

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

FOURTEENTH SESSION
Official Records



**FIFTH COMMITTEE, 749th
MEETING**

Tuesday, 24 November 1959,
at 10.50 a.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 52:</i>	
<i>Public information activities of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General (concluded)</i>	
<i>Draft report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly</i>	209
<i>Agenda item 28:</i>	
<i>United Nations Emergency Force:</i>	
<i>(a) Cost estimates for the maintenance of the Force;</i>	
<i>(b) Manner of financing the Force: report of the Secretary-General on consultations with the Governments of Member States</i>	209

Chairman: Mr. Jiří NOSEK (Czechoslovakia).

AGENDA ITEM 52

Public information activities of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General (concluded)

DRAFT REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (A/C.5/L.586)

1. Mr. NAIK (Pakistan), Rapporteur, introduced the Committee's draft report (A/C.5/L.586).

Mr. Urabe (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

2. Mr. SANCHEZ (Guatemala), Mr. SOKIRKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. KWEEDJIEHOO (Indonesia), Mr. PRATT (Israel) and Mr. TISHCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) requested a number of drafting changes and corrections in the text of the draft report.

3. Mr. TURNER (Controller), replying to a question from Mr. CARRILLO (El Salvador), said that the reference in paragraph 16 to the possibility of substituting a quarterly for the monthly United Nations Review was merely to one possible economy, and did not imply that the Secretary-General was committed to such a course.

4. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should adopt the report subject to the drafting changes and corrections which had been requested.

The draft report (A/C.5/L.586), as amended, was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 28

United Nations Emergency Force:

(a) Cost estimates for the maintenance of the Force (A/4160, A/4171, A/4210, A/4284, A/C.5/800);

(b) Manner of financing the Force: report of the Secretary-General on consultations with the Governments of Member States (A/4176 and Add.1 and 2, and Corr.1)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Lieutenant-General E. L. M. Burns, Commander of the United Nations Emergency Force, took a place at the Committee table.

5. The SECRETARY-GENERAL restated his conviction that, for the immediate future at least, the United Nations Emergency Force continued to be an indispensable element in the efforts of the Organization to assist Member Governments in maintaining stable and peaceful conditions in the area in which the Force operated. He referred to his evaluation of the Force's contribution to continuing quiet in the area (A/4210, para. 2), and said that in the present circumstances it was impossible for him to foresee when the operations of the Force might be brought to an end without risking the progress thus far made.

6. He expressed his appreciation to the members of the Force for their unique service in the cause of peace, to the Governments which still made contingents available to the Force, and to Lieutenant-General Burns for his consistently fine leadership of the Force.

7. Any decrease in the size of the Force below its present reduced numbers would require a redefinition of its present function and responsibility. As there had been no major changes in the satisfactory organization and functioning of the Force in 1959, he could see no possibility of substantial savings in the cost of maintaining the Force in 1960, beyond those reflected in the present estimates (A/C.5/800, paras. 8 to 12).

8. He referred to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions with regard to the estimates for 1959 and 1960 (A/4171, paras. 9 and 10, and A/4284, paras. 7 and 12), and said that he and the Commander of the Force foresaw no real difficulties from a budgetary point of view if those recommendations were adopted. Every effort would be made to keep expenditure within the target levels suggested.

9. On the question of provision in the estimates for the Force for compensation in respect of equipment, materials and supplies furnished by Governments to their contingents, he referred to paragraph 6 of document A/4160 and paragraph 7 of document A/C.5/800. There could be no question, in the light of the General Assembly's decisions, as to the Organization's ultimate obligation to reimburse the Governments providing such equipment and supplies for their extra and extraordinary costs on that account. As the period of service of contingents in the Force had been prolonged much longer than originally envisaged, it was only reasonable that such Governments should desire a re-examination of the General Assembly's original decision (resolution 1151 (XII), para. 2), which was that the United Nations would assume responsibility for payment only at the conclusion of the total period of service.

10. With regard to the manner of financing expenditure for the Force, he expressed concern that unpaid assessments for 1957, 1958 and 1959 amounted to over \$19 million; it was estimated that by the end of 1959 the Force would have had to borrow over \$6 million from the Working Capital Fund, and would have unliquidated obligations in excess of \$12 million. He

hoped that discussions in the Fifth Committee would help to make the future path clear. The views of fifty Member States were contained in documents A/4176 and Add.1 and 2; the views of the largest group were those that he himself had held from the outset. Whatever solution was adopted, he did not believe that any generally acceptable formula could ignore the application of the regular scale of assessments.

