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PERSONNEL QUESTIONS

Report of the Fifth Committee

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 2237th plenary meeting, on 21 September 1974, the General Assembly included the item entitled "Personnel questions: (a) Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General; (b) Other personnel questions: reports of the Secretary-General" in the agenda of its twenty-ninth session and allocated it to the Fifth Committee for consideration and report.
2. The Committee considered the item at its 1661st, 1663rd, 1665th, 1666th, 1668th, 1669th, 1671st, 1679th, 1682nd, 1683rd, 1684th, 1686th, 1687th, 1689th and 1693rd meetings, held from 13 November to 13 December 1974.

II. COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT

A. Documentation before the Committee

3. The Committee had before it two reports of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat. The first report (A/9120 and Corr.1 and 2) had been presented to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session which decided to defer its consideration until the following session; 1/ the second report (A/9724), made to the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session, had to be read in conjunction with it. The Committee also considered, under the question of the composition of the Secretariat, chapter V, section D, paragraphs 479 to 486 of the report of the Economic and Social Council, 2/ and the related Council resolution 1857 (LVI) of 16 May 1974, entitled "Employment of women by the secretariats of organizations within the United Nations system".
4. In his report to the twenty-eighth session, the Secretary-General proposed a consolidated statement of principles, standards and procedures designed to bring the various guidelines for staff recruitment into a coherent relationship. He stressed the need for continued efforts directed towards recruiting staff with the highest qualifications on as wide a geographical basis as possible, avoiding any discrimination based on sex and resorting, whenever practicable, to competitive examinations. The report also recommended the introduction of a number of technical changes in the procedure for calculating desirable ranges of posts for each nationality and region. With respect to staff in senior posts, the Secretary-General recommended a distribution by region broadly in line with that of the staff generally, and for the regional economic commissions, a preponderance of staff from the countries of the region. These recommendations related to the recruitment of staff for Professional and senior posts for which there were no special language requirements.

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/9030), item 86, p. 136.

2/ Ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/9603).

5. The report also recommended that candidates for posts other than those involving special language requirements be considered as meeting the minimum language qualifications if they possess an adequate knowledge of one of the two working languages of the Secretariat.

6. In his report to the twenty-ninth session, the Secretary-General incorporated and developed many principles and recommendations contained in the report of the previous year. Following General Assembly resolution 3062 (XXVIII) of 9 November 1973, which introduced substantial changes in the scale of assessment for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations, an adjustment in the system of desirable ranges was recommended. The system, covering 2,400 posts subject to geographical distribution, would be based on the mean of a membership factor of 2 to 6 posts, a population factor of 200 and the remaining posts distributed according to the scale of assessment for the budget. A variation of 10 per cent of the resulting position would allow flexibility.

7. The Secretary-General also recommended that the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2480 B (XXIII) of 21 December 1968 on language incentives be modified so as to normally require the knowledge of a second language as a condition of the promotion of staff members at levels P-1 to P-5, leaving to administrative discretion the determination whether such knowledge was required in the case of promotion to higher levels. The language incentives were to be applied to all staff members at levels P-1 to D-2 occupying posts for which there were no special language requirements, including staff members serving with United Nations subsidiary organs.

8. The resolution by the Economic and Social Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution requiring the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure an equitable balance between men and women staff members, particularly in senior and policy-making positions.

B. Discussion

9. The discussion under agenda item 81 (a) covered: (a) geographical distribution; (b) new numerical recruitment guides proposed by the Secretary-General in his report; (c) linguistic balance; and (d) employment of women in the United Nations Secretariat.

Geographical distribution

10. Several representatives noted that, while some improvement took place in the last few years as regards the geographical balance of the staff, various countries and regions such as Eastern Europe and Asia and the Far East continued to be under-represented. Moreover, since the problem of the composition of the Secretariat should not be dealt with only in terms of numbers but also in terms of quality of the different posts, it was stressed that the geographical imbalance was prevalent particularly at the highest levels. Some delegates pointed out that some nations or groups of nations with the same mother tongue retained a monopoly in

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certain units or posts. The hope was expressed that the long-range recruitment plan would help improve geographical distribution, eliminate under-representation of a number of States, reduce excessive over-representation and improve recruitment procedures and the quality of recruits. The Secretary-General should report annually to the General Assembly on progress in its implementation. Some representatives warned that the rectification of geographical imbalances was more a political than an administrative issue.

