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MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Hermod LANNUNG (Denmark).

AGENDA ITEM 64

Personnel questions (continued):

- (a) Geographical distribution of the staff of the Secretariat (A/4776 and Corr.1, chap. IV; A/4794, paras. 31-40; A/4901, A/C.5/890, A/C.5/L.683/Rev.2, A/C.5/L.684, A/C.5/L.686, A/C.5/L.689 and Add.1-3) (continued);
- (b) Proportion of fixed-term staff (A/C.5/891) (continued)

1. Mr. ZARROUG (Sudan) said that he did not propose to discuss the question whether priority should be given to one or the other of the draft resolutions (A/C.5/L.683/Rev.2 and A/C.5/L.689 and Add.1-3, respectively), or whether an understanding was possible between their sponsors. He wished to show, by referring to one point, that the two proposals differed not merely in minor matters of drafting but also in matters of principle, so that it was very difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile them. The point he had in mind was the application of the principle of geographical distribution to the Executive Chairman of the Technical Assistance Board, the Managing Director of the Special Fund and their staff. The Committee of Experts on the Review of the Activities and Organization of the Secretariat clearly stated in paragraph 57 of its report (A/4776 and Corr.1) that in its opinion the principle of geographical distribution should be applied to those categories. The Committee of Experts had presumably taken into consideration the factors mentioned by the Secretary-General (A/4794, para. 39), including his recommendation that the proposal "be the subject of careful reflection". Consequently, the sponsors of the joint draft resolution (A/C.5/L.689 and Add.1-3) could not accept the Canadian representative's suggestion that TAB and the Special Fund should be mentioned in operative

paragraph 5 so that the Acting Secretary-General would merely bring to the notice of the Executive Chairman and the Managing Director the desirability of ensuring equitable geographical distribution. The Secretary-General's objections were not really insurmountable, for the governing bodies of those programmes were composed of Member States and the programmes themselves were United Nations programmes. Furthermore, the joint draft resolution related only to the staff of the secretariats, not to field staff. The main difficulty seemed to be that those programmes were financed by voluntary contributions. The Australian representative, who had expressed concern at the persistent tendency of some delegations to think in terms of "gains" and "losses" of posts had said himself that the application of the geographical distribution principle to those programmes would probably make the main contributors less enthusiastic. That might seem a surprising view to take, since everyone recognized that the factor of contributions was not in itself sufficient to guarantee equitable geographical distributions; indeed, it resembled the view held by other States, which had threatened to pay no contributions unless their suggestions were adopted. To the under-developed countries, the words "voluntary contributions" and "technical assistance" were not synonymous with charity; they meant that the developed countries were ready to assist the rest in a spirit of mutual understanding. The under-developed countries could bow to no pressure, overt or covert, and reserved the right to safeguard their interests and sovereignty.

2. Mr. ZELLEKE (Ethiopia) felt that both the draft resolutions took account of the essential problem, i.e., the need to make arrangements flexible enough for the Secretary-General to be free to use his discretion; they differed, however, in the degree of flexibility provided. The United States draft resolution (A/C.5/L.683/Rev.2) was based on the criteria recommended by the Committee of Experts but left it entirely to the Secretary-General to decide how those criteria should be applied. In his delegation's opinion the existing, and universally acknowledged, imbalance in geographical distribution had come about, not because the Secretary-General's hands had been tied by unduly rigid directives, but owing to lack of precision in the criteria and methods used. It was consequently the Fifth Committee's duty to lay down guiding principles, such as those suggested in the joint draft resolution.

3. Furthermore, there were differences of detail between the two proposals; the most important concerned the minimum number of posts to be allotted to each Member State. In proposing four posts as the minimum, the United States had perhaps thought that some countries would have difficulty in finding the necessary personnel; but there was no reason to think that those difficulties would last forever. The number of five posts proposed by the sponsors of the joint draft resolution, on the other hand, was in keeping

with the wishes expressed during the Committee's discussion and would guarantee reasonable representation to those countries which paid small contributions and which, in most cases, had a small population. The two proposals also differed with respect to TAB and Special Fund staff; but the anxiety shown by various countries to see an ever-increasing proportion of technical assistance channelled through the United Nations was not prompted by a desire to exempt these operations from the regulations and principles adopted by the Organization. Not many posts were involved, and it would be difficult to give them special treatment; accordingly, the only solution was to include them among the posts subject to geographical distribution.

