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CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 74:</i>	
<i>Budget estimates for the financial year 1968 (continued)</i>	
<i>Introduction of a draft resolution on the United Nations regular budget</i>	209
<i>First reading (continued)</i>	
<i>Section 3. Salaries and wages (continued)</i>	213
<i>Agenda item 81:</i>	
<i>Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General (continued)</i>	216

Chairman: Mr. Harry MORRIS (Liberia).

AGENDA ITEM 74

Budget estimates for the financial year 1968 (continued)* (A/6705 and Corr.1, A/6707 and Corr.1 and 2, A/6854, A/6861, A/6878, A/C.5/1113 and Corr.1 and 2, A/C.5/1114 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1115 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1118, A/C.5/1123 and Corr.1, A/C.5/1124, A/C.5/1126-1129, A/C.5/1132, A/C.5/1135, A/C.5/1136, A/C.5/L.901, A/C.5/L.908 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.917)

Introduction of a draft resolution on the United Nations regular budget (A/C.5/L.917)

1. Mr. BROOMFIELD (United States of America), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/L.917, referred to the last part of the foreword to the budget estimates for the financial year 1968 (A/6705 and Corr.1), in which the Secretary-General dealt with a question of paramount importance to which a solution must be found if the full value of the proposals put forward by the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies in its second report^{1/} was to be achieved. He had in mind the fundamental problem of reconciling the total work programme, as determined by resolutions of the main legislative organs of the United Nations, and the total resources which Member States were prepared to make available for its implementation. He stated that he was compelled, because of such budgetary stringency, to assume the heavy responsibility of reducing, on a sometimes arbitrary basis, the legitimate requests of departments and offices, with possible detriment to the implementation of the programmes for which they were responsible. He therefore invited the General Assembly to give him guidance, "either annually or over

*Resumed from the 1204th meeting.

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Annexes, agenda item 80, document A/6343.

a longer period of time". That would not only be of benefit to him, but also to the legislative bodies of the United Nations, which would have the benefit of a financial framework within which to plan their work programmes and establish the necessary priorities.

2. The delegations of France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States had drawn up a working paper indicating the general direction of their thinking on the matter, concerning which they had held consultations with other delegations. That document was now draft resolution A/C.5/L.917, the key element of which was the proposal to establish a procedure for arriving at a "planning figure" for the United Nations regular budget, the purpose being to help improve the methods of preparing and managing the Organization's budget and programmes.

3. The proposal was in accordance with the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee and resolution 2150 (XXI), which the General Assembly had adopted unanimsously and in which it urged that the recommendations and comments of the Ad Hoc Committee should be given most attentive consideration. In addition, it offered a means of giving effect to the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation that heads of organizations should transmit preliminary and approximate estimates to the bodies responsible for examining the budget about one year before the date on which the legislative bodies were required to give it their final approval.^{2/}

4. Explaining the sponsors' motives, he said that the United States, like many other Members, had had a growing interest in improving the budgetary and management procedures of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. Those who prepared the budgets must have a better basis for their work, and all countries contributing to the budgets of international organizations must know as far in advance as possible what contributions would be expected from them.

5. As demands on the Organization grew—and they would continue to grow if the promise of the United Nations Charter was to be kept—it was necessary to develop and adapt the capacity to handle new and complex problems. There was widespread recognition that if the United Nations was to carry out its task effectively, it must pay more heed to sound management and orderly development and apply modern budgeting and programming procedures suited to its increased activities. It was essential that more efficient use should be made of the resources expended on the vital work of human, social and economic development.

^{2/} *Ibid.*, para. 26.

6. The approach to budgetary procedures advocated in the draft resolution was designed to strengthen the efforts towards improved management being undertaken by all units in the United Nations. Member States were agreed on the need for longer-range planning and for a system of priorities to ensure that the most essential things were done first. They were agreed that waste must be eliminated and that improvements in the United Nations financial and budgetary methods were both necessary and possible. The Ad Hoc Committee had unanimously adopted recommendations on the subject, which the General Assembly in turn had approved. In addition, the Fifth Committee, by adopting at its 1185th meeting, a draft resolution on agenda item 80,^{3/} had already recommended that the General Assembly should reaffirm its concern that rapid progress be made in carrying out the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations.

7. The United States Government considered the United Nations the prime instrument for carrying out in the most efficient way the work of international co-operation in maintaining and securing peace, undertaking the complex tasks of a world which technology had made smaller and advancing economic and social development. The world had entered upon a period when Member States would place increasing reliance on the United Nations and its resources. The United Nations programmes for helping developing countries were bound to grow.