11. To achieve a more equitable balance and to ensure more "fresh blood" to the Secretariat some representatives favoured an increase of fixed-term as against permanent appointments. They noted that permanent appointments were more frequent among staff members from over-represented countries and that some of them continued to hold their jobs even after reaching the pensionable age of 60. Such facts created obstacles to a renewal of the staff and closed many posts to the under-represented countries. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services recalled that the policy of retaining staff members beyond retirement age was based on General Assembly resolution 2887 I (XXVI) of 21 December 1971. In adopting that resolution, the Assembly had taken note of the report of the Joint Staff Pension Board which mentioned the intention expressed by the executive heads of the organizations affiliated with the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund that, should early retirement be facilitated by the resolution, they would in all appropriate cases use their discretionary power to retain staff beyond the age of 60. The aim was to make retirement policy more flexible and compensate for the costs entailed by early retirement. One delegation requested that in future reports on the composition of the Secretariat a special table should be included, showing how many staff in the Professional category who had already passed their retirement age, continued, with special authorization, to be employed on permanent or fixed-term appointments. Other representatives spoke against any increase of fixed-term appointments, attaching greater importance to the presence of a large body of career staff to preserve a true international character of the international civil service.

12. Several delegations criticized the practice of recruitment during the previous year. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services observed that there were only 96 nationals of over-represented countries among the 250 staff members recruited, and that they represented all the seven geographical regions. In the recruitment of new staff, the Secretariat had always taken into consideration the guidelines laid down in General Assembly resolution 2736 (XXV) of 17 December 1970. In all cases, the review of candidates for appointment was carried out by the Appointment and Promotion Board, whose membership and procedures were in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles set forth in the Staff Rules and Staff Regulations and the resolutions of the General Assembly.

13. One delegation remarked that neither the United Nations Charter nor the resolutions of the General Assembly said that the principle of equitable geographical distribution applied only to the Professional staff, while another representative wondered why the posts with special language requirements were excluded from those subject to this principle. Two representatives also questioned

the validity of the existing division of Member States by regions for the purposes of geographical distribution. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services pointed out that such division reflected the original concept of the composition of the regional economic commissions which the United Nations was to establish. Changes in that concept occurred in accordance with the wishes of the States concerned, as did the inclusion of particular States in particular regions. Since it could, however, be desirable to reconsider that traditional subdivision of Member States for the purposes of geographical distribution, the Secretary-General intended to deal with that question in his next report on the composition of the Secretariat.

14. Several delegates expressed the view that an equitable geographical distribution could and should be achieved without overlooking the fact that, under Article 101.3 of the Charter, the paramount consideration in the recruitment of the staff must be to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

New ranges

15. During his introductory statement, the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services pointed out that mathematical indicators could not be a substitute for the exercise of judgement in the selection and management of staff. However refined the system of geographical ranges, the task of determining whether or not a person was qualified was a matter for administrative decision to be taken in accordance with the standards specified in the Charter. Several representatives agreed with this opinion and stressed that numerical guides should be a flexible management tool to be used in the recruitment of new staff members. A too rigid application of this system, they said, could jeopardize the other requirement of the Charter concerning the qualifications of the staff.

16. Several representatives approved the modified procedure for calculating desirable ranges proposed in the Secretary-General's report. They stressed that the changes to be introduced should be intended to improve the representation in the Secretariat of under-represented and developing countries.

17. Two representatives considered that using budgetary contributions as a guideline in calculating the desirable number of posts for each nationality was against the interest of small and developing countries. It was underlined that this method was not in accordance with the principle of broad geographical distribution and made it difficult for developing countries to acquire their due position in the Secretariat. One delegation, considering the remarkable increase in the number of posts subject to geographical distribution, thought that the minimum range for the smaller contributors should be set at four to eight posts, rather than the two to six proposed by the Secretary-General.

