

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
53rd meeting
held on
Tuesday, 5 December 1989
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 53rd MEETING

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

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

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/44/SR.53
11 December 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1990-1991 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.41/Rev.2 concerning agenda item 111 (A/C.5/44/40)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that by paragraph 9 of draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.41/Rev.2 on the international campaign against traffic in drugs, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to undertake as soon as possible, with the assistance of a group of intergovernmental experts, a study on the economic and social consequences of illicit traffic in drugs, and that by paragraph 19 it would express its serious concern at the considerable reduction in the budget and staff of the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board.
2. In paragraph 13 of his statement (A/C.5/44/40) the Secretary-General indicated conference-servicing costs of \$490,900 and other costs (travel and subsistence costs for 10 experts) of \$82,900 for the activities called for in the draft resolution. He further indicated (para. 14) that the conference-servicing requirements could be met from within the permanent capacity under section 29 of the proposed programme budget, and that no additional appropriation would therefore be required. The other costs, as the Secretary-General indicated in paragraphs 16 to 18 of his report, would be covered from the contingency fund, and the Secretary-General intended to report on the extent to which an additional appropriation would be required in the context of his consolidated statement of programme budget implications.
3. Mr. UPTON (United Kingdom) noted that it was assumed in paragraph 9 of the Secretary-General's statement that interpretation would be provided in the six official languages. If none of the 10 experts spoke one or more of the official languages, it might be possible to dispense with some of the interpretation.
4. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/44/40) and on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.41/Rev.2, it was estimated that additional resource requirements of \$82,900 would have to be met under section 20 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 in respect of paragraph 9 of the draft resolution; that requirement would constitute an additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the proposed programme budget and would therefore be subject to the guidelines for the use of the contingency fund approved by the General Assembly in resolution 42/211; and, if the additional resources required could not be financed from the contingency fund, the Secretary-General would defer to the biennium 1992-1993 two of the seven meetings of the expert group envisaged in paragraph 20.18 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 in connection with the programme of work of the Division of Narcotic Drugs.
5. It was so decided.

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Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.36/Rev.2 concerning agenda item 111 (A/C.5/44/41)

6. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that by paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.36/Rev.2 on the international campaign against traffic in drugs, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), to co-ordinate at the inter-agency level the development of a United Nations system-wide action plan on drug abuse control. The additional requirements at full cost were set out in paragraph 9 of the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/44/41): conference-servicing costs of \$423,000 and other costs (travel and subsistence of 10 experts) of \$74,400. The conference-servicing costs would again be met under section 29, and no additional appropriation would therefore be required. The other costs, amounting to \$74,400, would be governed by the procedure for the use and operation of the contingency fund in the same way as for draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.41/Rev.2.
7. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) noted that in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution the Secretary-General was requested to select a limited number of experts; it now appeared that he had decided to select 10 experts. Perhaps the Director of the Budget Division could explain that decision and also state whether an attempt had been made to absorb the additional costs under the relevant section of the proposed programme budget and whether the possibility of using existing Secretariat resources had been considered before the decision had been taken to have recourse to an independent expert group.
8. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) requested clarification from the Secretariat and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee regarding the proposal to establish an expert group. There was already a structure in place for activities concerned with drug abuse control. Since the general question of reform and restructuring was still under discussion, it might not be appropriate to authorize the Secretary-General to establish an expert group to enhance the efficiency of that structure. The Committee's role was to adopt mandates to be subsequently translated into programmes by the Secretariat. The Secretariat should in turn indicate whether its resources were adequate to implement those programmes.
9. In paragraph 7 of the draft resolution the Secretary-General was also requested to give higher priority to narcotics control activities in his next medium-term plan. Priority-setting should in fact begin in the intergovernmental body and result in programme recommendations to the General Assembly through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) and the Secretary General. Other Committees seemed to be taking over the job of the Fifth Committee. His delegation would also like to know what effect paragraph 7 would have on the medium-term plan and on the Committee's attempts to designate priorities.
10. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Budget Division), replying to the representative of Uganda, said that he did not know whether the number of experts to be selected had been discussed in the Third Committee; he believed that the Secretary-General had proceeded on the basis of two experts from each geographical region. As to the

(Mr. Baudot)

second point raised by the representative of Uganda, the best the Secretariat could do was to indicate an alternative arrangement in line with the contingency-fund procedure, as it had done in paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's statement.