11. Mr. FULTON (United States of America) announced that his Government was asking the United States Congress to vote about \$3.2 million as a voluntary contribution towards the cost of maintaining UNEF in 1960. That amount would be in addition to his Government's assessed share of the \$20 million budget for UNEF and would bring its total contribution to approximately \$9.7 million. It was doing so because it was convinced that the initial decision to establish the Force (General Assembly resolution 1000 (ES-I)) had been a sound one and had represented a realistic means of dealing with a critical situation in the Middle East. It was important to recall, moreover, that that decision had been taken without a single dissenting vote. The Force had effectively performed its task of keeping the peace in the Middle East. It was the general hope that peace in that area had been assured for all time, but there was, unfortunately, no guarantee of that. The Secretary-General and the Commander of the Force had clearly indicated that the task was a continuing one and their considered judgement was accepted by the United States. Although not operating as an armed force, UNEF wielded power—the power to generate good will—and should clearly be maintained at its present level. Its cost should be borne by the Members of the Organization which had decided to establish it. Although the cost of preserving the peace in that area was low, the payment of even a small amount towards the total cost of \$20 million would prove a hardship for some Members. Nevertheless, maintenance of the Force was a United Nations responsibility which no Member Government could escape.

12. It was necessary to realize that many incidents had been reduced in gravity or had been prevented altogether, incidents which, had there been no UNEF, would have built up fear and tension. Disturbances in one part of the world soon had repercussions that created an atmosphere conducive to the outbreak of war.

13. His country had made additional voluntary contributions towards the cost of maintaining the Force in past years because it had wished to reduce the burden on those countries for whom the load was heavy. In deciding to take the same step in 1960, it was confident that other Members would wish to join in maintaining the Force as long as that was necessary. He was convinced that, in doing so, they would experience the same satisfaction as did his Government in supporting one of the most successful programmes of the United Nations.

14. Finally, he wished to express his Government's gratitude to those countries which had sent contingents to make up the Force. The officers and men in question, as well as their families, were making a real contribution to the maintenance of general peace and security. He asked the Commander of the Force to convey his country's thanks to those concerned.

15. His people looked optimistically to the future, convinced that, in spite of the differences which might exist between nations, progress was being made in the

right direction. His Government respected the moral and legal obligations imposed upon it by the Charter.

16. Mr. ANNAND (United Kingdom) said that, to be a continuing success, UNEF must continue to be successfully financed. His Government had always considered that its financing was a collective responsibility of the United Nations; having been established by General Assembly resolutions, the Force should be regarded as an expression of the Assembly's collective will. It would be logical, therefore, to finance it under the regular budget.

17. However, the UNEF Special Account remained in being, it should be maintained by all Member States in accordance with the scale of assessments. His Government had from the outset paid its assessed share and would do so again for 1960; in addition, it was prepared to make a special voluntary contribution of \$275,000. Thus, like that of the United States, the United Kingdom contribution for 1960 would be greater both in amount and in proportion than that for 1959. His Government hoped that such voluntary contributions would lighten the burden of some Member States and set an example for further voluntary and special contributions.

18. Mr. QUIJANO (Argentina) said that, since the Committee had had to consider the present agenda item for four years in succession, UNEF could clearly not be considered an emergency force. As the Secretary-General had stated, it was difficult to foresee when UNEF might be withdrawn without inviting the risk of dangerous consequences (A/4210, para. 2). He disagreed with the view expressed by one delegation that UNEF constituted an attempt to establish a permanent force in violation of the Charter, as it had been set up to meet a specific threat to world peace in a particular geographical area and not a single vote had been cast against that decision. Although his delegation did not envisage UNEF as constituting a permanent United Nations programme, the Organization would be concerned with its maintenance for some time to come.

19. His delegation wished to express its thanks to UNEF itself and to the Governments which had generously provided contingents for the Force. It was also grateful to the Secretary-General for his continued efforts to maintain the Force and to the Force's Commander, Lieutenant-General Burns, for his dedicated and effective service.

20. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General's views on the need to maintain UNEF in the area which it was controlling and on the pacifying influence which it exerted. It also accepted his statement that the Force had to be maintained at its present strength, thus eliminating any possibility of reducing maintenance costs. It considered that the revised estimates for 1960 could not be reduced below the level recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 12 of document A/4284 and it would therefore support the appropriation recommended by the Advisory Committee for that year. It also endorsed that Committee's recommendation that efforts should be made to hold expenditure within a target level of \$19.5 million.

21. However, it differed with many other delegations and with the Secretary-General regarding the manner of financing UNEF, a question on which no agreement had yet been reached. The temporary solutions so far proposed had not been generally accepted or implemented and one group of delegations refused to assume any obligation to contribute to the maintenance of the

Force. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report on his consultations with the Governments of Member States (A/4176 and Add.1 and 2, and Corr.1), a large number of States had submitted their views on the manner of financing UNEF, which was proof of the interest of Governments in the problem. The report revealed the variety of views held on the subject and the objection of many Governments to the present manner of financing. It further revealed the heavy burden which a contribution to UNEF imposed on many States. The number of unpaid contributions was ample evidence of those difficulties. His delegation, like a number of others, considered the method so far adopted inequitable and had accepted it with reservations.

22. In the opinion of his delegation, the maintenance of UNEF was an international responsibility which should be shared by all Members of the United Nations. The regular scale of assessments for the United Nations budget was not a suitable one for the financing of UNEF, as the considerations involved in maintaining the regular operations of the Organization were quite different from those involved in maintaining a special and temporary operation such as UNEF. The circumstances which had led to the establishment of the Force and the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security assigned to certain Powers by the Charter were further factors to be taken into account. There were many precedents, such as that set by General Assembly resolution 1212 (XII), for adoption of a scale other than the scale of assessments for the United Nations budget. In order to ensure the participation of all Member States in the maintenance of UNEF, his delegation would agree to the regular scale of assessment being applied to a certain proportion, which should never exceed 50 per cent, of the total cost of maintaining the Force, thus ensuring that the mandatory contribution would be within the capacity of States to pay. Some other method of obtaining contributions would have to be applied in order to meet the balance of the cost. Such contributions might be voluntary or based on a special scale which took into account the greater responsibility of the permanent members of the Security Council or the degree of their political or economic interest in the area protected by UNEF.

23. That proposal did not represent a hard and fast position on the part of his delegation, but was made, in a spirit of compromise, as a positive contribution to the solution of the problem. It was submitted for consideration along with the proposals which might be made by other delegations with a view to eliminating the difficulties encountered in the financing and operation of a programme which had otherwise proved most successful.

24. His delegation welcomed the generous voluntary contributions announced by the United States and United Kingdom representatives and had been particularly interested in the United States representative's reference to the need for such voluntary contributions in order to reduce the burden on the smaller contributors. It was evident that the countries which bore the greatest responsibility for the effective maintenance of UNEF were aware of the complaints of those delegations which were dissatisfied with the application of the regular scale of assessments.

25. His delegation, while firmly opposed to application of the regular scale of assessments to the financing of UNEF, was prepared to accept any solution accept-

able to the majority which represented an improvement on the present method. The small number of delegations which had voted in favour of the present method should, in fact, have been a forewarning of its ineffectiveness. It was essential to find a more generally acceptable manner of financing the Force.

26. Mr. KESZTHELYI (Hungary) drew attention to paragraph 42 of the Secretary-General's report on UNEF (A/4210), which showed that the number of countries failing to make any contributions to the financing of the Force was increasing year by year; they included Hungary. In addition to financial considerations, a question of principle was involved. His delegation still considered that, as a matter of justice, Hungary should not be obliged to contribute in any way whatsoever to expenses incurred as a result of a situation for which it bore no responsibility. It would therefore be unable to vote in favour of the budget estimates for the Force submitted by the Secretary-General.

27. Mr. SICILIANI (Italy) expressed his delegation's satisfaction at the Secretary-General's report on UNEF, which showed that the Force had continued to perform effectively the task for which it had been established: namely, the preservation of peace and security in the Middle East. Lieutenant-General Burns and his staff, as well as the countries which had supplied contingents for the Force, should be commended on their services to peace. As the Secretary-General pointed out, it was difficult to foresee when UNEF might be withdrawn without inviting the risk of dangerous consequences (A/4210, para. 2), especially in view of the recent increase in incidents as described in paragraphs 36-38 of the report. His delegation therefore believed that the Force should be kept in operation and should not be reduced below its existing strength. It therefore endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning the revised estimates for 1960 (A/4284, para. 12).

