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BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1970

PROBLEMS OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution
recommended by the Economic and Social Council (A/7707, para. 3)

Eleventh report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions to the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth
session

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has received from the Secretary-General document A/C.5/1252 in which he sets out the administrative and financial implications in 1970 of a draft resolution on the problems of the human environment recommended by the Economic and Social Council for adoption by the General Assembly.
2. In this document the Secretary-General indicates that adoption of the draft resolution would require an additional credit of \$171,200 under section 2 (Special meetings and conferences) of the United Nations budget for 1970. As rule 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly states that "no resolution in respect of which expenditures are anticipated by the Secretary-General shall be voted by the General Assembly until the Administrative and Budgetary Committee has had an opportunity of stating the effect of the proposal upon the budget estimates of the United Nations", the Advisory Committee is of the opinion that the requirements in 1970 should be viewed in conjunction with the total estimated costs of the Conference. Information on the latter is provided by the Secretary-General in his note (A/7707). He estimates that the total gross costs of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment would amount to \$1,564,000, as follows:

(In US dollars)

	1970	1971	1972	1973	Total
(a) Cost of preparatory committee (conference servicing).....	16,700	8,600	9,700	-	35,000
(b) Temporary Conference secretariat.....	81,000	160,000	120,000	-	361,000
(c) Travel of staff.....	5,000	5,000	10,000	-	20,000
(d) Experts and consultants.....	68,500	51,500	37,500	-	157,500
(e) Substantive background documentation (translation, editing, reproduction, copy preparation and printing)....	-	689,600	-	-	689,600
(f) Conference servicing costs (travel and subsistence of substantive staff from Headquarters, temporary Conference servicing staff, in-conference documentation and final report, general expenses).....	-	-	123,800	-	123,800
(g) Public information services..	-	-	58,500	-	58,500
(h) Printing of final report and proceedings (report, summary of discussions, and papers submitted to the Conference)	-	-	-	118,600	118,600
Total	<u>171,200</u>	<u>914,700</u>	<u>359,500</u>	<u>118,600</u>	<u>1,564,000</u>

3. The above costs were estimated on the assumption that the Conference would be held in Geneva for a period of two weeks.^{1/} However, the Advisory Committee notes that in operative paragraph 15 of the draft resolution the General Assembly would accept "with appreciation the invitation of the Government of Sweden to

^{1/} E/4667, para. 140 (a).

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hold the Conference in Sweden in June 1972". In accordance with normal practice, the host Government will reimburse to the United Nations the extra expenditure attributable to the holding of the Conference in its country. The revised estimates making provision for the holding of the Conference in Sweden and the amount of reimbursement by the Swedish Government will be indicated by the Secretary-General in his budget estimates for 1972.

4. The Secretary-General states further that the Economic and Social Council had considered the question at its forty-seventh session. The Council expressed the belief that every effort should be made to reduce the costs of the Conference. In response to that request the Secretary-General has reduced the estimates from the original total of \$1,918,000, as submitted to the Council (E/4667), to \$1,564,000, i.e. by \$354,000. Of this reduction, \$280,000 is attributable to a 20 per cent decrease in the volume of documentation, and the balance of \$74,000 is accounted for by the Council's recommendation that the Preparatory Committee should consist of government representatives rather than experts acting in their personal capacities (who would have been entitled to travel and subsistence costs), as originally envisaged.

5. The Advisory Committee will give detailed consideration to the costs to be incurred in 1971, 1972 and 1973 when it takes up the Secretary-General's budget estimates for the years in question. As regards the \$171,200 being requested for 1970, the Committee notes that nearly half this amount (\$81,000) is accounted for by the salaries of the temporary conference secretariat (consisting of 1 D-2, 1 P-4 and 2 General Service posts) whom the Secretary-General proposes to recruit as from 1 January 1970. Bearing in mind the fact that in operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council the Secretary-General is requested to set up a small conference secretariat "immediately", the Advisory Committee does not recommend a reduction in this amount. At the same time, the Committee is not convinced that the staff in question will be fully employed in 1970, considering that the Conference is scheduled for June 1972. In this connexion, the Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General, in his request for provisional staffing arrangements for 1970 envisages the possible strengthening of the Office of Science and Technology inter alia in connexion with work on the human environment.^{2/}

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/7606), section 3, para. 287.

6. The request for 1970 also includes an amount of \$68,500 for experts and consultants who would be required to prepare fifty background papers for the Conference (\$50,000) and to advise the Office for Science and Technology on specialized technical matters (\$18,500). The Advisory Committee is not convinced that all these services will be required, or indeed can be obtained in 1970, and trusts that it will be possible for the Secretary-General to effect economies in this item.
7. Subject to the above reservations, the Advisory Committee is not recommending any reduction in the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/1252. At the same time, the Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will utilize the credit in the most economical manner. In particular, he might explore the possibility of securing the assistance of universities and scientific foundations with a view to further reducing the costs of the Conference.
8. The Fifth Committee may wish to inform the General Assembly that in the event of the adoption of the draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council and contained in document A/7707, an amount of \$171,200 would be required under section 2 of the budget for 1970, and that additional appropriations would be needed in the budgets for 1971, 1972 and 1973. These future requirements are now estimated by the Secretary-General at some \$1,392,800; the Committee trusts, however, that he will carefully scrutinize and review these figures when preparing his budget estimates for those years.