4. For those reasons he would vote in favour of the joint draft resolution (A/C.5/L.689 and Add.1-3).

5. Mr. SANU (Nigeria) pointed out that the joint draft resolution merely provided a framework within which the Secretary-General might use his initiative in bringing about a just solution of the problem. There was no reason to defer a decision. The Fifth Committee should do its duty regardless of cold-war or ideological considerations; the latter would be bound to loom large at the seventeenth session, when a new Secretary-General would have to be chosen, and when some delegations would inevitably try to tie the issue to that of geographical distribution.

6. He appreciated the spirit in which the United States representative had submitted his draft resolution but that proposal erred by its very moderation and was not explicit enough. Precise directives were needed; that was proved by certain events which had taken place in Africa, some of which could probably have been avoided if the late Secretary-General had been given clearer instructions. His delegation would be unable to vote in favour of the United States draft resolution unless it was made more specific.

7. Several provisions of the joint draft resolution, especially operative paragraph 1, sub-paragraphs (a) and (c), reflected the views expressed by his delegation during the discussion. As to TAB, United Nations technical assistance minimized the complications that sometimes arose from purely bilateral assistance, but it would inspire even more confidence if it was put on a wider basis. It was a mistake to think that only a few countries could offer technical assistance or experts; some developing countries could also do so, as was plainly shown by the offers of assistance recently made to African countries by the Ministers of Finance of several Commonwealth countries including India, the Federation of Malaya, New Zealand, Ceylon and Pakistan. With regard to operative paragraph 3, the sponsors of the draft resolution had, generally speaking, based themselves on the recommendations of the Committee of Experts, but had endeavoured, in sub-paragraphs (a), (c) and (d) in particular, to correct some inequalities to which those recommendations might give rise. To attach too much weight to the factor of population or the factor of contributions would perpetuate the existing imbalance. The sponsors had therefore proposed that every Member State should be represented in the Secretariat by at least five of its nationals, so that it might participate actively in the various operations of the United Nations. Even if some countries were unable to find the necessary personnel, their right to reasonable representation should be recognized.

8. His delegation believed that the Committee would arrive at a just and equitable compromise.

9. Mr. GANEM (France) thought that it was a pity that the two draft resolutions before the Committee lacked the usual conciseness and practical nature of the Fifth Committee resolutions. The preambular parts and the last operative paragraph of both drafts were acceptable but the body of the text should be made milder. In the first place, due account should be taken of the position of the Acting Secretary-General, whose term of office would last one year only. The sponsors of the more ambitious of the two draft resolutions had explained that their programme would be spread over several years, but that fact was not specified in the text and, ultimately, it was the text that remained.

10. It was generally agreed that all Member States should have nationals, not representatives, on the Secretariat. It would be unwise, however, to specify an exact figure, whether it were four or five, for the new Member States might gain the impression that they were automatically entitled to four or five staff members on the Secretariat. It might therefore be more prudent, as well as more feasible, to employ a more flexible wording, such as "several" or "some". He was sorry that consideration had not been given to factors other than population and contributions. The possibility of taking postal traffic as a criterion might be considered since it was directly related to a country's population and its economic wealth. In any case, it was a pity that the two factors had been given equal weight and he wondered if the sponsors of the proposal had considered the immediate consequences it might have.

11. Most of the sponsors of the joint draft resolution were in favour of the entry of mainland China into the United Nations. If the principle of geographical distribution was to be applied in respect of 1,400 posts, 700 of which were distributed according to the population criterion, mainland China, which had 650 million inhabitants—a quarter of the world's population—would therefore be entitled to 175 posts in the Secretariat. Fifty-two posts were at present held by Chinese nationals; mainland China might therefore demand the recruitment of 125 Chinese staff members. In that case also, it might be wiser to adopt a more flexible formula. It might be asked why certain delegations wished to take a decision concerning the application of geographical distribution to posts at the G-5 level. It was true that at Headquarters many of those posts were filled by United States nationals, but they entailed no political responsibilities. It would certainly be possible too to recruit persons with the same qualifications from other quarters, but there hardly seemed any point in doing so. It would be better to invite the Acting Secretary-General to study the question further.

12. The joint draft resolution expressed a number of pious hopes which ran the risk of lowering the Fifth Committee's prestige and would be more appropriate in the Committee's report. The International Court of Justice, for example, when recruiting a Registrar, was above considerations of geographical distribution. Only recently it had appointed as Registrar a national of a country which had not at the time been a Member of the United Nations. The Registrar himself was only responsible for minor appointments.