8. What was the approach of the United States Government to those problems? For two decades the United States Government had favoured utilizing the full potential of the United Nations in order to organize a durable peace, fulfil the promises of the Charter for international co-operation, promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and of problems of change and help to step up the flow of resources and technology from the industrialized to the developing countries. Leaders of both political parties in the United States had consistently subscribed to that policy. Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson had made statements showing the United States Government's commitment to the United Nations. No country had been more openhanded than the United States in its support of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other international organizations. It was the United States which made the largest financial contribution. The people of the United States were proud of that contribution and of their support for United Nations activities. The great bulk of those activities and contributions had gone into economic and social programmes. The United States considered that political and technological change required an expanded effort of mutual aid which would help to close the North-South gap. In a developing world, there was no higher priority than to strengthen activities in the economic and social field. Finally, the United States placed increasing emphasis on multilateralism. The world was too complex to be the concern of a few big Powers alone. No country or group of countries was rich enough or intelligent enough to take on the problems alone. The world

community must share the work of planning, the responsibilities and the cost. Regional and international agencies for peace and development must grow in experience and in their capacity for practical co-operative action.

9. President Johnson had shown the United States Government's interest in the problem of the effective management of international organizations in his memorandum of 15 March 1966, in which he had directed the Secretary of State to take certain actions relating to the participation by the United States in the activities of international organizations. He had given an assurance that the United States would continue to meet its share of the organizations' expenses. He had added, however, that the same rigorous standards of programme performance and budget review must be applied to the activities of those bodies as to domestic programmes. To that end, he had laid down the following three guidelines: future expansion of the activities of international organizations must be governed by the test of feasibility and reasonableness; programmes of international organizations must be vigorously scrutinized, so that funds were allocated only to high-priority projects; and each international agency must operate with a maximum of effectiveness and economy. That was still the United States approach.

10. As needs increased and a larger share of the resources available were channelled through multilateral institutions, management and budgetary practices in international organizations must be improved and modernized. If the necessary support from parliaments and taxpayers, beset by so many pressing and legitimate claims at home and abroad, was to be continued and to expand, it was essential to recognize the advantages of better planning and to make the maximum use of resources. The budgetary procedures of the United Nations must be modernized so that it could discharge its increased responsibilities.

11. The sponsors of the draft resolution proposed several steps towards that end. They were convinced that those steps should be taken now, without waiting for the perfection of all the other procedures which might be related to that task, directly or indirectly. The proposal was designed to accommodate complementary procedures, especially with respect to long-term planning and the selection of priorities. Those other steps could and should be taken simultaneously by the appropriate bodies of the United Nations.

12. The second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution referred to the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation which he had already mentioned. Later in his statement, he intended to show that the draft resolution followed the recommendation closely and provided a way for preliminary and approximate estimates to be submitted about one year before the date on which the legislative bodies of the organizations were required to give final approval to the budget. The third preambular paragraph called attention to the Secretary-General's request for guidance from the General Assembly on the total resources which Member States were prepared to make available and the fourth stressed the importance of such guidance for sound management and orderly development of the United Nations.

^{3/} Ibid., Twenty-second Session, Annexes, agenda item 80, document A/7015, para. 16, draft resolution A.

13. It should be noted that at the current session the proposal would only have the General Assembly approve the procedure. It was not proposed to set a planning figure in the current year. The Secretary-General, the bodies responsible for preparation of the programme and the Member States would have a year in which to make the necessary preparations before the procedure became operative.

14. What would happen if that procedure were adopted? The results of the programme planning by United Nations bodies during the spring and summer of 1968 would, as usual, be available to the Secretary-General and to all concerned by November 1968. At that time, the first reading of the budget estimates would be almost completed and the approximate level of the budget to be adopted for the financial year 1969 would be known. Once apprised of the programme recommendations for 1969, the level of the budget for 1969 and the views of Member States about the future development of programmes, the Secretary-General would consult his principal staff and prepare his recommendations for a planning figure to be used in preparing the budget for 1970. The Secretary-General's paper would naturally present approximate and preliminary estimates but it would also include a breakdown of expenditure by section of the budget, a comparison with cost estimates for 1968 and 1969 and a brief explanation of the major factors expected to change for each section in 1970. That estimate would go to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for its comments and then to the Fifth Committee, which would review the planning figure and make recommendations to the General Assembly. In the normal course of events, the planning figure would be adopted not earlier than 15 December 1968. Early in January 1969 the Secretary-General would begin to put together the budget estimates for 1970 on the basis of the planning figure just adopted by the General Assembly. All organs of the United Nations and their subsidiary bodies financed out of the regular budget would co-operate with the Secretary-General and act consistently with the planning figure. The budget estimates would be put together in detail between January and May 1969. They would be reviewed by the Advisory Committee in June and July, and the Advisory Committee's comments would be transmitted to the Member States, together with the budget estimates, in early August 1969. The General Assembly would review the budget estimates for 1970 at its regular session and decide on a final budget. The budget thus decided upon would govern expenditures for programmes in 1970.

