

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
47th meeting
held on
Friday, 24 November 1989
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 47th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DANKWA (Ghana)

later: Mr. AL-MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENTS

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. RENE MOAWAD, PRESIDENT OF THE LEBANESE REPUBLIC

AGENDA ITEM 122: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1988-1989 (continued)

Standards of accommodation for air travel

AGENDA ITEM 137: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE
UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 133: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCES IN THE
MIDDLE EAST (continued)

(c) REVIEW OF THE RATES OF REIMBURSEMENT TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF
TROOP-CONTRIBUTING STATES (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 134: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS IRAN-IRAQ MILITARY OBSERVER GROUP
(continued)

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned
within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750,
2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/44/SR.47
30 November 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

89-57438 2150S (E)

/...

The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. RENE MOAWAD, PRESIDENT OF THE LEBANESE REPUBLIC

1. On the proposal of the Chairman, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. René Moawad, President of the Lebanese Republic

2. Mr. MONAYAIR (Kuwait) said that Mr. Moawad had, by carrying out his duties with such dedication, expressed the hopes of his people for a better future. The election of Mr. Elias Hraoui to succeed him constituted the greatest tribute to that spirit of dedication. He requested, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, that messages of sympathy be transmitted to the Government and people of Lebanon.

AGENDA ITEM 122: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1988-1989 (continued)

Standards of accommodation for air travel (A/44/730; A/C.5/44/12)

3. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/44/12) provided details as to how the General Assembly's new guidelines on standards of accommodation for air travel were being applied. The related report of the Advisory Committee (A/44/730) contained one recommendation. Following an exchange of views with the Secretariat, and bearing in mind the Advisory Committee's experience in considering such reports in the past, as well as in an effort to limit documentation, it recommended that the Secretary-General should in future submit his annual report on the matter directly to the Advisory Committee; following review, the Advisory Committee would report to the General Assembly if necessary.

4. Mr. BAZAN (Chile), while noting the need to limit documentation and the fact that the Advisory Committee's recommendation might be useful in the specific case of the subject under consideration, was reluctant to establish a precedent under which reports of the Secretary-General would be transmitted directly to the Advisory Committee.

5. His delegation had some doubts as to the need to accord first-class travel to eminent persons, as detailed in table 5 of the Secretary-General's report. It would be interesting to know whether any eminent persons had declined to accept the standard of accommodation offered to them by the Organization. It also seemed strange that a single individual should be the only person available to attend a number of meetings in Europe, North America and elsewhere, necessitating what amounted to four round-the-world trips from Melbourne.

6. Mr. UPTON (United Kingdom) said that the increase in the number of exceptions to the General Assembly's guidelines since the last reporting period should not be endorsed, to avoid giving the impression of condoning lax interpretation of the rules. He would also like to see the practice of reporting to the Fifth Committee retained at least for the coming reporting period.

7. Mr. GUPTA (India) said that the practice of authorizing first-class travel for individuals who had to work immediately after a long overnight flight was not justified. However, he felt that greater flexibility should be applied in according first-class accommodation to those Permanent Representatives of States who travelled on United Nations business. In view of the limited expenditure involved, he hoped that the Secretariat might give further consideration to his suggestion in the course of the coming year.
8. Mr. CROSSMAN (United States of America) said that his delegation had no strong objections to the exceptions listed in the Secretary-General's report. Given the recent improvements in standards of international air travel, it did not believe that the restrictions on first-class travel were unduly inconvenient and opposed any liberalization of the current policy. Indeed, it believed that further efforts could be made to reduce the cost of air travel, including the discontinuation of first-class travel for so-called eminent persons. His delegation did not support the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning future reports on the subject and believed that the current reporting mechanism was essential if control was to be maintained over related expenditures.
9. Mr. KALBITZER (Federal Republic of Germany) said that, while he would regret it if the Fifth Committee were no longer to receive the Secretary-General's report, he would accept the Committee's decision in that regard.
10. Mr. VAHER (Canada) said that the number of exceptions should be kept to an absolute minimum. His delegation therefore favoured the continued submission of the Secretary-General's report to the Fifth Committee. He also wished to know whether the United Nations took advantage of such benefits as frequent-flyer programmes.
11. Ms. MILLS (Deputy Controller) said that she was unaware of any cases in which eminent persons had declined first-class travel offered by the Organization. The four round-the-world trips made by a single individual all related to a specific project on the subject of commodities in Africa.
12. The Organization had indeed been able to negotiate a series of arrangements with airlines whereby the Organization received benefits such as discounted fares, free tickets or upgrading. It was continuing to pursue such opportunities in the hope of achieving further savings.
13. The CHAIRMAN proposed the following modification to the Advisory Committee's recommendation, in order to take account of the views expressed by delegations. The Fifth Committee would note the negative trend in the authorization of exceptions to the General Assembly's guidelines concerning first-class travel and recognize the need for a change in that trend. It would recognize the role of the Advisory Committee in considering the subject and allow the Advisory Committee to continue to play that role but would retain the current procedure whereby the Secretary-General's reports were submitted to the Fifth Committee. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee endorsed that proposal.
14. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 137: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued) (A/44/605 and Add.1 and Add.2 and A/44/725)

