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Chairman: Mr. Milton Fowler GREGG (Canada).

## AGENDA ITEM 58

Budget estimates for the financial year 1964 (A/5440, A/5505, A/5507, A/5529, A/5600, A/C.5/973, A/C.5/978, A/C.5/982, A/C.5/988, A/C.5/989, A/C.5/990, A/C.5/991, A/C.5/L.792) (continued)

### General discussion (continued)\*

1. Mr. ASSANE (Niger) recalled that in the statements they had made at the 1019th meeting of the Committee, both the Secretary-General (A/C.5/988) and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/C.5/989) had voiced their concern at the financial position of the Organization. The Secretary-General's adoption of a policy of austerity with regard to the budget estimates for the financial year 1964 (A/5505) was therefore most heartening: austerity and efficiency must be the watchwords if the Organization was to succeed in its task. However, austerity should not apply to all areas, and particularly not to bodies which were concerned with promoting rapid economic and social development, such as the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). His Government welcomed ECA's establishment of two sub-regional offices, one at Tangiers, the other in his own

country, at Niamey, for it greatly valued the United Nations technical programmes. It attached great importance to economic development within a regional framework and had already taken steps in that direction. Two conferences of West African States had been held at Niamey in December 1962 and February 1963 to discuss the co-ordination of regional development plans, and another conference of the same States would convene in Lagos under the aegis of the Organization of African Unity at the end of November. The first inter-African economic conference would be held at Niamey in December 1963. His country had joined all the regional economic bodies and had recently signed the charter of the African Development Bank. In addition, it was providing ECA with rent-free accommodation for the Niamey office, the work on which should be completed by the middle of 1964; housing for the staff should be ready by the end of 1963. In the meantime, temporary premises would be made available for the Niamey office.

2. Niger, like the other developing countries, looked to the United Nations to promote development and maintain peace. It was conscious of the need for sound financing if the Organization was to carry out its tasks: that could be achieved only if all Member States paid their contributions regularly. His country was doing its best in that respect. In response to the Secretary-General's appeal, it had made contributions to the United Nations Special Fund and to the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance. It had also taken the first steps towards paying off its arrears, which were mainly on the UNEF and ONUC accounts. It had also decided to purchase United Nations bonds before the terminal date of 31 December 1963.

3. Those commitments would be a heavy charge on his country's small budget, but it accepted them in order to do its bit towards ensuring the proper functioning of the United Nations, to which it pinned its faith. He endorsed the Secretary-General's statement that "First and foremost, we must make sure that all existing resources are used to maximum effect" (A/C.5/988, para. 12), which indicated a welcome trend towards the rationalization of expenditure.

### First reading (A/C.5/L.792) (continued)

#### SECTION 20. OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (A/5505, A/5507)

4. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the initial estimate submitted by the Secretary-General under section 20 was \$2,371,200, while the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$96,200 (A/5507, para. 331).

*The Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/5507, para. 331) for an appropriation of \$2,275,000 under section 20 was approved on first reading by 49 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.*

\*Resumed from the 1032nd meeting.

## SECTION 21. INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE (A/5505, A/5507)

*At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Aquarone, Deputy-Registrar of the International Court of Justice, took a place at the Committee table.*

5. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the initial estimate submitted by the Secretary-General under section 21 was \$964,600, while the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$9,600 (A/5507, para. 337).

6. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asked whether the principle of equitable geographical distribution was supposed to apply to the staff of the International Court of Justice and, if so, how far it was applied in practice.

7. Mr. AQUARONE (International Court of Justice) said that there were no more than 30 established posts in the Registry of the Court, of which 17 were in the Professional category. The Statute of the Court provided for the Registrar and the Deputy-Registrar to be appointed by the Court and for the remaining staff to be appointed on proposals submitted by the Registrar. There were technical factors involved: the official languages were English and French and most staff members had to have a thorough knowledge of those two languages. That applied especially to the 4 Secretaries and First Secretaries, whose duties, largely linguistic in character (translation and interpretation), required that French or English should be their first language. It was also necessary to recruit Netherlands staff since the Court had its seat at The Hague. At present the Registrar was French, the Deputy-Registrar was Australian, and there were 3 established posts vacant in the Professional category. Of the remaining posts, 4 were held by United Kingdom nationals, 2 by Frenchmen, 1 by a Greek and 5 by Netherlands nationals. One factor to be taken into account was that once staff were appointed they tended to stay.

8. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that not one member of the staff of the Court came from a neutralist or socialist country; they all came from Western countries. Although the total staff was small there must be a more equitable distribution if it was to be genuinely international.

*The Advisory Committee's recommendation (A/5507, para. 337) for an appropriation of \$955,000 under section 21 was unanimously approved on first reading.*

*Mr. Aquarone, Deputy-Registrar of the International Court of Justice, withdrew.*

ESTIMATES OF INCOME (A/5505, A/5507, A/5529, A/C.5/978) (continued)

### INCOME SECTION 1. STAFF ASSESSMENT INCOME (continued)

9. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the initial estimate submitted by the Secretary-General under income section 1 was \$9,300,000 while the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$75,000 (A/5507, para. 341). In his revised estimates (A/C.5/978, para. 7), the Secretary-General recommended an additional amount of \$140,000, with which the Advisory Committee concurred (A/5529).

*The estimate of \$9,365,000 recommended by the Advisory Committee under income section 1 (A/5507, para. 341 and A/5529) was unanimously approved on first reading.*

## AGENDA ITEM 64

Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (A/C.5/977):  
(b) Inter-organizational machinery for matters of pay and personnel administration: report of the Secretary-General (A/5556, A/C.5/976 and Corr.1)

10. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that in resolution 1869 (XVII) the General Assembly, having noted with approval the line of action taken by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) regarding a review of the terms of reference, composition and working arrangements of the International Civil Service Advisory Board (ICSAB), had requested the Secretary-General to report to it on developments in that regard and had asked the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to submit its observations thereon for consideration by the Assembly at its eighteenth session. The Secretary-General's report on the matter was contained in document A/C.5/976 and Corr.1 and the related observations of the Advisory Committee in document A/5556. The principal changes that the General Assembly was asked to approve were an increase in the membership of ICSAB and a revision of its terms of reference.

11. Mr. KITTANI (Iraq) recalled that as long ago as 1956 the Salary Review Committee had recommended a strengthening of ICSAB.<sup>1/</sup> For several years its recommendations had not been heeded, although ACC had urged that they should be, having come across a number of cases where the machinery for dealing with common staff problems had broken down. It was therefore gratifying to find that the need to strengthen ICSAB had at last been recognized. The new draft terms of reference for the Board contained in appendix 2 of the ICSAB report (A/C.5/976 and Corr.1, annex) had the support of all members of ACC, who hoped for their approval by the General Assembly. It was not clear, however, whether the Fifth Committee was expected to amend the draft terms of reference where necessary or merely to make comments which the Secretary-General might take into account.

12. With regard to paragraph 1 of the draft terms of reference, he agreed with the Advisory Committee (A/5556, para. 10) that it would be preferable for the Chairman of ICSAB to be elected by the members of the Board itself rather than by the Secretary-General. As regards paragraph 3, which gave the Board authority to act through a panel of three or more of its members at the discretion of the Chairman, there was much to be said for the Advisory Committee's view (*ibid.*, para. 9) that ICSAB's authority would be enhanced if as a general rule it met as a body. It was essential that all trends of opinion should be represented on the Board and the panel procedure should be adopted, if at all, only in exceptional circumstances. He would also endorse the Advisory Committee's interpretation of paragraph 9 of the draft terms of reference as not excluding the possibility of calling on experts from outside the various secretariats to assist the Board and assumed that paragraph 8 likewise did not restrict the range of persons from whom the Board could receive evidence to the secretariat staffs. As the Advisory Committee had indicated (*ibid.*, para. 8) the whole exercise of strengthening ICSAB would be fruitless if its recommendations were not accepted by the

<sup>1/</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Eleventh Session, Annexes*, agenda item 51 separate fascicle, document A/3209, para. 303.

various organizations within the system. Although the various members of the United Nations family were autonomous bodies and jealous of their independence, it was to be hoped that there would not be any cases where the Board's recommendations were disregarded without compelling reasons.

