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New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEMS 123 AND 124: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1990-1991
AND PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

First reading

Section 1. Overall policy-making, direction and co-ordination

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 123 AND 124: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1990-1991 AND PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/44/6/Rev.1, A/44/7 and Corr.1, A/44/16 and Add.1, A/44/223)

First reading

1. The CHAIRMAN outlined the procedure which the Committee would follow in its first reading of individual sections of the proposed programme budget for 1990-1991.
2. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom) noted that in his outline the Chairman had raised the possibility of adjustments to the estimates for each section depending on decisions taken in other Main Committees or by the General Assembly. That established practice was acceptable to his delegation, on the understanding that such adjustments would be made within the framework of the rules governing the operation of the contingency fund.
3. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Budget Division) said that the understanding of the representative of the United Kingdom was correct.
4. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that variations in the section estimates would be governed by two factors: the operation of the contingency fund and adjustments for inflation and for currency shifts.

Section 1. Overall policy-making, direction and co-ordination

5. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Budget Division) said that it was desirable for a representative of the Secretariat to speak at the beginning of the consideration of each section in order to give additional information, once the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) had been received, on three points: changes in the programmes for 1990-1991 in comparison with 1988-1989; priorities, especially in the light of the implications of the CPC recommendations for the Secretary-General's draft budget; and extrabudgetary resources.
6. Section 1.A called for little comment on those three points, except in the case of the World Food Council (WFC). Programme changes and priorities obviously did not apply to the policy-making organs, and the question of extrabudgetary resources concerned only two organs, the Board of Auditors and the Joint Staff Pension Board. The amount in question was about \$176,000 and related to services rendered to the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund.
7. In the case of the World Food Council, a number of changes in outputs were proposed for 1990-1991. Under services to intergovernmental bodies there were eight outputs, as against two for 1988-1989; the difference was due to a change of

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(Mr. Baudot)

presentation, in that the outputs had not been listed in detail for 1988-1989. Under regional consultations, working groups and seminars, the six outputs planned for 1990-1991 amounted to only half of the 1988-1989 figure; the reduction was due to rationalization of the consultation process and a decrease of \$100,000 in the resources requested for temporary assistance. Under information activities, 36 publications were planned for 1990-1991, together with 100 meetings with media and non-governmental bodies, as against 22 publications and 40 meetings in 1988-1989; there again the reduction was due to rationalization and a cut in the resources requested.

8. Element 1.1 in the Council's programme (Policy development and economic analysis) was proposed for highest priority. It accounted for 65 per cent of the programme's resources, a much higher figure than the 10 per cent which was supposed to have been indicated. In contrast, programme element 1.3 (Information activities) had the lowest priority and accounted for only 8 per cent of resources.

9. Extrabudgetary resources for WFC were estimated at \$200,000, a figure comparable to that for 1988-1989. In 1990-1991, as in the current biennium, the funds were to be used to supplement consultant services, travel and temporary assistance, in connection with the support of the Council's sessions.

10. Most of the activities in Section 1.B were not programmed in the usual sense of the term, except in the case of the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Office for Research and the Collection of Information. The only programme change in the Division of Palestinian Rights was the alteration of the title of the single subprogramme to "Question of Palestine: exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights", and the Secretary-General had proposed exempting the subprogramme from a priority designation; CPC had not commented on that point.

11. The whole programme of the Office for Research and the Collection of Information was new, for the Office had been created as one of the political reforms introduced under resolution 41/213 and had not appeared in the initial version of the 1988-1989 budget. Highest priority had been given to subprogramme 1.3 (Early warning), which accounted for about 9 per cent of resources and was therefore in accordance with the rules. Lowest priority was given to subprogramme 2.1 (Dissemination of information), which accounted for about 6 per cent of resources.