AGENDA ITEM 133: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST (continued)

(c) REVIEW OF THE RATES OF REIMBURSEMENT TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF TROOP-CONTRIBUTING STATES (continued) (A/44/500 and A/44/725)

AGENDA ITEM 134: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS IRAN-IRAQ MILITARY OBSERVER GROUP (continued)

Voluntary contributions of supplies and services (continued) (A/44/624 and A/44/725)

15. Mr. SOTO (Colombia) said that the Organization should not be induced to accept responsibility for the administration of huge numbers of peace-keeping personnel and huge amounts of equipment throughout the world without establishing a definite time-frame for their operations. The permanent members of the Security Council bore a particular responsibility in that regard. On the other hand, it was incomprehensible that the Secretary-General should be asked to increase his important activities in a field where expenditure almost equalled the entire regular budget of the United Nations unless he was ensured sufficient means to do so.

16. Given the need for more efficient administration, his delegation fully endorsed the comments concerning economies of scale contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/44/605). It also recognized the advantages inherent in the use of civilian personnel provided by Governments but felt that the impartiality of such personnel must be guaranteed. They should therefore be employed initially only on a limited and experimental basis. Noting the need for the Secretary-General to react promptly, his delegation supported the proposal concerning national training programmes under United Nations guidelines made by the delegations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

17. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposals to expand the Working Capital Fund by an amount of \$100 million and to increase the levels of his commitment authority. It also believed that the establishment of a reserve stock of equipment and supplies was appropriate and hoped that the Secretariat could promptly allay the doubts raised by the Advisory Committee in that regard. It did not, however, believe that an expansion of the Working Capital Fund should be used to compensate for the failure of some to pay their assessed contributions. The idea of establishing a planning and monitoring group in the secretariat should ensure benefits in terms of cost-effectiveness, but its functions and authority should be clearly defined. His delegation was also prepared to consider proposals concerning the establishment of mechanisms to deal with such matters as start-up problems, to establish guidelines for the voluntary contribution of supplies and services and to involve other organizations of the system in peace-keeping efforts.

(Mr. Soto, Colombia)

18. With regard to the composition of existing groups of Member States for the apportionment of the costs of peace-keeping operations, his delegation supported the requests for changes in their status submitted by the Central African Republic, Myanmar and Poland.

19. Mr. KPOTSRA (Togo) said that his delegation welcomed the in-depth consideration of measures to improve the preparation, implementation and management of peace-keeping operations. The very inclusion of the item in the agenda reflected the importance which Members attached to the question. Of particular relevance was the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 8 of its report (A/44/725) on improving co-ordination among the various Secretariat units involved in preparing for and managing peace-keeping operations. In view of the growing number of such operations, the establishment of a Secretariat planning and monitoring group should be given serious consideration.

20. As the Working Capital Fund was only a fraction (6 per cent) of the combined regular peace-keeping budgets for 1989 and further expenditures had been incurred for recent operations, his delegation supported in principle the proposed increases in the Fund and commitment authority in respect of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. The basic problem of insufficient resources would be much less serious if all Member States honoured their obligations promptly and in full. None the less, some understanding could be shown for the fact that late payments often reflected the difficult financial situation of the States concerned.

21. The reserve stock of equipment and supply items, which would require \$15 million, must be considered in detail, taking into account the reservations expressed by many delegations on the problems of maintenance, storage and suitability of the equipment. The idea of providing more civilian personnel would certainly increase the participation of Member States in peace-keeping operations, but, as the Secretary-General himself had said, it must be approached with caution (A/44/605, para. 28). In the light of the experience in Namibia, an appropriate legal and administrative framework for such participation would have to be defined in advance. On the whole, that proposal and the other measures recommended by the Secretary-General in paragraph 55 (b) of his report were in keeping with the requests contained in resolution A/SPC/44/L.6, which had recently been adopted by the Special Political Committee.

22. The Organization's financial difficulties underscored the need for Member States to pay their contributions regularly. His delegation welcomed the report contained in document A/44/605/Add.2, based on the Secretary-General's request, in General Assembly resolution 43/230, for information which would make it possible to identify anomalies in the composition of the existing groups of Member States. Annexes II and III of the report set forth an equitable apportionment of costs for peace-keeping and took into account the capacity of States to contribute. In that connection, it was surprising that while annex III listed Togo as being among the 40 least developed countries, it was still classified in group (c), rather than group (d) for assessment purposes. His delegation wished to draw attention to that anomaly and hoped that, at the current session, corrective action would be taken in the spirit of resolution 3101 (XXVIII).

