

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records



**FIFTH COMMITTEE, 1300th  
MEETING**

Tuesday, 7 October 1969,  
at 10.45 a.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Agenda item 74:	
Budget estimates for the financial year 1970 ( <i>continued</i> )	
General discussion . . . . .	9

**Chairman:** Mr. David SILVEIRA DA MOTA  
(Brazil).

**AGENDA ITEM 74**

**Budget estimates for the financial year 1970 (*continued*)**  
**(A/7606, A/7608, A/C.5/1230, A/C.5/1231, A/C.5/1233,**  
**A/C.5/1234**

*General discussion*

1. Mr. VIEIRA (Brazil) stressed the significance his delegation attached to the work of the Fifth Committee, where decisions were taken on the important question of allocating relatively scarce resources in such a way as to serve the best interests of the Organization by providing it with adequate means to achieve its multiple objectives. The diversity of individual interests with regard to objectives and levels of expenditure made it essential that all decisions on budgetary matters be taken collectively by the General Assembly, as in fact was expressly set forth in Article 17 of the United Nations Charter, so that no single or particular approach might prevail over the will of the majority. Whether or not the increase in size of the budget and the rate of growth of United Nations expenditure was regarded as excessive or reasonable, and quite apart from the fact that the financial obligations which the poorer countries had to meet were becoming a heavy burden for them, it should be recognized that the expenditure levels called for in the budget were moderate in relation to the financial capabilities of the industrialized countries. The estimated expenditure for 1970 was no exception: indeed, as an American newspaper had pointed out, it was approximately equivalent to the cost of two days of the Viet-Nam war or to the total annual defence budget of Mexico.

2. His delegation had examined with great interest the budget estimates for the financial year 1970 (A/7606) and the relevant report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/7608). It approved of the spirit in which the estimates had been drawn up and concurred in the view expressed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 20 of the introduction (A/7601/Add.1) to his annual report on the work of the Organization concerning the need to improve programme formulation processes. Little progress had been made towards the improvement of those processes and the establishment of priorities, and serious efforts should be made to correct that situation in

order to secure the best possible utilization of the scarce resources available to the United Nations. On the other hand, his delegation could not accept a situation in which purely budgetary considerations became a determining factor of the work of the United Nations.

3. The estimates for 1970 represented an increase of 6 per cent over the level of approved gross expenditure for 1969. Since only 2 per cent of that increase was due to new programmes or the expansion of certain existing services and activities, the implication was that the activities of the United Nations taken as a whole had remained virtually stagnant. The Advisory Committee had recommended reductions totalling \$1,256,600. However, the Secretary-General, in his statement at the 1299th meeting (A/C.5/1233, para. 3), had said that he did not consider the discrepancies between the appropriations recommended by the Advisory Committee and those he had requested to be significant and that he would see to it that the work programmes of the Secretariat for 1970 would be carried out to the fullest extent possible within the budgetary limits recommended by the Advisory Committee. In the circumstances, the Brazilian delegation would support the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the understanding the cuts suggested would not adversely affect approved priority programmes, especially those aimed at promoting economic and social development. Bearing that last point in mind, the Brazilian delegation would decide on the Secretary-General's requests for additional resources to finance new and urgent programmes like those referred to in paragraph 21 of the introduction to his annual report. It was confident that the Secretary-General would continue to take all the necessary steps to ensure the most efficient management of the funds placed at his disposal and to achieve an optimum utilization of resources to promote economic and social progress and to carry out United Nations peace-keeping activities.

4. His delegation was going to adopt the same approach in considering the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning the procedures and financial regulations relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. The new procedures and regulations recommended by the Advisory Committee would have to be adopted only if it was definitely established that there was a need to alter the practices authorized by the existing text of the annual General Assembly resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. For an intelligent discussion of the question, the Fifth Committee would undoubtedly need all the information and all the additional details which the Advisory Committee could provide regarding the intent of the draft resolutions<sup>1</sup> which it had recommended for adoption in 1968.

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Annexes, agenda item 74, document A/7336, annex.*

5. The Brazilian delegation had noted with appreciation that in examining the Secretary-General's budget estimates, the Advisory Committee had had before it the report<sup>2</sup> of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the work of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields. It believed that CPC, working in close co-operation with the Advisory Committee and the Secretary-General, could play a significant role in establishing the priorities to be applied to the work programme. That co-operation would be very important not only with regard to the budget estimates for 1970, but also in establishing the planning estimate for 1971. In that connexion, he pointed out that with the world situation changing so rapidly, plans set up two or more years in advance could not be regarded as immutable. For the same reasons, the planning estimate should be taken only as a provisional forecast, as a guide to programme-formulating bodies and not as a strait jacket that might impede the normal expansion of United Nations activities. In that context, he expressed the hope that financial stringency would not turn the Second United Nations Development Decade into an even greater failure than the first.