15. It should be noted that the timing of those different stages was similar to that of the process which would be followed if the existing system were adopted for the budget for 1970. The new procedures would make it possible to implement the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee, which was echoed in the second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution; in addition, the Secretary-General would be required to plan further ahead and to consult the General Assembly about the amount of resources to be devoted to the budget. The Assembly, for its part, would give the Secretary-General the guidance he had requested as to the general magnitude of the

budget which Member States would be prepared to support for the coming year. Lastly, the planning figure would help the Secretary-General to build a budget which balanced the programmes and priorities decided upon by the competent organs of the United Nations. As a result, the proposed procedures would inject a necessary element of a sound management, orderly development and modern budgeting into the United Nations.

16. There remained the question of deciding how to fund emergencies which might arise between the establishment of the planning figure and the final approval of the budget and for which no provision had been made in the planning figure. That matter was dealt with in operative paragraph 4 of the draft, which requested the Advisory Committee, in consultation with the Secretary-General, to review the whole problem of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses and a number of related problems and to report back to the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee was also requested to draft a resolution on that subject, "bearing in mind the above intent with respect to the planning figure". Meanwhile, unforeseen and extraordinary expenses and related items would be dealt with according to the rules in force. One of the related items concerned the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee that a special appropriation line might be included in the budget to meet contingencies.^{4/} If that procedure were adopted, an amount for that purpose should also be included in the planning figure. Expenditure incurred for true emergencies would, of course, be covered in any event. The Advisory Committee would be asked to suggest rules to govern other important categories of expenditure which could not be deferred. The sponsors of the draft resolution were confident that it would recommend a logical and reasonable solution.

17. His delegation did not want to oversell the planning figure device. The proposed procedure was no alchemy to produce more resources than the Member States were willing to supply. It would not solve all the problems or provide all the improvements needed in longer-range planning, the establishment of priorities and the development of programmes. Nevertheless, his delegation did believe that the procedure would improve the United Nations budgeting system, regardless of whether other improvements were made. Moreover, the planning figure would help to accelerate progress towards long-term planning and the establishment of priorities. It could operate with any state of planning. It was not an end in itself: it complemented existing arrangements for programme review and analysis and represented a useful financial framework for that purpose. It would be an important step, which could be taken without waiting until all other related systems had been perfected.

18. In connexion with the unjustified misgivings evoked by the draft resolution, it should be pointed out that the planning figure was not a ceiling: it considered the needs of the United Nations at a given moment and provided for an orderly review of the situation and a decision about the resources which the Member States were willing to provide at that

^{4/} Ibid., Twenty-first Session, Annexes, agenda item 80, document A/6343, para. 41.

moment. It would not hamper the ability of the United Nations to respond to its needs; in fact, if the Organization operated more efficiently, all Member States were bound to benefit. Nor was it a rate-of-growth proposal, since the sponsors did not believe that such a proposal would serve the interests of the United Nations, particularly at that time. It had been said that the proposal was not timely because longer-range planning and the setting of priorities had to be perfected first. Yet the proposed procedure would complement and might even accelerate the work of the bodies responsible for programme planning. There had been objections that it was not clear how the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses of the General Assembly and related items would fit into the picture. However, the draft resolution established a procedure whereby the Advisory Committee would study the matter and make recommendations to the General Assembly. In addition, there was no need to fear that the proposal would require the budget to be established much earlier than was now the case. Indeed, it would enable Member States to be involved in the process earlier and to know further in advance what contributions would be required of them. Lastly, it had been suggested that the planning figure and the other measures recommended were primarily in the interest of the larger contributors. It should be pointed out that, in the first place, all Member States were contributors and all had to convince their taxpayers that the programmes they supported were worth-while and efficiently administered; in the second place, if the resources were not employed to the best advantage, the developing countries would be the biggest losers.

19. The American people had faith in the United Nations and placed great hopes in it. The great majority of Americans remained firm in their support of the Organization and wanted it to be strengthened as an instrument of peace. The Americans wanted the United Nations to be used fully to help Member States in the process of nation building and economic and social development. They believed, however, that the burden should be equitably shared. All countries had much to do at home. Even the most affluent nations faced formidable problems in the underdeveloped areas of their own communities. Each Member State should be able to convince its people that the resources it was devoting to international programmes were being employed to the best advantage.

20. The United Nations had a great future. It had to be adaptable and inventive if it was to tackle the next generation of problems. It had to modernize its budgetary and administrative processes if it was to be productive in its two tasks of maintaining peace and security and assisting the developing countries in their economic and social development.

21. The co-sponsors had said that they subscribed to the views he had just expressed when introducing draft resolution A/C.5/L.917. There had already been many informal consultations on the text and its sponsors would welcome further discussions with any member of the Committee.