13. Since consultations between the sponsors of the two draft resolutions had not yielded any results, the Chairman might propose the establishment of a small committee, composed of four or five members representing, say, the Scandinavian countries, Asia, Latin

America, Africa and the Pacific region, that might meet immediately so as to arrive quickly at a satisfactory compromise draft.

14. Mr. MACHOWSKI (Poland) said that he had always felt that an improvement in geographical distribution called for radical measures, but the sponsors of the two draft resolutions before the Committee had not provided for any measures that would make it possible to solve that obviously complex problem. Judging from the trend of the discussions, there was little hope of finding a solution at the present session. Moreover, the Acting Secretary-General had asked for time to study the question and had indicated that he would be prepared to take account of the Committee's opinion if a majority view emerged. The draft resolutions under consideration would hardly be likely to enlighten the Secretary-General, since they were both far from representing the view of a large majority. It would therefore be better to leave the Secretary-General greater freedom of action.

15. Mr. CHRISTIADI (Indonesia) observed that the two draft resolutions were intended to afford guidance to the Acting Secretary-General in continuing his predecessor's efforts to improve the geographical distribution of the staff. Nevertheless, there were some obvious differences between the two texts. According to the United States draft resolution, the General Assembly would simply invite the attention of the Acting Secretary-General to the report of the Committee of Experts and would leave him free to take the steps he considered appropriate to improve geographical distribution. The joint draft resolution likewise mentioned the report, but it also contained various principles and ideas that had been advanced in the course of the Committee's discussions. Those detailed directives reflected the wishes of most members of the Committee more accurately than the somewhat vague wording of operative paragraph 1 of the United States draft resolution. The joint draft resolution had the further merit of drawing attention to the relative importance of posts at various levels—a factor which would considerably affect the value of the number of posts allocated to the nationals of a Member State. The Indonesian delegation hoped that the points system would be further worked out so as to take account of the relative importance of posts. For those reasons it would be able to give its full support to the joint draft resolution.

16. Mr. VELA (Ecuador) congratulated the sponsors of the two draft resolutions, which both provided useful guidance for the Acting Secretary-General. The Committee should, however, avoid adopting a rigid formula that would be difficult to apply in practice. It would be better to give the Acting Secretary-General broad directives and, from that point of view, the United States draft resolution seemed to be the more satisfactory of the two. In fact it contained the essentials, which were the new principles enunciated by the Committee of Experts: the importance of the population factor and the principle of the equality of Member States, and the minimum number of staff members for each Member State. In short, the revised United States draft resolution did not advocate any radical measures but reflected most of the views expressed by the members of the Committee.

17. The preambular part of the joint draft resolution was also quite acceptable in substance. However, the Ecuadorian delegation had some doubts concerning the provisions of operative paragraph 1 regarding the

application of the principle of geographical distribution. It believed that it would be useful to undertake a survey to determine which posts at the general service level should be subject to geographical distribution. It also had some doubts concerning the proportion of fixed term staff, and stressed the need to pay due regard to existing contractual obligations, for which provision was fortunately made in operative paragraph 4. In conclusion, he hoped that the sponsors of the draft resolutions would reach an agreement on a compromise text which would receive the support of the great majority of the Committee.

18. Mr. WILLOCH (Norway) agreed that it would be regrettable if the discussion which had been so thorough and interesting were to yield no tangible result. The draft resolutions before the Committee would involve a definite change in the present formula and in the geographical distribution of the staff. But no attempt should be made to solve all the problems at the present stage. The wiser course would be to move forward gradually, without precipitating matters. It was best to seek a compromise formula acceptable to the majority of the Committee. To move too rapidly from the present system to a new formula might lead to some loss of confidence and efficiency among the members of the Secretariat. Although that consideration was recognized by the sponsors of the joint draft resolution, they had not incorporated it in the text. Nor had they given any indication by way of exact figures of the possible effects of the changes they advocated. In any case, it should be noted that Norway's representation in the Secretariat would be little changed whichever of the draft resolutions might be adopted.

19. He understood fully the reasons that had led the sponsors of the joint draft resolution to propose that the principle of geographical distribution be applied to the staffs of TAB and the Special Fund, but saw no reason for coming to an immediate decision on the matter since the majority of the Committee had recognized the need for giving it careful study. He thought that a minimum of five staff members from each Member State was too high; he would prefer that figure to be brought down to four. Moreover, the wording of operative paragraph 3 (b) was too inflexible, considering that the consequences of its application were not known; he suggested that the word "equal" at the beginning of the sentence, be deleted.

