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SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1959

BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1960

Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees

Twenty-third report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session

I. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES FOR 1959

1. In its thirteenth report to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session (A/4221), issued on 21 September 1959 on the supplementary estimates for 1959, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, pending a discussion with the High Commissioner for Refugees in regard to various administrative and financial questions concerning his Office, recommended that the initial appropriation of \$1,398,000 under section 10 of the 1959 budget^{1/} should be increased to \$1,500,000, an amount which was \$25,200 less than the revised estimate submitted by the Secretary-General. The Committee suggested in this regard that efforts should be made during the remainder of the year to defer where possible those new activities in respect of which no formal commitments had been made.

2. The Advisory Committee's interim recommendation was approved by the Fifth Committee at its 709th meeting held on 28 September 1959.

^{1/} Section 10 of the 1959 budget covered the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees; the corresponding section in the 1960 estimates is section 11.

3. The Advisory Committee has since considered, with the High Commissioner, the extent to which economies could be effected in the remaining months of 1959. The Committee understands that the High Commissioner has carefully reviewed the additional requirements in the light of the views expressed in the Committee's report (A/4221), but that, as a practical matter, it would not be possible fully to achieve savings of the order previously recommended. In particular, it has been explained to the Committee that the new branch offices in Morocco and Tunisia, to which a substantial proportion of the increase of \$34,700 for temporary assistance was attributed, had been established on a minimal basis. In the case of the branch office for Australia and New Zealand and the temporary office for Canada, the proposed additional expenditure of \$19,500 would be off-set by a corresponding reimbursement from voluntary funds. However, as the Committee is further informed, owing to technical delays that have occurred in the opening of the offices in Morocco and Tunisia and by postponement of the appointment of legal correspondents, a modest reduction in the supplementary requirements would be possible.

4. The Advisory Committee had expected that during the three months remaining after the submission of its interim recommendation, it would be possible to make special efforts to achieve a substantial part of the savings which the Committee had recommended. However, in the light of the practical difficulties now cited by the High Commissioner, the Committee accepts his appraisal of the situation.

5. The Advisory Committee has also considered a report by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/797), indicating a further increase, to be off-set by an equivalent additional grant from the voluntary funds of the High Commissioner's Programme, of \$25,000 in the 1959 estimates under section 10. These expenditures arise from the approval in October 1959, by the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, of certain proposals relating to an intensification of the public information and fund-raising activities of the High Commissioner's Office, designed to take full advantage of the possibilities offered by the World Refugee Year.

The estimate of \$25,000 comprises the following elements:

	\$
(a) Temporary assistance and consultants required for the preparation of pamphlets and other public information material	5,000
(b) Travel for public information purposes and for fund-raising missions	9,500
(c) Public information activities, including the issue of films in extra copies and in additional languages; production and distribution of pamphlets; facilities to press and television services	10,500
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	\$25,000
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7. The Advisory Committee, while having no objection to the inclusion of this additional item of \$25,000, is not entirely convinced that these funds can be fully expended on a properly planned basis, during the short remaining period, on activities which were only approved by the Executive Committee in October.

8. On the basis of the foregoing considerations, the Advisory Committee recommends that the initial 1959 appropriation under section 10 - Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees - in the amount of \$1,398,000 should be increased by an amount of \$147,200 to a revised total of \$1,545,200. Of the increase of \$147,200, an amount of \$122,200 would relate to the purposes outlined in the Secretary-General's initial report on the supplementary estimates for 1959 (A/4198) and \$25,000 for those stated in his later report (A/C.5/797). In addition, the Advisory Committee notes that the reimbursement to the regular budget from the voluntary funds of the High Commissioner's Programme will be increased from \$480,000 to \$524,500.^{2/}

II. REVISED BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR 1960

9. In regard to the 1960 estimates of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the Advisory Committee has previously recommended^{3/} a provisional

^{2/} The increase of \$44,500 comprises \$19,500 reported earlier (A/4198, para. 57) and \$25,000 mentioned in paragraph 5 of the present report.

^{3/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/4170), para. 189.

appropriation under section 11 in the amount of \$1,467,400, as proposed by the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General has since submitted revised estimates for the Office of the High Commissioner (A/C.5/798) providing for additional requirements in the amount of \$152,900 of which \$132,300 would fall under section 11, \$17,600 under section 13 and \$3,000 under section 15. The revised total estimate for section 11 accordingly amounts to \$1,599,700.