12. The extrabudgetary resources for Section 1.B were estimated at about \$750,000 and related to posts under the heading of special political affairs which were subject to separate assessments for the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

13. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee recommended an appropriation of \$53,390,400 under section 1: the regular budget estimate of \$19,158,300 under subsection A was \$1,709,600 higher than the revised appropriation for 1988-1989; and the estimate of \$34,291,400 under subsection B was \$1,526,400 higher.

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14. Paragraphs 1.5 to 1.23 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/44/7) dealt with eight policy-making organs under subsection A. With respect to the reference in paragraph 1.7 to the special session of the General Assembly to be held in 1990, the estimate might be affected if additional special sessions of the General Assembly were convened. That would, of course, have to be governed by the contingency-fund procedure.

15. Paragraphs 1.9 to 1.11 dealt with the requirements of the Advisory Committee and its secretariat. The amounts, especially those for travel, were based on the current number of seven ACABQ members resident overseas. Any change in that number would mean a change in the estimates.

16. Regarding the Board of Auditors (paras. 1.13 to 1.14), the Advisory Committee recommended a full-scale review of the cost of the external audit, which should address, in particular, the question of the distribution of external audit costs between extrabudgetary sources and the regular budget. The outcome of the review should be submitted to the Advisory Committee in time for its recommendations to be taken into account in the discussion of the 1992-1993 budget.

17. In its comments on the World Food Council (WFC) and its secretariat in paragraphs 1.16 to 1.21, the Advisory Committee raised, in particular, the question of the implementation of its previous recommendations. It had called for more detailed justification in the WFC estimates for temporary assistance for meetings, consultations, workshops and seminars, but that information had not been included in the Secretary-General's submission. The Council and its secretariat should ensure that the ACABQ recommendations were complied with. With respect to the estimates for travel (paras. 1.19 and 1.20), the Advisory Committee stressed the need for efficient arrangements for the travel of the President and members of the Bureau of the Council. There was also a need to scrutinize the use of travel funds for the Council's secretariat. The requirements under travel of staff provided for \$19,700 in travel and subsistence resources per staff member in the Professional category and above, but no adequate justification for that large amount had been given.

18. Among its comments on subsection B, the Advisory Committee noted in paragraph 1.35 that Headquarters had three editorial units and in paragraph 29.24 it gave details of the units performing editorial functions. It had always struck the Advisory Committee as curious that there should be three such units; there might be political reasons for two but certainly not for three. It hoped that there was full co-ordination among the three units to ensure that the available staff and funds were used co-operatively, so as to take maximum advantage of the units' capacity.

19. In paragraph 1.51 the Advisory Committee recommended reductions totalling \$59,300 in the Secretary-General's overall estimate for section 1.

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20. Mr. MONTHE (Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination) drew the attention of the Committee to the recommendation contained in paragraph 49 of document A/44/16 and expressed his satisfaction that the Secretariat had both complied with that recommendation and provided additional information concerning priorities. He also recapitulated the recommendations contained in paragraphs 74 and 80 of the same report.

21. Mr. NASSER (Egypt) asked whether the information presented orally by the Director of the Budget Division could be made available in writing.

22. MR. GUPTA (India) welcomed the information concerning changes in programmatic content and asked whether such information could be made available in writing prior to consideration of the relevant sections of the proposed programme budget. If not, it would be useful for the Committee to have the Secretariat's comments in writing before it proceeded to a second reading.

23. In view of the distinct possibility that a special session of the General Assembly might be convened to consider problems relating to narcotic drugs, he wished to know whether the reduction in resource growth recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 1.8 of document A/44/7 might have an adverse effect on conference-servicing arrangements for those and other meetings. He also requested clarification of the reference, in paragraph 1.29 of document A/44/7, to the redeployment of nine posts to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, given that paragraph 1.70 of document A/44/6/Rev.1 indicated that only eight such posts were to be redeployed.

24. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) was convinced that the Committee, while welcoming any proposed reduction, would wish to ensure that mandated programmes were not adversely affected. It would therefore have been helpful if the Director of the Budget Division had given the Secretariat's view as to whether the recommendations of the Advisory Committee would have any such negative impact. He sought assurances from the Secretariat that programmes could be efficiently and completely delivered if those recommendations were accepted.

25. Mr. SHEK (Israel) said that his delegation wished to record its reservations with respect to the appropriations for the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. That Committee, which in no way contributed to a resolution of the conflict in the Middle East, based its activities on disregard of a major party to that conflict. It also had strong reservations with respect to the appropriation for the Division for Palestinian Rights, whose activities were mainly devoted to so-called information and propaganda on behalf of the Palestine Liberation Organization. In addition, it deplored the statement, contained in paragraph 1.100 of document A/44/6/Rev.1, that the work for which related posts were created would "continue for the foreseeable future". His delegation was astonished that the United Nations, which was supposedly involved in efforts to resolve the conflict, should express so pessimistic a point of view.

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26. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom) recalled the concern expressed during meetings of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at the trend towards an increase in costs associated with the use of experts and consultants, travel, external printing and equipment. Although section 1 of the budget was of necessity largely unprogrammed, specific targets had been established by the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts (Group of 18) but never fully achieved.

27. With regard to the reference, in paragraph 1.27 of document A/44/7, to a "contingency provision" to cover the replacement of an official vehicle, his delegation sought assurances that the said provision would not imply a charge to the contingency fund.

28. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines), noting that some \$200,000 was to be provided to the United Nations Board of Auditors under extrabudgetary resources, requested information as to the relative proportions of regular budget and extrabudgetary resources for that and other bodies. He also wished to know how many supporting national staff were permitted to each Board member and what their entitlements were, apart from travel. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the level of travel and subsistence resources allocated per staff member of the World Food Council appeared to be quite substantial, and believed that the allocation should be reduced to the level normally prevalent in the United Nations. It would also be interesting to know whether the Group of 18 had made any reference to the apparent overlapping of editorial responsibilities at Headquarters.

29. Mr. VISLYKH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation would have considerable difficulty in accepting section 1 of the proposed programme budget in view of the proposal, contained in paragraph 1.69 of document A/44/6/Rev.1, to restore a post at the Assistant Secretary-General level which had been abolished by the General Assembly in 1988. The proposal ran counter to General Assembly resolution 41/213. His delegation would vote against any section which included a proposal to restore a high-level post and believed that it would not be alone in doing so.

30. It was the belief of his delegation that high-level posts should be addressed comprehensively, at the political level, in isolation from the consideration of individual budget sections. It therefore proposed that the Committee should establish an informal working group to consider the question of high-level posts in detail and that the first reading of individual sections of the proposed programme budget should be carried out on the understanding that the question of restoring high-level posts in any given section would be temporarily deferred until such time as a consensus decision was adopted by the working group. That decision could then be taken into account during the second reading. His delegation attached particular importance to the proposal in view of its desire not to vote on section 1 in its current form and thus set an unfortunate precedent for the remaining sections of the budget.

31. Mrs. MBELLA (Cameroon) requested that the Committee not conclude its consideration of section 1 until it was sure that decisions taken in other Main Committees would not affect the section in any way.

32. Mr. GROSSMAN (United States of America) drew attention to the substantial expenditure required for external printing and binding of General Assembly records, which underlined the need to streamline the agenda and procedures of the Assembly. It was his hope that the Assembly would approve a study of the Organization's external printing requirements in order to determine whether savings in that category were possible, but it should also be recognized that the surest way of achieving such savings was to reduce the number of meetings and the level of documentation.

33. While pleased to note the Advisory Committee's thorough review of the budget and operations of the World Food Council, his delegation was disappointed that the Council had failed to implement specific recommendations made in connection with the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989 and expected those recommendations to be implemented in the Council's budget submission for the biennium 1992-1993.

