

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-FOURTH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
54th meeting
held on
Monday, 11 December 1989
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 54th MEETING

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

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

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resolution contained in document A/44/23 (Part I) concerning agenda item 18.

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/44/SR.54
14 December 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

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

General Assembly resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses (A/44/7/Add.5)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the report of the Advisory Committee (A/44/7/Add.5) addressed a number of anomalies and other difficulties with regard to what had become the standard text for the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. The Committee had, on the basis of past experience and of other factors noted in its report, concluded that the level of commitment authority granted to the Secretary-General should be increased from \$2 million to \$3 million in any one year. However, the Advisory Committee was of the opinion that provisions relating to the International Court of Justice and to commitments for international security measures should remain unchanged. For reasons of clarity, it recommended that paragraph 1 of the standard text of the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses should be reworded, as indicated in the annex to document A/44/7/Add.5; that redrafting implied no substantive change. The Advisory Committee had no difficulty with the existing text of paragraph 2 of that resolution, but drew the attention of the Fifth Committee to the fact that such supplementary estimates as might arise from the operation of the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses would continue to be governed by the provisions of General Assembly resolution 41/213.

2. A number of difficulties with regard to the text of paragraph 3 had been addressed by the Advisory Committee in its report. It recommended that the provision for a commitment authority in the amount of \$10 million should not be interpreted as imposing a limit based upon a cumulative total but should relate to any single action by the Security Council. Accordingly, what should determine the need to convene the General Assembly was the size of the operation or activity decided upon by the Council. It was on the basis of that assumption that the Advisory Committee had recommended no change in the amount of \$10 million referred to in paragraph 3 of the resolution. The text of that paragraph had also been reworded in order to indicate that the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses should apply even when the Assembly was in session, and to take into account the practice of suspending the session of the Assembly until just before the opening of the new session.

3. The Advisory Committee intended to keep the operation of the resolution under review and, if necessary, to report to the General Assembly again in the near future.

4. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom), supported by Mr. CONMY (Ireland), urged that sufficient time be allowed for delegations to consider the text of the draft resolution, in accordance with the rules of procedure.

5. The CHAIRMAN said that a decision on the subject would be deferred until a later meeting of the Committee.

Optical disc system for the United Nations (A/44/7/Add.6)

6. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the report contained in document A/44/7/Add.6, which was based on a report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and related comments by the Secretary-General, was straightforward. The Advisory Committee believed that the phased introduction of an optical disc system, as suggested by the Secretary-General, was prudent. It therefore recommended that the General Assembly approve the establishment of an optical disc system in the United Nations Secretariat, provided that the system was implemented on a phased basis, taking into account the availability of funds and in the light of technological developments. It did not believe that there was any current need for an additional appropriation in the biennium 1990-1991 for that purpose. Any requirements for start-up costs should be financed from redeployment of resources and other savings in the proposed programme budget. In addition, the Secretary-General should explore further possibilities of voluntary contributions in cash and/or in kind towards the optical disc system. If any additional resources were required, they must be justified in the context of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget outline for 1992-1993.

7. Mr. BOUR (France), said that his delegation was somewhat concerned about the phased approach that was recommended. If the system was to be implemented over a period much longer than that envisaged by JIU, the development of the system would be delayed not only in New York and at Geneva, but at other duty stations, particularly the regional commissions, whose future development should be taken into account.

8. With regard to financing, his delegation fully endorsed the proposal concerning redeployment of resources and noted the Secretary-General's intention to draw on an amount of \$212,000 under section 29. It hoped that further proposals for redeployment, particularly under sections 28, 29 or 32, would be submitted by the Secretary-General before a final decision was taken on the proposed programme budget for 1990-1991. By way of example, the proposal to defer spending in the amount of \$1,933,000 in respect of the upgrading of electronic equipment, as recommended by the Advisory Committee, could well facilitate the redeployment of resources for the optical disc system.

9. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) requested clarification from the Secretariat as to whether estimates for the optical disc system were based on an assumption that the regional commissions would benefit from that technology. It also wished to know whether the technology had yet been tested at the level of the regional commissions and, if so, what the results had been. A decision on the subject should probably not be taken without further discussion in the context of informal consultations.

