft studied it closely, they would see that it could not but facilitate the Secretariat's task in future.

9. His delegation approved of the spirit of the amendments that had been proposed, but did not think that the problem they raised were directly linked to the one which the draft resolution was addressed, namely, the problem of geographical distribution viewed solely from the standpoint of contracts. His delegation therefore asked the sponsors not to insist on their amendments appearing in what was a compromise text.

10. Mr. BOUTAKDJIRT (Algeria) associated himself with representatives who had stressed the Secretary-General's efforts to increase the number of staff members from developing and socialist countries. However, the imbalance was still far from being corrected and several geographical regions, especially Africa, were still insufficiently represented. Moreover, several delegations had drawn the Secretariat's attention to the fact that within one and the same region there were over-represented countries and others which were represented insufficiently or not at all. His delegation therefore hoped that recruitment would in future be effected on the basis of equitable distribution, both among geographical regions and within the regions themselves.

11. His delegation also agreed that highly qualified personnel should be recruited in order to improve the efficiency and productivity of the Secretariat. That concern should not, however, be allowed to overshadow the principle of equitable geographical distribution. His delegation supported the proposals of numerous delegations to the effect that the nationals of developing countries should be recruited on fixed-term contracts. Those countries could then be represented at all levels of the administration. His delegation earnestly hoped that speedy action would be taken on those suggestions.

12. As to the representation of different cultures in the Secretariat, his delegation considered that persistent discrimination against non-English-speaking candidates could not but hinder the establishment of a truly universal Secretariat. Since Algeria's working language was French, it would wish to find in the Organization the technical facilities it needed to be able to make its contribution. It also hoped that in future there would be no discrimination among the languages officially recognized as working languages.

13. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) considered that the last preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.5/L.879/Rev.2 did not belong in the draft and asked the sponsors to withdraw it. While the purpose of the draft resolution as a whole was to help the Secretary-General to improve the geographical distribution of the Secretariat staff, thereby giving practical expression to the second sentence of Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, the preambular paragraph in question dealt with the stability and efficiency of the Secretariat, and constituted a stand in favour of a high proportion of permanent contracts. Many delegations did not share that view. For its part, in addition to the other arguments, his delegation felt that if—as had been stated in the Committee—the United Nations had difficulty recruiting qualified persons because they were offered better situations elsewhere, their services could more easily be secured by means of fixed-term contracts of some length, say from four to seven years. Moreover, with that type of contract it would be possible to adjust the composition of the Secretariat to changes in the international community and to give it the universal character which an organization such as the United Nations ought to have. He therefore requested the sponsors of the draft resolution either to delete the last preambular paragraph or to replace it by the first sentence of Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, or else to replace the words "permanent contracts" in that paragraph by "fixed-term contracts with longer duration"—which his delegation preferred—or by the words "semi-permanent contracts", those two expressions being equivalent in his view.

14. If the sponsors could accept none of those suggestions, nor an amendment by which the words "and semi-permanent" would be inserted after the word "permanent", his delegation formally introduced an amendment to that effect, on the understanding that that was a compromise.

15. His delegation's reasons for proposing the amendment were the following: draft resolution A/C.5/L.879/Rev.2 favoured increased recruitment of fixed-term rather than permanent staff in order to improve the geographical distribution of Secretariat posts. The last preambular paragraph was in contradiction with the operative part and with the spirit of the draft resolution as a whole. Numerous delegations had found the representation of many countries in the Secretariat to be inadequate and it was impossible for the Secretary-General to improve it without reducing the percentage of permanent contracts, which were held by 70 per cent of the Secretariat staff. Statistics showed that the principle of equitable geographical distribution was even less respected in the case of permanent-contract staff than of the Secretariat staff taken as a whole.

16. Mr. ROHRMOSER (Guatemala) felt that resolution A/C.5/L.879/Rev.2, giving practical expression to the principle that recruitment of Secretariat staff should result in an equitable representation of all Member States, fully met Charter requirements. While an increase in the number of fixed-term contracts would probably make for a better geographical distribution of posts, a large proportion of permanent contracts was none the less necessary to ensure the stability and efficient operation of the Secretariat. He supported draft resolution A/C.5/L.879/Rev.2 and would vote for it. He also supported the amendment to that text submitted by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, France and Senegal (A/C.5/L.882/Rev.1).