34. Noting the Secretary-General's intention to retain a post at the Assistant Secretary-General level in response to increased responsibilities in the areas of peace-making and peace-keeping, he said that his delegation would have preferred to see the post abolished and noted with interest the proposal made by the representative of the Soviet Union to establish a working group to consider high-level posts.

35. His delegation was unable to approve the appropriation of funds either for the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, for the reasons specified in paragraph 73 of document A/44/16, or for the Division for Palestinian Rights, for the reasons specified in paragraph 79 of the same report. It therefore requested that a recorded vote be taken on those appropriations. His delegation did, however, remain committed to the new budget process. That process did not, in its view, require every delegation to support every element of the budget, and it looked forward to joining in a consensus on the appropriation for the section as a whole and to being in a position to support the General Assembly's decision on the overall level of the budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

36. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that, generally speaking, his delegation supported the recommendations of CPC and ACABQ and could therefore accept section 1 as amended by ACABQ.

37. In his view, the proposal of the Soviet Union was a timely one. The question of reducing the number of high-level posts was very important. Recommendation 15 of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts had not yet been implemented and it was appropriate that the issue should be considered at the current session. The proposal for a working group should, however, be considered in the context of the practice of the Fifth Committee, in other words at the end of the first reading.

38. Mr. NASSER (Egypt), supported by Mr. KOUEAA (Tunisia), said that his delegation had hoped that section 1 might have been approved by consensus. He expressed concern at the modest level of the appropriations for the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and for the Division for Palestinian Rights. The activities of those bodies merited high priority.

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39. Mr. ABDULLAH (Iraq) shared the views of the representatives of Egypt and Tunisia and expressed concern at the request of one delegation for a separate vote of those appropriations.
40. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) said that his delegation supported the views expressed by the representative of Algeria as well as the proposal of the Soviet Union. The Committee should establish a working group after the first reading had been completed in order to deal with all substantive issues which could not be solved in a section-by-section examination of the budget. The issue of extrabudgetary resources should also be examined. It was, moreover, important that General Assembly resolution 41/213 should not be abandoned.
41. His delegation shared the views expressed by the representatives of Egypt, Tunisia and Iraq on the estimates for the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and for the Division for Palestinian Rights.
42. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) pointed out that one delegation had requested a vote while the Fifth Committee was in the middle of a discussion. He wondered whether a proposal for action could be made while such a discussion was in progress.
43. His delegation had noted the proposal of the Soviet Union with great interest. The issue had already been discussed at length in CPC which, in paragraph 67 of its report, had made a specific proposal. It would surely be better to exhaust the possibilities for further action referred to in that paragraph before proceeding to discuss any kind of institutional arrangement on the issue.
44. Mr. BOUR (France), speaking on behalf of the twelve States members of the European Community, said that the question which must be addressed was how the Committee should proceed in its consideration of the budget. A number of delegations had made interesting proposals to facilitate the Committee's work with a view to arriving at a broad agreement on the proposed budget. The Twelve understood the difficulties which some States might encounter, since they themselves had difficulties with some sections. To facilitate the emergence of a broad consensus on the proposed programme budget as a whole, the Twelve would abstain from requesting votes on individual sections of the budget, particularly during the first reading. The Twelve believed that any difficulties that might arise could be set aside until the Committee had concluded its consideration of the whole budget in first reading so that it would have an overview; alternatively, the Committee could engage in consultations either in formal working groups or in a more informal framework. That would facilitate progress on the first reading and would afford an opportunity for consensus which would be a more elegant solution than taking a vote at the present stage. The Twelve hoped that the working arrangements adopted by the Committee would lead to the broadest consensus possible. They trusted that the expression of reservations by delegations did not imply total rejection of a proposal or the need to proceed to a vote during the first reading.

45. The CHAIRMAN, replying to the representative of Japan, said that the Committee was still discussing section 1 and, during the first reading, each delegation had the right to make proposals; decisions would not, however, be taken until the discussion had been completed. The discussion of individual sections should not be interrupted in order to consider such proposals.