10. Mr. UPTON (United Kingdom) shared the Advisory Committee's view that no additional appropriations were required for 1990-1991 and expressed doubts with respect to continued financing in the absence of a proper cost-benefit analysis. The most appropriate solution would, perhaps, be to explore further possibilities of voluntary contributions, as recommended by the Advisory Committee.

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11. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) noted that the Advisory Committee's report was based on a report of JIU and that a complete report by the Secretary-General was required before a decision could be taken. He, like the representative of Uganda, wished to highlight the needs of the regional commissions, which were greater than those of New York, Geneva and Vienna.

12. Ms. ZHANG Xian (China) requested information as to the costs and timing of all three phases of the project.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that a decision on the subject would be deferred until a later meeting of the Committee. Answers to the questions raised by delegations would be provided by the Secretariat in the course of informal consultations.

Extrabudgetary resources (A/44/7/Add.7)

14. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), said that discussions on the subject of extrabudgetary resources had received new inputs during the current year as a result, to some extent, of the observations made by the Advisory Committee and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) in their respective reports. The Secretary-General had provided additional information since the issuance of the report of the Advisory Committee, and that information formed the basis of the report contained in document A/44/7/Add.7. Among various weaknesses relating to the current system of receiving, recording, reporting and managing extrabudgetary resources was a lack of awareness of existing rules, regulations and procedures governing the acceptance and utilization of extrabudgetary funds. Reporting mechanisms were also inadequate.

15. The Secretary-General intended to submit to the Advisory Committee and CPC a progress report addressing, inter alia, issues listed in the annex to document A/44/7/Add.7.

16. The role of the intergovernmental bodies in the matter had been explained in the report of the Advisory Committee, which had concluded that the review of the programme budget proposals by the Advisory Committee and CPC afforded the most appropriate opportunity for examining the functioning of the large number of extrabudgetary funds and activities. The Advisory Committee had therefore called for a series of refinements and changes in the information provided in the budget document. Such information would enable the Advisory Committee to exercise its administrative and budgetary functions in respect of a number of extrabudgetary funds and would also allow CPC and other intergovernmental bodies to look at the programmatic implications of trust funds and extrabudgetary programmes.

17. In regard to larger extrabudgetary programmes, such as the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, the Advisory Committee believed that their treatment should be different and accordingly intended to look into the matter further with a view to reporting to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

18. Ms. MUSTONEN (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, welcomed the measures taken by the Secretary-General to solve problems such as lack of

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awareness of existing rules, regulations and internal procedures governing the acceptance and utilization of extrabudgetary funds. The Nordic delegations looked forward to the progress report which the Secretary-General was to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

19. The Advisory Committee had pointed to other issues which called for further examination by the Secretary-General and the Nordic delegations trusted that appropriate responses would be given in the context of the progress report. They wished to emphasize that information was needed on the growth of extrabudgetary resources since 1980-1981 and on the utilization of such funds by object of expenditure and sector of activity. They hoped that such information would facilitate the future work of the Fifth Committee in defining precisely the role of extrabudgetary financing in the overall structure of United Nations programmes. In that connection, the Advisory Committee had pointed to the possible impact of extrabudgetary financing on the work programme of the Organization and priority setting.

20. The Nordic delegations welcomed the Advisory Committee's proposal to examine extrabudgetary funds in the context of the proposed programme budget, as well as the intention of the Secretary-General to provide additional information by expanding the introduction to the programme budget through the inclusion of a specific section on extrabudgetary resources. They concurred with the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Secretary-General should indicate clearly the role of extrabudgetary resources in implementing approved programmes of work or in initiating new activities. Adequate programmatic and substantive information on those funds would also enable CPC to undertake a more comprehensive review of the programme budget, including the trust funds.

21. Mr. IZZO (Italy) said that his delegation favoured drawing a clear distinction between the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources and supported the use of extrabudgetary resources for United Nations programmes. In line with that position, Italy had increased its voluntary contributions in recent years. There was a need for transparency in the use of all funds, both regular budget and extrabudgetary.