28. The Secretary-General had also made it clear that UNEF's future was seriously endangered by the financial difficulties which were described in paragraph 41 of the report (A/4210), and which were due mainly to the unwillingness of certain countries to meet their obligations under a General Assembly resolution. If every Member State contributed only to expenses in which it had a direct interest, the Charter and the fundamental principles of the United Nations would be imperilled. However, his delegation viewed with understanding the difficulties of those Members whose failure to pay their contributions was due to other factors; it would give sympathetic attention to any proposal designed to assist countries which were unable to meet their commitments but which endorsed the principle of compulsory contributions to the maintenance of the Force. It should be remembered that UNEF's purpose was to maintain peace and security, for the benefit of all peoples.

29. Mr. TUGARINOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation's position on the political aspects of the UNEF problem had been adequately explained at the 842nd plenary meeting. As at previous sessions, his delegation opposed the view that the costs of UNEF should be allocated among all Members on the normal scale of contributions to the budget. All expenditure for the maintenance of the Force should be borne by States whose actions had led to its establishment. The overwhelming majority of Member States were neither directly nor indirectly responsible for

those actions and, as was plain from paragraphs 41 and 42 of the Secretary-General's report (A/4210), it was difficult to convince them that they should bear the cost involved. His delegation would vote against any proposal to burden the United Nations with the cost of UNEF and would not consider itself bound by any recommendation for the Soviet Union's participation in that operation.

30. Mr. BLANCO (Cuba) said he was glad to see from paragraph 2 of the Secretary-General's report on his consultations with Governments on the manner of financing the Force (A/4176) that, of the forty-six Member States from which replies had been received by 20 August 1959, thirty-four favoured assessment of UNEF's expenses among all Members. They included Cuba, which subscribed to the principle that all States were interdependent and that all Members of the United Nations were collectively responsible for the cost of maintaining peace. However, Cuba considered that, for reasons given in its reply to the Secretary-General (A/4176, annex), the cost of maintaining UNEF should be apportioned on a more equitable basis than the scale of assessments for the United Nations budget. His delegation considered that 80 per cent of the expense of maintaining UNEF should be borne by the permanent members of the Security Council, which had direct and primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The remaining 20 per cent should be apportioned among all other Member States according to a scale of assessment based on their financial position, the benefits they derived from the establishment of UNEF, and their responsibility for the maintenance of peace; the scale could be worked out by a sub-committee of the Fifth Committee, by the Advisory Committee, or by the Committee on Contributions.

31. The United Nations had several times demonstrated its ability to preserve peace by collective action, but had shown insufficient foresight in setting aside funds for that purpose. Funds for UNEF were obtained by a combination of compulsory assessment

with voluntary contributions. The precarious situation of the Working Capital Fund made it increasingly difficult to finance action of the type which had been needed at Suez, in Lebanon and recently in Laos, out of an appropriation of only \$2 million for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. Just as various funds had been established for purposes connected with the economic development of under-developed countries, it might be advisable to establish a special fund to finance the maintenance of peace and security. If all Member States co-operated, that would entail only a small sacrifice. For example, the fund might be maintained out of United Nations income, or out of the contributions of new Member States which were at present used to reduce other Member States' assessments.

32. UNEF had been established in consequence of an attack but was now a necessity to the peace of the Middle East. No purpose would therefore be served by belated recriminations. His delegation thanked the United States and United Kingdom delegations for the voluntary contributions they had announced.

33. Mr. DE PINIES (Spain) expressed his delegation's gratitude for the service rendered by UNEF and by those countries which had contributed contingents; a tribute was due to Lieutenant-General Burns and also to the Secretary-General for his keen interest in all matters relating to the Force. His delegation would support the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the budget estimates for UNEF.

34. In its reply to the Secretary-General's inquiry concerning the manner of financing the Force (A/4176, annex), his delegation expressed the view that the application of the ordinary scale of assessments was not equitable, and made an alternative proposal. In addition, it was prepared to study any other suggestions for an alternative to the method currently in use. Thanks were due to the United States and the United Kingdom for their generous voluntary contributions; it was to be hoped that other countries would follow their example.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.