



Eighteenth session
Agenda item 12

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Financial implications of the draft resolution contained in
document A/C.3/L.1136/Rev.1

Twentieth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary
Questions to the General Assembly at its eighteenth session

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/994) concerning the financial implications of a draft resolution approved by the Third Committee (A/C.3/L.1136/Rev.1) whereby the General Assembly, inter alia, would urge the Economic and Social Council to reconsider its decision concerning the calendar of conferences for 1964 so that the Commission on Human Rights may continue to meet annually, and request the Secretary-General, as soon as the Economic and Social Council has agreed that the Commission should meet in 1964, to make special provisions for it to meet at Headquarters and conclude its session before 15 March 1964.
2. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, subject to the session of the Commission on Human Rights being held prior to 15 March 1964, every effort would be made to provide the necessary servicing staff from within available resources and expenditures would be limited to travel of members. These expenditures are estimated at \$26,000. If, on the other hand, the session were to be held after 15 March 1964, it would not be possible to service the session within existing staff resources, a considerable proportion of which would by then have been despatched to Geneva for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. It would consequently be necessary to call upon temporary assistance, at an additional cost of some \$54,000, although it is

doubtful whether, given the competing needs of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, qualified temporary staff would be available at that time in sufficient numbers. It seems clear, therefore, that if the Human Rights Commission is to hold a session in 1964, it should do so prior to 15 March.

3. Should the General Assembly decide to adopt the draft resolution submitted by the Third Committee, and should the Economic and Social Council reconsider its calendar of conferences for 1964 in order to provide for a session of the Human Rights Commission prior to 15 March of that year, additional expenditure would have to be authorized under section 1 of the 1964 budget. The Advisory Committee considers that the Secretary-General's present estimate of \$26,000 for such expenditure is reasonable under existing circumstances. However, the Committee would not recommend that the necessary provision be included at this stage in the 1964 budget, but rather that the Secretary-General be authorized to incur such expenditures as may be necessary, if and when the Economic and Social Council has reinstated the session of the Human Rights Commission. The Committee would suggest that, in this special case, recourse might be had to the procedure envisaged in paragraph 1 of the resolution relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. From the budgetary standpoint, this procedure would have the additional advantage of allowing for a more accurate calculation of the expenditure involved.

4. The Advisory Committee feels obliged to make a number of observations on questions of principle which are raised by the draft resolution adopted by the Third Committee. The Committee, of course, fully recognizes now - as it did when it met in its summer session - the great importance of the subject matter before the Commission on Human Rights. It is certain that this view is fully shared by the Secretary-General, by the Economic and Social Council and by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. With this in mind, the Advisory Committee would recall that, following urgent and pressing appeals from the Secretary-General, endorsed by the Advisory Committee, for a substantial curtailment of the programme of conferences and meetings in 1964, the Economic and Social Council decided without opposition at its thirty-sixth session, to cancel all sessions of its functional commissions, except the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in 1964. This decision was reflected in revised budget estimates, prepared

by the Secretary-General in September 1963, which were approved unanimously in first reading by the Fifth Committee at its 1020th meeting on 17 October 1963 after many delegations, in the course of the general debate, had commended the action taken by the Economic and Social Council as a welcome step towards rationalization.

5. The Advisory Committee's recommendation to the Economic and Social Council in July 1963, like the proposal of the Secretary-General and the decisions of the Council and the Fifth Committee, necessarily took into account all the United Nations activities in the economic and social field - and indeed in other fields. Many of these activities, like those in the human rights area, are of the greatest importance. The Advisory Committee was and is compelled to consider all interests and to recommend how they can best be dealt with from an administrative and budgetary point of view in the light of available resources and the financial position of the Organization.

6. Accordingly, although the Advisory Committee recognizes and respects the concern of the Third Committee at the prospect of some delay in the human rights sector of the economic and social field, it cannot lend its support to the suggestion that the Economic and Social Council should reverse the decision which it took in July and that the Fifth Committee should reverse its decision taken at the present session of the General Assembly on the first reading of section 1 of the 1964 budget. The Committee associates itself fully with the position of the Secretary-General set forth in his statement of 25 October 1963 to the Third Committee (A/C.3/L.1144) on the financial implications of its resolution, as follows: "The Secretary-General would, however, wish to point out that the views which he expressed in his report (E/3741) to the Economic and Social Council at its thirty-fifth session, and which he reiterated in his statement to the Council's thirty-sixth session remain valid. Inasmuch as the Economic and Social Council, in reaching its decision, took fully into consideration all of the factors governing its calendar of conferences for 1964, the Secretary-General would hope for administrative and budgetary reasons that the calendar of meetings as approved by the Council will be maintained."