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Chairman: Mr. Mario MAJOLI (Italy).

AGENDA ITEM 54

Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and with the International Atomic Energy Agency: report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/4415, chapter VII, section I; A/C.5/820, A/C.5/841, A/C.5/847) (continued)

1. Mr. BANNIER (Netherlands) emphasized the importance of co-ordination between the United Nations and the other inter-governmental bodies with wide international responsibilities in economic, social, cultural, educational, health and other fields. Without such co-ordination, international organizations would form an incoherent and unruly whole, and the sum total of their requests for budget appropriations would exceed the resources of Governments. When in 1945 and 1946 Governments had granted autonomy to the various inter-governmental organizations, their intention had not been to preclude the possibility of co-ordination or a certain degree of integration. A number of measures, including action taken during the past five or six years by the Economic and Social Council and by the General Assembly, had confirmed the validity of the original conception of the United Nations structure and the need to strengthen that structure in its present form even without changing existing constitutional arrangements. It was essential for the General Assembly to keep the co-ordination of United Nations organs under continuous and critical review; improvements were always possible, and the recent progress in co-ordination was gratifying.

2. He was pleased that chapter VII, section I, of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/4415)<sup>1/</sup> namely, the section entitled "Programme appraisals in the economic, social and human rights fields", had been allocated to the Fifth Committee. That section dealt with the consolidated report of the Committee on Programme Appraisals.<sup>2/</sup> That report, to which the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary

<sup>1/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, Supplement No. 3.

<sup>2/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 60.IV.14.

Questions had given considerable attention (A/4599), should also be taken up by the members of the Fifth Committee and by the Governments and organs concerned, because it was the most informative, complete and imaginative report ever composed on the many past, present and future activities of the United Nations family of organizations.

3. In the consolidated report, the coherence between the various activities of the international organizations and the fact that programming by those organizations was following mainly parallel lines were made clearly apparent for the first time. Those organizations had begun their activities as separate bodies, but as closer co-operation between them became the rule, the patterns of their programmes had become, not identical, but at least comparable. As stated in the epilogue to the consolidated report (paragraph 375), not only Governments but also individuals in many walks of life had been drawn into active participation in the programmes of the inter-governmental organizations, whether in agriculture, industry, improvement of health and education, in community development or social welfare. Those organizations and their member Governments were multilateral in character, and the co-operation and association of all those participating in them had already resulted in an appreciable degree of co-ordination, freely accepted and in no way imposed. Although much remained to be done, the report indicated the special problem areas, and that in itself was sufficient to show that such an appraisal exercise had been worth-while.

4. Another conclusion drawn from the consolidated report related to priorities. The importance of having a set of priorities within and between the different sectors of activity was fully recognized, and the Council had tried to lay down guiding principles in that respect. The difficulties, however, were much greater than was generally believed, and the Advisory Committee rightly pointed out (A/4599, para. 9 (d)) that strict priorities had to be imposed if the outlay was to produce maximum results. The problem was a complex one, and the hitherto generally accepted concept of priorities no longer corresponded to present-day needs. Certain political or moral requirements, not to be underestimated, often interfered with economic and social priorities; certain basic factors, like population trends, differed radically in different regions of the world. Rational and irrational arguments had to be taken into account. The reports of the Advisory Committee and of the Committee on Programme Appraisals both showed that there were very rapid and fundamental shifts in emphasis in the work of the international organizations resulting from changes in the needs of the under-developed countries. Hence a set of priorities could not be static and should not be determined by hard and fast rules. The importance of the problem was sufficient in itself to justify the preparation of further reports by the Advisory Com-

mittee and the Committee on Programme Appraisals at the end of the present five-year period.

5. As to the cost of future activities of the organizations, the consolidated report contained very limited information because the organizations had not found it possible to forecast their requirements with any degree of precision. He agreed with the suggestion made by the Advisory Committee (*ibid.*, para. 11) that greater attention should be given in the future to the cost of programmes. It was equally desirable to have approximate estimates of budgetary implications in relation both to a minimum normal development of existing activities and to an optimum growth that could be manageable within other limitations, such as the availability of qualified personnel. The latter part of the suggestion should, however, be amended to refer, not to the existing availability of qualified personnel, but to personnel which could be made available to the organizations, if only temporarily, by all the authorities concerned, such, for instance, as Governments.