23. Mr. TAN Kok Nam (Singapore) said that the United Nations remained a viable option for small States like Singapore and had an important role to play in assisting those States in maintaining security. His delegation was pleased to note the consensus in support of the Secretary-General's observation that reform was a continuing process, requiring constant review of the Organization and its ability to perform its functions. At a time of more openness in the world and in a year when many new peace-keeping operations had been established, the comprehensive review of United Nations peace-keeping activities was heartening. His delegation welcomed the review as part of the ongoing reform and restructuring process of the United Nations and regretted that it had not been initiated earlier. His delegation also welcomed the revitalization of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations. Its recommendations, contained in document A/44/301, and the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/44/605) deserved careful consideration.

24. A relative newcomer to United Nations peace-keeping operations, Singapore, had recently responded to a call to participate in the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) by providing police monitors and election supervisors for service in Namibia. Singapore would not have been able to participate in UNTAG on such short notice without the assistance of Australia, Austria, Canada, Fiji, Malaysia and the Nordic countries, to which it was extremely grateful. Singapore's own experience had shown that the sharing of expertise and the rationalization of certain aspects of peace-keeping work were essential to the Organization's ability to respond to new initiatives and involve more Member States in peace-keeping activities.

25. In the Special Political Committee, his delegation had expressed its support for the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations. Referring to the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peace-keeping operations, he said that the role of the Organization in maintaining international peace and security would be strengthened through a better system for the collection, processing and dissemination of information; the designation by Member States of units in their police and military forces for United Nations peace-keeping activities; the provision of civilian units; training; and the maintenance of a reserve stock of commonly used equipment and supply items. His delegation was especially in favour of the development of better early-warning, information and communications systems. Early warning was a highly sensitive area and great care would have to be taken in determining the data to be fed into the system.

26. Recognizing the need for proper co-ordination among the various Secretariat units involved in peace-keeping, his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning a feasibility study on the establishment of a Secretariat planning and monitoring group. The participation of civilians in United Nations peace-keeping operations would encourage the involvement of a greater number of Member States. At the same time, as the Advisory Committee had indicated, there were practical aspects to be considered, including the establishment of standard administrative procedures consistent with existing rules and practices to govern the provision of civilian personnel. Regional organizations might be an alternative

(Mr. Tan Kok Nam, Singapore)

source of peace-keeping personnel and a means of involving small States unable to provide any sizeable contingents on their own. The regional force could consist of either uniformed or civilian personnel.

27. Aware that Member States were withholding their assessed contributions at a time of increased peace-keeping responsibilities for the Organization, his delegation agreed in principle to consider the Secretary-General's proposal to increase the Working Capital Fund. His delegation therefore welcomed the Advisory Committee's request that the Secretary-General present options for financing the increase and awaited with interest the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the level of the increase and the means of financing it. For the same reason, his delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal for an increase in the levels of commitment authority in respect of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. The Secretary-General's proposal concerning a reserve stock of equipment and supply items was sound, but, as the Advisory Committee had indicated, it would first be necessary to address the questions of location, storage, maintenance and management of the stock. While many of the proposals by the Special Committee and the Secretary-General were not new, it was important to note that, for the first time, Member States were prepared to consider them as part of a comprehensive approach.

28. The strict financial discipline imposed on the regular budget must also apply to peace-keeping. Otherwise, irresponsible parties in conflict-ridden countries would continue to pursue their own narrow interests on the assumption that the United Nations would bear the expenses. Small, poor developing nations would not be able to afford the increased peace-keeping assessments that would result. In that context, consideration should be given to fixing a definite, but reasonable, time-limit for peace-keeping activities, as at least two delegations had already suggested. That would induce the parties to focus on the key issues, spare ordinary citizens suffering and reduce peace-keeping expenditures for the United Nations. In conclusion, his delegation supported the requests by the Central African Republic, Myanmar and Poland, to be reclassified in the light of changes in their economic situations.

29. Mr. VILLAR (Spain) said that his delegation agreed with the statement by the representative of France on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community. Referring to the history of the division of countries into groups for purposes of apportioning the costs of peace-keeping, he said that his delegation wished to highlight that that division reflected the particular responsibility of the permanent members of the Security Council to finance peace-keeping operations and the unequal capacity of Member States to pay. His delegation also wished to stress the stability of that classification over time, and the fact that Spain had been among those countries whose contributions had been reduced by 80 per cent in 1961 for very sound reasons.

30. The criteria on which the existing division of countries was based remained valid. His delegation also believed that a reasonable degree of stability should be maintained in the classification and that frequent reviews should be avoided. Any changes in the groups should be limited in number, staggered over time and

/...

(Mr. Villar, Spain)

based on objective need. His delegation also believed that States Members of the United Nations must do their utmost to support the Organization's peace-keeping activities.