22. Mr. KULEBYAKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) paid a tribute to the excellent introductory

statement made by the representative of the United States of America who had presented some very convincing arguments. He hoped that the delegations would appreciate the purpose of the draft resolution and ensure its adoption and speedy implementation.

23. The draft resolution had been prepared in the light of prevailing circumstances. It was a carefully considered and timely response to the request made by the Secretary-General in the last part of the foreword to the budget estimates for 1968. The sponsors had taken into account the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations on the improvement of the Organization's financial procedures. Those recommendations had been unanimously adopted in resolution 2150 (XXI) by the General Assembly, which had urged their earliest implementation.

24. As indicated in the preamble, the sponsors had borne in mind the recommendations and the resolution when preparing the draft, which was designed to improve the Organization's administrative and financial procedures. One of the means proposed for that purpose was the planning of budgetary resources placed at the Secretary-General's disposal, to enable him to forecast and organize the proposed activities more effectively. The budgetary functions and responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the departments concerned would thus be enhanced. Any Government drawing up programmes first took into account the possibility of their implementation and the need to reconcile their requirements with available resources. Such planning was all the more important and necessary in the case of the United Nations, which was composed of many Member States.

25. The emergence of the question of long-term budget planning was not fortuitous. It was the result of a progressive development over the past few years. Desiring to improve the present system of budgeting and to ensure that the work programme could be reconciled with resources, his delegation had collaborated in the preparation of draft resolution A/C.5/L.917. He was glad to say that the draft included features which corresponded quite closely to management methods applied in the Soviet economy, which was based on a single plan under which effort was concentrated in the most important sectors. A study of the Soviet economy's success would show that the remarkable progress it had made in the past fifty years had been due to planning.

26. Although the draft resolution was only a first step towards the introduction of a system of planning in the United Nations, it contained proposals which would make it possible to bring order into the Organization's budgetary procedures and would enable the Secretary-General to make the most effective and economical use of the resources needed for social and economical development. His delegation was confident that the significance of the draft resolution would be fully appreciated by the members of the Fifth Committee.

27. Mr. FENSOME (United Kingdom) said that the representative of the United States of America had clearly presented the arguments and reasons which had led the sponsors to submit draft resolution A/C.5/L.917. That was a matter of some significance in the

development of the Organization, particularly its budgetary procedures. The Committee's members would no doubt wish to study the statements just made, especially those passages in the United States representative's statement which outlined the procedures and time-table envisaged for determining the planning figure.

28. Two specific points needed to be stressed. The sponsors shared the views of the Secretary-General regarding the concept of a budget ceiling and the imposition of an arbitrary limit on its rate of growth. They had no intention of proposing a ceiling for the regular budget or an arbitrary limit for its rate of growth. Such a measure would be contrary to the aims of the Organization and the natural aspirations of the developing countries. Nor were they attempting to circumvent the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter. Their draft resolution was a sincere attempt to help modernize the Organization's budgetary procedures and to ensure that resources were most effectively used for the benefit of all Member States, in the light of the relevant recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Secretary-General's request in paragraph 25 of his foreword to the budget estimates for 1968. The burdens imposed by the budget fell just as heavily on the major contributors as on those with modest assessments.

29. In its statement at the 1189th meeting, his delegation had reminded the Committee briefly of the support his country had given to the United Nations and its voluntary programmes. The United Kingdom's contribution to the regular budget represented less than one-fiftieth of the amount it was currently spending on various forms of economic and technical assistance. That simple comparison put the whole matter in perspective and proved, if proof were needed, that the purpose of the draft resolution was not to secure trifling economies in a sector where the United Kingdom's expenditure was relatively small compared with its contribution in other areas. It was, on the contrary, a genuine attempt to improve one part of the United Nations machinery for the benefit of all concerned.

30. Mr. GANEM (France) recalled that, during the general discussion on the budget estimates (1196th meeting), his delegation had expressed support in advance for a document then being prepared and now introduced as a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.917) by the United States representative. The latter had justifiably mentioned the support his Government gave to the United Nations. Since the establishment of the United Nations and the promulgation of the concept of technical assistance, France's policy had been to devote as large a proportion of its resources as possible to the assistance of developing countries. At present technical assistance accounted for 1.68 per cent of its national budget, a higher proportion than any other donor except the United States, whose population was four times that of France. In maintaining that policy, France wished to see the Organization's growth become progressively more orderly, as recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee.

31. He assured the delegations of developing countries that France would not have become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution if it had proposed the

imposition of a ceiling or a fixed rate of growth. He therefore invited the Committee to study the draft carefully and hoped that it could be adopted unanimously.

First reading (continued)* (A/C.5/L.908 and Corr.1)

SECTION 3. SALARIES AND WAGES (continued)*
(A/6705 AND CORR.1, A/6707 AND CORR.1 AND 2,
A/6854, A/C.5/1114 AND CORR.1, A/C.5/1136)

32. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1136) on the increase in General Service salary scales at Headquarters.

33. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had considered the report in question and the financial implications of a proposed 5 per cent increase in General Service salary scales at Headquarters. As usual, the Secretary-General had based his proposal for that increase on an analysis of the best prevailing salary and wage scales in the New York area, as given in the Commerce and Industry Association index. In accordance with the provisions of annex I, paragraph 7, of the Staff Regulations of the United Nations, approved by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General fixed the salary scales for staff members in the General Service category on the basis of the best prevailing conditions of employment in the locality. The Advisory Committee was satisfied with the Secretary-General's analysis of the statistics provided in the index and suggested that the General Assembly approve the 5 per cent increase in General Service salaries proposed by the Secretary-General, and the financial implications of that increase.

34. Mr. MOEBIUS (Austria) noted the statement in the budget estimates for the financial year 1968 (A/6705 and Corr.1, p. 63, para. 169) that a comprehensive review of United Nations activities in the field of public information had been conducted and that it had resulted in certain new proposals. His delegation attached great importance to those proposals. A report on the subject was to be submitted to the General Assembly at its current session.

35. During the discussion on the budget estimates, some delegations had criticized the public information activities of the United Nations. His delegation was particularly pleased with the services provided by the Radio and Visual Services Division. Coverage of United Nations activities was becoming increasingly difficult, especially for smaller countries unable to maintain permanent radio and television correspondents at Headquarters. The Austrian radio and television services had been glad to use the facilities provided by the United Nations Secretariat, such as the regular taped radio programmes and short-wave news broadcasts in German and the television facilities. His delegation therefore hoped that those services would continue.

36. Mr. MIRZA (Pakistan) said that if the scale of wages for General Service staff was not satisfactory, that was mainly because New York was an

*Resumed from the 1204th meeting.

extremely expensive place. The scale in force at the United Nations should set a pattern for the working classes all over the world.

37. The question of restructuring the General Service category could not be dealt with in isolation. All the related problems must be analysed, i.e., there should be an examination and evaluation of the current status, conditions of employment and career opportunities for staff in that category. If discrimination between Professional and General Service staff could not be eliminated entirely, it should at least be minimized as far as possible, so that all United Nations staff would have the same career opportunities.

38. The separation of General Service staff from Professional staff had reduced them to being no more than a local appendage of an internationally recruited civil service. It was not fair to regard them as a supplementary local service. Most of the jobs they performed were not of a local nature and were essential for the proper functioning of the United Nations. It was strange that they should be considered international civil servants for the purposes of the budget, but local staff when the time came to fix their wages. Under the Staff Regulations and Rules, General Service staff were considered international civil servants; their responsibilities were not national but exclusively international. They were subject to the authority of the Secretary-General, who could assign them to any of the activities or offices of the United Nations, including overseas missions. Their whole time was at the disposal of the Secretary-General and they were required to work beyond the normal hours of duty when asked to do so. They were also subject to certain restrictions in their outside activities, with regard to such things as public statement, political activities and publications. In addition, they were required to possess certain language qualifications. Under the current system, General Service staff were not fully integrated into the international civil service and did not enjoy sufficient protection as regards salaries and other benefits. In 1950, the Advisory Committee^{5/} had stated that the objectives of any post classification and salary system should be to ensure equality of treatment throughout the Secretariat, reasonable opportunities for promotion and a maximum degree of job security and of career prospects. The Advisory Committee had further stressed that rigid segregation of staff into General Service and Professional categories should be avoided, so that staff members might have opportunities of passing freely from one category to another. In 1956, the Salary Review Committee had stated^{6/} that the transfer of posts of a semi-local nature would provide increased promotion opportunities in future for qualified members of the General Services, but it had approved transfers only up to the P-3 level.

39. Most locally recruited General Service staff were satisfactorily qualified, but their salaries were not on a par with their responsibilities. The staff in the Reproduction Section, for example, had to set up entire documents for printing in languages other than their

own, but they got no language allowance. Their work was very strenuous and they sometimes had to work round the clock and on holidays. Many staff found it necessary to take additional jobs, with the approval of the administration, and most were in debt. In addition, those in the lower grades paid a staff assessment rate which in many cases was higher than the United States tax rate. The Advisory Committee had noted in 1962^{7/} that the Secretary-General's proposal had been based on a survey only covering outside rates of pay and had stated that the next General Service salary review at Headquarters should cover other conditions of employment. In 1964 the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination had approved the principle that if benefits were appreciably better outside, staff should be compensated by an increase in pay.

40. He considered that allowances were not intended to serve an economic purpose, but a social one. They were to be regarded as social benefits rather than as part of a system of compensation. Consequently, there should be no change in the policy under which a flat-rate allowance was paid to all eligible staff members.