13. Mr. ZALAMEA (Colombia) associated himself with the doubts expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 5 of its report (A/5556) regarding the adequacy of existing machinery to provide necessary co-ordination and to reach agreements which would be observed by all organizations. For that reason, he supported the proposals in that report and in the Secretary-General's note (A/C.5/976 and Corr.1) relating to the strengthening of ICSAB. However, consideration should continue to be given to the possibility of setting up an inter-organizational inter-governmental body, as suggested by the Salary Review Committee in 1956.<sup>2/</sup>

14. Turning to the draft terms of reference for the new and enlarged ICSAB, he endorsed the Advisory Committee's comment that ICSAB's authority would be enhanced if, as a general rule, it were to meet as a body, and if limited panels were resorted to only in exceptional circumstances. It would be advisable for ICSAB to be able to meet wherever was most expedient for its work; that might be spelled out more clearly in its terms of reference. He agreed with the Advisory Committee that the Chairman of ICSAB should preferably be elected by the Board itself and that the Secretary, although appointed by the Secretary-General, should be responsible to the Board alone in the discharge of his functions and be removable only with the Board's agreement.

15. As to the work to be done by the new ICSAB, he felt it should take on as soon as possible the work now being done by the Expert Committee on Post Adjustments, so that there should be no duplication of activities between the two bodies. As it would have occasion to state in its interventions on personnel policy, the Colombian delegation attached great importance to the application of the principle of "best prevailing conditions of employment in the locality of the United Nations Office concerned" (Staff Regulations, annex I, para.7) by all United Nations bodies; ICSAB should consider whether that principle was being applied at all United Nations duty stations. He did not think that it was; although full compliance with that rule could not be achieved overnight, there was room for considerable improvement of existing practices.

16. Mr. BENDER (United States of America) said that the proposal to extend the functions of ICSAB was by no means a routine administrative matter; it was a significant step towards better co-ordination. The proposal, which had come appropriately enough, from ACC, was to strengthen ICSAB so that it could make recommendations relating to salaries and personnel administration which would be respected and accepted by all the organizations of the United Nations common system. The proposal was not new, as it had already been made by the 1956 Salary Review Committee and subsequently by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The United States had always supported those proposals because it believed that there should be common standards with regard to pay and personnel policy for all staff employed by the United Nations proper and by the

specialized agencies. He therefore supported the proposal and trusted that it would be speedily implemented.

17. Some delegations felt that the proposal did not provide for sufficient strengthening of ICSAB, a view which the Advisory Committee appeared to share. However, it was a step in the right direction. His delegation gave its general endorsement to the revised terms of reference of ICSAB (A/C.5/976, and Corr.1, appendix 2), with the modifications suggested by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/5556) and by the representative of Iraq.

18. Lastly, he expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would report to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly on the steps taken to implement the proposal.

19. Mr. QUIJANO (Argentina) said that in view of the size of the appropriations for staff costs and related expenses in the budgets of all the organizations of the common system, it was highly important to introduce some degree of uniformity with a view to achieving a general reduction of such costs. He therefore supported the proposal to strengthen ICSAB, which would then be able to establish a much-needed co-ordination. It would at least preclude such surprises as the Committee had been faced with at the seventeenth session because of unilateral action by one of the specialized agencies in Geneva.

20. Some delegations felt that even the strengthened ICSAB would not be able to carry out its task effectively; the answer to that was to be found in paragraph 8 of the Advisory Committee's report which stated that real co-ordination in the application of the common system could be achieved only if the executive heads and legislative bodies were prepared to stand by the recommendations of ICSAB. He supported the proposals, which were satisfactory in themselves; difficulties would arise only if they were not applied in the right spirit. Co-ordination could be achieved if there was a will to do so.

21. He found the draft terms of reference acceptable in general, but he was in favour of the changes recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 9 and 10 of its report.

22. Mr. S. K. SINGH (India) welcomed the fact that a first step was now being taken to give effect to the recommendations made by the Salary Review Committee in 1956. The proposals listed in paragraph 4 of the Advisory Committee's report would ensure some degree of uniformity among the organizations belonging to the common system. He therefore supported them, and the increased expenditure of \$14,000 that they would involve, mentioned in paragraph 12 of the Advisory Committee's report.

23. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had two main objections to the proposed enlargement of the membership of ICSAB and reinforcement of its authority. In the first place, such a step was unnecessary since there were already as many as five distinct bodies dealing specifically with co-ordination matters; besides, it was in direct contradiction with the policy of consolidation and containment which everyone claimed to approve. In the second place, the new ICSAB was intended to exercise dictatorial authority over the whole family of international organizations, an authority which should be both unconstitutional and impossible to reconcile with true internationalism. Neither the note by the Secretary-

<sup>2/</sup> Ibid., para. 299.

General nor the related report of the Advisory Committee made it clear how or by whom such authority was to be conferred. Nor was it made clear what the relations would be between the new ICSAB and the Fifth Committee, for instance, or the Advisory Committee itself—both of which bodies already bore a large part of the responsibility for setting norms and standards within the United Nations. It was evident that the juridical implications of the proposals had not been properly worked out, and that any decision at the present stage would be premature. He suggested that the Secretary-General should give the matter further study and report to the Committee at the nineteenth session.

24. Mr. CARDOSO (Brazil) said that his delegation would support the proposals to revise the composition and widen the terms of reference of ICSAB, on the understanding that the Secretary-General would make every effort to meet the expenditure which the proposals entailed from the total amount already requested under section 1—Travel and other expenses of representatives, members of Commissions, Committees and other subsidiary bodies, of the 1964 budget estimates. With regard to the geographical composition of the Board, he pointed out that five of its members were nationals of North American and Western European countries, two were nationals of African and Asian countries, and only one was a national of a Latin American or Eastern European country; it was to be hoped that the proposed enlargement of the Board would lead to an improvement in that situation.

25. Mr. CUTLER (Australia) likewise supported the proposals set forth in paragraph 4 of the Advisory Committee's report regarding the composition and terms of reference of ICSAB, and endorsed the Advisory Committee's reminder, in paragraph 8 of its report, that real co-ordination in the application of the common system could be achieved only if those concerned were prepared to stand by the recommendations of ICSAB. He hoped a sentence to that effect would be included in any draft resolution the Committee might adopt.

26. Mr. TEMPLETON (New Zealand) said that his delegation had no doubt about the need to strengthen ICSAB, and welcomed the recommendations put forward. The proposed action was not at variance with the policy of consolidation and containment, for it was an administrative question which could be implemented without significant appropriations. Enlargement from nine to eleven, and the appointment of a full-time Secretary should permit the Board to undertake more work, and to carry it out more effectively. His delegation therefore hoped that the Board could secure new members of outstanding competence, knowledge and integrity, for it was essential that the Board's authority be strengthened. As the Advisory Committee had pointed out, the executive heads and legislative bodies must be prepared to stand by the Board's recommendations. Only thus could the Board acquire authority comparable to that now enjoyed by the Advisory Committee. His delegation also agreed with the Advisory Committee that the Chairman of ICSAB should be elected by the members of the Board and that the Secretary should be responsible to the Board alone. In practice the Board should not, if it was to exercise its powers of co-ordination effectively, hesitate to take the initiative. That was not, as the United States representative had observed, a routine administrative matter, but a question of the highest

importance if co-ordination throughout the United Nations system was to be improved. If that administrative experiment was to succeed, the Board should make full use of its new authority.

27. Sir Alexander MacFARQUHAR (Director of Personnel) said that wider terms of reference and increased membership would naturally tend to enhance the already considerable respect enjoyed by ICSAB; such respect, indeed, was the best guarantee that its recommendations would in future be heeded. With regard to the possible use of limited panels, he recalled that such an arrangement had been envisaged only in order to meet a situation where there were practical difficulties in the way of convening the full Board. However, the Board would doubtless regard that as a very exceptional procedure. With regard to the "outside experts" mentioned in paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report and queried by the Iraqi representative, he confirmed that the Committee's intention was indeed to ensure the Board's freedom of action.

28. The Secretary-General had already indicated his intention of consulting the Chairman of the Advisory Committee about appointments to the Board, and he would no doubt wish to reconsider the matter of the Board's Chairman with his colleagues on the ACC, now that the Fifth Committee had endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation that he be elected by the Board's own members.