46. He welcomed the proposal of France on behalf of the States members of the European Community to the effect that there should be no vote during the first reading on any section of the budget, in order to facilitate consultations among delegations.

47. Mr. GUPTA (India) thought that the Soviet Union's proposal merited consideration by the Committee. Delegations were concerned not only about posts at the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General levels but also about posts at the D-2 level. He hoped that the matter could be considered in a working group or in informal consultations.

48. Ms. BROINOWSKI (Australia) said that the proposed programme budget and the report of ACABQ had not fully met the expectations of delegations. Her Government continued to attach considerable importance to staff reductions both for operational and budgetary reasons and because they would improve the overall efficiency of the United Nations system. Her delegation recognized that the Secretary-General and ACABQ had faced difficult choices in making their recommendations but regretted that it had not been possible to make greater progress towards the full implementation of the mandated post reductions in accordance with the agreed timetable. In the circumstances, her delegation was prepared to accept the Secretary-General's compromise proposals regarding interim measures, on the understanding that steps would be taken to move to a full 15 per cent reduction in the next biennium and that the results would be reflected in the programme budget for 1990-1991.

49. In the light of the proposal of the Soviet Union and the comments made thereon by the delegation of Algeria, she would suggest that informal consultations would represent the best way to resolve the matter. She also considered that the question of the already inflated calendar of conferences and the utilization of conference services might be dealt with in informal consultations.

50. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that his delegation had hoped for a speedy first reading of section 1. However, as the question of the resources to be allocated to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People had been raised, it supported the delegations of Egypt, Tunisia, Iraq and Uganda in their commendation of the work done by that Committee and shared their reservations regarding the modest level of the resources allocated for that purpose. He suggested that the Secretariat might consider increasing the level of resources allocated for that Committee.

51. His delegation hoped that the spirit of resolution 41/213 would be observed in the search for consensus which should cover the entire question and all the issues relating thereto.

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52. Mr. GROSSMAN (United States of America) asked whether, when the Committee took a decision on section 1, it would thereby approve funding for the two programmes relating to the Palestinian people. If that was the case, his delegation would request a recorded vote. His delegation fully expected to support a consensus on the budget but wished to have those important points examined.

53. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the representative of France had proposed that the Committee should postpone all votes on controversial questions, but that that should not prevent the Committee from taking decisions on other points where a consensus was possible. If the representative of the United States had no objection, the Committee would postpone voting until the second reading.

54. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom) said that his delegation fully associated itself with the proposal made by the representative of France on behalf of the States members of the European Community. The thinking behind that proposal, as his delegation understood it, was that at the current stage the Committee was trying to evolve the broadest measure of agreement on the budget and, in particular, was looking at the balance between the activities included in the budget and the resources required to implement those activities. Two delegations had suggested that they might need to have recourse to a vote. One vote would be on a matter of policy which would perhaps reflect positions taken elsewhere in the Organization; the other was a reflection of an issue which was certainly proper to the Fifth Committee but was of general application. It would be a matter for regret if the Fifth Committee appeared to be taking decisions while ruling out the possibility of compromise at the current stage without looking at the picture as a whole. The understanding of his delegation was that, if the Committee could, during the first reading of the budget proposals and on the recommendations of ACABQ, in essence put aside a decision which would cause difficulties to individual delegations, it would be very helpful to the work of the Committee. If his delegation understood the Chairman correctly, that was what the Chairman also had in mind. He hoped therefore that all could agree to proceed on that basis.

55. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) said it was his understanding that, while other Committees had a responsibility to mandate certain programmes, it was the responsibility of the Fifth Committee to examine the administrative and financial inputs to determine whether they were adequate or not.