18. One representative, believing that the existing guidelines for recruitment were flexible enough and seeing no justification for changing them, said that he was perplexed by the notion that some Member States should agree to any formula in which the number of their nationals in the Secretariat would be other than

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ascending. He added that the desirable range of posts for each nationality should extend to 25 per cent on either side of the absolute figure rather than the 10 per cent proposed by the Secretary-General. Commenting on this observation, the representative of the Secretary-General recognized that this "flexibility factor" was an arbitrary figure and the Secretariat would have no difficulty in applying a factor of 15 per cent if the Committee wished. One delegation observed that the time was ripe to consider an examination of the present situation in the Secretariat, in the light of balanced regional and cultural representation among the staff, with a view to duly serving the purposes of the Charter.

Linguistic balance

19. Regarding linguistic balance, the view was expressed that no language should have the privilege of a de facto monopoly in the Secretariat. One delegate suggested that French-speaking persons had to know English in order to be hired by the United Nations, whereas English-speaking persons did not have to know another language.

20. Some representatives stated that the requirement of the knowledge of a second language should not be such as to create serious difficulties in the recruitment and promotion of qualified staff. It was also stated that the requirement of the knowledge of a second official language as a condition for promotion in the Professional category discriminated against the staff members whose mother tongue was not one of the official languages. Some delegations proposed that this requirement should be replaced by a language bonus system, which would be disassociated from promotions and which would not impede mobility within the United Nations system. While some representatives supported the provision on language requirements as proposed by the Secretary-General in document A/9724, one delegate believed that knowledge of a second language should rather be required from staff in the higher levels, where such knowledge was more necessary because senior officials had to supervise staff from many different nationalities. A number of representatives stated that there was already sufficient flexibility in the application of resolution 2480 B (XXIII) and that the Secretary-General's exercise of his discretion should be approved.

Employment of women

21. Several representatives noted that women were not sufficiently represented at all Professional levels, especially in senior posts. They stressed that the recruitment of women, particularly from developing countries, should be further encouraged and supported the adoption of the draft resolution on employment of women proposed by the Economic and Social Council.

22. A number of representatives expressed the view that it was not appropriate to apply fixed percentage ratios of female and male staff at particular levels or in different types of posts, while one delegation believed it desirable that by the end of the Second United Nations Development Decade the number of women shall approach 30 per cent in Professional and senior posts in the Secretariat.

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23. Some representatives stressed that it was incumbent on all Member States to nominate suitable women candidates for all positions, including policy-making posts and posts that were the traditional preserve of men. In reply to a question, the representative of the Secretary-General stated that, according to the statistics available, 2,000 of the 3,000 women who had applied for Professional posts during the past two years were from the United States. Government nominations of women in that period had totalled 153, compared to some 1,500 men. Out of 614 persons hired during that period, 76 or 12.4 per cent had been women.

24. One representative stated that the fact that 70 per cent of women candidates came from over-represented regions put the onus on under-represented countries to propose more women candidates. While some representatives considered that, since there were not enough women candidates from under-represented countries, a greater flexibility should be used in applying guidelines for recruitment of staff by nationality, others supported efforts to employ more women only in the framework of the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

C. Proposals and voting

25. At the 1679th meeting, the representative of the United States of America submitted the following amendments (A/C.5/L.1192) to the draft resolution contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1857 (LVI):

(a) In operative paragraph 1, replace "bearing in mind the principle of equitable geographical distribution" by "bearing in mind in particular Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter";

(b) In operative paragraph 2, substitute "increased" for "greater" after "to give";

(c) In operative paragraph 4, insert "and their nationality composition" after "at professional and policy-making levels". Delete thereafter the words "bearing in mind the principle of equitable geographical distribution".

26. At the 1687th meeting, the representative of the United States of America orally revised part (c) of his amendments by deleting the last sentence.

27. At the same meeting, the Committee approved by 34 votes to 18, with 30 abstentions, the amendments, as orally revised, to the draft resolution.

28. At the same meeting, the draft resolution contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1857 (LVI), as amended, was adopted without a vote (see para. 85 below, draft resolution I).

