

PAYMENT OF TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES
OF MEMBERS OF COMMISSIONS AND SUB-COMMISSIONS

Note by the Secretary-General concerning the Resolution of
3 October 1946, of the Economic and Social Council.

A. BACKGROUND

1. The rules which at present govern the payment of expenses of delegates, Commission and Sub-Commission members and experts attending meetings of the United Nations are the following:

(a) By a General Assembly Resolution adopted at the First Part of the First Session, the cost of transportation, but not the subsistence allowances, of five Delegates of each Member State to the General Assembly is authorized for payment (1).

(b) Since the Resolution of the General Assembly referred to above mentioned specifically only Delegates to the General Assembly, neither the cost of transportation nor subsistence allowances are paid in the case of persons attending meetings of the Councils, Commissions or Sub-Commissions as representatives of Governments. This is in accord with a recommendation of the Advisory Group of Experts on Administrative, Personnel and Budgetary Questions (2) and follows the practice developed over a period of years by the League of Nations.

(1) Document A/64, Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during the First Part of its First Session (page 20).

(2) First report of the Advisory Group of Experts on Administrative, Personnel and Budgetary Questions, London, 8 March 1946 (page 135).

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(c) Persons serving as members of Commissions, Sub-Commissions or Committees in their personal capacity as experts, and not as representatives of Governments, are paid both cost of transportation and subsistence allowances. This is in accord with a recommendation of the Advisory Group of Experts on Administrative, Personnel and Budgetary Questions, (2) and follows the practice developed over a period of years by the League of Nations.

2. In the course of its third session, the Economic and Social Council, having concluded that the position with regard to (b) was unsatisfactory, adopted on 3 October the following Resolution: (3)

"The Economic and Social Council, in order to equalize the opportunities of Members of the United Nations to participate in the work and activities of the Commissions and to ensure the most effective co-operation of the Members, recommends that travelling expenses and subsistence allowances should be paid by the United Nations for each member of the Commissions and Sub-Commissions of the Council.

THEREFORE, the Council recommends that the General Assembly adopt the following resolution:

The categories of expenses listed below shall be borne by the budgets of the United Nations for each member of the Commissions and Sub-Commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

(a) The actual expenses for travel between his residence and the place of meeting of the Commission, and the actual expenses for travel on business of the Commission.

(b) A daily subsistence allowance to be paid for the period of travel and for the period of the meeting of the Commission." (4)

B. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

1. It does not seem that the payment of expenses of government representatives could be restricted to the Commissions and Sub-Commissions of the Economic and Social Council. Commissions and Sub-Commissions of

(2) First report of the Advisory Group of Experts on Administrative, Personnel and Budgetary Questions, London, 8 March 1946 (Page 135).

(3) Document E/226 Rev.1, 14 October 1946.

(4) It is assumed that the term "Commission" in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) of the Draft Resolution includes "Sub-Commission".

all other organs of the United Nations would have to be treated in the same way. The budgetary implications of such a measure are estimated to be the following:

(a) Commissions and Sub-Commissions of the Economic and Social Council	\$ 520,000.
(b) Commissions and Sub-Commissions of the Security and Trusteeship Councils	<u>500,000.</u>
Total	\$1,020,000.

The assumptions which form the basis for the rough estimates given above are the following:

(a) That the total membership of the Commissions and Sub-Commissions of the Economic and Social Council will consist of some 200 government representatives; that each Commission and Sub-Commission will hold two meetings per year lasting, on the average, fifteen days; that the subsistence allowance will be at the rate of twenty dollars per day; and that the transportation costs for each member will average \$1,000. This gives the following over-all figures:

(i) Transportation cost\$ 400,000.

(ii) Subsistence allowance 120,000.

which represent an aggregate cost per year \$520,000.

(b) If travel and subsistence allowances were to be paid to members of Commissions and Sub-Commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly would wish to consider establishing the same terms for members of the Commissions and Sub-Commissions of the two other Councils. At the present time, there are only two comparable groups under the Security Council - the Atomic Energy Group and the Military Staff Committee. Expenses of members of these two groups have been paid by their respective governments. It may also be assumed that Commissions and Sub-Commissions will be established by the Trusteeship Council. The total number of such organs for

both Councils may not be so large as that of the Economic and Social Council. But, in view of the fact that the Commissions and Sub-Commissions to be established by the Trusteeship Council may undertake more trips to trust territories, the total cost per year may be approximately estimated at \$500,000.

(c) That expenses of only one delegate from each government on a Commission would be reimbursed.

(d) That reimbursement of such expenses of Commission members, if approved, would not be retroactive in effective date, i.e. would not apply retroactively in the case of Commissions under the Economic and Social Council after the date of the Council's resolution of 21 June 1946, (Commission members to be Government representatives).

2. Concerning similar Organs under the Specialized Agencies, it must be noted that, as most specialized agencies are still in the initial organization stage, complete information on this subject is not available. Some agencies, such as the FAO, are already paying travel and subsistence allowances to the members of executive committees and of standing committees; some others do so in a restricted way - ILO pays only employer and worker groups when they serve on committees, but does not reimburse government representatives. Others, as well as the United Nations, do not pay their Commission and Committee members when they are government representatives - (PICAO and UNESCO).

The difficulties of making a precise estimate of the cost to the specialized agencies of adopting the policy recommended by the Economic and Social Council for the United Nations will be recognized immediately. A number of the agencies concerned are still in an interim or preparatory stage and the permanent structure, the number of standing commissions or committees, and the length and frequency of their meetings, has not yet been determined. However, on the basis of answers to an inquiry concerning structure and practice, the Secretariat estimates that approximately

\$700,000 per annum would be required for the agencies already on a full functioning basis (such as ILO and FAO); and that approximately \$500,000 per annum would be required for those whose future organization is only beginning to take form.

The attention of the General Assembly is therefore drawn to the fact that approval of the Draft Resolution regarding payment of expenses to members of Commissions and Sub-Commissions will necessitate approval of a supplemental budget of approximately \$1,000,000 for 1947 as the direct cost to the United Nations, and of an amount up to \$1,200,000 in budgets of the Specialized Agencies, should they follow the United Nations' lead.