41. United Nations staff members, moreover, had to work more overtime than those outside. It would therefore be reasonable to expect that the rate of overtime should be equal to that outside, if not higher.

42. Subject to the principle of geographical distribution in the recruitment of Professional staff, it would be better to promote permanent General Service staff, if they were qualified, rather than recruit new staff, if the recruitment was to be made from the same geographical area. That would maintain the geographical ratio and would afford career opportunities to qualified members of the General Service staff. At present their chances of promotion were extremely limited: 9.8 per cent were at the level of G-5, 27.9 per cent at G-4, 51.6 per cent of G-3, 8.6 per cent at G-2 and 1.9 per cent at the level of G-1. The only way to remove the bottleneck at the level of G-3 was to reduce the retirement age.

43. Finally, he considered that the proposed salary scale should be carefully examined and invited the Secretary-General to consider the case of technical, supervisory and administrative staff with sympathy.

44. Mr. LOQUMAN (Mauritania) wished to repeat that his Government had always supported the efforts made by the Secretary-General to conduct the Organization's activities in a proper manner and in particular to improve staff administration. He appreciated the work of the Advisory Committee, which gave the Fifth Committee a basis on which to make up its mind about the budget estimates, and had confidence in its recommendations.

45. In section 3 the Secretary-General had set forth his staff needs and had asked for an allocation of over \$60 million, but the Advisory Committee had recommended a considerable reduction. As the representative of a developing country, he considered that if the Secretary-General did not get the funds he had asked for, he could not discharge his responsibilities.

^{5/} *Ibid.*, Fifth Session, Supplement No. 7a, paras. 9 and 11.

^{6/} *Ibid.*, Eleventh Session, Annexes, agenda item 51, document A/3209 (separate fascicle), paras. 62-64.

^{7/} *Ibid.*, Seventeenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 62, document A/5272, para. 6.

The work of such bodies as UNIDO and UNCTAD, the size of whose staff was directly involved, was also liable to suffer. What was more, it seemed from several passages in the budget estimates relating to section 3 that the Secretary-General had already taken steps with a view to promoting some staff members. If that was the case, he wondered how the Secretary-General could be denied the funds he needed in order to keep the promises he had made. The morale and efficiency of the staff would be affected.

46. Mr. SANU (Nigeria) reiterated his delegation's support for the reductions in section 3 recommended by the Advisory Committee. Much had been said about the improved situation with regard to vacancies in established posts, but sight should not be lost of the fact that retirements and resignations tended to neutralize the efforts of the Secretary-General with regard to recruitment. The Advisory Committee had pointed out in paragraph 175 of its main report (A/6707 and Corr.1 and 2) that it had been provided with statistics which showed that separations tended to keep pace with the recruitment of new staff. He would like to have an idea of the number of vacancies which would occur in 1968.

47. He sympathized with the concern of the delegations of Trinidad and Tobago and of Barbados that the reduction proposed by the Advisory Committee should not adversely affect the programme in the economic and social fields. He wished to assure them that Nigeria, as a developing country, could not be a party to a decision that would curtail the activities of the United Nations in those fields. His delegation was aware that, as in the past, the Secretary-General would exercise his discretionary powers to transfer staff to carry out urgent and important tasks. The staffing of the regional office of ECLA in Trinidad and Tobago was an urgent task, and it should be possible for the Executive Secretary of ECLA to transfer suitable staff there from within the region.

48. His delegation had listened attentively to the statement made at the 1202nd meeting by the Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs, which had underlined the necessity of bringing the processes of budget-making and programme formulation as closely together as possible. It was clear that the meeting programme of bodies responsible for the examination of programme and establishment of priorities—namely, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions—would have to be rationalized so that due regard would be taken of the recommendations of one by the other. While his delegation appreciated the Under-Secretary's statement, it feared that there would be repercussions from other departments of the Secretariat if the recommendation of the Advisory Committee were set aside; for the Fifth Committee would then have to grant a hearing to other heads of department who might feel that their programme of work would be affected by the Advisory Committee's recommendations. It was because of its fear of setting a dangerous precedent that his delegation felt unable to support any call for re-examination of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee. The Secretary-General should utilize all avenues open to him to fulfil the work programme,

but, if it became apparent by the middle of 1968 that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would cause undue hardship, then the Secretary-General should submit a report to the Advisory Committee for consideration at its summer session.

