

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

FIFTEENTH SESSION

Official Records



**FIFTH COMMITTEE, 771st
MEETING**

Wednesday, 19 October 1960,
at 11 a.m.

NEW YORK

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Chairman: Mr. Mario MAJOLI (Italy).

AGENDA ITEM 50

Budget estimates for the financial year 1961 (A/4370, A/4408, A/4524, A/C.5/815, A/C.5/822, A/C.5/828 and Corr.1, A/C.5/829, A/C.5/L.611) (continued)

General discussion (continued)

1. Mr. SICILIANI (Italy) said that, in his initial budget estimates for 1961 (A/4370), the Secretary-General had clearly made considerable efforts to keep rising expenditure in check and to facilitate, by the form in which the estimates were presented, the Fifth Committee's review of the budget. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had earned his delegation's thanks for its careful report (A/4408) and for its endeavours to reduce the estimates by approximately \$1 million.

2. The natural development of the United Nations, the increase in its membership and the depreciation of the value of money were inescapable facts which the Committee had to bear in mind in examining the estimates. It should also remember, however, that those estimates represented an increasingly small proportion of the total financial burden laid on many Member States by their co-operation in international activities: the combined specialized agency budgets exceeded the United Nations budget, and recent international events would entail further expenses. National treasuries had also to sustain the burden of voluntary contributions; Italy, for example, would contribute \$2,250,000 to the Special Fund and the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance for 1961.

3. The rising expenditure of the United Nations was thus a source of concern, and economies should be sought whenever compatible with efficiency. Since the estimates under part II—Staff costs and related expenses—continued to represent some two-thirds of the

total, and since the 1961 estimates for that part of the budget exceeded the 1960 appropriations by over \$2.6 million, staff policy should emphasize quality rather than quantity and costs arising from the travel of staff should be limited wherever possible.

4. Income from sources other than staff assessment was estimated at a lower figure than in 1960 (A/4370, foreword, para. 52). With due deference to the explanations given for that reduced estimate, every effort should be made to increase such income; however modest the results, such efforts would make a favourable impression on all Member States.

5. With regard to the cash position of the United Nations, as described in paragraph 90 of the Secretary-General's foreword to the 1961 budget estimates, it was to be hoped that all Member States would meet their obligations to the United Nations and thus make further borrowing unnecessary.

6. His delegation would support all measures designed to meet the needs of the growing family of nations and of their economic and social progress, but would recommend the Committee to keep the following points in mind with a view to reducing budgetary expenditure and to improving the efficiency of the Organization: firstly, a careful review of the staff might make it possible to reduce the establishment; secondly, staff travel costs should be kept to the minimum; thirdly, income should be increased; and fourthly, attention should be given to methods of expediting the payment of contributions by Member States.

7. Mr. RAJAPATIRANA (Ceylon) pointed out that the Advisory Committee, after a close scrutiny of the Secretary-General's budget estimates, had recommended a reduction of \$942,850 (A/4408, para. 85) in estimates totalling \$67,453,750 (A/4370, foreword, para. 8). To act on the adage "Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves", which the United Kingdom representative had quoted at the 769th meeting, would involve the Fifth Committee in an unduly time-consuming process of detailed examination over and above such an examination made by the Advisory Committee. It could, however, discuss the broad principles of budget administration, and under that heading he would suggest that at future sessions the Secretary-General should submit to the Committee, for its annual review of the budget estimates, the following information: firstly, a statement of the expenditure actually incurred under each section of the budget up to, say, 31 August of the current financial year, and of the estimated expenditure under each section for the remaining four months of that financial year; secondly, a clear statement of the financial position at the end of the preceding financial year and at the end of the month preceding the one in which the Committee examined the budget estimates; and thirdly, a statement showing what new activities were contemplated for the next financial year. The last-mentioned statement would clearly be subject to revision in the light of the General

Assembly's decisions, but would nevertheless be extremely useful.

8. A proposal had been made that the rapidly rising expenditure of the United Nations should be stabilized by setting a fixed ceiling. In the Ceylonese delegation's view, a growing United Nations had to expect its expenditure to increase if the tasks entrusted to it were to be discharged. Care should be taken, however, to see that the expanding machinery did not make extra work, and that "Parkinson's Law" should not be allowed to operate in the Secretariat. Furthermore, Member States should consult together regarding the appropriateness of the ceiling fixed for the contribution of some Members which could well afford to bear a greater share of the Organization's expenses, and regarding means of liquidating arrears of contributions.