17. Mr. BAKOTO (Cameroon), replying to the Bulgarian representative, said that in his own delegation's view there was no contradiction in draft resolution A/C.5/L.879/Rev.2. The draft reaffirmed the widely recognized principle that a sizable proportion of permanent contracts was necessary to ensure efficiency. At the same time, in order to take account of the present situation, it called for an increase in recruitment on the basis of fixed-term contracts, not necessarily of short duration, but it left open the possibility of once again giving preference to permanent contracts after an equitable geographical distribution of Secretariat posts had been achieved. As stated in operative paragraph 1, the measure was a temporary one, designed to meet existing conditions.

18. Mr. KATAMBWE (Democratic Republic of the Congo) expressed surprise at the course taken by the debate on the draft resolution which, as amended, was a step back from the original draft. Everyone had spoken in favour of a genuinely equitable distribution of posts, in quantitative as well as qualitative terms, and taking working languages into account. That agreement was not, however, reflected in any text. As to working languages, the sponsors of the amendment contained in document A/C.5/L.882/Rev.1 had thought that it would be readily acceptable, since it merely expressed the idea that the United Nations should make proper use of all its working languages. He regretted that the sponsors of the draft resolution had not taken the amendment into account and he hoped that they would now do so.

19. Mr. CISS (Senegal), associating himself with the previous speaker's remarks, also expressed surprise that the sponsors of the draft resolution had not incorporated the amendment in their text.

20. His delegation was therefore unable to accept the draft resolution in its present form and would like to have some time to review the entire question and possibly submit new proposals.

21. Mr. GANEM (France) said that his delegation, as a co-sponsor of the amendment continued in document A/C.6/L.882/Rev.1, associated itself with the remarks of the two preceding speakers and also wished to have an extra day to determine its position.

22. The CHAIRMAN noted that a number of suggestions had been made, in particular by the Bulgarian representative, and that several delegations had asked for postponement of the vote on the draft resolution until Thursday, 1 December. If there was no objection,

he would take it that the Committee accepted that last proposal.

*It was so decided.*

#### AGENDA ITEM 74

Budget estimates for the financial year 1967 (continued)  
(A/6305, A/6307, A/6385, A/6457 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, A/6502, A/6524, A/6526, A/C.5/1054, A/C.5/1055 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1056 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1060, A/C.5/1062, A/C.5/1065, A/C.5/1066, A/C.5/1074-1076, A/C.5/1081, A/C.5/L.868, A/C.5/L.871, A/C.5/L.875-877, A/C.5/L.880)

#### Publications and documentation of the United Nations (A/C.5/L.880)

23. Mr. RIHA (Czechoslovakia) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/L.880, whose basic idea was to have the Publications Board carry out a comprehensive review of publication activities and to have the Secretary-General submit to the General Assembly at its twenty-second session a report containing such suggestions and accommodations as might be appropriate for the elimination, consolidation or reduction in frequency of various publications.

24. In the general discussion on the budget estimates, some delegations had expressed concern at the increasing volume of documentation and at whether it could be controlled. It had also been pointed out that some documents were not available within the required time-limits, especially in working languages other than English. The recommendations had also been made that printing contracts should be awarded to as many countries as possible, particularly developing countries. Lastly, some delegations had questioned the quality of the publications and there had been some doubt of whether expenditure in that area really met essential needs. Those were the factors which the Publications Board should take into consideration when making its review. It should propose a system which would ensure that indispensable documents would be published at a reasonable cost, redundant publications and duplication eliminated, the quality of the documentation and its timely delivery guaranteed and the requirement concerning the working languages met.

25. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.880 was based on reiterated suggestions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and took into account the views of the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies and the experience of the Economic and Social Council. There was, of course, no question of reducing expenditure on publications without regard to the consequences. The problem was to ensure that the documentation produced was really essential and that its cost was kept within reasonable bounds.

26. Operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution was based on the views expressed by the Advisory Committee in its main reports to the General Assembly at the seventeenth<sup>1/</sup> and nineteenth<sup>2/</sup> sessions, and

<sup>1/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventeenth Session, Supplement No. 7.

<sup>2/</sup> Ibid., Nineteenth Session, Supplement No. 7.

paragraphs 255 and 256 of its main report to the Assembly at the current session (A/6307).

27. Operative paragraph 2 recommended that the results of the review should be first submitted to the Advisory Committee, which had for several years been giving special attention to the question. The Publications Board had been chosen to carry out the review because in its main report to the General Assembly at the twentieth session the Advisory Committee had urged the Publications Board "to establish and apply even stricter criteria and controls in its continuing review of the Official Records and publications programme of the United Nations".<sup>3/</sup>

28. Lastly, operative paragraph 3 emphasized the importance of the working languages, arising from the fact that a growing number of Member States did not use English as their working language.