29. Mr. MALHOTRA (Nepal) proposed that further consideration of the item should be deferred until the following day.

*It was so decided.*

#### AGENDA ITEM 66

Personnel questions:

- (a) Geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/987, A/C.5/L.790 and Corr.1 and Add.1);
- (b) Proportion of fixed-term staff (A/C.5/987)

30. Mr. TARDOS (Hungary) said that the geographical distribution of the staff and the proportion of fixed-term staff were long-debated and sharply controversial problems. The composition of the staff could not of course be transformed overnight to reflect changes in international power relations and the increased membership of the Organization, particularly as that was contrary to various interests. For instance, Secretariat staff received considerably higher salaries than they would in their national public service. Some were anxious about the efficiency of the Secretariat with a non-permanent personnel, and certain Governments were justifiably afraid that their political influence in the Secretariat might decrease.

31. Even a cursory glance at the figures in document A/C.5/987 concerning geographical distribution of the staff revealed a dismal picture, despite the fact that certain changes for the better had taken place during the past two years. Of the posts subject to geographical distribution, 44 per cent were occupied by nationals of NATO countries; while 40 posts fell to every NATO country, the other 96 Member States held only 8 posts each on the average. Worse still, 69 of the 132 most senior posts were occupied by nationals of NATO countries.

32. Even if political considerations were set aside and the composition of the staff analysed in terms of parti-

cular geographical regions, there were still considerable divergencies from the mid-points of the newly established desirable ranges. While Western Europe was 31 per cent over-represented, and Eastern Europe was 31 per cent under-represented; Latin America was 27 per cent over-represented and Africa was 17 per cent under-represented. In fact the number of staff members was 10 per cent lower than the total of 1,500 on which the desirable ranges had been based, and he had accordingly made a 10 per cent negative correction of the mid-points; without that correction, Eastern Europe would be 38 per cent under-represented. A study of the situation inside the individual groups would reveal an even more disquieting picture.

33. The Secretary-General should take practical steps to eliminate the existing imbalances. Such steps should include an increase in the proportion of fixed-term appointments, which his delegation was glad to note had already risen in one year from 25.4 to 29.7 per cent, and the introduction of a policy whereby no one was recruited from any over-represented country unless no candidate could be found in under-represented countries. His delegation was strongly opposed to the Secretary-General's declared intention (A/C.5/987, para. 18) of continuing with the conversion of fixed-term appointments in order to bring within the career group an increasing number of staff from the under-represented regions, and maintaining the proportion of fixed-term staff at about 25 per cent of the total. Many Member States, including Hungary, could ill afford to lose their most highly qualified nationals to international service. Furthermore, useful experience could be gained by working with the United Nations, and not to make use of that experience would entail a further loss to the State of which the person concerned was a national. But it would be a loss for the United Nations too, for it was to its advantage that

Member States should employ in their public service persons experienced in United Nations affairs. The way to improve the geographical distribution of the staff, therefore, was to decrease the number of career appointments. The proportion of fixed-term staff was now almost 30 per cent, and he would like to know why it would be suitable for the Secretary-General to try to decrease that proportion.

34. An increase in the number of posts subject to geographical distribution would likewise make it easier to keep the staff within the desirable ranges set for different countries or regions. In that context, his delegation recommended the Secretary-General to include in the scope of geographical distribution those staff members whom he specifically appointed to mission service as well as those in the G-5 category.

35. Finally, he would like to know why staff members occupying posts subject to geographical distribution who had lost their Hungarian citizenship were still registered on the Hungarian quota and not among the stateless persons. His Government had several times officially notified the Office of Personnel of such persons, and he hoped that the absence of response was due to administrative shortcomings and not to an endeavour on the part of the Secretariat to question a Member State's right to decide who was to be considered a citizen of that State.

36. Mr. FERNANDO (Ceylon) said that his delegation was satisfied with the progress being made towards more equitable geographical distribution of staff. He would like to know whether staff members were appointed in consultation with the Governments of the Member States of which they were nationals; his delegation felt that that should be the case.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.