29. At the 1682nd meeting, the representative of Japan introduced a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1200/Rev.1), sponsored by Australia, Ghana, Japan and Turkey, later joined by Thailand, which read as follows:

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"1. The Fifth Committee, in taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General in documents A/9724 of 27 September 1974 and A/9120 of 21 September 1973, recalls the basic principles governing the recruitment policy of the United Nations as stated in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter. The Committee continues to hold to the view as expressed in General Assembly resolution 1852 (XVII) which recognizes the importance of the principle of an equitable geographical distribution in the composition of the Secretariat, and considers that this principle is in harmony with the paramount consideration in the employment of staff; namely, the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. In this connexion, the Committee recalls that the use of the system of national and regional desirable ranges of posts to gauge equitable geographical distribution of the professional and higher level staff was designed to be a flexible tool of management. The Committee considers that the guidelines already approved by the General Assembly for determining the desirable range of posts should be preserved. Nevertheless, the Committee requests the Secretary-General to study further possible formulae for assigning posts to Member States based on geographical considerations, including an increase in the minimum range of posts, in the light of the discussions in the Fifth Committee during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly and report on the implications of the above to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session.

"2. The recruitment policies of the United Nations, as implemented by the Secretary-General, should be governed by the above considerations as well as by the following:

"A. The need to develop an international civil service based on the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity;

"B. The principle of equitable geographical distribution should be applied to the Secretariat as a whole; and to this end, no post, individual department, division or unit in the Secretariat should be considered as the exclusive preserve of any individual Member State or any region;

"C. Increased effort should be made to recruit well-qualified women candidates for professional and senior level posts;

"D. An increased effort should be made to correct imbalances in the age structure of the Secretariat.

"3. Member States, bearing in mind relevant Articles of the Charter, should co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in carrying out the aforementioned policies.

"4. While convinced that knowledge of a second language, as defined in resolution 2480 B (XXIII), should normally be required as a condition for the promotion of staff members at levels P-1 to D-2, the Committee believes that professional competence and the quality of work of staff members concerned should also be fully taken into consideration. Accordingly, the Committee favours a flexible application of the aforementioned resolution for promotion of staff members."

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30. At the same meeting, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics submitted the following amendments (A/C.5/L.1203) to the draft decision:

(a) Replace the first part of paragraph 2, subparagraph B, by the following text:

"The principle of equitable geographical distribution should be applied not only to the United Nations Secretariat as a whole but also to its individual departments and divisions;"

Delete the remainder of the text of paragraph 2, subparagraph B, starting with the words "and to this end ...";

(b) At the beginning of paragraph 2, subparagraph C, insert the words: "In accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution,"

(c) Add the following new subparagraph to paragraph 2:

"E. Greater efforts should be made to increase the percentage of Secretariat staff with fixed-term contracts."

31. At the 1683rd meeting, the representative of Canada proposed the following oral amendment to the draft decision:

(a) Delete the last sentence of paragraph 4, or

(b) In the same sentence, insert the word "continued" between the words "favours a" and "flexible application".

32. At the same meeting, the representative of Kuwait proposed the following oral amendments to paragraph 1 of the draft decision:

(a) In the third sentence, replace the word "gauge" by the word "implement" and add the words "on a rotating basis" after the words "geographical distribution";

(b) In the fifth sentence, delete the words "including an increase in the minimum range of posts".

33. At the same meeting, the representative of Trinidad and Tobago proposed that in the fourth sentence of paragraph 1 of the draft decision the words "should be preserved" be replaced by the words "should be maintained pending any new decision".

34. At the same meeting, the representative of Guyana proposed that in paragraph 2, subparagraph A, of the draft decision the word "career" be inserted between the words "international" and "civil service".

35. At the 1684th meeting, Colombia and Ecuador submitted the following amendments (A/C.5/L.1204) to the draft decision:

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(a) In paragraph 1, replace the fourth sentence by the following: "The Committee considers that the guidelines proposed by the Secretary-General in his reports should be applied for the purpose of determining the desirable range of posts."