56. It would be easy for the Committee to adopt the budget by taking votes on individual sections. It had, however, decided to work on the basis of consensus and consensus must be understood to mean not necessarily unanimity but agreement to disagree, while allowing the work to proceed. Savings could perhaps be effected through the abolition of a post at the Under-Secretary-General level, but the Committee should not spend much time on the question. It should proceed with the discussion and, at the appropriate time, take up the issue of whether or not a special informal group should be set up to consider such proposals.

57. The CHAIRMAN said that, if the representative of the United States had no objection to the Committee continuing its work with due regard for the proposal of the States members of the European Community, the Committee would postpone voting on all controversial questions until a later stage.

58. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Budget Division), referring to the request from the Egyptian and Indian delegations that the Secretariat's introductory comments on each budget section should be made available in writing, said that the question had been discussed in CPC, which had recommended that in future budgets the presentation of the programme content should be improved and clear indications should be given of where one budget differed from its predecessors. For the current session, however, it had agreed that oral statements would be sufficient, although if delegations insisted, every effort would be made to provide transcripts of the introductory remarks after delivery. Under section 1, the change in programme content relating to the World Food Council amounted to a modification of some outputs; all the other changes were already shown in the budget documents.

59. There was no direct relation between the cut in general temporary assistance recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 1.8 of its first report and provisions for a special session of the General Assembly. If the General Assembly decided to hold a special session, the Secretariat would submit a statement of programme budget implications, which would be likely to indicate that the conference-servicing costs could be absorbed within existing resources but that the travel costs for representatives of the least developed countries, for which there was no alternative provision, would have to be funded out of the reserve.

60. The discrepancy between the numbers of D-2 posts given in paragraph 1.29 of the report of ACABQ and paragraph 1.70 of the budget proposals was due to a typographical error in the report of ACABQ.

61. The representative of Ghana had commented on the relationship between the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the Secretariat's reaction to them. In fact, the budget proposals were thoroughly discussed with the Advisory Committee, which made its recommendations after intensive exchanges with the Secretariat. The Advisory Committee's recommendations relating to the World Food Council were not for a cut in appropriations, but for improvements in the operation of the Council's secretariat. Every effort would be made to implement them.

62. The United Kingdom representative had commented on the fact that appropriations for travel under section 1 had increased, although over the budget as a whole they were down. That was true. In the Secretary-General's judgement, it was important to have enough money available to cover the travel requirements inherent in activities under section 1.

63. The United States representative had called for information on publication costs. Again it was true that appropriations for that purpose under section 1 were up, but in the Secretary-General's view they were fully justified.

64. The Secretariat had begun to act on the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the share of the expenses of the Board of Auditors financed from extrabudgetary resources should be reviewed. The Controller would be preparing a study for consideration by the Advisory Committee along with the budget proposals for 1993-1994. The \$186,300 in estimated extrabudgetary resources for 1990-1991 did not include payments made directly by UNDP.

(Mr. Baudot)

65. It was true that the budget proposals, in so far as they related to Secretariat units with editorial functions, did not entirely follow recommendation 29 of the Group of 18. The functions of the Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Affairs had been combined with those of the Office of the Secretary-General and it was possible that responsibility for publications would devolve upon the Department of Conference Services. Although substantial resources were requested for document publication, the capacity of the three editorial units was barely sufficient. Some streamlining was necessary, in particular in the two units within the same department. The Secretariat did, however, believe that co-ordination among the units was satisfactory.

66. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) confirmed that there was a typographical error in paragraph 1.29 of the Advisory Committee's report. It was the second time he had been disappointed in the editorial work of the Secretariat: the Advisory Committee spent days checking its reports before they were sent for publication. The first error had occurred in chapter I, paragraph 18, of the report, where the published document had referred to real growth in the budget of 0.4 per cent whereas the Advisory Committee's submission had clearly said minus 4 per cent. The error occurred only in the English text: the other languages were correct. He would ask that all the submissions of the Advisory Committee should be rechecked.