49. His delegation had listened with considerable interest to the discussion on the Secretary-General's proposal for reorganization of the top echelon in the United Nations Secretariat. It was clear from the Secretary-General's note on that subject (A/C.5/1128) that the only basic reorganization proposed was the combination of the posts of Controller and Director of Personnel into one post, that of Director of Administration. There was no doubt that such reorganization would allow a proper examination, and possibly a reconciliation, of the budgetary and staff requirements of the United Nations. His delegation hoped, however, that the officials in charge of the two separate departments would be of equal rank. With regard to the top echelon posts listed in annex III to the Secretary-General's note, his delegation merely wished to say that the principle of equitable geographical distribution had weighed more heavily than the factor of responsibility, and it would have wished to have more justification from the Secretary-General for his selections. His delegation agreed with those who felt that the post of Legal Counsel deserved to be raised to the top echelon, and it hoped that the Secretary-General would take the views expressed in the Committee into account in his final decision on the matter. What was important was that the Legal Counsel should have a direct channel of communication to the Secretary-General, and that the legal advice tendered should be independent and not subject to any comment by any intermediate official.

50. His delegation felt that there was a need for more flexibility in the top echelon of the Secretariat; in other words, there should be more frequent rotation of senior posts, perhaps once in four years, which would prevent the more or less permanent occupation of posts by the same officials and would enable greater regard to be paid to the principle of equitable geographical distribution, thus giving nationals of all Member States, and particularly of African countries, an opportunity to participate more actively in policy-making. The qualifications required of an official with the rank of Under-Secretary should be such as to permit the type of rotation which he suggested.

51. The Secretary-General stated in paragraph 17 of his note that he proposed to appoint a small team of four or five experts to consider the problem of reorganization of the Secretariat at other levels and to make recommendations. In view of the importance of the proposed reorganization, his delegation hoped that the Secretary-General would increase the number of experts to seven or eight and select them on as wide a geographical basis as possible. Member States should also have been given an idea of the terms of reference of the team of experts. His delegation hoped that the experts would examine the distribution of work in the Secretariat and the composition of personnel in the various departments. The reorganization should afford an opportunity to ensure effective participation by all Member States in

the work of the Organization, and his delegation hoped that the report of the team of experts would be placed before the Members, so that they would have an opportunity to examine and comment on the recommendations.

52. Mr. CISS (Senegal) thought that when speaking of UNCTAD and UNIDO, dealt with in sections 19 and 20 of the budget estimates, some of the previous speakers had let themselves stray from the specific consideration of section 3, with the result that some confusion might have arisen in their minds regarding the staff requested by the Secretary-General for 1968 and the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee. He wished to assure the representative of Mauritania that, as a developing country, Senegal had no intention of supporting recommendations which would adversely affect United Nations programmes in the economic, social and human rights fields. He was supporting the Advisory Committee's recommendations because he was convinced that they were not likely to compromise United Nations activities of benefit to the developing countries. It was necessary to be realistic; if a reduction could be made in expenditure without hurting essential programmes, it should be approved. His delegation considered that the Advisory Committee's recommendations under section 3 were reasonable and deserved the Fifth Committee's support.

53. Mr. TURNER (Controller), commenting on some of the observations made during the discussion, said that while he could not agree with all the remarks of the representative of Pakistan, he was grateful to him for having recognized the Secretary-General's responsibility for ensuring that all staff members received fair treatment.

54. He assured the representative of Mauritania that the Secretary-General had never authorized the promotion of a staff member without taking into account the limits of the manning table.

55. Replying to the question put by the representative of Nigeria, he said that the number of separations in 1968 was expected to be 165 in the Professional category and above. The figure for 1966 was 152 and for 1967 would be about 160. Those figures did not include separations in the General Service category, nor those in UNCTAD and UNIDO.

56. Mr. MSELLE (United Republic of Tanzania), referring to the statement in paragraph 9 of document A/C.5/1114 and Corr.1 that, because of the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee, the Secretary-General would be unable to give effect in 1968 to a request of the Economic and Social Council for the implementation of its resolution 1199 (XLII) concerning the United Nations programme in the field of public administration, asked for some clarification by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. A reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee was directly impeding the execution of a programme designed to benefit the developing countries.

57. Regarding the reorganization of the top echelon of the Secretariat, his delegation felt that the commotion over the post of Legal Counsel would lower the prestige normally attaching to that post. However, he wished to draw attention to another aspect

of the reorganization—the fact that the officials at the higher level of the top echelon would receive about \$2,000 net more in salary than those at the lower level. That did not seem to be in accordance with the principle of strict financial discipline. He hoped that the recommendations of the team of four or five experts the Secretary-General was to appoint to study the reorganization of the Secretariat at other levels would adhere more closely to that principle.

58. His delegation associated itself with those which had emphasized the insufficient representation of African countries in the Secretariat. If the reorganization envisaged by the Secretary-General resulted in the appointment of an African to the top echelon, his delegation would be most gratified.

59. Mr. ZIEHL (United States of America) while reaffirming his delegation's support for the Secretary-General's reorganization of the top echelon of the Secretariat and recognizing the special circumstances which required certain increases in salary in that case, endorsed the Tanzanian representative's hopes that the recommendations of the team of experts to be appointed to study further reorganization of the Secretariat, would concentrate on needed reorganizations rather than on possible salary adjustments.

