



Fourteenth session
Agenda item 51

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Niaz A. NAIK (Pakistan)

1. At its 755th, 756th and 757th meetings held from 1 to 3 December 1959, the Fifth Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/4293) on the United Nations International School. In this report, submitted in pursuance of resolution 1297 (XIII), the Secretary-General suggested that Member States might wish to consider the desirability of placing the net revenue of the United Nations Gift Centre in a special fund for assisting the International School in order to obviate the necessity for considering annually a grant-in-aid for the School and, more important, to ensure that the School could plan for the future with assurance of solvency, thus qualifying it for capital assistance from voluntary sources for such purposes as the building and equipping of new premises.
2. The delegations of Ecuador, Ghana, India, Iran, Iraq, Peru, Poland and Uruguay submitted a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.593 and Add.1) to establish, as of 1 January 1960, an International School Fund to which would be credited the net revenues of the United Nations Gift Centre. The delegations of Argentina and the United States of America submitted a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.594) to decide, in principle, to contribute to the School for a period of five years such continuing financial assistance as the General Assembly might consider necessary, to make a grant of \$75,000 to the School in 1960 and to consider further at the fifteenth session the suggestion of the Secretary-General for the establishment of a continuing fund financed from the revenue derived from the Gift Centre, as well as other means for financing grants to the School.

3. During the discussion, several representatives expressed appreciation for the important contribution made by the International School towards the education of the children of members of the Secretariat and of permanent missions. They noted with satisfaction the substantial increase in the enrolment in the School and expressed the hope that its services would be made more widely available to such children and that the efforts to secure permanent premises and adequate equipment would be successful.
4. The sponsors of the eight-Power draft resolution felt that the International School Fund suggested by the Secretary-General should be established immediately in view of the urgent need to expand the services of the School and to acquire permanent premises by 1961. The sponsors of the two-Power draft resolution argued that, while the International School deserved support, the proposal concerning the allocation of the net proceeds of the Gift Centre deserved further study in terms of its implications on budgetary policy and in the light of the desire to preserve the autonomy of the International School.
5. At the 756th meeting, the sponsors of the two draft resolutions submitted a new joint draft resolution (A/C.5/L.598) to invite the Board of Trustees to establish an International School Fund, to decide to contribute to the Fund for a period of five years such financial assistance as the Assembly might consider necessary, to make a contribution of \$100,000 in 1960, and to request the Secretary-General to present to the fifteenth session (a) a report on the International School Fund; (b) his recommendations, together with the comments of the Advisory Committee, on future contributions to the Fund, including the suggestion contained in document A/4293; and (c) a report on the progress made in finding permanent accommodations for the School. They indicated that the new draft would make it clear that the proposed Fund would be established by the Board of Trustees of the School rather than by the United Nations, and would permit greater scrutiny of the suggestion for providing a continuous source of income from the proceeds of the Gift Centre. They expressed the hope that, with the establishment of the proposed Fund, it would be possible to obtain voluntary contributions and donations.

6. Several members of the Committee, while expressing appreciation for the services performed by the School and sympathy towards efforts to establish the School on a sound financial basis, opposed the provisions of the draft resolution. While assistance might be given in special circumstances on an ad hoc basis, they could not accept a continuing financial commitment to the School, nor an obligation to cover the operating deficits of the School, particularly since the School served not only children of members of the Secretariat, but also children of members of permanent missions and of others not connected with the United Nations. The School, in their view, should seek to balance its budget by setting up a more economic level of tuition fees, bearing in mind the fees charged by national schools. It also seemed that the proposals advanced tended to favour one group. They suggested that the Secretary-General discuss this matter with the Board of Trustees and consult with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the level of the education grant, so that the Assembly might review the education grant at the next session. In view of the considerable financial commitment proposed in the joint draft resolution, it was also suggested that the relation between the United Nations and the International School should be defined. Several members expressed regret that the documentation was not available in time for detailed consideration.

7. A number of representatives argued, on the other hand, that the level of tuition fees was beyond the capacity of many members of the Secretariat and of the permanent missions, and that the International School might approach economic viability by increasing enrolment by lowering the fees or establishing a scholarship fund. They felt that higher fees would further inhibit the enrolment of children of persons associated with the United Nations and would not be justified so long as facilities in the temporary quarters were inadequate. Certain delegations felt that the scholarship fund should clearly be limited to children of families associated with the United Nations.

8. The representative of Lebanon, while supporting continuing assistance to the International School, felt that instruction in Arabic and other languages would enable the School to attract wider enrolment. He proposed an amendment to request the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps with the Board of Trustees to institute instruction in Arabic and other languages. Subsequently, he agreed to withdraw the amendment after a statement by the representative of the Secretary-General that the School was fully aware of the need for instruction

in additional languages, that more could not be done in this respect because of financial stringency or lack of demand, and that the Secretary-General would bring the Lebanese proposal to the attention of the Board of Trustees.

9. Separate votes were taken on the last paragraph of the preamble and each of the operative paragraphs of the joint draft resolution (A/C.5/L.598).

The last paragraph of the preamble was adopted by 32 votes to 7, with 20 abstentions; operative paragraph 1 was adopted by 52 votes to none, with 8 abstentions; operative paragraph 2 was adopted by 43 votes to none, with 17 abstentions; operative paragraph 3 was adopted by 32 votes to 22, with 6 abstentions; operative paragraph 4 was adopted by 40 votes to 6, with 12 abstentions; operative paragraph 5 was adopted by 50 votes to none, with 9 abstentions; operative paragraph 6 was adopted by 44 votes to none, with 16 abstentions. The joint draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 38 votes to 4, with 18 abstentions.

Recommendation of the Fifth Committee

10. The Fifth Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations International School as well as the report by the Board of Trustees of the School,^{1/}

Recalling its resolution 1297 (XIII) of 5 December 1958 requesting the Secretary-General to use his good offices to assist the School to find suitable permanent accommodation and approving a grant-in-aid in respect of the school year 1958-1959,

Recognizing the increasing urgency of providing permanent accommodation for the School,

Believing it necessary that the financial solvency of the School should be assured,

Noting the suggestion of the Secretary-General that a continuing fund should be established for assistance to the International School to be

financed by the net proceeds from the operation of the United Nations Gift Centre,

1. Reaffirms its hope that steps will be taken to make the United Nations International School available to the children of the largest possible number of members of delegations, United Nations staff members, and others associated with the United Nations;

2. Invites the Board of Trustees of the School to establish an International School Fund;

3. Decides to contribute to the International School Fund for a period of five years such continuing financial assistance as the General Assembly may consider necessary;

4. Decides to make a contribution of \$100,000 to the International School Fund in 1960 for the purpose of liquidating the operating deficit at the end of the 1959-1960 school year and for such other purposes of the School as the Board of Trustees deems fit;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to use his good offices to assist the Board of Trustees of the School in finding suitable permanent accommodation for the School in the immediate vicinity of United Nations Headquarters, in developing plans for a building, and in pursuing its efforts to raise funds from private sources for the construction of the building, and, if necessary, for the acquisition of a site therefor;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to present to the General Assembly at its fifteenth session:

(a) A report by the Board of Trustees of the School on the establishment and operations of the International School Fund;

(b) His recommendations, together with the comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, on future contributions to the Fund and on the means of financing such contributions, including the suggestion contained in paragraphs 8 and 9 of his report;

(c) A report on the progress which has been made in finding permanent accommodation for the School.