6. The Brazilian delegation was also concerned about the problem of the overlapping of activities of the organs having investigatory functions in the field of administration, namely, the Advisory Committee, the Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit. It would be ironical if the desire to ensure good management and the efficient utilization of resources which had led to the creation of the Joint Inspection Unit resulted in an aggravation of the problem of duplication in the United Nations. His delegation had therefore noted with appreciation the assurances given at the 1299th meeting by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee (see A/C.5/1234) that the Advisory Committee intended to intensify its efforts to avoid duplication of effort which, if it were to continue, would be wasteful not only of the resources of the investigating and co-ordinating units, but also of the time of senior officials and other resources of the organizations within the United Nations system.

7. With regard to the state of the Organization's finances, he recalled that the previous year his delegation had suggested<sup>3</sup> that it would be advisable to study the possibility of increasing the Organization's income by undertaking new income-producing activities. He was therefore awaiting with interest the report prepared by the Secretary-General at the Committee's request,<sup>3</sup> which would contain the Secretary-General's conclusions and recommendations concerning the Brazilian suggestion. The Organization's financial situation, as described by the Secretary-General in the introduction (A/7601/Add.1, paras. 9-14) to his annual report and in his statement at the 1299th meeting of the Committee, was very alarming. The Organization continued to borrow to finance regular budgetary expenditures and to repay the debts inherited from UNEF and ONUC, because some States refused to pay their contributions or because some contributions were paid in a form which made them difficult or impossible to use. The behaviour of those States threatened to jeopardize

the Organization's credit, and was moreover unfair to the States which fulfilled their financial obligations, and particularly to those which were the Organization's creditors, namely, those which had participated in the UNEF and ONUC peace-keeping operations, to which the United Nations owed a total amount of \$30.1 million on that account. His delegation hoped that the countries which for reasons of principle refused to contribute to the two peace-keeping operations accounts and to the regular budget would pay voluntary contributions in order to improve the Organization's finances. It had in mind particularly the countries to which the consensus of 1 September 1965<sup>4</sup> concerning the applicability of Article 19 of the United Nations Charter was addressed. There was no doubt that, as the Secretary-General had observed (A/C.5/1233, paras. 28 and 31), the United Nations could not survive indefinitely by resorting to "one measure of expediency or another" in order "to remain actively in business" and it was to be hoped that it would soon be possible to arrive at a *modus vivendi* for reducing the Organization's indebtedness and for reaching an accommodation on disputed budget items and thus avoid jeopardizing the Organization's efficiency.

8. He wished to reserve his delegation's position of principle on the estimate under section 12, chapter IV, for the payment of interest and repayment of principal due on the United Nations bond issue pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 1739 (XVI), 1878 (S-IV) and 1989 (XVIII). Since the proceeds from the sale of the bonds had been used wholly to cover expenses arising from peace-keeping operations—ONUC and UNEF—the apportionment of costs relating to the bonds should be based on a different scale of assessments than the one applied for the regular budget and should be regulated by the principles approved by the General Assembly (resolution 1874 (S-IV)) for the financing of peace-keeping operations.

9. Mr. MBANGWETA (Zambia) said he was glad that the General Assembly, in its resolution 2472 B (XXIII), had requested the Committee on Contributions to keep under review the criteria it used in establishing the scale of assessments, and also its terms of reference, in the light of the debates on the subject at the twenty-second and twenty-third sessions of the General Assembly. That was the only way in which the United Nations could establish an equitable scale of assessments, in the light of the variations in the economic situation of a number of States.

10. His delegation had also noted with satisfaction General Assembly resolution 2480 (XXIII) on the composition of the Secretariat, which stressed the need for weighted geographical distribution of senior posts in the Secretariat. In view of the political development in countries which had recently achieved independence or were soon about to do so, it was only fair that the main geographical regions of the world should be appropriately represented in senior Secretariat posts, thus helping to maintain the Secretariat's international character. However, the scope of that resolution seemed to be limited by the consideration relating to bilingualism, and his delegation hoped that the powers given to the Secretariat to make all promotions conditional

<sup>2</sup> Document E/4670 and Corr.1.