20. He fully endorsed the principle set out in operative paragraph 4 but thought it might even be strengthened by stating that due regard should also be paid to the reasonable expectations of the existing staff. The risk to staff efficiency and morale would be as great from impairment of promotion opportunities as it would from violation of existing contractual obligations.

21. Lastly, he recalled in relation to operative paragraph 6 the repeated assertions made during the discussion that the draft resolutions under consideration were regarded as guiding lines for the Secretary-General. Operative paragraph 6 was not in conformity with that idea in that it requested the Acting Secretary-General to report on the progress he had made in carrying out the resolution. The better course of action would be to request him to report on the practicability of the resolution and the progress made in improving geographical distribution.

22. Mr. EPIE (Cameroun) thought the two draft resolutions were honest attempts to find a solution to the problem of imbalance in geographical distribution. He

would be very glad if the sponsors could find some common ground for agreement. The best course would perhaps be to take up the suggestion made by the French representative and set up a small group to try to reconcile differing viewpoints face to face. The Cameroun delegation would support any resolution which appeared to it likely to improve geographical distribution and which gave weight to the factors of contribution and population of Member States and their rights as Members of the United Nations. Particular care must be taken to ensure that the existing imbalance was not replaced by a different imbalance due to faulty application of the various factors.

23. Mr. LIVERAN (Israel) said his position of principle in regard to the so-called question of geographical distribution had not changed and he wished merely to show the consequences likely to occur in practice as a result of adopting either of the draft resolutions, neither one of which was in line with the principles he had advanced at the 864th meeting.

24. There were two major defects in the joint draft resolution. First, in contradiction with the practice followed since the inception of the Organization and contrary to the apparent desire of the Committee's members, its sponsors failed to give the Acting Secretary-General an opportunity of making known his views, as his predecessor had had the chance of doing, on an administrative question of importance. Indeed, they were imposing specific solutions on him at the outset which left him no freedom of action except on subsidiary points. Furthermore, although the Committee had apparently agreed to the idea of passing on to the Acting Secretary-General the ideas all delegations had been able to accept, in order to give him the guidance he had asked for, the joint draft resolution represented no more than a partisan point of view and presented the Acting Secretary-General with the views of a minority only.

25. In many of its passages, the sponsors of the joint draft resolution had reverted to the language of the report of the Committee of Experts without giving any indication of the exact meaning to be assigned to terms that the various experts themselves had sometimes interpreted in different ways. For instance, the sponsors spoke of the relative importance of posts at various levels, without mentioning any criterion for determining that importance—a point on which the Soviet expert alone had spoken with some precision. Since the Fifth Committee had not considered the matter, the Acting Secretary-General would be hard put to it to apply the recommendation in the joint draft resolution. If the sponsors thought that the report of the Committee of Experts should be approved and that the Acting Secretary-General should apply their recommendations, they ought to say so plainly. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that a recommendation of the General Assembly to the Secretary-General had a binding force; hence, the use of the word "recommends" in a draft resolution of the kind did not correspond with the notion of allowing the Acting Secretary-General freedom of action and judgement.

26. Speaking generally, the joint draft resolution was defective in that it was vague where it should be exact and exact where it should be vague, so that it could be of no possible help to anyone.

27. The United States draft resolution did not at least err for lack of clarity. It invited the Secretary-General to study the problems and to experiment with various

ways of attempting to solve them. It therefore gave the acting Secretary-General the necessary latitude, as most delegations wished.

28. Had the Polish representative submitted a draft resolution embodying the ideas he had stated earlier in the meeting, he would have had the satisfaction of having succeeded in putting on paper the opinion of the majority of the Committee.

29. The CHAIRMAN invited delegation wishing to submit amendments to do so at the current meeting.

30. Mr. CUTTS (Australia) said he would find it difficult to put forward the amendments he wished to propose so long as the Committee had not decided which of the two draft resolutions it proposed to vote on first.

31. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that, on the contrary, some delegations would prefer all amendments to be submitted before deciding upon the order of voting.

32. Mr. NOLAN (Ireland) was of opinion that, in any event, it would be better to defer the voting until the following week.

33. Mr. VENKATARAMAN (India) thought the Committee might leave the question of procedure to the discretion of the Chairman.

