



UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/9464
15 December 1973

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Twenty-eighth session
Agenda item 104

INCLUSION OF ARABIC AMONG THE OFFICIAL AND WORKING
LANGUAGES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ITS COMMITTEES
AND SUB-COMMITTEES

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Ernesto C. GARRIDO (Philippines)

1. At its 2144th plenary meeting, on 8 October 1973, the General Assembly decided to allocate to the Fifth Committee for its consideration agenda item 104, entitled "Inclusion of Arabic among the official and working languages of the General Assembly, its committees and sub-committees".

2. The Fifth Committee considered this item at its 1629th meeting on 14 December, at which time it had before it a draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1156) which was introduced by the representative of Egypt on behalf of Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, China, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Guinea, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Republic, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, the Niger, Oman, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Spain, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Yugoslavia. The representative of Egypt announced that Guyana, Madagascar, Senegal and the Upper Volta had subsequently joined the list of sponsors. The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1564 and Add.1) on the administrative and financial implications of the proposal to include Arabic among the official and working languages of the General Assembly, its committees and sub-committees, as well as the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9008/Add.29).

DECISIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

3. After a number of statements were made in strong support of the inclusion of Arabic among the official and working languages of the General Assembly, its committees and sub-committees, the Fifth Committee decided, without objection, to recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the 36-Power draft resolution (A/C.5/L.1156) (see paragraph 5 below).

4. The Committee also decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it should approve paragraph 9 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, setting out the over-all costs of implementing the draft resolution, as well as paragraph 10 of the same report, which states that, on the assumption that additional costs resulting from the implementation of its draft resolution for 1974-1976 will be paid collectively by the Arab States, there will be no additional appropriation necessary in the United Nations budget in respect of this decision for the biennium 1974-1975.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

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

Inclusion of Arabic among the official and working languages of the General Assembly and its Main Committees

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the significant role of the Arabic language in preserving and disseminating the civilization of man and his culture,

Recognizing further that the Arabic language is the language of nineteen Members of the United Nations and is a working language in such specialized agencies as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organisation, as well as an official and working language of the Organization of African Unity,

Aware of the need to achieve greater international co-operation and to promote harmonizing the actions of nations as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations,

Noting with appreciation the assurances of the Arab States Members of the United Nations to meet collectively the costs of implementing the present resolution during the first three years,

Decides to include Arabic among the official and working languages of the General Assembly and its Main Committees and to amend accordingly the relevant provisions of the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

6. The Fifth Committee also recommends that the General Assembly should:

(a) Approve paragraph 9 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9008/Add.29);

(b) Approve the understanding contained in paragraph 10 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/9008/Add.29).