<sup>3</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Annexes*, agenda item 74, document A/7476, para. 144.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, *Nineteenth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1331st meeting, paras. 3 and 4.

upon the knowledge of a second language would not jeopardize the principle of equitable geographical distribution which ought to govern staff appointments.

11. With regard to the Secretary-General's report (A/7499) on the budget performance of the United Nations for the financial year 1968, his delegation had noted with appreciation the activities undertaken in 1969 by the Special Committee on the Policies of *Apartheid* of the Government of the Republic of South Africa. It felt, however, that the Special Committee's work would have been more successful if it had met in Africa, where the struggle against the inhuman policies of the South African régime was being waged, and it hoped that in future that body's activities, which were designed to expose the immorality and injustice of the policy of *apartheid*, would be conducted in Africa.

12. Developing countries like Zambia took a particular interest in the special projects and activities of UNESCO for 1968 and 1969 mentioned in the report<sup>5</sup> submitted to the General Assembly at its twenty-third session by the Advisory Committee. His delegation would have liked to have had more information on those activities, and the areas in which they had been carried out. That information was necessary in order to understand and appraise UNESCO's activities, especially the role it played in developing countries and with respect to the colonial peoples who were still ruled by minority régimes and denied access to education.

13. His delegation was very much interested in the activities of the United Nations Council for Namibia, of which Zambia was a member, and the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia, and was glad that the Secretary-General had submitted an estimate for the establishment of an office of the Council in East Africa. It was, however, unfortunate that that office had not yet been established as might have been hoped, since the decision to establish it had been taken almost a year ago. It was also regrettable that the Secretary-General had not seen fit to make provision in the estimates for a possible decision by the Council to go to the area or to send a sub-committee there in 1970. His delegation hoped that that omission was due to an oversight and not to a lack of interest in the matter on the part of the Secretariat, for such omissions could reduce the effectiveness of the Council's work. His delegation also hoped that the Secretary-General could remedy the omission by submitting a supplementary estimate for that purpose under section 17, Chapter V. Any other course would be tantamount to prejudging the issue and giving South Africa indirect support on the question of Namibia. On the other hand, the meagre provision under chapter VI of the same section for the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and under chapter VII for the Special Committee on the Policies of *Apartheid* of the Government of the Republic of South Africa was not due to indifference on the part of the Secretary-General but to the fact that the work programmes of those Committees had not yet been prepared.

14. He wished to reiterate his country's unshakable belief in the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and its hope that the Organization would fulfil its lofty purposes by acting resolutely and courageously in the pursuit of peace, justice and human dignity.

15. Mr. RODIONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) drew attention to the importance which his delegation attached to the study of the United Nations budget estimates and said that he wished to comment on matters of great significance.

16. First, the steady increase in the size of the budget was bound to arouse concern; it was clear that, despite the recommendations of the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly at its twenty-third session regarding the need for austerity and reduction of expenditure, the Secretariat had been unable to reduce administrative costs. As in the past, Member States were being invited to increase their contributions, which would inevitably make things more difficult for some of them.

17. The budget estimates for 1970 totalled \$164.1 million, i.e. \$9.2 million—or 6 per cent—more than the 1969 budget; it should also be noted that those estimates did not include the financial implications of the decisions to be taken by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly during the current session. However, that appreciable increase in expenditure did not reflect a genuine increase in requirements, particularly in light of the fact that the efficiency of the United Nations had not increased in proportion to the budget. In fact, the bulk of the expenditure was attributable to a wide range of activities which had no direct bearing on the maintenance of peace and security, which was the fundamental task of the United Nations. The Secretariat's operating costs were by far the largest item. In common with many other delegations, his delegation had repeatedly emphasized that an attempt should be made to simplify the structure of the Secretariat, rationalize working methods and reduce staff, particularly in those departments and services where there had been no expansion of activities and where in some cases they had even declined, but no progress had been made in that direction. On the contrary, the Secretariat's operating costs were rising steadily year after year: staff costs in the budget estimates for the financial year 1970 amounted to \$93.7 million, i.e. \$11 million—or 11.33 per cent—more than in 1969. Those costs were thus increasing more rapidly than the budget as a whole, a fact which a number of Member States, particularly those making the largest contributions to the United Nations budget, were bound to find disturbing.