31. Based on those considerations, and particularly the importance of maintaining stability, his delegation supported Poland's request to be transferred to group (c) as being fully justified by that country's current economic situation. It had no objection to the requests by Myanmar and the Central African Republic to be transferred to group (d), as both were among the least developed countries. It might be appropriate to reconsider the composition of groups (c) and (d), as the report of the Secretary-General had brought out an anomaly: some least developed countries were in group (c), while countries not classified as least developed were in group (d). Such a review might be best conducted by the group (c) and group (d) countries concerned. His delegation had also taken the opportunity to reassess its own status as a member of group (c). It had studied the data contained in the Secretary-General's report and had found no technical or economic justification for reclassifying Spain, and only Spain, from group (c) to group (b). Spain was indeed the ninth largest contributor to the regular budget of the United Nations, but it was not the only group (c) country whose contribution was higher than that of many countries in group (b). While Spain's contribution had increased by 87.5 per cent between 1973 and 1989, the contributions of other group (c) countries had increased by an even greater percentage over the same period. Nor was Spain the only country in group (c) to belong to economic and political groupings such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development or the European Economic Community.

32. His delegation had also considered the per capita income factor, which should be the most clear-cut indicator of capacity to pay. However, the results of the study were confusing, for while per capita income in Spain was higher than that of many countries in group (b), it was also lower than that of many countries in group (c). Consequently, there appeared to be no objective reason why Spain should be transferred to group (b), unless other countries were similarly reclassified.

33. As a long-time member of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, Spain actively supported United Nations peace-keeping activities. It participated in three such operations and was prepared to consider taking part in others. It was fully prepared to support peace-keeping operations financially and therefore agreed to its reclassification, effective 1 January 1990, subject to the necessary budgetary approval by the national authorities for 1990. However, in order to mitigate the effects of the proposed 500 per cent increase in its contribution, his delegation favoured the use of a scheme along the lines of that used by the Committee on Contributions (A/44/11) for avoiding excessive variations in the contributions of Member States. It therefore proposed that its reclassification should be phased in gradually over a three-year period. Under that arrangement, Spain would contribute 50 per cent of its total contribution in 1990; 80 per cent in 1991; and 100 per cent beginning in 1992. His delegation was prepared to participate in informal consultations in order to determine how its proposals could best be reflected in decisions taken on the question. Spain's 100 per cent increase over five years in its contributions to operational activities for

/...

(Mr. Villar, Spain)

development and the proposed 500 per cent increase in its contributions to peace-keeping reflected its commitments to the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations. It was to be hoped that other Member States would demonstrate similar support.

34. Mr. YU Mengjia (China) expressed appreciation of the importance attached by the Secretary-General to United Nations peace-keeping activities, and agreement with the Secretary-General's analysis of the nature of such operations and the conditions necessary for their success, as set forth in his report on the work of the Organization (A/44/1).

35. The Security Council bore prime responsibility for the maintenance of world peace and security. When a peace-keeping operation was set up, the Council should clearly spell out its mandate and duration; it should then regularly review its progress, duration, scale and efficiency. Although effective in defusing conflicts, eliminating tension, creating conditions for negotiations and promoting political settlements, peace-keeping operations were no substitute for final solutions to conflicts. Perpetual extensions of their mandates should therefore be avoided.

36. Given the development of the international situation and the demand for new peace-keeping operations, United Nations expenditure on peace-keeping might well soon exceed the regular budget. His delegation believed peace-keeping operations should continue to be financed from a variety of sources, and voluntary contributions from all sides should be greatly encouraged.

37. To deal with the start-up costs of new peace-keeping operations, the Secretary-General had proposed an expansion of the Working Capital Fund. His delegation believed that, in indicating the options for financing such an expansion, the Secretary-General should also explain the uses to which the Fund was currently put and the reasons for its rapid depletion. If those questions were not dealt with, the Fund would soon be depleted again. Additional financial burdens on Member States should also be avoided. His delegation did favour an increase in the levels of commitment authority granted to the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee in respect of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

38. It was evident that participation in current peace-keeping operations was limited to a small number of countries, and that both participating developing countries and the operations they had participated in were comparatively few. The Secretary-General should provide information on the needs of peace-keeping operations; that would help Member States to make contributions, and would be conducive to an improvement in the geographical balance of such operations.

39. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that there should be greater co-ordination among the various Secretariat units responsible for the planning and day-to-day management of peace-keeping operations. It also agreed that further study was needed of the use of civilian personnel - an important development, which would permit participation by Member States unable to send troops.

/...

(Mr. Yu Mengjia, China)

40. Voluntary contributions in both cash and kind that were made as outright grants should be recognized as income credited to peace-keeping operations and deducted, in due time, from the assessed contributions of Member States. In connection with the draft technical guidelines for voluntary contributions of supplies and services (A/44/624, annex I), he said that equipment and material provided as advances, especially when intended to offset regular budget assessments, must be kept to a minimum, and must be commensurate with the needs of the operations concerned, and acceptable to the Secretary-General.