22. Mr. NASSER (Egypt) said that his country attached great importance to the question under discussion because extrabudgetary resources almost exceeded resources allocated under the regular budget. His delegation would welcome more detailed information for future discussion of the issue.

23. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) expressed the hope that the progress report to be submitted by the Secretary-General would deal with the whole issue in appropriate detail in terms of priority setting and recommendations for better procedures for the acceptance and allocation of extrabudgetary resources and make provision for better budgetary and administrative control of special funds by intergovernmental bodies.

24. Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium) considered that the issue should be studied further in informal consultations within the framework of budget sections 1 to 3.

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25. Mr. GUPTA (India) said that his delegation agreed in general with the comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee and hoped that in his report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session the Secretary-General would comment on those recommendations, particularly those in paragraphs 7, 12 and 13.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/44/L.33/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 67 (A/C.5/44/44)

26. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), orally presenting the report of the Advisory Committee, said that the revised draft resolution A/C.1/44/L.33/Rev.1 would have the General Assembly renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and would request that Committee to hold two preparatory sessions during the first half of 1990. The Secretary-General had indicated in his statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/44/44) that the additional conference-servicing requirements for the two sessions, on a full-cost basis, would be \$700,500, but that no additional appropriations would be required under section 2A or 29 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

27. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had long had doubts regarding the usefulness of the Ad Hoc Committee. It had a poor record in using conference servicing facilities and a meagre output. In particular, there was no need for that Committee to receive summary records.

28. Mr. JAYASINGHE (Sri Lanka) said that the Ad Hoc Committee dealt with disarmament and security issues which were very complicated. The ultimate aim of the Ad Hoc Committee was to produce an international instrument and summary records of its proceedings were absolutely necessary.

29. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) said that the Ad Hoc Committee should continue to be provided with all necessary resources for the performance of its mandate. It was the hope of his delegation that despite the injection of extraneous issues into the discussion, all would recognize the need to support fully the efforts of the Ad Hoc Committee towards the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean at the earliest possible date. It would be regrettable if Member States were to be deprived of the means of being kept informed about the Ad Hoc Committee's work through summary records of its meetings.

30. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the statement of programme budget implications contained in document A/C.5/44/44 and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/44/L.33/Rev.1, no additional appropriations would be required under sections 2A or 29 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

31. It was so decided.

Programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/44/L.55 and L.56 and the draft resolution contained in document A/44/23 (Part I) concerning agenda item 18 (A/C.5/44/46)

32. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/44/46) dealt with the programme budget implications of three draft resolutions on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Draft resolution A/44/L.55 concerned the proposed programme of activities of the Special Committee in 1990 and the substantive servicing of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies. Draft resolution A/44/L.56 dealt with information activities concerning decolonisation. The third draft resolution was contained in document A/44/23 (Part I, chapter II), and related to the proposed programme of activities in observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

33. In paragraph 9 of his statement, the Secretary-General had indicated that the meetings of the Special Committee and its subsidiary bodies at Headquarters were included in the 1990 calendar of meetings and conferences and would be accommodated from within the resources programmed under section 29 of the 1990-1991 proposed programme budget.

34. In paragraph 17 of his statement, the Secretary-General had estimated at \$615,800 the cost of organizing seminars in the Caribbean and Asia/Pacific regions and at Headquarters in connection with the programme of activities in observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration. However, for the reasons given in paragraph 24, the Secretary-General had stated that no additional resources would be required under section 29 of the proposed programme budget.

35. Non-conference-servicing costs for activities planned in 1990 under the three draft resolutions were estimated at \$972,500 on a full-cost basis, or \$744,100 after applying ratios of utilization over the past three bienniums. After setting the figure of \$744,100 against the 1990 portion of the provisions made under section 3 and section 27 of the proposed programme budget for 1990-1991, the Secretary-General had estimated a net requirement of \$426,900, comprising \$271,800 under section 3 and \$155,100 under section 27.