18. With regard to the staff figures proposed for 1970, he noted that 308 additional posts were requested, whereas according to the Secretary-General more than 200 of the established posts authorized for 1969 remained unfilled. But it was already some time since the Fifth Committee had asked the Secretariat, which at present consisted of over 8,000 staff members, to attempt to keep the numbers within reasonable limits, particularly by more rational deployment. It was precisely with that in mind that the General Assembly, at its twenty-third session, had recommended a study on the utilization and deployment of personnel; it would have been reasonable not to request any

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Twenty-third Session, agenda item 79, document A/7379.

increase in staff before that study had been concluded. His delegation was therefore categorically opposed to any increase in United Nations, UNCTAD or UNIDO staff over and above the number of posts authorized for 1969. It was also opposed to the allocation of a further amount of \$1.07 million for temporary staff.

19. Furthermore, it was regrettable that the situation with regard to equitable geographical distribution had failed to improve, despite the repeated appeals of the General Assembly. The Secretariat continued to recruit staff in countries which were already over-represented, whereas recruitment had not been speeded up in the under-represented countries, particularly the Soviet Union, and other countries. However, the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, as laid down in Article 101 of the Charter, would enable the Secretariat to carry out its duties more effectively and with total impartiality.

20. Finally, his delegation felt that the Advisory Committee could have proceeded on a more stringent basis and that it would be possible to effect, in addition to the decrease recommended by that Committee, a reduction of over \$1 million in the appropriation requested for established, provisional and temporary staff. In that respect, his delegation considered that the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Reorganization of the Secretariat should be included in the Fifth Committee's agenda as a separate item for detailed consideration.

21. His delegation was likewise opposed to the appropriation requested under section 12, chapters I (United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea) and IV (United Nations bond issue)—\$82,800 and \$8,738,000, respectively—and section 17, chapter III (United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea)—\$271,600. The contributions paid by the Member States had too long been used to meet those illegal costs. It should also be noted that the so-called United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea was not serving the interests of the Korean people and that the best way of ending the division of Korea was to abolish that body, which engaged in activities incompatible with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

22. He also wished to re-affirm the view repeatedly expressed by his delegation that operational technical assistance activities should not be charged against the regular budget which should be exclusively an administrative budget, as provided by Article 17 of the Charter. That should by no means be construed to mean that the Soviet Union was opposed to technical assistance activities; quite the contrary. In spite of the enormous losses which it had suffered during the Second World War, the Soviet Union was helping the developing countries to build up their industries and, for that purpose, was supplying technical assistance to 39 countries, in which it had built or was in the process of building more than 690 industrial plants. It was also helping to train experts and technicians, in response to the wishes and requirements of the developing countries; to that end, it had helped to set up 115 training establishments and had trained more than 10,000 students from developing and socialist countries in the USSR

entirely at its own cost. That effort would of course be followed up and expanded but, in the view of his delegation, United Nations technical assistance activities should be financed solely from voluntary contributions and not from the regular budget.

23. To sum up, his delegation was unable to support the budget estimates for 1970 in their present form; it considered that the total requested should be reduced by more than \$2 million. He reserved the right to speak again when the budget was considered in detail.

24. Mr. WEI (China) reminded the Committee that, in the introduction (A/7601/Add.1) to his annual report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General had referred to the Organization's precarious financial situation. He emphasized that the situation had been the same for several years and his delegation had therefore hoped that 1970 might be a year of consolidation after the period of rapid expansion since 1966. However, the Secretary-General's proposed expenditures had reached the record figure of \$164 million and the revised estimates would be much higher. Hence, Member States would have to contribute more money in order to meet the expenses of the Secretariat.

25. As usual, the higher expenditure was largely due to the increases in staff costs and related expenses. In proposing to raise the total number of staff in 1970 to 8,395—an increase of almost 1,000 in the space of three years—it was not certain that the Secretary-General had done everything possible to utilize the existing staff with optimum efficiency. The budgetary powers of the Committee had nothing in common with those of a national legislature and, to limit the increase in expenditure, it would be advisable to give some thought, for example, to linking the annual percentage increase in the budgets of international organizations to the average increase in national income of a representative group of countries or to prescribing a fixed percentage ceiling which should normally not be exceeded. While aware that the main reason advanced for the constant requests for expansion was the proliferation of United Nations economic and social activities, his delegation was not in favour of the overstaffing of the various secretariats. He recalled that at the twenty-third session the Advisory Committee had recommended<sup>6</sup> a desk-to-desk survey in the Secretariat. In addition, his delegation had suggested at the Committee's 1243rd meeting on 28 October 1968, that the Joint Inspection Unit should look into the problem of the continued growth of the staff. It had therefore been glad to learn that the survey had begun and also that, pending the results, the Secretary-General had considered it "not to be prudent to increase the present permanent authorized establishment of the Secretariat in 1970" (A/7606, foreword, para. 13). However, the Secretary-General was requesting 308 additional posts, of which 234 were provisional. His delegation shared the reservations of the Advisory Committee concerning the need for additional staff of the order and in the areas requested and thought that it would be useful if the Secretary-General would inform the Committee of the results of those studies and surveys already completed on the staffing of certain services. Again, the participation of the Joint Inspection

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Twenty-third Session, Supplement No. 7, para. 50.