41. The applications from Poland, the Central African Republic and Myanmar to be reclassified for the purposes of apportioning the costs of peace-keeping operations merited serious consideration. On the other hand, the economic conditions of some other countries, including some least developed countries, had undergone great changes since 1973. His delegation believed an overall study of the issue was needed.

42. The success of United Nations peace-keeping operations depended on the political will of Member States to support them, and on a solid financial basis. All Member States should fulfil their financial obligations under the Charter, and pay their assessed contributions for peace-keeping operations in time and in full.

43. Mr. GURYANOV (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation was already on record in the Special Political Committee as attaching great importance to improvements in the effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations peace-keeping operations. Success in tackling the problems involved would require a comprehensive approach, including structural improvements in Secretariat units responsible for peace-keeping operations, greater co-ordination among them, and the establishment of a Secretariat planning and co-ordination group.

44. His delegation could support such proposals for meeting start-up costs as seeking alternative sources of financing: for example, voluntary contributions and payments of arrears to the regular budget. Additional steps should be taken to reduce costs, by increasing the share borne by the parties to conflicts and by parties deriving particular economic benefit from peace-keeping operations, by bringing in outside contributors such as regional organizations, and by involving the specialized agencies.

45. In connection with the apportionment of the costs of peace-keeping operations, his delegation supported the proposed transfer of Poland from group (b) to group (c). Such a step would be purely pragmatic. It should not be tied to any other changes that might be made in the composition of the groups of contributing countries, and it could be done during the current session.

46. His country was up to date with all assessed contributions towards peace-keeping operations for 1989, apart from amounts assessed for forces whose mandates extended beyond 1989. It had also begun to pay off its arrears for previous years, and had contributed \$2.4 million for that purpose in 1988.

47. Mr. Al-Masri (Syrian Arab Republic) took the Chair.

/...

48. Ms. BERENQUER (Brazil) said that guidelines for the efficient and cost-effective management of peace-keeping operations should be drawn up in the light of experience with existing operations, in particular those created more recently. Since, however, conditions in the field and the operational characteristics of peace-keeping activities varied widely, the guidelines must be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of individual operations. The difficulties of predicting requirements and the political implications of such activities must be borne in mind, lest rules and procedures obstruct the fulfilment of mandates adopted by Member States. The authority of the Security Council and the General Assembly in their respective roles under the Charter must be preserved.

49. It was to be regretted that the studies called for under resolution 43/230, section III, paragraph 1, had not been made available to the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations in due time; she trusted that they would be made available to that Committee at its next session. She was attracted to the idea of a Secretariat planning and monitoring group for peace-keeping operations, as proposed by the Advisory Committee, but felt the idea needed further study: each situation might end up requiring a group of slightly different composition from the next. Her delegation therefore regarded the suggestion as an informal mechanism for co-ordination requiring no change or addition to the existing administrative structure, and could support it on that basis. Caution, however, must be exercised: established procedures must be fully observed, so that no action could be construed as encroaching on the authority of any existing organ.

50. Many of the Secretary-General's other proposals needed further study and should not be implemented for the time being. That was especially true of an increase in the use of civilian personnel in peace-keeping operations. It was also true of the proposed increase in the Working Capital Fund. Her delegation awaited the report of the Secretary-General on options for financing such an increase, and emphasized that the proposal should not give rise to increased assessments or burdens on Member States as a means of dealing with cash-flow problems caused by withholdings of assessed contributions.

51. Her delegation supported the requests from the Central African Republic, Myanmar and Poland to be assigned to different categories of States for the purpose of assessing contributions for peace-keeping operations, and would also favour a review of the cases of Spain, Greece and Turkey.

52. Mr. SEZAKI (Japan) said that the extraordinary improvement in the international climate over the past three years had meant new demands on the peace-making and peace-keeping functions of the United Nations. With the rapid growth in the number and magnitude of peace-keeping operations, a considerable number of administrative and budgetary problems had emerged. At its previous session, the General Assembly had examined how the United Nations would meet the growing financial requirements of its peace-keeping operations as well as ensure their more cost-effective management and co-ordination. Although the Assembly had succeeded in identifying a wide range of concrete issues, it had made progress on only a limited number, such as the receipt and utilization of voluntary contributions, particularly those tendered in cash for peace-keeping and related operations. In the case of the rest, it had yet to arrive at fundamental solutions.

/...

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

53. In its resolution 43/230, section III, the General Assembly had identified six areas in which problems existed in respect of the economies of scale which it wished to see achieved: the administrative co-ordination of various peace-keeping operations; procedures and criteria for the contribution of civilian personnel by Member States; start-up activities, including financing; the reserve stock of communications and other equipment; and reimbursement of Member States contributing troops to peace-keeping operations. The Assembly had also decided to pursue discussions on technical guidelines relating to the treatment and valuation of voluntary contributions in the form of supplies and services. The Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee had both presented concrete proposals and recommendations in each of those areas. It was essential that the General Assembly should establish workable agreements in each respect, wherever possible, rather than postpone consideration because it lacked comprehensive and systematic solutions.