36. In paragraph 26, the Secretary-General proposed that the additional estimate of \$271,800 under section 3 - which was largely attributable to substantive servicing requirements for two regional seminars to be held in connection with the observance of the thirtieth anniversary - should be financed for the time being from the 1991 portion of the provision made under section 3 of the proposed programme budget. At the same time, the Secretary-General indicated that should the General Assembly decide at its forty-fifth session to authorize activities at a comparable level for 1991, there might be need for recourse to the contingency fund at that time.

37. In paragraphs 27 and 28 the Secretary-General stated that the additional estimate of \$155,100 under section 27 would be subject to the guidelines for the

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contingency fund. In that connection, the Secretary-General identified a number of information activities that could be deferred to the 1992-1993 biennium if the additional requirement of \$155,100 could not be financed from the contingency fund (para. 29).

38. The Advisory Committee had reviewed the supporting information on the activities proposed in the draft resolutions. The Committee had noted that with the exception of the proposed production of information kits not currently programmed under section 27 and the activities proposed in connection with the observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration, the activities planned for the 1990s were essentially a continuation of activities undertaken in 1989. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee had no objection to the estimate of additional requirements arising out of the three proposed draft resolutions and recommended to the General Assembly that no additional requirement should arise under section 3 for the time being. Additional requirements would arise in the amount of \$155,100 under section 27, but would be subject to the guidelines for the operation and use of the contingency fund. Any additional appropriations requested by the Secretary-General would be examined in the context of the consolidated statement to be submitted in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 42/211.

39. Mr. FRIESSNIGG (Austria), speaking as Chairman of the Committee on Conferences, said that the Committee had met earlier in the morning at the request of one member in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/10 A which provided that the Committee on Conferences should consider proposals relating to the schedule of conferences and meetings when administrative implications were being considered. Divergent views on how to proceed with the matter had been expressed by members and the Committee, unable to reach any conclusion, had decided to adjourn.

40. Mr. UPTON (United Kingdom) said that his delegation wished to ask the Secretariat several questions relating to the conference-servicing aspects of document A/C.5/44/46 - questions which should have been addressed in the meeting of the Committee on Conferences. His delegation would appreciate details concerning the Special Committee's utilization rates for the past 10 years, specifically as they related to the programme budget implications under consideration. The titles, venues and source of financing of the 15 conferences referred to in paragraph 6 (c) should also be specified. Participants in the conferences, from both the Special Committee and the Secretariat should be indicated. Referring to paragraph 10, he requested details on invitations received or solicited and the possible effect of such invitations on the Special Committee's programme of work and asked whether the activities planned would be in accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/243. The Special Committee should revise its programme of work in the light of new mandates laid down by the General Assembly in other areas. Drawing attention to paragraph 16, he said that further clarification would be useful on the provisions made for activities in observance of the thirtieth anniversary in co-operation with the Secretariat, which appeared to be of a perennial nature. An indication of further demands which might be made on the regular budget if the Secretariat

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exhausted its resources under section 3 and requested additional funds, would be useful.

41. Referring to the table in paragraph 17, he said that in the past, survey missions by other subsidiary bodies had aroused concern. Clarification was required as to why four staff members must spend three working days surveying possible venues for meetings. The venues in question should be named. Under the heading "substantive requirements", the 30 invitees and 8 staff members mentioned should be identified and the proposal for more non-members than members of the Special Committee to travel must be explained. It would also be useful to know whether the general operating expenses referred to were intended to cover incidental travel expenses or provide administrative support; if the latter was the case, the type of support should be specified.

42. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that the Secretariat could not immediately answer the very detailed questions posed by the representative of the United Kingdom. The Committee must therefore decide whether it wished to defer action on the matter or take action on the understanding that the information requested would be provided at a later stage.

43. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) said that his delegation was a member of the Committee on Conferences and it was not correct that that Committee had been unable to reach a conclusion. In fact, the Committee had determined that the delegation which had requested the meeting had done so in order to seek information which could be obtained through other channels. The Secretariat and the Advisory Committee had been extremely responsible in the estimates they had submitted and in indicating the circumstances under which the contingency fund was to be used. It was therefore inappropriate to defer taking a decision simply because a request for information had been made.