(b) Add a new paragraph 2, to read as follows:

"The Fifth Committee also maintains the request that it made to the Secretary-General at the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly to the effect that he should pay greater attention, in recruiting staff for the senior categories which participate directly in the administrative policy-making of the United Nations, to candidates from countries inadequately represented in those senior categories, particularly candidates from the developing countries."

Renumber the following paragraphs accordingly.

(c) Replace the end of the original paragraph 4, after the words "the Committee believes" by the following: "that in individual cases where professional competence and quality of work are especially important, the Secretary-General may continue flexible application of the aforementioned resolution for promotion of staff members".

36. At the 1686th meeting, the representative of Japan, on behalf of the sponsors, accepted the second amendment submitted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and, taking into account the remarks of other delegations, revised paragraph 2, subparagraph C, of the draft decision. The new text read:

"Bearing in mind the need for equitable geographical distribution, increased effort should be made to recruit a greater number of qualified women candidates for Professional and senior level posts."

Following the spirit of the proposal of the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, in the fourth sentence of paragraph 1 of the draft decision the words "should be preserved" were replaced by the words "should be maintained at this time". The last sentence of paragraph 4 was revised to read:

"Accordingly, the Committee endorses the policy of flexibility followed by the Secretary-General in the implementation of the aforementioned resolution for promotion of staff members."

37. At the 1687th meeting, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics withdrew his first and third amendments and asked for a separate vote on subparagraphs A, B, C and D of paragraph 2 of the draft decision.

38. At the same meeting, the representative of Ecuador, also on behalf of Colombia, withdrew his first amendment and asked for a vote on the second and third amendments.

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39. At the same meeting, the representative of Costa Rica, on the understanding that the sponsors did not object to the proposal, asked that the word "individual" be deleted from their third amendment to the draft decision. The representative of Canada withdrew his amendment.

40. At the same meeting, the representative of Kuwait recalled the amendment to the fifth sentence of paragraph 1 of the draft decision that he had proposed during the 1683rd meeting. He said that his delegation did not favour an increase in the minimum range of posts which could benefit countries which were already over-represented in the Secretariat. The representative of Japan regretted that the sponsors of the draft decision could not accept the proposal.

41. At the same meeting, the Committee decided:

(a) By 50 votes to 15, with 19 abstentions, to adopt paragraph 2 of document A/C.5/L.1204.

(b) By 33 votes to 23, with 28 abstentions, to adopt paragraph 3 of document A/C.5/L.1204, as amended.

(c) By 80 votes to none, with 5 abstentions, to adopt paragraph 2, subparagraph A, of document A/C.5/L.1200/Rev.1.

(d) By 76 votes to none, with 11 abstentions, to adopt paragraph 2, subparagraph B, of document A/C.5/L.1200/Rev.1.

(e) Unanimously to approve paragraph 2, subparagraph C, as amended, and paragraph 2, subparagraph D, of document A/C.5/L.1200/Rev.1.

(f) By 79 votes to none, with 13 abstentions, to adopt the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1200/Rev.1) as a whole, as amended.

DECISIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

42. The Fifth Committee decided to include in its report to the General Assembly the text of paragraphs 43 to 47 below.

43. The Fifth Committee, in taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General in documents A/9724 of 27 September 1974 and A/9120 and Corr.1-2 of 21 September 1973, recalls the basic principles governing the recruitment policy of the United Nations as stated in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter. The Committee continues to hold to the view as expressed in General Assembly resolution 1852 (XVII) of 19 December 1962 which recognizes the importance of the principle of an equitable geographical distribution in the composition of the Secretariat, and considers that this principle is in harmony with the paramount consideration in the employment of staff; namely, the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. In this connexion, the Committee recalls that the use of the system of national and regional desirable ranges of posts to

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gauge equitable geographical distribution of the Professional and higher level staff was designed to be a flexible tool of management. The Committee considers that the guidelines already approved by the General Assembly for determining the desirable range of posts should be maintained at this time. Nevertheless, the Committee requests the Secretary-General to study further possible formulae for assigning posts to Member States based on geographical considerations, including an increase in the minimum range of posts, in the light of the discussions in the Fifth Committee during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly and report on the implications of the above to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session.