9. The delegations of smaller countries were as conscious as the USSR delegation of the imbalance in the geographical distribution of the staff. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that staff should not be terminated on grounds of nationality, but could not subscribe to the theory, implicit in the Secretary-General's remarks at the 769th meeting, that only the nationals of some great Powers conformed to the standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity referred to in Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter, and that only they had a monopoly over those qualities. The Committee should ensure that the Secretary-General had the means to perform his duties efficiently, but would do well to suggest that he should periodically review his recruitment policy and, where necessary, avail himself of the Committee's assistance.

10. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee (A/4408, paras. 118 and 119) that before definite increases were made in the permanent establishment, it would be wise to await a clearer picture of the outcome of two factors: the review of the activities and organization of the Secretariat under General Assembly resolution 1446 (XIV), and the five-year appraisal of programmes in the economic and social field. He did not see why the creation of a post at the Director (D-2) level in the Internal Audit Service, referred to in paragraph 126 of the Advisory Committee's report, should not be included in the scope of that recommendation. Furthermore, such new posts as were urgently needed in order to undertake work for the benefit of less developed areas or of new Member States should, where possible, be filled by recruiting staff on short-term contracts, who could be replaced by qualified nationals of emerging and under-represented countries as they became available.

11. Mr. BANNIER (Netherlands) said that, even in their initial form, the budget estimates for 1961 clearly demonstrated the growing responsibilities of the United Nations, especially in the economic and social fields. When the revised estimates resulting from recent decisions of the Economic and Social Council and the financial implications of activities connected with the maintenance of international peace and security in 1961 were also taken into account, the budget would reflect more accurately than in the past the practical interpretation placed by Member States on the Purposes and Principles of the Charter. Then and in subsequent years, the United Nations budget would be of a different order of magnitude from the estimates now before the Committee.

12. Much as his delegation deplored increased assessments and the difficulties they represented for Governments, the Committee should examine the budget, not merely by reference to specific figures, but by reference to what Member States' contributions achieved; for the value of the United Nations, in terms of peace and security and of economic and social progress, was immeasurable.

13. The Fifth Committee could discharge its heavy responsibility only if it was adequately acquainted with decisions of other United Nations organs regarding activities with financial implications, and with the principal considerations underlying those decisions. As he had pointed out at the fourteenth session (712th meeting), the Committee must try to understand the requirements of programmes, and the bodies that drew them up should always bear in mind their financial implications. To judge from the documents now before the General Assembly, there was every hope that both those conditions would be met. The Economic and Social Council had paid due attention to the five-year appraisal of programmes in the economic and social fields; the Secretary-General had considerably amplified the information provided in the 1961 budget estimates and the report of the Advisory Committee and the oral statements by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/828 and Corr.1) and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee (A/C.5/829) had been illuminating.

14. Apart from the established technical programmes, the largest increase in the 1961 estimates over the 1960 appropriations—some \$2.6 million—related to the cost—direct, and in terms of conferences—of economic and social activities; the bulk of the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee related to the part of the budget concerned with those activities, namely, part II. The Advisory Committee had, commendably, recommended a reduction from 63 to 29 in the number of new professional posts requested (A/4408, para. 131) and from 57 to 40 in the number of new General Service posts requested (*ibid.*, para. 134), with consequential savings of some \$325,000, and had suggested a specific approach to requirements in the economic, social and human rights field as a whole (*ibid.*, para. 124). However, its recommendations antedated the examination of the five-year appraisal of programmes by the Economic and Social Council at its thirtieth session. At that session delegations had voiced even more strongly the criticism, referred to by the Secretary-General in paragraph 13 of his budget foreword, that the suggestions he had made at the Council's twenty-eighth session regarding the magnitude of likely changes in the budgetary requirements for economic and social programmes^{1/} were unrealistically low. The inference was that, if the Fifth Committee acted on the Advisory Committee's recommendation, and deferred consideration of some requirements until the outcome of the five-year appraisal emerged more clearly, the result would not be to reduce those requirements.