11. The representative of Ghana might recall that during the discussion on section 20, especially with respect to the Secretary-General's request for a number of non-recurrent posts, the Secretariat had argued that there was room for better co-ordination of the various programme elements under the section. The improvement of the overall structure for drug abuse control had also been discussed at the joint ACC/CPC meetings. The call for improved co-ordination was therefore warranted.

12. The question of priority-setting raised by the representative of Ghana was very pertinent. What the Secretary-General could do was to ask the various intergovernmental bodies to identify priorities among subprogrammes. He assumed that the Secretary-General would interpret the request in paragraph 7 to mean that the bodies concerned with narcotics control activities should be asked to identify which subprogrammes should receive priority in the next medium-term plan. It was not really for the Secretary-General or the Fifth Committee to identify such priorities.

13. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee would welcome further study of the question of co-ordination, a subject which had been discussed in various forums for a number of years. No concrete action had been taken, despite the many recommendations made, because of the reluctance of a number of influential countries which were not convinced of the need to streamline the existing machinery. There were at present three secretariats all dealing with the same subject - the Division of Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. That was clearly not the most efficient way of proceeding.

14. The request made in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution was therefore timely. It was to be hoped that the Secretary-General would draw some of the experts from countries which had previously been reluctant to accept the streamlining proposals. It would also be useful for the expert study to be produced before the special session of the General Assembly on the question of closer international co-operation in combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking. If that was not possible, the outcome of the study would be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session. The Advisory Committee would report shortly to the Fifth Committee concerning the handling of extrabudgetary funds, including those allocated under section 20, and it would indicate what follow-up action it intended to take with a view to reporting to the General Assembly at its forty fifth session or thereafter.

15. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that his delegation shared the concerns raised by the representatives of Uganda and Ghana. In particular, it was difficult to understand how, on the basis of the texts of the two draft resolutions on the

(Mr. Ladjouzi, Algeria)

international campaign against traffic in drugs (A/C.3/44/L.36/Rev.2 and A/C.3/44/L.41/Rev.2) the number of 10 experts had been arrived at. It was also odd that the Secretary-General should be requested to select a group of experts to help carry out the work of the Secretariat. He noted, however, that the Advisory Committee was to study that question.

16. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/44/41) and the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.36/Rev.2, it was estimated that additional resource requirements of \$74,400, relating to the costs of travel and subsistence of 10 experts, would have to be met from section 20 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, unless voluntary contributions were made available by Member States to meet those requirements; in the absence of voluntary contributions, the requirements would constitute an additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the proposed programme budget for 1990-1991 and would therefore be subject to the guidelines for the use of the contingency fund approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/211, and in the event that the additional resources required could not be financed from the contingency fund, the Secretary-General would defer to the biennium 1992-1993 two of the seven expert group meetings envisaged in paragraph 20.18 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 in connection with the programme of work of the Division of Narcotic Drugs.

17. It was so decided.

18. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would comply in full with the normal procedure for priority-setting in implementing paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.36/Rev.2, if it was adopted. Account should also be taken of the clarifications sought by his delegation in connection with paragraph 4 before the Fifth Committee was called upon to take a decision on paragraph 6 of the draft resolution at the special session of the General Assembly.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.74 concerning agenda item 12 (A/C.5/44/42)

19. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.74 by the General Assembly would call for no additional appropriations under the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

20. Ms. FRIESSNIGG (Chairman, Committee on Conferences) said that a decision in accordance with paragraphs of draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.74, to hold a meeting of the Working Group on the Drafting of an International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families in New York would constitute an exception to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 40/243, whereby United Nations bodies should meet at their respective established headquarters. On the basis of the information provided, and the clarifications

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(Ms. Friessnigg)

received from the Secretariat, the Committee on Conferences had decided to recommend that the General Assembly should grant an exception to section I, paragraph 4, of resolution 40/243.

21. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/44/42) and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and of the Committee on Conferences, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.3/44/L.74, the following additional output would need to be added under programme element 4.1:

"(iii) Preparation of technical revisions of the text of the articles of the draft convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and their families;"

Although no additional appropriations would be required, the holding of the Working Group meeting in New York would constitute an exception to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 40/243.