54. The peace-making and peace-keeping role of the United Nations would continue to grow as regional conflicts became more amenable to solution. There was therefore an urgent need for practical solutions to the administrative and budgetary problems involved in peace-keeping operations. His country would extend as much financial support as possible for such operations and would provide personnel in areas where that would be appropriate.

55. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's proposal for the establishment of a Secretariat planning and monitoring group, provided that it did not entail the creation of a new unit or high-level post. The group should link the various entities dealing with peace-keeping operations and enhance co-ordination among them. However, establishing such a group would not solve all the administrative and budgetary problems. Actual forward planning and monitoring of start-up activities and the ongoing management of peace-keeping operations would require the entities involved in logistic operations - such as the Field Operations Division, which appeared to have been stretched to the limits of its human and technical capabilities - to be strengthened. To that end, the Secretariat should re-examine programme priorities in the light of the ongoing reform process with a view to redeploying additional resources to that sector.

56. His delegation welcomed the proposals and recommendations of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on ways of achieving greater economies of scale through procurement methods that would increase the quantity of goods ordered, thereby attracting lower bids from potential suppliers. However, such measures were not the only route to economies. Section III, paragraph 1 (a) of General Assembly resolution 43/230 envisaged a comprehensive study on how economies of scale could be achieved through administrative co-ordination of the various peace-keeping operations of the United Nations. That could be done, for example, by developing a common system of recruiting field personnel, establishing a mutual allocation scheme for supplies and services, pooling technical personnel and stockable equipment, and strengthening training. It was also important to develop a data base to store organizational knowledge and experience gained in commercial transactions related to the purchase of services and supplies.

/...

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

57. The sharp increase in the share of total peace-keeping operation expenditures represented by the cost of civilian personnel was a matter of concern to his delegation as it had been at the expense of expenditure to improve the infrastructure and equipment of both military and civilian components. The Secretary-General reported that there was a shortage of trained and experienced United Nations staff members with the requisite technical skills as a result of the recent increase in the number of peace-keeping operations, which were being called upon to perform wider range of tasks, including supervising elections and monitoring the implementation of complex agreements. There was thus an urgent need for Member States to provide civilian personnel. The use of technical personnel from specialized agencies was also worth considering. The Secretary-General had presented a list of specific areas where the provision of civilian personnel by Governments was possible (A/44/605, para. 29). His list did not, however, exhaust the possibilities and additional areas should be identified where civilian personnel could be utilized for the types of functions currently being performed by military components. His delegation agreed on the whole with the conditions outlined by the Secretary-General to be met by Member States in providing civilian personnel (A/44/605, paras. 30-35) and welcomed the Advisory Committee's clarification regarding the language requirement for civilian personnel (A/44/725, para. 15). It also welcomed the latter's view of ACABQ that the use of civilian personnel would allow for wider participation by Member States which were not in a position to provide military contingents.

58. Regarding the recommendation that standard administrative procedures should be established to govern the provision of civilian personnel, his delegation considered it extremely unlikely that the Secretary-General would be able to reach agreement with Member States on a complete standard procedure given the specific and unforeseeable nature of each operation. His delegation shared the view of the European Community that the Secretary-General should not try too hard to plan and standardize in that area. While it was appropriate for the Secretary-General to prepare common administrative procedures and propose them to all Member States in due course, it was also appropriate that those procedures should be applied flexibly, taking into account the specific requirements of the operations concerned. In principle, Governments that provided civilians should be reimbursed. Failure to do so might impede the provision of qualified civilian personnel on a universal and assured basis. His delegation therefore saw little justification for requiring Member States to provide civilian personnel at no cost to the Organization.

59. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee's recommendations on ways to facilitate efficient start-up activities and its request that the idea of establishing a reserve stock of equipment for peace-keeping infantry battalions should be developed further. It was important to develop that idea on the basis of the experience gained by States in preparing an updated inventory of resources that could be made available to the United Nations on short notice. It was also desirable to consider computerizing such an inventory, as well as the inventory of supplies and equipment held in the stocks of existing peace-keeping operations, so that they could be readily available for quick reference. His delegation agreed in

/...

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

principle with the proposals to increase the level of the commitments the Secretary-General could enter into in respect of unforeseen and extraordinary expenses, subject to the concurrence of the Advisory Committee.

60. With respect to the Secretary-General's proposal that the Working Capital Fund should be increased by \$100 million, he recalled that, at its forty-third session the General Assembly had requested an "analysis of the problems involved in starting up peace-keeping and related operations and possible solutions, including the establishment of a Fund and the use of the existing Working Capital Fund". A discussion about increasing the amount of funds required to deploy a new mission should therefore be confined to pre-implementation and other immediate costs. His delegation believed that there was no convincing justification for the proposed increase. It noted with interest that the Advisory Committee leaned towards increasing the Working Capital Fund. However, it believed that arrears in respect of assessed contributions must be fully paid before any such increase was effected.