15. The conclusions of the Committee of Experts appointed under General Assembly resolution 1446 (XIV) to review the activities and organization of the Secretariat would not be available until the sixteenth session; in the circumstances, there was merit in the Advisory Committee's suggestion that new professional appointments should be kept to a minimum for the time being. It should be remembered, however,

^{1/} E/3260 (mimeographed).

that first-rate specialists could in many cases be recruited only on exceptionally attractive terms; it had evidently been on that ground that the Secretary-General had mentioned the need for a thorough reappraisal of budgetary and employment policies in a number of key areas (A/4370, foreword, para. 15). His delegation firmly believed that the Secretary-General should be provided with the funds he needed in order to implement the decisions and recommendations of the Economic and Social Council and of the regional economic commissions. If, as the Secretary-General had appeared to imply in his statement to the Committee (A/C.5/828 and Corr.1) the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee were incompatible with those requirements, part at least of the original estimates should be restored. He was aware that the Advisory Committee had recommended an additional provision of \$75,000 for consultants and experts (A/4408, para. 147), but that might prove insufficient.

16. While his delegation agreed with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on the desirability of a rational system of priorities (A/C.5/829, para. 13), the remarks of the President of the Economic and Social Council, as quoted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/828, para. 22), were no less cogent. However, his delegation would encourage efforts to lay down the broad lines to be followed in assigning future priorities, and to reduce or wind up less urgent activities; in common with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, it welcomed the attention which the Economic and Social Council had given that question in recent months, including the setting up of an *ad hoc* working group to study various aspects of programme co-ordination.

17. Demands on the United Nations would continue to increase. Stabilization of the budget over a protracted period or, *a fortiori*, its reduction to the ceiling proposed by the USSR representative at the 768th meeting would stultify the Organization's operations. The Netherlands did not want that to happen; nor, it believed, did any Member State which believed in the future of the Organization.

CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION (A/4524, A/C.5/822) (continued)

18. Mr. AHMED (Sudan) said that his delegation had always been in favour of prudence, economy and sound financial control, which should not, however, be regarded as an end in themselves. Their purpose was to obtain the best possible use of available resources, to avoid waste and to ensure an equitable distribution of material and human resources among the different activities of the Organization. It was heartening to note from the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/822) the great efforts made by the Secretariat in compliance with General Assembly resolution 1272 (XIII), and the success achieved in the limitation of documentation during the past two years. His delegation fully supported the Advisory Committee's remarks in paragraphs 4-7 of its report (A/4524) and endorsed its constructive suggestion for the increased use of editorial control facilities.

19. With regard more specifically to the action taken by the regional economic commissions, which was described in paragraph 12 of the Secretary-General's report, his delegation was surprised at the criticism the Indian representative had expressed at the 770th meeting of the commendable spirit of co-operation

shown by the Economic Commission for Africa. The Indian representative seemed to feel that the Executive Secretary of ECA had over-implemented resolution 1272 (XIII). He would like to know what yardstick the Indian representative had used in that connexion. The decision taken by the Executive Secretary of ECA to use his discretion with regard to the processing of material received called for approval rather than criticism. The Indian representative appeared to consider the Executive Secretary's action premature because ECA was a very new organization. It was true that the new economic commission needed all possible assistance from the United Nations but no organ of the United Nations should be exempt, because of age or lack of experience, from its obligations under any resolution that was applicable to all organs. The main issues seemed to be the speed and the scope of the action taken by ECA. As far as speed was concerned, the Executive Secretary of ECA should be complimented on having taken early and prompt action. With regard to the scope of his action, that was a question which must be left to the judgement of the head of the department concerned, since the possibilities of reducing documentation might vary widely from one organ to another and, as he understood the procedure followed, the Secretary-General left it to the various organs to determine the methods appropriate to their particular circumstances. Resolution 1272 (XIII) did not attempt to make any precise recommendations regarding the method of control or the amount of limitation to be achieved; it sought to attain the greatest possible economy without impairing the efficiency of the Organization or sacrificing the adequacy and quality of documentation.

20. Adequacy and quality were the criteria by which the Committee should be guided in passing judgement on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1272 (XIII). He accordingly suggested that, if the Committee decided to ask for the submission of a further progress report at its seventeenth session, it should request the Secretary-General or the Advisory Committee to assess the adequacy and quality of documentation during the period 1958 to 1962 in comparison with the preceding four years in order to determine whether there had been any deterioration as a direct result of the implementation of the resolution.

21. Mr. SAHNI (India) said that he had had no intention of expressing any personal criticism of the Executive Secretary of ECA, for whom he had the greatest regard. His comments had simply been based on the reference to the Executive Secretary's action in paragraph 12 of the Secretary-General's report, and he was sorry if they had appeared in any way uncomplimentary. He had watched the establishment and progress of ECA with great interest; he could assure the Sudanese representative that he did not regard it as a tender plant, which should be given special treatment.