44. The nature of the Special Committee was such that it could not always predict in advance where or when it would meet, and it had therefore estimated 15 conferences on the basis of its experience. The Special Committee had been specifically authorized to hold meetings away from Headquarters and there were no grounds for contesting the legality of that authorization.

45. The CHAIRMAN suggested that as the Secretariat had indicated that it would provide the information requested, a decision need not be deferred.

46. Mr. UPTON (United Kingdom) said that it was important to proceed swiftly, but not at the expense of the Committee's normal examination of programme budget implications. The representative of Ghana had misunderstood the reason for convening the Committee on Conferences earlier that morning. The meeting should have served to draw the General Assembly's attention to a conflict in General Assembly resolutions, one relating to the mandate of the Special Committee and the other relating to its rules on conference-servicing arrangements. In addition, either the Committee on Conferences or the Fifth Committee should have submitted a recommendation on the matter. The absence of information from the Secretariat only

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pointed up the vagueness of the programme of work of the Special Committee and its programme budget implications. Action on other programme budget implications and reports had been deferred because of delegations' insistence on receiving information from the Secretariat. He trusted that his delegation would be accorded similar treatment. In the circumstances, his delegation would not be able to join in a consensus.

47. The CHAIRMAN said that note had been taken of the position of the United Kingdom delegation, but that the Committee was generally in favour of taking a decision without delay. Accordingly, on the basis of the statement of programme budget implications contained in A/C.5/44/46 and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and of the Committee on Conferences, he proposed that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolutions A/44/L.55 and L.56 and the draft resolution contained in document A/44/23 (Part I), modifications would have to be made in the citation of outputs under sections 3 and 27 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 as indicated in paragraph 21 of the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/44/46). The Committee should further inform the General Assembly that additional financial requirements of \$271,800 and \$150,100 would arise under sections 3 and 27, respectively; that the Secretary-General would utilize the 1991 portion (\$272,600) of the provision already made under section 3A.2 to finance additional 1990 requirements under section 3 and that no additional appropriation would be required at the current stage; that no additional appropriation would be required under section 29; that the additional requirement of \$155,100 under section 27 would constitute an additional expenditure deriving from legislative mandates not provided for in the proposed programme budget and would therefore be subject to the guidelines on the use of the contingency fund; and that the necessary resources could not be provided from the contingency fund, the Secretary-General, pursuant to the annex to General Assembly resolution 42/211, had identified activities for deferral to the biennium 1991-1993 (A/C.5/44/46, para. 29) in order to offset the additional costs that would result from the adoption of the draft resolutions.

48. Mr. UPTON (United Kingdom) said that it was regrettable that the Committee was proceeding to take action when it still lacked information from the Secretariat on programme budget implications of considerable political and financial significance. His delegation would vote in the plenary Assembly against the draft resolutions in question, at which time it would vigorously denounce the existence of duplication, redundancy and waste. With the approach of the 1990s, new tasks and challenges were replacing those of the age of decolonization and it was time to review priorities, particularly in the light of the Organization's current financial instability. That obvious fact had apparently escaped the Special Committee and certain quarters of the Secretariat.

49. The Chairman's proposal was unacceptable because it ignored the role of the Committee on Conferences, whose mandate it was to decide whether to authorize exceptions to General Assembly rules on conference servicing. The Secretariat should have taken the initiative to convene a meeting of the Committee on Conferences. While the principle of self-determination, as enshrined in the

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Charter of the United Nations, deserved support, his delegation and others had grave doubts concerning the costly activities proposed. It was becoming clear that the proposals consisted in large measure of a flurry of symposia and seminars - probably held in expensive resort hotels. They amounted to extended holidays for the Special Committee at the expense of the United Nations budget and the Organization's good name and integrity. Indeed, it was ironic that reprinting the Charter had lower priority. Under such circumstances, his delegation could not join in a consensus. Out of respect for the fading idea of the new budgetary procedure, his delegation would not request a vote. However, it dissociated itself from the decision.

50. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) referred to the provision of \$1,037,600 for a series of regional meetings for the dissemination of information on decolonization (A/44/L.56) and expressed regret that information had not been given on the responsibilities of the host countries for defraying the additional costs of each of those meetings, in accordance with resolution 40/243. For that reason, his delegation could not support that portion of the Secretary-General's statement.

51. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that despite his Government's strong and long-standing commitment to decolonization, it had reservations about a number of United Nations decolonization activities, particularly the work of the Special Committee. For several years, the Special Committee had devoted considerable resources to programmes which were not attuned to current realities. An example was its efforts to impose its views on peoples who were satisfied with their existing political arrangements.

52. Only 16 Member States had responded to the Secretary-General's request for views on measures to be taken in connection with the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Those who had responded had done so in no more than a few sentences (document A/44/800). As even certain members of the Special Committee had not responded, the prevailing opinion appeared to be that there was no need for a large-scale continuation of decolonization activities.

53. Referring to the Special Committee's planned visiting missions to remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, he said that information should be provided on the number of missions undertaken and Territories visited in 1988 and 1989. Experience had shown that not every Government which hosted meetings away from Headquarters (paras. 10 and 11) necessarily agreed to defray all additional costs. His delegation objected to the practice and strongly hoped it would be discontinued.

54. The programme of activities in observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was expected to cost the Organization more than \$1 million. It would be recalled that the Special Committee had already celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration at an estimated cost of \$1.5 million. His delegation did not see the benefits to be gained by repeated celebrations of that type.

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55. The total cost of the Special Committee's work programme exceeded the 1990 portion of resources for the biennium 1990-1991. While no additional funds would be sought at the current session, it was clear from paragraph 26 of the Secretary-General's report that an excessive level of expenditure in 1990 could result in a draw-down of the contingency fund in 1991. In view of the transition to independence in Namibia, the activities of the Special Committee - and the resources allocated to it - should be substantially reduced, not increased. It was to be hoped that the Secretary-General's revised estimates relating to Namibia would also include a reduction in the level of resources allocated to the Special Committee beginning in 1991.

56. His delegation objected to an additional appropriation of \$155,100 to implement the information programmes proposed by the Special Committee. According to paragraph 29 of his report, the Secretary-General proposed to defer ongoing information activities in order to provide those resources in the event that the contingency fund was fully committed. In his delegation's view, reprinting of the United Nations Charter and revisions of other general information materials on the Organization were of greater importance than the activities planned by the Special Committee.

57. While his delegation would not block a consensus on the programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/44/L.55 and L.56, it did not support the request for additional funding. His country would oppose those draft resolutions in the plenary Assembly for substantive and financial reasons. It reserved the right to change its position on the financing of those programmes when the Fifth Committee took a decision on the consolidated statement at the end of the session.

58. His delegation wished to express in the strongest possible terms its disappointment at the way the issue had been handled by the Committee on Conferences when it had met earlier that morning to consider the Special Committee's proposal to hold meetings away from Headquarters. Apparently some delegations had not wanted to debate the matter and, through a violation of rule 118 of the rules of procedure of the Committee on Conferences, had silenced opposition to the proposal. His delegation and one other had requested a legal opinion on rule 118 from the Office of Legal Affairs, but no such opinion had been forthcoming and the meeting had been adjourned.

59. It was regrettable that the democratic winds of change sweeping the globe had evidently bypassed some United Nations committees and it was ironic, moreover, that those delegations which professed strong support for self-determination and freedom should resort to tactics associated with "old" rather than "new" thinking to prevent the Committee on Conferences from discharging its responsibilities, in particular those under paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 35/10 A. It was to be hoped that the territories which the Special Committee intended to liberate would not fall victim to a similar fate.

60. The decision taken that morning further weakened the role of the Committee on Conferences and his delegation had doubts as to whether it should continue to exist

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given the efforts by some to strip it of its few remaining responsibilities. In addition, his delegation regretted that its request for a legal opinion concerning the application of rule 118 had been ignored. It assumed that the Office of Legal Affairs, had it been given an opportunity to respond, would have ruled in its favour. Obviously, that was why no opinion had been provided.

61. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt his proposal regarding the programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/44/L.55 and L.56 and the draft resolution contained in the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/44/23 (Part I)).