61. Consideration should also be given to the use of voluntary contributions in cash to improve the financial situation. Japan had made substantial voluntary contributions to specific missions in recent years and in August 1989 had made a cash contribution of \$2.5 million to help establish the Secretary-General's trust fund to support and strengthen peace-keeping activities. The purpose of the Fund was to provide short-term financing for preliminary and start-up activities of newly established peace-keeping or related operations. He was glad to note that the Fund had since become operational and was being utilized for the United Nations Observer Group in Central America and the United Nations Observer Mission to verify the electoral process in Nicaragua. Japan called on other Member States to respond positively to the Secretary-General's request for voluntary contributions to the Fund.

62. His delegation endorsed the draft guidelines for voluntary contributions made as outright grants (A/44/624, annex I, sect. I and A/44/725, paras. 33 and 38). It also agreed with the Advisory Committee that the term "voluntary contribution in the form of advances" was a misnomer since it was a loan in the form of supplies and services and constituted a liability upon the Organization to refund the equivalent value of those supplies and services to the donor. Nevertheless, if the Organization entered into such an arrangement on a reimbursable basis, the Secretary-General should follow the normal procurement practice and should meet all the requirements specified in paragraphs 25 and 26 of his report (A/44/624). In such cases, the Secretary-General should also invite the Government concerned to increase the element of donation in its offer.

63. With regard to the rates of reimbursement to the Governments of troop-contributing States, his delegation was fully aware of the increasingly heavy burden those Governments were bearing. However, given the incompleteness of the data received and utilized in the present review, there was no realistic basis for recommending a revision in the current rates. His delegation trusted that the Secretary-General would find ways and means of remedying the situation and collecting the required information.

/...

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

64. On the question of changes in the composition of the groups of Member States among which peace-keeping operation costs were apportioned, his delegation was ready to accede to the requests of the Central African Republic, Myanmar and Poland for a change in their status. Such changes should be limited, however, to unusual cases which the basic criteria set out in General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII) appeared to justify. Those countries whose economic circumstances had improved should consider moving to a higher group when appropriate.

65. Mr. KABIR (Bangladesh) said that his country was totally and unequivocally committed to the peace-keeping role of the United Nations, as its participation in peace-keeping operations testified. It sincerely hoped that the Committee's discussion of the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peace-keeping operations would have a positive influence on those operations and would improve their efficiency, cost-effectiveness and capacity to respond.

66. A prerequisite for the success of any peace-keeping operation was adequate planning prior to deployment. His delegation endorsed the call for greater co-ordination among the various units involved in preparing for and managing peace-keeping operations and the Advisory Committee's recommendation for a study of the feasibility of establishing a peace-keeping planning and monitoring group in the Secretariat. A compilation of the experience and practice of past operations could serve as a useful guide and a reference tool. Regarding economies of scale in procurement for peace-keeping operations, he noted that the differing nature of operations, as well as the timing of requisitions, must be borne in mind. His delegation therefore endorsed paragraph 10 of the Secretary-General's report (A/44/605). The more time and flexibility afforded to the Secretary-General in preparing for an operation, the greater the possibilities of obtaining and utilizing standard equipment and achieving economies of scale. His delegation was confident that the Secretary-General would do his best to achieve that goal.

67. The Secretary-General had identified a number of areas in which civilian personnel provided by Governments could be utilized in peace-keeping operations. While the suggestion that Governments willing to participate might supply inventories of the specialized individuals or units they would be prepared to provide was useful, a detailed framework should be worked out for such participation as the area was a new one for the United Nations.

68. The start-up problems associated with peace-keeping operations were formidable. The proposed planning and monitoring group would help to reduce start-up problems, as would the measures outlined by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 43 (a) to (f) of his report (A/44/605).

69. The phenomenal rise in expenditures and the expected expansion of the United Nations peace-keeping role required urgent consideration of the financial aspects of peace-keeping operations. It was imperative to ensure the full funding of peace-keeping operations, based on a formula for apportioning the cost that reflected the limited capacity of the developing countries, particularly the least

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

developed, to contribute financially. Voluntary contributions and other alternative sources of funding must be regarded only as a means of supplementing assessed contributions. While it supported in principle the Secretary-General's proposals concerning the Working Capital Fund, the level of commitment authority, and a reserve stock of commonly used equipment and supplies, his delegation hoped that the Secretary-General would indicate what options were available for financing an increase in the Working Capital Fund. In the case of establishing a reserve stock, additional information was needed about costs, location, maintenance and management.