22. Mr. RAJAPATIRANA (Ceylon) felt that there was a danger that the limitation of documentation might be carried too far. There might be some overlapping and duplication in the documentation produced by the United Nations, the specialized agencies, regional bodies and Member States, and that represented a possible field of study. On the other hand, it was important to avoid restricting documentation to the point at which it would be harmful to the interests of smaller countries which looked to the United Nations for studies which they were not in a position to prepare themselves.

23. His delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's emphasis, in paragraph 4 of its report (A/4524), on the importance of a continuous review of the problem and of making periodic assessments of procedures for keeping documentation within reasonable limits.

24. Mr. PARISIS (Belgium) expressed satisfaction with the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/822) and that of the Advisory Committee (A/4524). However, he hoped that paragraph 25 of the Secretary-General's report did not imply an attitude of resignation in the face of inevitable trends. The purpose of the measures taken under General Assembly resolution 1272 (XIII) was to achieve economy together with efficiency. A limitation of the number of United Nations documents would reduce the time spent on reading them by members of delegations, while the documents themselves would gain in clarity if prepared in concise form.

25. His delegation suggested that the Committee should propose in its report, as a further means of limiting documentation, the extension of the biennial pattern of sessions to those functional commissions and other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council which did not at present follow that pattern, in accordance with the suggestion made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 44 of its report (A/4408). It seemed to him that the Advisory Committee's suggestion could most suitably be taken up under the heading of control and limitation of documentation.

26. Mr. CUTTS (Australia), Rapporteur, doubted whether it would be appropriate for the Committee to include that suggestion in its report on the subject of control and limitation of documentation. He thought it might more appropriately be included in the Committee's report on its general discussion of the budget.

27. Mr. PARISIS (Belgium) accepted that suggestion.

28. Mr. CHELLI (Tunisia) expressed appreciation of the efforts made by the Secretary-General to limit the volume of documentation without impairing its quality. Economies could be achieved in that field only through co-operation between the Secretariat and national delegations. The Advisory Committee appeared to conclude that there was still room for further limitation along the present lines without the risk of detrimental effects. His delegation associated itself with that view.

29. Mr. MONTERO BUSTAMANTE (Uruguay) paid a tribute to the efforts made by the Secretary-General to achieve the objectives of General Assembly resolution 1272 (XIII). His delegation concurred in the view expressed in paragraph 25 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/822).

30. Mr. AHMED (Sudan) said he was glad to find that the Indian representative was in basic agreement with his own views on the work of ECA. Any difference between them was a matter, not of substance, but only of degree.

31. Mr. EVANS (Secretariat) said that the Secretariat had taken careful note of the views expressed in the discussion and would bear them in mind in its work during the next two years. It was encouraged by the Committee's approval of the efforts which had been made in the field of control and limitation of documentation. Those efforts would be continued so as to ensure a proper balance between considerations of quality and economy.

32. The Sudanese representative's request for an assessment of the effect of efforts to control and limit documentation on the quality of the documentation provided could certainly be met. A summary could be provided of the opinions expressed by organs of the United Nations concerning the documents which they received.

33. Mr. TURNER (Controller), replying to a question from Mr. EL HAKIM (United Arab Republic), said that recordings on disc or tape were made, in the original language, of all interventions made in the General Assembly, its committees and other important United Nations bodies.

34. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee might wish to take note of the reports of the Secretary-General and of the Advisory Committee, it being understood that the report of the Fifth Committee would reflect the views and suggestions put forward by members during the discussion, in particular, that the comments of the Advisory Committee should be endorsed by the General Assembly and drawn to the attention of the organs concerned; that continued vigilance should be exercised over documentation; and that further reports by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee should be submitted to the General Assembly at its seventeenth session, including an assessment of the effect of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1272 (XIII) on the quality of documentation.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 51

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly (*continued*):*

(e) United Nations Administrative Tribunal (A/4376, A/C.5/L.613)

35. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to recommend two candidates to fill the vacancies which would occur in the Administrative Tribunal on 31 December 1960, on the expiry of the terms of office of two of its members.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Lim (Federation of Malaya) and Mr. Ilić (Yugoslavia) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	71
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	71
<i>Abstentions:</i>	1
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	71
<i>Required majority:</i>	36
<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Mr. Correa (Ecuador)	71
Mr. Petré (Sweden)	68
Two candidates	1

Mr. José A. Correa (Ecuador) and Mr. Bror Arvid Sture Petré (Sweden) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended that they should be appointed members of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1961.

*Resumed from the 767th meeting.

36. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Rapporteur should be authorized to report directly to the General Assembly on the item.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.