44. The Fifth Committee also maintains the request that it made to the Secretary-General at the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly ^{3/} to the effect that he should pay greater attention, in recruiting staff for the senior categories which participate directly in the administrative policy-making of the United Nations, to candidates from countries inadequately represented in those senior categories, particularly candidates from the developing countries.

45. The recruitment policies of the United Nations, as implemented by the Secretary-General, should be governed by the above considerations as well as by the following:

(a) The need to develop an international civil service based on the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity;

(b) The principle of equitable geographical distribution should be applied to the Secretariat as a whole; and to this end, no post, individual department, division or unit in the Secretariat should be considered as the exclusive preserve of any individual Member State or any region;

(c) Bearing in mind the need for equitable geographical distribution, increased effort should be made to recruit a greater number of qualified women candidates for Professional and senior level posts;

(d) An increased effort should be made to correct imbalances in the age structure of the Secretariat.

46. Member States, bearing in mind relevant Articles of the Charter, should co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in carrying out the aforementioned policies.

47. While convinced that knowledge of a second language, as defined in resolution 2480 B (XXIII) of 21 December 1968, should normally be required as a condition for the promotion of staff members at levels P-1 to D-2, the Committee believes that in cases where professional competence and quality of work are especially important, the Secretary-General may continue flexible application of the aforementioned resolution for promotion of staff members.

^{3/} Ibid., Twenty-seventh Session, Annexes, agenda item 81, document A/8980, para. 92 (b).

III. OTHER PERSONNEL QUESTIONS

A. Documentation before the Committee

48. The Committee considered under agenda item 81 (b) the following documents:

(a) The report of the Secretary-General on "Differential treatment based upon sex under the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules" (A/C.5/1603) and the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/9608/Add.5);

(b) A note by the Secretary-General on the amendments made to the Staff Rules during the period from 1 July 1973 to 30 June 1974 (A/C.5/1600);

(c) Two notes by the Secretary-General transmitting to the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on personnel problems in the United Nations (A/8454) and a summary of that report (A/8826). Full consideration of this report had been deferred by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth 4/ and twenty-eighth 5/ sessions.

The Committee also had before it the reports of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1601) and of the Advisory Committee (A/9841) on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit and on the major recommendations of the Administrative Management Service which resulted from its survey of the Office of Personnel Services (A/C.5/1601/Add.1). The Secretary-General had also presented to the Committee a statement (A/C.5/1639) on the administrative and financial implications of his proposals contained in document A/C.5/1601.

49. In their reports, the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee recommended, with some technical differences in the methods proposed to carry out the changes, certain amendments to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules to eliminate distinctions among staff members based on sex. According to these requests, a married female staff member would be entitled to reimbursement for her husband's travel expenses on her appointment, home leave, transfer and separation and to a repatriation grant when leaving the Secretariat at the rate for a staff member with dependants on the same basis as male staff members.

50. The report of the Joint Inspection Unit contained a critical analysis of the methods currently used in the United Nations in the recruitment, training, promotion and administration of its staff in the Professional category and above, as well as an assessment of the reasons for the difficulties encountered. It presented a series of recommendations that fell into five broad categories: (a) revision of the basic concepts underlying the present personnel policy; (b) modernization of administrative practices; (c) reform of the recruitment methods; (d) introduction of a career development system; and (e) modification of the structure and the emoluments of the staff. A final recommendation dealt with the manner in which the

4/ Ibid., Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/8429), item 84, p. 133.

5/ Ibid., Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 30 (A/9030), item 86, p. 136.

work initiated by the report might be carried forward by the establishment of a task force. The recommendations of the Administrative Management Service, which were first submitted to the Secretary-General in October 1972, dealt with reforms to be made in the areas of job classification, recruitment, personnel administration and the organization of the Office of Personnel Services.