6. In its report, the Advisory Committee gave clear evidence of the many aspects of co-ordination. A very significant new form of co-operation between the various specialized agencies had been seen in connexion with the civilian assistance activity in the Congo described by the Secretary-General in his memorandum of 11 August 1960.<sup>3/</sup> To ensure the cohesion and effectiveness of their activities, the specialized agencies had sacrificed part of their autonomy and had placed their services at the disposal of the Secretary-General and his personal representative. On the other hand, the United Nations had agreed to reimburse the specialized agencies on the basis of their "extra costs". It had thus been possible for the different activities of the specialized agencies to be grouped together, and an arrangement of that kind might prove extremely effective not only in the Congo but also in other countries where international technical assistance was a new phenomenon, or in countries at present receiving assistance through machinery which required improvement or simplification.

7. With regard to the administrative and operational services costs in connexion with technical assistance granted under the Expanded Programme, it seemed advisable—without necessarily considering as final the decisions taken by the Council for the period up to and including 1962—to accept the recommendation by the Advisory Committee that the decisions taken in that regard should not become effective until notice had been given to the organizations concerned. The Advisory Committee would have to discuss that matter in more detail in 1961.

8. As to the provision of common services by the United Nations to activities which were financed from sources other than the regular United Nations budget or which received only partial support from the budget, his delegation, for the time being, supported the Secretary-General's proposal in his foreword to the budget estimates for 1961 (A/4370, para. 85) for the continuation for the present of the several policies now being applied. The same problem existed with respect to the specialized agencies. While acknowledging the advantages of a uniform system, he fully appreciated that the Advisory Committee preferred to postpone consideration of that matter until the report of the

Committee of Experts on the Review of the Activities and Organization of the Secretariat had been submitted.

9. The efforts to strengthen the field offices and thus adapt them to new requirements were of relevance both to the United Nations proper and to the specialized agencies. He was in accord, on that subject, with the opinion expressed at the 809th meeting by the representative of New Zealand, whose delegation had been among those that had taken the initiative in connexion with Economic and Social Council resolution 795 (XXX). The co-ordination and integration of field representation, not only by relocating the offices of the different organizations, but also through the vesting of authority by several organizations in one individual, was an excellent means of making United Nations agencies more effective, particularly in newly independent countries. The results so far were satisfactory, particularly with regard to the use made by the specialized agencies of the services of TAB Resident Representatives, and it would be advantageous to make even wider use of that procedure. While it was to be hoped that the efforts to combine the functions of Resident Representative and Information Centre Director in a single official would be successful, that would not always be feasible, particularly in countries where the United Nations and the organizations connected with it were engaged in very diverse activities. Even in those countries, however, efforts must be made to combine the general authority for all such activities in a single person.

10. He would not dwell upon the detailed comments by the Advisory Committee on the 1961 budget of the specialized agencies (A/4599). He reiterated the hope, expressed by his delegation at the fourteenth session, that in the fairly near future both the ACC and the Advisory Committee would feel justified in considering the question of a consolidated budget for all United Nations bodies.

11. In its resolution 794 (XXX), the Economic and Social Council had invited the ACC to study the possible effects on the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies of an increase in the operations of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the Special Fund in coming years, bearing in mind the need to ensure the co-ordinated development of those activities. From table VI of the consolidated report submitted by the Committee on Programme Appraisals, it was apparent that during the past four or five years the extra-budgetary funds had, in general, shown a larger increase than the regular budget funds. That trend reflected the importance that Governments attached to enhanced action by the voluntary programmes and by inter-agency co-operation for assisting the under-developed countries. Also at the present session of the Assembly, the amounts pledged for the two largest extra-budgetary programmes had risen substantially. With one exception, that of WHO, the technical assistance charged to the regular budgets of the specialized agencies was much less than the assistance charged to the voluntary programmes. His delegation was gratified by that development, for it expedited the integration and co-ordination of activities. The agencies, however, had two problems to solve. In the first place, they were responsible for executing programmes that were not determined solely by their own governing bodies, whose authority therefore tended to be limited; and secondly, the question whether the headquarters staff of the agencies should be financed

<sup>3/</sup> Official Records of the Security Council, Fifteenth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1960, document S/4417/Add.5.

from extra-budgetary funds rather than from the regular budgets was becoming more acute. The ACC had been asked by the Economic and Social Council to study all aspects and consequences of that development. As that was a matter which likewise concerned the Advisory Committee, he suggested, as the representative of New Zealand had already done, that the Assembly should invite ACC to transmit the outcome of its study to the Advisory Committee and that the latter Committee should present its comments to the Council.