10. As mentioned in the Advisory Committee's report on the initial 1960 estimates,^{4/} an administrative review of the Office of the High Commissioner at Geneva was carried out early in 1959 by a senior official from Headquarters. In addition, a scheme of reorganization of the Office was introduced by the High Commissioner with effect from 1 April 1959. The Committee had therefore noted that it would be useful to examine, in the light of the administrative review, the steps taken by the High Commissioner and to determine the extent of the resultant advantages on the administrative as well as on the financial side. Accordingly, the Committee had reserved its final recommendation on the estimates until after it had had an opportunity to discuss this aspect of the matter with the High Commissioner himself.

11. The Advisory Committee has since had occasion to study further the questions involved, with the assistance of the High Commissioner. In doing so, the Committee has taken into consideration the revised 1960 estimates for the Office, as now submitted by the Secretary-General.

12. It appears from the Advisory Committee's study that in reorganizing the Office as of 1 April 1959 the High Commissioner took into account a number of the points which arose as a result of the administrative review. The official who undertook the review accordingly limited his final and specific recommendations to one point, namely, that the Administrative and Financial Section, which is at present one of a number of sections of a division and reports in the first instance to the head of that division, should be given the status of an Executive Office directly responsible to the High Commissioner himself. Regarding this recommendation, the High Commissioner has indicated to the Committee that, for practical reasons, it would not be in the interests of his Office to adopt at

^{4/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/4170), para. 188.

present such a structure, even though it might be regarded in general as a standing organizational arrangement in other major segments of the Secretariat.

13. The Advisory Committee sees some relation between the organizational point mentioned in the preceding paragraph and the need, in the light of the consolidation of the total administrative expenses of the Office in the regular budget of the Organization, for development of co-ordinated arrangements and procedures in the Office of the High Commissioner and the Office of the Controller, to ensure proper application of normal financial procedures. The Committee, in its report on the supplementary estimates for 1959 (A/4221, para. 26), referred to this latter question, with particular regard to the submission of statements of financial implications of proposals prior to their adoption and to the procedures for authority to incur unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. On this point the High Commissioner has assured the Committee that efforts would be made to overcome initial difficulties due to the transitional stage of budgetary treatment and the special nature of the unforeseen expenses which arise in the case of his Office.

14. As regards the additional 1960 requirements for the Office of the High Commissioner under sections 11, 13 and 15, the Advisory Committee notes that the total increase of \$152,900 includes \$59,600 for the new branch offices in Morocco and Tunisia, \$17,000 for the temporary office in Canada (an equivalent amount to be reimbursed from voluntary funds), \$24,000 for the enlargement of the branch office for Latin America, \$24,600 for legal correspondents in countries without branch offices and \$27,700 for the strengthening of the Legal Section and the unit in charge of North Africa at the headquarters of the Office at Geneva.

15. The distribution of the proposed additional amount of \$152,900 by objects of expenditure, is as follows:

Salaries and wages (section 11)	\$79,250
Common staff costs (section 11)	15,450
Travel on official business (section 11)	13,000
General expenses (section 13)	17,600
Permanent equipment (section 15)	3,000
Reimbursement of expenses of correspondents (section 11)	24,600

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16. As regards the provision for salaries and wages, the Advisory Committee suggests that one of the three new secretarial posts for the Office at Geneva (two in the Legal Section and one in the unit for North Africa) might be found through appropriate adjustments in the total secretarial staff of the Office as a whole. In addition, it would appear that no turnover deduction has been applied to the estimated cost of new posts to allow for recruitment delays.
17. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee notes that the additional provision of \$13,000 for official travel, when added to the amount of \$82,000 already included in the initial estimates, would result in a total provision of \$95,000 for this purpose. The Committee believes that through a more restrictive handling of travel requirements, generally along the lines that have been applied at United Nations Headquarters for some years, some reduction of this expenditure should prove possible, without being an undue limitation.
18. In the light of the above considerations, the Advisory Committee recommends an appropriation under section 11 in a revised amount of \$1,590,000, representing a reduction of \$9,700 in the total figure submitted for that section by the Secretary-General. The Committee further recommends that additional provision should be made in sections 13 and 15 in the amounts of \$17,600 and \$3,000 respectively.
19. The effect of the recommendations given above may be tabulated as follows:

<u>Section</u>	<u>Amount</u> <u>previously recommended</u> <u>by the Advisory Committee</u>	<u>Present</u> <u>addition</u>	<u>Revised amount</u> <u>recommended by the</u> <u>Advisory Committee</u>
	\$	\$	\$
11. Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees	1,467,400 ^{a/}	122,600	1,590,000
13. General expenses	5,642,000 ^{b/}	17,600	5,659,600
15. Permanent equipment	550,800 ^{b/}	3,000	553,800

a/ This is the same as the initial estimate submitted by the Secretary-General, Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 5 (A/4110), section 11.

b/ Amounts recommended in the Committee's main budget report (A/4170), as revised in connexion with the interim arrangements for the Library (A/4259).