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CONVOCATION OF A WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE UNDER THE AUSPICES
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1974-1975
AND MEDIUM TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1974-1977

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution
recommended by the Second Committee (A/9403, para. 5)

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Ernesto C. GARRIDO (Philippines)

1. At its 1630th meeting, held on 17 December 1973, the Fifth Committee considered the statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1589) concerning the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee (A/9403, para. 5).
2. Under the terms of operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide to convene a World Food Conference under the auspices of the United Nations for two weeks in November 1974 at Rome.
3. Under the terms of operative paragraph 4, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General, after consultation with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to appoint as soon as possible a Secretary-General of the Conference, and to set up a small Conference secretariat drawing particularly upon the expertise and competence of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and other relevant bodies of the United Nations system.
4. Under the terms of operative paragraph 7, the General Assembly would accept with appreciation the invitation of the Government of Italy to act as host to the Conference in Rome.

5. In his statement (A/C.5/1589), the Secretary-General indicated that the financial implications of the proposed World Food Conference were estimated at \$714,000. However, since the Secretary-General had been informed by the Director-General of FAO that it was envisaged by FAO that up to \$250,000 could be made available by that organization for the Conference servicing costs, it had been assumed that the above estimate could be reduced by the same amount. Accordingly, it was estimated that, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, additional appropriations under the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975 in the amounts of \$416,000, \$45,000 and \$3,000 would be required under section 6 (Policy-making organs (Economic and social activities)); section 7 (Department of Economic and Social Affairs); and section 14 (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), respectively. As a consequence of the requirements for temporary assistance, an additional appropriation in the amount of \$57,000 would be required under section 34 (Staff assessment), offset by an increase in the same amount under income section 1, income from staff assessment.

6. In its related report (A/9008/Add.34), the Advisory Committee noted with concern that the costs of the Conference secretariat, or \$380,000, would account for two thirds of the costs of the Conference, and that the costs of the secretariat had been calculated on the assumption that all posts would be occupied as of 1 January 1974. The Advisory Committee recommended that a 20 per cent delayed recruitment factor be applied to the cost of posts, thereby reducing the estimate by \$76,000 from \$380,000 to \$304,000. The Advisory Committee also expressed its belief that the magnitude of the request for consultants (\$20,000 in the Conference secretariat and \$45,000 for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs) did not accord with the draft resolution. Accordingly, it recommended that the provisions for consultants be reduced by \$45,000 to \$20,000 to be divided equally between the Conference secretariat and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Advisory Committee recommended also that the provision for information activities be reduced by \$15,000 to \$10,000 and that the estimated cost, or \$3,000, included under section 14 for travel by UNCTAD be absorbed within the provisions approved under the section in first reading. On this basis, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee (A/9403, para. 5), additional appropriations, totalling \$325,000, would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975 in the amount of \$315,000 under section 6 and of \$10,000 under section 7. As a consequence of the temporary assistance requirements, an additional appropriation in the amount of \$45,000 would be requested under section 34 (Staff assessment), offset by an increase in the same amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment).

7. During the discussion on this item, one delegation confirmed the pledge of hospitality made by its Government, which would provide the facilities required for the Conference and was prepared to bear the additional costs of holding the Conference in Rome rather than at Geneva, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV). Another delegation expressed the view that the estimates before the Committee were excessive, especially in respect of additional staff. That delegation further indicated that, should the recommendation of the Advisory Committee have been put to a vote, it would have abstained.

DECISION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

8. The Fifth Committee decided, without objection, to inform the General Assembly that, should it approve the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee (A/9403, para. 5), additional appropriations amounting to \$325,000 would be required, distributed among sections 6, 7, 34 and income section 1, as set out in paragraph 15 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9008/Add.34).