AGENDA ITEM 57

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions (A/4775 and Corr.1, A/C.5/L.690 and Add.1 and 2, A/C.5/L.692 and Add.1) (continued)

34. Mr. VENKATARAMAN (India) said he would prefer the Fifth Committee to postpone the continuation of its debate on the item to a later meeting, since he would like to have time for further consultation with certain delegations which had not yet been able to approve one or two sentences of the text which he had drafted in the hope that it might provide a generally acceptable compromise formula. He would not formally submit his text as an amendment to the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Contributions (A/4775 and Corr.1, para. 39) unless he obtained the approval of those delegations.

AGENDA ITEM 62

Administrative and budgetary procedures of the United Nations: report of the working group appointed under General Assembly resolution 1620 (XV) (A/4971)

35. Mr. EL-MESSIRI (United Arab Republic) said that the Working Group of Fifteen on the Examination of the Administrative and Budgetary Procedures of the United Nations had endeavoured to identify principles for the financing of peace-keeping operations which had a sufficiently wide acceptance to provide a basis for a series of recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly. The Group's report (A/4971) indicated that that objective had not been achieved. The Working Group had, however, been able to identify the major issues to be resolved and to explore, through extensive discussion, the various elements of those issues in order to determine to what extent common ground existed; it had also been able to focus attention on the precise differences in points of view.

36. The members of the Working Group had begun by considering the politico-legal and administrative problems involved in financing peace-keeping operations, but none of the proposals put forward had found sufficiently wide acceptance to serve as the framework for a series of recommendations. The Working Group had then set up a Sub-Committee of Five to identify the principles and issues which could be used as a basis for determining the method of financing peace-keeping operations. The Sub-Committee had succeeded in identifying those principles and issues, but it had not found it possible to classify them in such a way as to enable the Working Group to resolve the problems involved.

37. Some members had considered that it was outside the terms of reference of the Working Group to examine certain questions such as the authority to sanction peace-keeping operations which was vested in various United Nations organs by the Charter and the extent to which, by virtue of that authority, such organs might obligate Member States financially in respect of such operations. Others had considered that that basic problem must be resolved first before methods of financing could be considered.

38. The Working Group had decided to base its report on the principles and issues identified by the Sub-Committee. It had accordingly recorded the points of view expressed by its members under the headings corresponding to those principles and issues (A/4971, sections A to H). Some of those sections concerned basic principles and included different formulations of the same principle in order to show the divergencies in the views expressed and to identify more precisely the issues to be resolved. Other sections concerned methods and procedures to be used in the financing of peace-keeping operations.

39. The votes which had been taken regarding each of the statements or proposals and which were recorded in the Working Group's report reflected only the position adopted by each member of the Group on each particular issue as it arose within the framework of the Working Group's discussions.

40. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Working Group had consulted the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, whose observations were recorded in annex I to the report.

The Working Group had felt that it had not reached a sufficient measure of agreement on the principles and methods to be used in establishing a provisional scale of contributions to justify consultation with the Committee on Contributions.

41. The Working Group had decided that its report should be as brief as possible. It had therefore presented only a summary of the principles and issues discussed together with a record of the positions taken by its members. The way in which the principles and issues considered were listed in the report did not constitute an organized classification of the problems since the members of the Working Group had not really succeeded in reaching agreement on the matter. A summary of observations of members of the Working Group appeared in annex II to the report.

42. Mr. CUTTS (Australia) expressed regret that the Working Group had not succeeded in drawing up recommendations for the benefit of the General Assembly on methods of financing peace-keeping operations. The Working Group's report was a catalogue of individual opinions which, though undoubtedly useful, could hardly assist the General Assembly to take the necessary decisions concerning the financing of ONUC and UNEF.

43. The one advance appeared to be that all the members of the Working Group had recognized that the financing of peace-keeping operations was a collective responsibility, although they had not succeeded in reaching agreement on the way in which a collective decision could be taken.

44. The members of the Fifth Committee could not in their turn embark on an interminable discussion of the principles and issues considered by the Working Group. The only practical decision the Committee could take seemed to be on the question of whether the International Court of Justice should be asked for an advisory opinion on the legal nature of financial obligations arising out of peace-keeping operations. In any event, the Committee would later be called upon to find the means of financing the United Nations operations in the Congo. Where the remainder of the report was concerned, all the Committee could do was to take note of it.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.