Unit in the survey would be important, because if the survey was carried out exclusively by Secretariat staff, it might be difficult for them to propose any changes without encountering internal objections.

26. Other factors contributing to the increase in expenditure were the meetings schedule and documentation. Despite the efforts of the Committee on conferences and the resolutions adopted regarding the control and limitation of documentation, there was still a tendency to hold more and more meetings and the documentation was becoming increasingly voluminous. His delegation believed that development had to proceed in accordance with a co-ordinated plan, with priorities established among the programmes; the developing countries would benefit from better co-ordination between the different United Nations bodies, which would also help to avoid unnecessary expenditure on meetings and documentation.

27. With regard to the Secretary-General's statement that he had taken measures to ensure timely distribution of documents, he drew the Secretary-General's attention to the delay in the translation into Chinese of important documents such as the budget estimates for the financial year 1970, the Advisory Committee's related report and the annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the organization. Again, for certain conferences, such as the Fourth United Nations Congress on Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders, no provision was made for Chinese language services. His delegation would request the organs concerned to provide a Chinese text of the final report of the Congress. Before deciding not to provide interpretation of certain proceedings or the translation of certain documents into Chinese, the Secretariat should consult the Chinese delegation. Generally speaking, while gratified to see more Chinese interpreters being recruited and welcoming the praiseworthy efforts of the Chinese Translation Section he hoped that the staff concerned would redouble their efforts to improve the quality of their work, and full use should be made of Chinese typewriters.

28. Referring briefly to the problem of the geographical distribution of United Nations staff, he made a plea on behalf of the countries under-represented in the Secretariat and refused to accept that political considerations should affect the recruitment of staff, as they seemed to have done in the case of China. As a rule, qualified nationals of developing countries would seem to be particularly well suited for work connected with development programmes.

29. With regard to the activities of the Office of Public Information, China would be obliged for the time being to withhold its support of its programmes unless proper attention was paid to the dissemination of information on the United Nations to the Chinese people.

30. Lastly, his delegation would adopt an attitude of reasonableness with regard to the budget estimates. It did not favour an excessively austere approach in view of the justifiable needs of the Secretariat, but it urged that all uneconomical expenditures should be reduced to the minimum. His delegation would support the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee, but hoped that the priority development programmes would not be affected by them and that the amounts of the reductions would not be reinstated under other items.

31. In conclusion, he paid a tribute to the Advisory Committee, whose comments were helpful for the Committee's work.

32. Mr. KASPRZYK (Poland) said that his delegation attached great importance to the Fifth Committee's work for two reasons: first, the ability of the Organization to fulfil its important international tasks for social and economic progress in the developing countries was determined by its financial and administrative efficiency and, secondly, there was an urgent need, in view of the forthcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, to review the Organization's methods of work and to determine its priorities and tasks in the light of current needs. He congratulated the Advisory Committee on having suggested cutbacks in expenditures without hampering the programmes and was gratified to note that the requirements for 1970 had been very conscientiously estimated.

33. However, in view of the increase of \$10,185,350 in over-all expenditures as compared with the figures approved for 1969, every effort should be made to find additional resources and to determine more precisely the principal tasks of the Organization. Those additional expenditures would be augmented by further expenditures resulting from the decisions adopted at the current session and would lay a heavy burden on many Member States, including Poland. He had several comments to make on that subject. First, the proposals of the Committee on the Reorganization of the Secretariat concerning the preparation of the budget estimates on the basis of the unified and well-balanced programmes of the whole Organization were very reasonable. Secondly, his delegation stressed the need to ensure that available staff were properly used and that it worked on current problems and not on questions which should have been taken off the agenda years before. The results of the study of the Administrative Management service on staff utilization should be made known before the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly. With regard to the immediate future, his delegation could not support the creation of 308 additional posts, including 234 provisional posts, in 1970, a figure which should be substantially reduced. Taking into account the large number of vacancies and the leeway given to the Secretary-General to assign available staff to do the most urgent work, that proposal should not detract from the Organization's activities on behalf of the developing countries.