62. It was so decided.

63. The CHAIRMAN requested the Secretary of the Committee to report directly to the Assembly on the decision just taken.

64. Ms. BROJNOWSKI (Australia) said that, both because it was a former colony and for other reasons, her country was a strong supporter of activities, including consultations, relating to decolonization and it looked forward to the completion of efforts to that end at the earliest possible date. It noted, however, that while the need for decolonization activities was gradually diminishing, expenditures on such activities were constantly growing. In that context, it failed to see why the estimate of \$1,185,800 given in paragraph 17 of the Secretary-General's report could not have been reduced to a more realistic level. Her delegation had not wished to stand in the way of a consensus, but it reserved the right to reconsider its position when the Committee came to take a decision on the consolidated statement of conference-servicing requirements.

65. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) said that his delegation, which represented a country that had long suffered from colonial domination and neo-colonial practices, found no elements in the draft resolutions under consideration which differed significantly from what the General Assembly had supported in the past. He was all the more astonished, therefore, by the aggressive tone of the statements made by some earlier speakers. One of the basic aims of democracy was to reflect the wishes of the majority, whose decisions could not be subject to the veto of a minority. He also objected to the discourteous remarks made about the Special Committee. Such remarks were totally unacceptable. To the suggestion that the activities of the Committee on decolonization were in some way redundant, he would reply that even when the last vestiges of the old colonial order had disappeared, there would still be a need for a "Committee on de-neocolonization".

66. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) supported the views expressed by the representatives of Ghana and Cuba. The Fifth Committee was not the appropriate forum in which to discuss the usefulness of activities relating to decolonization, and its work would be more effective if it avoided politicization of the issues involved. Also, he saw no reason for the Committee on Conferences to have discussed the programme

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(Mr. Ladiouzi, Algeria)

budget implications of the draft resolutions in question. The Fifth Committee should be guided by the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and it must not apply General Assembly resolutions in a restrictive or discriminatory manner.

67. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) said that his delegation had been pleased to join in the consensus on the decision just taken, which clearly demonstrated that decolonization remained a vital concern in the world today. Ghana's experience was that the decolonization issue was one of awareness, relating to the conditions under which peoples decided their future. He rejected the accusation that there had been any violation of the rules of procedure of the Committee on Conferences. As to the "winds of change", history showed that peoples would fight injustice and inequality as long as they continued to exist; and Ghana could not subscribe to any "new thinking" which ignored those evils.

68. Mr. KALBITZER (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation had no substantive objection to the decision just taken but regretted the manner in which the discussion and subsequent action by the Committee had been conducted. He wondered why the Secretariat had been unable to provide the information requested on the programme budget implications of the draft resolutions in question, particularly as it had responded to similar requests on other occasions and at very short notice. He did not believe that time was so short as to warrant forcing a decision on the issue. Doing so tended to cast doubt on the issue itself. It should not be forgotten, moreover, that the rights of a minority in the Committee had to be respected by the majority and by the Chairman.

69. Mr. GEBREMEDHIN (Ethiopia) expressed satisfaction with the consensus decision adopted by the Fifth Committee. The Committee on Conferences for its part had, as the representative of Ghana had emphasized, taken action strictly in accordance with rule 118 of its rules of procedure. The Special Committee, moreover, was indeed authorized under General Assembly resolutions 1654 (XVI) and 2621 (XXV) to meet elsewhere than at United Nations Headquarters whenever and wherever that might be required. It was most disturbing that certain subsidiary bodies were being singled out for unnecessarily detailed scrutiny.

70. Mr. DUHALT (Mexico) said that his delegation firmly supported the action taken by the Fifth Committee and endorsed the view expressed by previous speakers that the proceedings in the Committee on Conferences had been conducted in a democratic manner, in strict compliance with the rules of procedure. Those delegations which had found its decision not to their liking would do well to take a fresh look at their own opinions.

71. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that there appeared to be some confusion among delegations as to the nature of the decision taken by the Fifth Committee. His delegation believed that a majority decision was not a consensus decision.

72. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had adopted neither a majority decision nor a consensus decision. It had simply taken a decision without a vote.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.