12. At its thirtieth session, the Council had studied other aspects of co-ordination, on which the Fifth Committee did not at present have to make any decision. He would like, however, to stress the importance of programme co-ordination in the field of industrialization and public administration, the concentration of activities and the strengthening of inter-agency consultations. The Fifth Committee should give attention to the administrative and budgetary aspects of co-ordination, which were inseparable from the structural aspects. That was why it should also follow as closely as possible the Economic and Social Council's decisions and the Advisory Committee's comments on the Council's actions. It should be noted in that connexion that under a draft resolution (A/C.6/L.479) about to be adopted by the Sixth Committee, the rules of procedure of the Assembly were to be amended so as to provide for arrangements similar to those in the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council and most of the specialized agencies with regard to co-ordination. One last aspect of the question which should be borne in mind, and to which the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had drawn attention, was that of co-ordination on the national level, which to a certain extent determined the conditions in which the international bodies could themselves co-ordinate their activities.

13. He wished in conclusion, to stress that co-ordination, being an effort to achieve greater harmony between activities, between administrations and between budgets, was a continuous process. The circumstances in which it occurred continued to change. As the objectives of the inter-governmental organizations became ever broader, the need for co-ordination became increasingly acute. Thus, it was to be hoped that the excellent consolidated report—Five-Year Perspective, 1960–1964—would be kept up to date and that the Economic and Social Council and the Fifth Committee would intensify their drive for better co-ordination in order to ensure, as the Advisory Committee had stated, "that the resources of the organizations were directed, effectively and economically, to tasks of the greatest importance, usefulness and urgency" (A/4599, para. 12).

14. Mr. BENDER (United States of America) said that he had nothing to add on points of substance to what had been said by the previous speakers. He merely wished to congratulate the Committee on Programme Appraisals on its excellent work and also the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee, which together had initiated those appraisals. He also congratulated the Advisory Committee, its Chairman and its Secretary on their report (A/4599), which contained some very valuable information.

15. Mr. AGHNIDES (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) thanked the delegations that had kindly congratulated the Advisory Committee on its work. The Advisory

Committee would bear in mind the two valuable suggestions made by the New Zealand representative, who had asked that in its next report it should pay special attention to the relations between the specialized agencies and UNICEF on the one hand and TAB on the other hand, and had also proposed that the Advisory Committee should give its opinion on the results of the study to be conducted by the ACC on the operations of the Expanded Programme and of the Special Fund. The Advisory Committee would also study the report of the committee of experts appointed under resolution 1446 (XIV) to review the activities and organization of the United Nations Secretariat.

16. He entirely agreed with the Netherlands representative that something more than a five-yearly appraisal of programmes was needed and pointed out that in paragraph 12 of its report the Advisory Committee had stated that there would be a decided advantage in undertaking a similar forward look covering periods even longer than five years.

17. In addition to the difficulties referred to by the Netherlands representative, he mentioned the fact that ever since their creation the various agencies had, whether consciously or unconsciously, cherished the desire to prove their independence. The Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee had the task of trying to mitigate that tendency, which was a perfectly natural one. It was only fair to say that the agencies usually understood the need to sacrifice some of their sovereignty in the common interest.

18. Mr. CHIKARAISHI (Japan) paid a tribute to the members of the Advisory Committee for its excellent report (A/4599). He approved the suggestion in paragraph 11 of the report that more attention should be paid to the cost of the programmes when the appraisals were brought up to date. At a time when United Nations activities in the economic and social fields were ramifying and extending to the newly independent countries of Africa, it was essential that the programmes should be established on a sound financial basis. Co-ordination became all the more necessary as activities developed, and the Japanese delegation welcomed the results already obtained by the Co-ordination Committee of the Economic and Social Council, by the ACC and by the Advisory Committee. It was pleased to note that the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 799 (XXX) had recognized the growing importance of the ACC. Much remained to be done, in particular with regard to co-ordination at local and at national levels and the co-ordination of operational programmes and of the activities of the central bodies. But the most important thing was that one organ should be responsible for the future activities of the various United Nations agencies. For that reason the Japanese delegation approved the establishment of an *ad hoc* working group to study co-ordination problems (Economic and Social Council resolution 798 (XXX)).

19. Mr. GABITES (New Zealand) recalled his remark at the 809th meeting that it would be well for the Committee to study carefully the comments of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and proposed that they should be published in full as a document.

*It was so decided.* <sup>4/</sup>

The meeting rose at 12 noon.

<sup>4/</sup> The complete text of the statement by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions at the 809th meeting was circulated as document A/C.5/851.