60. Mr. BANNIER (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, pointed out that the Advisory Committee considered the Secretary-General's proposals as a whole, and not project by project. The question of public administration was certainly important, and if the Secretary-General regarded it as a priority project, he could change the order of priorities and find the funds for its implementation out of the total resources placed at his disposal. That was a matter entirely for the Secretary-General to decide.

61. Mr. GINDEEL (Sudan) said that while the reorganization of the Secretariat at the top echelon as such was solely within the competence of the Secretary-General, it was before the Fifth Committee because it had financial implications. In the circumstances, and inasmuch as it was also the Secretary-General's intention to arrange a study of the reorganization of the Secretariat at other levels, it might be advisable to defer a decision until the reorganization plan as a whole, with all its financial implications, was known. If Member States approved then and there the reorganization at the top echelon, they might find it difficult subsequently not to endorse other proposals for reorganization, whatever their financial implications.

AGENDA ITEM 81

Publications and documentation of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General (continued)* (A/6675, A/6872, A/C.5/L.915 and Add.1)

62. Mr. ZIEHL (United States of America), referring to operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.5/L.915 and Add.1), said that,

* Resumed from the 1204th meeting.

while not denying that it was important for documents to be submitted in due time and simultaneously in all working languages in order to facilitate the work of delegations, he nevertheless wondered whether the wording was satisfactory as it stood and whether it might not entail difficulties for the Secretariat. The very rigid way in which the Secretary-General was requested to take "all the necessary measures" did not seem to allow him the latitude required in practice. The Secretariat should not be asked to do the impossible, and such problems as the distribution and storage of documents must be taken into account. He also wondered whether the text meant that a document should on no account be circulated unless it was available in all working languages. Taken literally paragraph 4 was unrealistic. The United States delegation had therefore suggested informally to the sponsors of the draft a number of possible amendments. Paragraph 4 could begin with the words: "Requests the Secretary-General to take, to the extent practicable, all the necessary measures...", or "... to take additional steps to ensure that all practicable measures are taken to make more effective", or the words "necessary measures" could be replaced by the words "practicable measure" or "necessary and practicable measures". For those reasons, the United States delegation again requested the sponsors to re-consider amending paragraph 4 of the draft resolution. It also requested the Secretary-General's representative to tell the Committee what problems, if any, the proposed text would cause the Secretariat if it were adopted.

63. Mr. CISS (Senegal) observed that the delegations had had and continued to have great difficulty in obtaining documents in their working language in good time. In spite of the assurances that had been given regarding remedial measures, the situation recurred every year. Consequently, it was most important that operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution should be worded very carefully, so that the Secretariat would not be able to use possible practical difficulties as an excuse for failing to observe the rules of procedure of United Nations bodies relating to documents and working languages.

64. Mr. VAN GREVENYNGHE (France) said that he fully shared the Senegalese representative's views. The suggestions of the representative of the United States of America all stressed the practical applicability of the provisions of operative paragraph 4. The mention of practical measures rather than necessary measures would imply that the Secretary-General was being asked to take the practicable or feasible

measures he deemed necessary; in other words, the matter would be left to his discretion. Paragraph 4, whose wording was virtually the same as that of paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2247 (XXI), which had been unanimously adopted, without objection by any delegation, reaffirmed a principle whose soundness was recognized by all. His delegation understood the physical difficulties facing the Secretariat, and could accept certain departures from that principle in very exceptional circumstances. But that eventuality was covered by operative paragraph 8 of the draft resolution, which requested the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly of any difficulties he encountered. His delegation therefore asked the United States representative not to press his suggestions, which were not acceptable to the sponsors because they were inconsistent with the aims of the draft resolution.

65. Mr. CAHEN (Belgium) associated himself with the comments of the representatives of Senegal and France, for he could not approve the suggestions of the United States delegation, although he understood its motives. Operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution stated a principle which was not negotiable. Regardless of the way in which it might subsequently be applied, the scope of the principle could not conceivably be limited at the very time it was formulated.

66. The problem of publishing documents simultaneously in all working languages presented itself at two levels, that of principle and that of practice. At the first level, the point at issue was the equality of the various working languages; that equality was recognized in the rules and it implied simultaneous publication, which made it necessary for the Secretariat to adapt itself organizationally, and to use the means necessary for the achievement of that objective. No one questioned the Secretariat's goodwill, for there had already been definite improvement. It was that principle of equality which was laid down in paragraph 4. Therefore, it could not be so worded as to include a concept that related solely to the level of implementation. His delegation had gathered from the replies to the questions it had put to the representative of the Secretary-General that the practical application of the principle raised no especially difficult problems in normal circumstances and had no substantial financial implications. Obviously, the Secretariat could depart from the principle of equality in certain exceptional circumstances, provided that the principle was duly observed in normal circumstances.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.