

GENERAL  
ASSEMBLYASSEMBLEE  
GENERALEA/464  
11 November 1947  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISHWORKING OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE UNITED NATIONS UNDER  
CHAPTER XV OF THE CHARTER

## REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

Rapporteur: Mr. G. BAGGE (Sweden)

1. In accordance with the instructions given by the General Assembly at its ninety-first plenary meeting held on 23 September 1947, the Fifth Committee, at its eighty-second, ninety-first and ninety-second meetings, held on 30 October and 7 and 8 November respectively, considered the question of the working of the Secretariat of the United Nations under Chapter XV of the Charter. The item had been submitted to the General Assembly by Australia with particular reference to the character of Secretariat work under paragraph 2 of Article 101 of the Charter. The Committee also discussed under this head the question of the composition of the Secretariat, with reference to paragraph 3 of Article 101.

2. The Committee had before it the notes submitted by the Australian delegation (documents A/C.5/167 and A/C.5/167/Add.1). The representative of Australia referred to a resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 31 October 1947 (document A/433) under the terms of which the General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to assist the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies by providing factual surveys and analyses of economic trends and conditions, and commended this point of view. He referred also to the resolution proposed by Sweden and adopted by the General Assembly on 20 October 1947 (document A/403) recommending that the Councils and Commissions should refrain from creating special committees or sub-committees until it had been ascertained that a particular task could not usefully be entrusted to the Secretariat. The Assistant Secretary-General for Administrative and Financial Services stated that the Secretariat accepted the general interpretation presented by the Australian representative, and would make every effort compatible with its resources to carry out any assignments which might be made to it under the Australian and Swedish resolutions.

3. In connection with paragraph 3 of Article 101 of the Charter, the Committee had before it a report by the Secretary-General (documents A/C.5/W.21, A/C.5/W.21/Add.1 and A/C.5/W.21/Add.2) on the staff of the United Nations Secretariat. During the general discussion, a number of delegations expressed

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their grave concern that the staff of the Secretariat, in view of its eminently international character and obligations, had not yet become more effectively representative of different cultures and nationalities, and expressed the hope that considerable progress would be made in this direction. The Committee rejected, by twenty votes to nineteen, with seven abstentions (roll-call vote), a proposal by the delegation of Colombia that geographical distribution within the Secretariat should be based on a quota system related to the financial contribution of each Member (document A/C.5/W.28).

4. The Committee, after extensive discussion of the subject, approved unanimously a resolution presented at the ninety-second meeting (document A/C.5/W.43) by eight delegations, recognizing that this decision of the Committee could in no way affect the basic principles established in the Charter regarding the recruitment of staff. The Committee believed that no conflict would arise with the regulations laid down by the General Assembly concerning contracts of personnel or with clauses of individual contracts. It agreed further that, in the implementation of the policy expressed in the resolution, linguistic ability should also be taken into consideration, particularly in higher posts, together with efficiency, competence and integrity.

5. The Committee recommends, therefore, that the General Assembly adopt the following resolution:

COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT AND THE PRINCIPLE  
OF GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

WHEREAS it is desirable to attain a balanced geographical distribution in the composition of the Secretariat, thus improving the present distribution, which results from unavoidable difficulties encountered in the initial stages of organization;

WHEREAS the above consideration does not conflict with the paramount consideration of employment of the staff, as laid down in Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter, namely, the necessity of securing the highest standard of efficiency, competence and integrity;

WHEREAS, in view of its international character and in order to avoid undue predominance of national practices, the policies and administrative methods of the Secretariat should reflect, and profit to the highest degree from, assets of the various cultures and the technical competence of all Member nations:

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

1. REAFFIRMS the principle of securing the highest standard of efficiency, competence and integrity in the staff of the

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Secretariat, as well as the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible; and

2. REQUESTS the Secretary-General:

- (a) To examine the recruitment policy that has been followed to date with a view to improving the present geographical distribution of the posts within the various Departments;
- (b) To take, as soon as possible, the necessary steps with a view to engaging staff members from those countries which have not yet any of their nationals in the Secretariat;
- (c) To review, in accordance with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the qualifications, background and experience of the present members of the staff, with a view to replacing those who do not reach the high standards fixed by the Charter;
- (d) To take all practicable steps to ensure the improvement of the present geographical distribution of staff, including the issuance of such rules and regulations as may be necessary to comply with the principles of the Charter as elaborated in this resolution;
- (e) To present to the next regular session of the General Assembly a report of the action taken under this resolution.

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