29. Draft resolution A/C.5/L.880 thus repeated recommendations which had been made several times before but unfortunately had had no practical effect, because of the vast scope of the problem. The sponsors believed that the General Assembly should take a decision leading to practical action, and they hoped that their text would have the Committee's full support.

30. Mr. NADIM (Iran) said that the problem of publications and documentation had already been broached during the general discussion on the budget estimates for 1967 and the debate on the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts under agenda item 80. It was a proven fact that the question had become the constant concern of the various United Nations bodies. Moreover, the type of study proposed in the draft resolution was not without precedent in the United Nations. The Economic and Social Council had recently asked the Secretary-General to offer suggestions designed to reduce to more reasonable proportions the volume of documentation requiring the Council's attention or to make such documentation better suited to the Council's needs. Having studied the matter, the Secretary-General had formulated certain proposals which had been adopted by the Council (see resolution 1154 (XLI)) and which might be expected to achieve the desired objectives.

31. It should be possible to extend the initiative concerning the documentation of the Economic and Social Council to all United Nations documentation, and the sponsors of the draft resolution were convinced that the studies the Publications Board was asked to make would have the similar result of improving the quality of United Nations documents. They therefore hoped that their text would receive the unanimous support of the Fifth Committee.

32. Mr. VAN GREVENYNGHE (France) said that the comments of many delegations on the subject of documentation showed that they attached great importance to that part of the Organization's activities. The Advisory Committee took a similar interest, as was testified by the observations on the subject in its main report (A/6307). His delegation had noted with satisfaction the efforts made both by the Secretary-General and his staff and by the Economic and Social Council to introduce order in a sector which was of great

importance to Member States. If the situation had improved in the economic and social sector, however, the over-all picture continued to be a matter for concern.

33. The first problem was the resources available for United Nations publications. The study proposed by various delegations at the 1137th meeting would have the merit of giving a clear indication of what had to be done. Secondly, there was the question of the geographical distribution of printing contracts, which the representative of Israel had rightly raised at the same meeting. All Member States should participate equitably in the various activities of the Secretariat, including those concerning publication and documentation, on the understanding that the quality of work must continue to be taken into account. Lastly, there was the far-reaching question of the volume of documentation and publications, of the form they should take and of the choice which had to be made in order to maintain their quality and take account of the human and material resources of the Secretariat.

34. In paragraph 68 of its main report, the Advisory Committee submitted conclusions and recommendations which called for practical measures. It remained to carry those measures into effect; that was the purpose of the draft resolution. It was not a matter of automatically reducing the volume of documentation and publications which constituted a unique source of information, but of clarifying and simplifying the documentation in such a way that Member States could easily find the information they needed.

35. The draft resolution did not ask the General Assembly to take immediate decisions. It would merely have the Publications Board undertake a study covering the whole of United Nations documentation, including summary and verbatim records, on which the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts had made a recommendation in paragraph 104, sub-paragraph (f), of its second report (A/6343) and the Advisory Committee in paragraph 68, sub-paragraph (e), of its main report (A/6307).

36. The proposed study would also explore ways of limiting documentation. That objective was justified. The observations made by the Secretary-General in the note that he had submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its fortieth session<sup>4/</sup> main report which dealt with documentation, were designed "to reduce the volume of documentation to more manageable proportions". That objective could be attained by means of more concise presentation in the case of many documents, which would then gain in precision and clarity.

37. Operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution raised once more a question which had already been the subject of a recommendation submitted by the Economic and Social Council in operative paragraph 3, sub-paragraph (c), of section I of its resolution 1090 E (XXXIX). His delegation fully endorsed the observations made in that connexion at the 1137th meeting by the representatives of Tunisia and Senegal. There were still undue delays in the translation into French of many United Nations documents, some of which,

<sup>3/</sup> Ibid., Twentieth Session, Supplement No. 7, para. 274.

<sup>4/</sup> Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fortieth Session, Annexes, agenda item 17, document E/4157.

including very important ones, were distributed in that working language so late that the French-speaking delegations suffered considerable inconvenience. His delegation appreciated the efforts made by the Secretary-General and the departments concerned to remedy the situation, but felt sure that a great deal could still be done to ensure that the working languages received equal treatment in an Organization which claimed to be universal.

38. The question of press communiqués was relevant in that connexion. Press communiqués were of value only if they were used on the actual day of issue. The fact that they were distributed in only one language hampered their dissemination in the French-speaking countries and the same was doubtless true of the Spanish-speaking countries, among others. The result was that the peoples of those countries were not kept properly informed of the Organization's activities.