67. The United Kingdom representative had asked whether the "contingency provision" to which the Advisory Committee referred in paragraph 1.27 of its report, was the contingency fund for the 1990-1991 programme budget. It was not. If the companies now making vehicles available for the Secretary-General free of charge decided to terminate the current agreements, the \$35,800 referred to would be needed; if not, the money would not be required.

68. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana), returning to the question of general temporary assistance, said that the Secretary-General's estimates represented the "customary level of services" (A/44/6/Rev.1, para. 1.3). If, therefore, the provision under that heading was reduced, it seemed likely that the Secretariat would not be able to provide the customary level of services; but if the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee had been arrived at after intensive discussions with the Secretariat, perhaps it would. At all events, his delegation did not wish to be told that, because the General Assembly had accepted a cut recommended by the Advisory Committee, the level of services that could be provided had been affected.

69. In a similar vein, he wondered what effect the remarks of the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 1.20 of its report, about the travel appropriation for the World Food Council, were supposed to have. They appeared to be tantamount to recommending a reduction.

70. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee appeared to be ready to take action on section 1 in first reading, due regard being had to the request from the United States delegation to consider certain parts of the appropriation under section 1 separately, and the French proposal, made on behalf of the States members of the European Community, to put off any voting for the time being.

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71. Mr. GROSSMAN (United States of America) said that his delegation would be willing to accept the French proposal provided the Chairman could give an assurance that the Committee would not be taking any action on funds for the two programmes relating to the Palestinian people.

72. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee endorsed the recommendations made by CPC in paragraphs 74 and 80 of its report (A/44/16).

73. It was so decided.

74. Mr. VISLYKH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he would be prepared to approve section 1 without a vote, in accordance with the French proposal, on condition that the Fifth Committee accepted the understanding which his delegation had proposed.

75. Mr. GROSSMAN (United States of America) asked the Chairman to specify what sum the Fifth Committee was being asked to approve.

76. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would be taking action on the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee minus the sums on which the United States delegation had requested a separate vote.

77. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria), supported by Mr. ABDULLAH (Iraq), asked whether it was possible for the Committee to approve only part of the section in first reading.

78. Mr. BOUR (France) said that the intention of his proposal was to promote broad agreement on the total budget package. He believed it would be to the benefit of the United Nations if the budget was adopted by consensus: approving some appropriations by a vote could have serious repercussions. Many delegations had said that the consensus requirement should not be used as a means for any one Member State to impose its views on others. His delegation's aim was to reach agreement wherever agreement could be reached and allow the Fifth Committee to single out problems which needed attention without delaying action on other parts of the budget.

79. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) said that the Committee was in danger of setting a serious precedent. It could well end up approving only half the budget proposals in first reading if particular items were to be left out at every stage.

80. Mr. LOPEZ (Venezuela) said that he had no problem in accepting all the proposals under section 1, but hoped that in due course the Secretariat would provide details on the items referred to in paragraphs 1.77, 1.81 and 1.82 of the budget proposals.

81. Mr. CHABALA (Zambia) expressed dissatisfaction and amazement at the procedure the Committee seemed to be about to follow. He was most disappointed that the Fifth Committee had been put in a position where certain parts of the budget apparently could not be considered. In his delegation's view, it would be better to approve the section subject to reservations by some delegations. That at least would be in keeping with past practice.

82. Mr. ZONGWE MITONGA (Zaire) said that postponing a decision on some parts of section 1 was not an acceptable procedure.

83. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that he could go along with the French proposal.

84. Mr. KALBITZER (Federal Republic of Germany) pointed out that the Committee could not properly approve the appropriations under section 1 until it had agreed on the staffing table, and the Soviet proposal on the staffing table was still pending. The Committee should therefore take action on the Soviet proposal.

85. The CHAIRMAN said it was not his intention that the Committee should take a decision on only part of the appropriations. The Committee could vote on the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee, taking into account the request by the United States to consider part of the appropriation later; or it could proceed immediately to a separate vote on part of the budget proposals, as requested by the United States.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.