22. It was so decided.

Programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/44/L.43, A/44/L.44 and A/44/L.45 concerning agenda item 39 (A/C.5/44/43)

23. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that the programme budget implications of the three draft resolutions on the question of Palestine related to the activities of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People under section 1 (Overall policy-making, direction and co-ordination) and section 27 (Public information). Those activities entailed conference-servicing requirements of \$3,482,300, the details of which were set out in annex V to the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/44/43), and an additional requirement of \$174,600 arising out of the postponement until 1990 of meetings scheduled for 1989; those requirements could be met under section 29. The Secretary-General indicated that provision had already been made for the requirements arising under sections 1 and 27, and that no additional appropriation would be required under those sections. His statement gave full details of all the various kinds of meetings to be held by the Committee so that they could be included in the calendar of conferences and meetings in future bienniums.

24. Ms. FRIESSNIGG (Chairman, Committee on Conferences) said that the proposed programme of work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for 1990-1991, which included 14 events to be held away from the established headquarters of the Committee's substantive secretariat, represented a departure from the provisions of General Assembly resolution 40/243. On the basis of the information provided, and the clarifications received from the Secretariat, the Committee on Conferences recommended that the General Assembly should grant an exception to section I, paragraph 4, of resolution 40/243. It noted that the

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(Ms. Friessnigg)

Secretariat would endeavour to combine events and wished to encourage the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to seek every opportunity to maximize savings, inter alia, by endeavouring to secure, to the extent possible, invitations and agreements from host Governments, in accordance with section I, paragraph 5, of General Assembly resolution 40/243, to defray the actual additional costs directly or indirectly involved.

25. Mr. SHEK (Israel) reiterated his delegation's strong reservations with respect to appropriations for the activities of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and the Division for Palestinian Rights and for those of the Department of Public Information relating to the question of Palestine. The substantial resources already devoted to those programmes could not be justified, representing as they did blatant, and often offensive, anti-Israeli propaganda on behalf of the Palestine Liberation Organization. His delegation strongly objected to the financing of a campaign against a Member State.

26. Mr. ABDULLAH (Iraq), Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) and Mr. MONAYAIR (Kuwait) expressed full support for the activities of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

27. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/44/43) and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and of the Committee on Conferences, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolutions A/44/L.43, A/44/L.44 and A/44/L.45, no additional appropriations would be required under sections 1, 27 or 29 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

28. It was so decided.

29. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that the activities provided for in the draft resolutions under consideration were unlikely to contribute to a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict. Since they entailed no additional appropriations, his delegation had not opposed the decision of the Fifth Committee but it maintained its objection to the substance of those activities.

AGENDA ITEM 159: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER GROUP IN CENTRAL AMERICA
(continued) (A/C.5/44/L.9/Rev.1)

30. The CHAIRMAN announced that the word "possibles" should be deleted from the French text of the fifth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.5/44/L.9/Rev.1.

31. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation had noted the need for urgent action to facilitate implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA). Nevertheless, it wished to highlight the fact that it had not been possible, in the text of the draft resolution, to

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(Mr. Abraszewski, Poland)

take account of ongoing discussions on agenda item 137. The text should, ideally, have reflected certain changes, as requested by Member States, in the apportionment of the costs of peace-keeping operations financed through assessed contributions, together with other conclusions and decisions relating to administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations. The discussions under agenda item 137 should be brought to a prompt conclusion.

32. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.5/44/L.9/Rev.1 without a vote.

33. It was so decided.

34. Mr. BIDNY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had consistently supported a political settlement of the problems affecting Central America and had therefore voted in favour of Security Council resolution 644 (1989). However, an analysis of the Secretary-General's report on the financing of ONUCA showed that a number of factors could substantially affect the level of his estimates, and it was the opinion of his delegation that those estimates could be substantially reduced. Given the urgent need for rapid deployment of the observers in order to promote a political settlement in the region, his delegation had raised no objection to the draft resolution. However, its decision was based on the understanding that, if the Group's mandate were to be renewed, the Advisory Committee would carefully analyse the Secretary-General's detailed performance report on the initial six months operation of ONUCA and that the Secretary-General would endeavour to maximize savings wherever possible through the efficient rational use of resources.

35. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 159.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.