34. The time had come, he believed, to review the structure of the organs dealing with co-ordination and define more precisely the terms of reference of control organs. His delegation favoured broadening the competence of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and strengthening the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The creation of many new control and co-ordination organs was bound to impair their efficiency. In the interest of efficiency, his delegation also endorsed the Secretary-General's suggestion (see A/C.5/1233, para. 10) to set up a small unit within the Secretariat to plan the application of computer methods.

35. There should be a new approach to the problem of documentation. United Nations documents generally included much superfluous background information, and his delegation reserved the right to return to that point during

the debate on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2292 (XXII). In that connexion, the large translation backlog presented a real problem, which could best be solved by reducing documentation to essentials, not by recruiting new translators.

36. He emphasized the importance of the principle of geographical distribution in recruitment and categorically opposed any approach in which that principle would be disregarded in some cases on pretext of efficiency.

37. The appropriation of funds for the United Nations Cemetery in Korea and the so-called United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea was incompatible with the principles of the United Nations Charter and was the cause of financial difficulties which could easily be avoided. The same was true of the so-called United Nations bond issue, and his delegation would be obliged to vote against the requested appropriation of funds for that purpose.

38. Lastly, the shortage of office space at Headquarters should not be allowed to interfere with the development of the Organization's activities; consideration should be given to decentralizing the Secretariat and transferring some of its offices to Geneva. Constructing a new office building in New York was not the only way, nor even the best way, to overcome present difficulties, particularly when the problem of the legal status of the United Nations Headquarters had not been satisfactorily settled; the best solution would be for the United States of America to ratify the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. Moreover, the Organization needed an alternative programme based on decentralization and transfer of some of the offices and departments of the Secretariat to Geneva. Until such a programme was prepared, other plans, notably plans for the proposed new construction at Headquarters, would be one-sided and ill-conceived.

39. In conclusion, he said that his delegation felt that the United Nations, confronted by new realities, should draw on its twenty-five years of experience to find a better solution of its present problems. An excellent opportunity to do so would be afforded by the commemorative session of the General Assembly in 1970 and the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. Every effort should be made to ensure that the United Nations, in which the developing countries had placed such high hopes, would be an effective instrument of international co-operation and would ensure justice and peace throughout the world.

40. Mr. CAPUTI (Uruguay) observed that the Committee's agenda included an unusually large number of complex and important items of an administrative and budgetary nature. His delegation would endeavour to find means of placing United Nations finances permanently on a sound basis while safeguarding the economic interests of the less-

developed countries and making the budget realistic both from the human and from the technical point of view.

41. In the General Assembly, the Canadian representative, on 29 September 1969 (1769th plenary meeting), had given a clear, precise and detailed description of the problems faced by the United Nations: he had recalled, among other things, that talk was of the essence at the United Nations but that to be useful it must be kept within reasonable bounds; he had also noted that the number of conferences and meetings and the volume of documentation had increased so much that even the largest delegations had difficulty in providing competent representation and coping with the flood of documents produced. In the opinion of the Uruguayan delegation that was an important problem, with considerable administrative and budgetary implications, and should therefore be studied by the Fifth Committee.

42. The Canadian representative had also said that during the past ten years the programmes and activities of the United Nations family of organizations had increased greatly and budgets had more than doubled and that if the current trend continued, they would amount to some \$500 million in 1974. He had further observed that, owing to a lack of effective control, priorities had become blurred and programmes had been carried on long after they had ceased to be relevant to needs. Lastly, he had drawn attention to the fact that poorly qualified staff or staff with low productivity were being recruited or kept on, that this had made itself felt in the work of the United Nations and that therefore the first thing to do was to consolidate existing activities before undertaking new efforts.

43. The Uruguayan delegation believed that better deployment and utilization of staff was bound to improve the performance of the Organization and to be of greater benefit to Member States, which should be able to feel, in the true sense of the word, that their contribution was being used in their best interests.

44. Among the items on the Committee's agenda, there were three which his delegation regarded as particularly important: the budget estimates for the financial year 1970, the planning estimate for the financial year 1971 and the pattern of conferences. Those items should be examined very carefully.

45. In conclusion, he thanked the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for their particularly well-documented reports and assured the Fifth Committee of his delegation's full co-operation.

46. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the list of speakers for the general discussion should be closed on Friday, 10 October 1969, at 6 p.m.

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.*