70. Regarding the review of rates of reimbursement to the Governments of troop-contributing States, he noted that, despite the stipulation in General Assembly resolution 40/247 that rates of reimbursement should be reviewed at least once every two years, the rates had remained unchanged since 1980. Consequently, the percentage of the cost not covered by reimbursement had risen significantly. The incompleteness of the data received from troop-contributing States had prevented the Secretary-General from recommending a revision in the current rates. His delegation shared the Advisory Committee's concern in that connection and hoped that all the countries involved would supply complete information so that the Secretary-General could make appropriate recommendations. His delegation supported the proposal that the issue should be reviewed at the next session, when steps could also be taken to ensure better geographical representation.

71. His delegation supported the technical guidelines presented by the Secretary-General for the treatment and valuation of voluntary contributions in the form of supplies and services as outright grants or in the form of advances, and the related recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

72. In connection with the composition of the existing groups of Member States for the apportionment of the costs of peace-keeping operations financed through assessed contributions, his delegation was ready to support the requests of the Central African Republic, Myanmar and Poland for reclassification.

73. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) said that Argentina had consistently supported United Nations peace-keeping operations, having contributed military personnel to those operations for several decades. Currently, Argentine officers were serving with the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group, the United Nations Angola Verification Mission and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. The active and continued presence of Argentine troops in peace-keeping operations was evidence of his Government's firm commitment to the use of that mechanism as an instrument for solving regional conflict.

74. The report submitted by the Secretary-General (A/44/605 and Add.1 and 2) covered all the aspects of the comprehensive study called for in General Assembly resolution 43/230. Although it would obviously be difficult to secure economies of scale, given the diversity of the locations and troops involved in the various operations, it would be of interest to continue the effort to standardize the equipment used with a view to lowering costs and improving quality. Account should be taken of transport costs also, given the distance of the conflicts from the places where the equipment was produced.

(Mr. Osella, Argentina)

75. Civilian involvement in peace-keeping operations was steadily increasing, and the idea of preparing an inventory of human resources needed for peace-keeping operations, so that States which did not provide troops could contribute in that way, had much to recommend it. In that connection, the suggestion that Member States should provide information on military units and observers that could be made available to the Secretary-General at short notice, and the suggestion regarding the possibility of preparing an inventory of States wishing to provide equipment and services for peace-keeping operations, would make an important contribution to the more effective preparation of operations of that kind. To that end, as recommended by ACABQ, a detailed analysis should be made of practical aspects such as the contractual status of such personnel, the integration of such staff in the military contingents and their legal status, all of which were mentioned in paragraph 34 of the Secretary-General's report. At a time when peace-keeping operations were expanding, speedy and effective preparation was essential for their subsequent success.

76. The United Nations must be able to adapt to changing situations and respond rapidly and vigorously in order to solve conflicts and maintain peace throughout the world. The Secretary-General should therefore have freedom to put peace-keeping operations into effect speedily. His delegation accordingly supported the proposed increase in commitment authority.

77. The cost of the operations should be apportioned fairly among the members of the Organization, bearing in mind the responsibilities of the various countries as set forth in the Charter. The system for the apportionment of peace-keeping costs provided for in General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII) derived naturally from recognition of the greater capacity of the more economically developed States to contribute. In his delegation's view, that system should be maintained as reflecting the consensus of all Member States. There had been changes and movements within those categories which had helped to keep the situation balanced. The requests of Poland, Myanmar and the Central African Republic resulted from changes in their economic situation and his delegation would support them, on the understanding that the validity of the system as a whole would not be questioned.

78. Mr. CONMY (Ireland) said that his delegation associated itself fully with the statement made by the representative of France on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community.

79. Ireland had noted with satisfaction the almost universal support currently enjoyed by United Nations peace-keeping efforts. Such support was crucial to the success of the Organization's peace-keeping efforts, which derived their strength from their collective international character. It was regrettable that, in some cases, expressions of support were not matched by the necessary action. He had in mind the continued failure of some Member States to pay their assessed contributions, which were legally binding obligations, on time and in full. That failure had a detrimental impact on the Organization's ability to prepare, launch and carry out peace-keeping operations. It also placed an unfair burden on the troop-contributing Governments, some of which were owed substantial sums of money.

(Mr. Conmy, Ireland)

80. His delegation supported in general the Secretary-General's proposals for enhancing the Organization's preparedness to launch peace-keeping operations and looked forward to participating in the informal consultations on them. Commenting on the Secretary-General's report on the review of rates of reimbursement (A/44/500), he said that his delegation was one of those which had complied with the request to provide data on which to base the review. It was disappointed that the failure of a few delegations to do the same had made the review incomplete, and that definitive conclusions could therefore not be reached at the current stage. His delegation joined with others in calling on those few Member States which had not submitted the data requested by the Secretary-General to do so immediately, so that the review could be completed and presented to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. It would not be acceptable to allow a further two years to go by before a complete review was concluded.

81. In conclusion, his delegation wished to applaud the generous step which the delegation of Spain had announced to the Committee earlier in the meeting.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.