39. His delegation hoped that the adoption of the draft resolution would be a first step towards rationalizing the activities of the United Nations in the spirit of the recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts and by the Advisory Committee. It should be remembered that the reference in the draft resolution to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts in no way implied that each of that Committee's recommendations would have to be the subject of a General Assembly resolution in order to be implemented. The Assembly had adopted an over-all decision (resolution 2150 (XXI)) regarding the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts and the recommendations it contained, and no further decisions were needed.

40. Mr. CAHEN (Belgium) agreed with the previous speaker that the submission of the draft resolution did not mean that its sponsors thought that each of the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations required a separate resolution to ensure its implementation. They had, however, thought it necessary to submit a separate draft resolution in the case in point, for a number of special reasons. The first was the importance and seriousness of a problem which had caused the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to give that problem a special place in its report. There were also the concern expressed by the Economic and Social Council and by the Advisory Committee, both of which had stressed the need for rapid and effective action, and especially the repeated warnings of the Secretary-General. The main reason for submitting the draft resolution was to allow the Secretary-General to take action against a phenomenon which he had rightly denounced. The desire for efficiency underlying the various provisions of that text explained, in particular, the request made to the Secretary-General in operative paragraph 3. That proposal should ensure greater productivity and increased efficiency in the work of the Organization, in the interests of all the Member States.

*The draft resolution (A/C.5/L.880) was adopted without opposition.*

41. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) thanked the sponsors of the draft resolution and the members of the Committee for submitting and adopting a text which constituted a positive response to the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

42. Mr. ZIEHL (United States of America), explaining his delegation's position on the draft resolution, expressed the hope that operative paragraph 2, sub-paragraph (a), would not be interpreted in a restrictive manner and that it had been the intention of the Committee which had just adopted it that the Secretary-General's preliminary report should contain not only proposals for the elimination, consolidation or reduction in frequency of various publications, but also any other suggestions and recommendations which would help to achieve economy in the publications programme.

43. Mr. TURNER (Controller) said he thought that when the Secretariat implemented the proposal in operative paragraph 2, sub-paragraph (a), it should interpret it in that sense.

First reading (continued) (A/C.5/L.868, A/C.5/L.871)

SECTION 7. BUILDINGS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO PREMISES (A/6305, A/6307, A/6385, A/6524, A/6526, A/C.5/1054, A/C.5/1062, A/C.5/1075, A/C.5/1076)

44. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to begin its first reading of section 7 of the budget estimates for the financial year 1967 and suggested that it should consider first the Secretary-General's progress report on the programme of improvements and major maintenance of the Palais des Nations at Geneva.

PROGRAMME OF IMPROVEMENTS AND MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF THE PALAIS DES NATIONS AT GENEVA (A/6526, A/C.5/1075)

45. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), referring to the Advisory Committee's report (A/6526), recalled that the General Assembly, at its twentieth session, had approved in principle a programme of improvements and major maintenance of the Palais des Nations at Geneva. With regard to the work scheduled for 1966, the Secretary-General had taken into account, for each maintenance and improvement project, the new conditions resulting from the proposals for the extension of the conference areas of the Palais. It had been necessary to make certain adjustments in the programme for 1966 and subsequent years, but, on the whole, the changes made were in line with the projects set out in document A/C.5/1040.<sup>5/</sup> Moreover, the proposed adjustments in the schedule of works could be accepted without altering the annual appropriations approved by the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee therefore considered that the Secretary-General should put in hand the projects he had proposed, and submit a further progress report to the General Assembly at its twenty-second session.

46. In reply to a question by Mr. ZODDA (Italy), Mr. PALTHEY (Deputy Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva) said that the villa "La Pelouse" consisted of a first-floor flat and a small conference room and 10 offices on the ground floor. He explained that the rental for the flat would only be sufficient to cover the cost of renovating it.

<sup>5/</sup> See Official Records of the General Assembly, Twentieth Session, Annexes, agenda item 76.

47. Mr. TARDOS (Hungary) inquired whether the administrative expenses amounting to \$220,000 entered at the bottom of the table which appeared in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1075) were attributable to maintenance and improvement works or represented the administrative expenses of a particular department.

48. Mr. PALTHEY (Deputy Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva) replied that the administrative expenses in question were solely attributable

to repairs and to such other items as site supervision, reproduction of architects' plans and sundry other costs.

49. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should approve the opinion of the Advisory Committee and the proposals made by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/1075).

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.*