51. In his report, the Secretary-General provided for the information of the General Assembly his conclusions on the recommendations made by the Joint Inspection Unit and the Administrative Management Service, a summary of the actions to implement them which had been initiated in response to those recommendations, as well as an indication of the actions which the Secretary-General proposed to take in 1975 and 1976. The only specific action requested of the General Assembly was the authorization of the recruitment of two classification experts to work on a job classification system covering all posts in the Secretariat.

52. In its report, the Advisory Committee noted that there was substantial agreement between the conclusions and recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and those of the Administrative and Management Service. Endorsing most of the changes proposed, the Committee recommended that they be implemented without delay to the extent that this could be done by redeploying existing resources. As for the additional costs required to implement the proposed reorganization of the Office of Personnel Services, the Committee expressed the opinion that they should be viewed in the context of over-all budgetary needs, so that the proper degree of priority could be assigned to individual reforms.

53. In his statement (A/C.5/1639), the Secretary-General indicated an estimate of the total additional funds needed to give full effect to the new directions of the United Nations personnel programme. The resources required were estimated at \$309,000 for 1975 and \$745,000 for the biennium 1975-1977.

B. Discussion

54. The discussion under agenda item 81 (b) covered: (a) the differential treatment based on sex under the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules and (b) the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and of the Administrative Management Service.

Differential treatment based on sex

55. The proposals of the Secretary-General to eliminate differential treatment based on sex from the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules were generally accepted subject to the observations of the Advisory Committee. The financial implications of such changes were considered a necessary price to pay in order to overcome the existing inequities and to adhere more closely to Article 8 of the Charter. One delegation expressed doubt about the proposed reforms, emphasizing that it was generally the man who supported the family by his work.

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Recommendations by the Joint Inspection Unit and by the Administrative Management Service

56. The discussion of this subject covered: (a) the basic staff structure of the Secretariat; (b) recruitment; (c) staff management; and (d) organization of the Office of Personnel Services.

Staff structure of the Secretariat

57. Several representatives, noticing the uneven bureaucratic growth and the crisis in morale of the Secretariat, emphasized the need for structural reforms within the Office of Personnel Services and for the modernization of the personnel policies of the Secretariat. Some delegations pointed out that a number of recommendations made by the Joint Inspection Unit in this connexion affected the United Nations system as a whole and expressed the view that these should be also considered by the International Civil Service Commission.

58. Some delegations commented on figures from the report of the Joint Inspection Unit which suggested that 35 per cent of the United Nations Professionals had not completed university education and that another 25 per cent had never attended an institute of higher education. The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services observed that several groups of posts of a technical or service nature which did not require any university training had been included in the Professional category because of the level of pay they commanded and not because of the formal qualifications they involved. Moreover, the great diversity of education systems made it very difficult to establish any equivalence of academic degrees. The Secretariat therefore assessed the qualifications of a candidate for a post on the basis of his or her actual experience as well as the level of their academic or university degrees. Since the JIU report had been established, further study had shown that all Directors in the Secretariat had clearly recognizable university qualifications, while only 14 per cent of the Principal Officers (D-1) lacked such qualifications. Most of the latter group of staff members had joined the Secretariat in 1946. As to the 250 staff members appointed during the previous year to posts subject to geographical distribution, only 12 did not have a university degree. These 12 candidates all had wide professional experience.

59. Several representatives supported the institution of occupational groups within the existing categories of staff members. In accordance with the opinion expressed by the Advisory Committee, they stressed that this should not, however, lead to an excessive rigidity and compartmentalization of the Secretariat. Staff members should be able to move from one occupational group to another. One representative stressed the need to keep a reservoir of "generalists".

60. The institution of a job classification system covering all posts in the Secretariat was generally welcomed as well as the Secretary-General's request to recruit classification experts to plan and develop the system which should ensure a consistent relationship between the duties of a post and the grade attached to it and the grading of staff members with similar responsibilities in the same way. One delegation thought that this matter was within the mandate of the International Civil Service Commission. Another proposed that the study on job classification be carried out in strict consultation with it.

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61. Several representatives urged that the promotion of General Service staff to Professional posts should be discontinued, particularly when it was only used as a reward for long service. They expressed the view that this practice contributed to the unusually high age structure of the Professional category and prevented junior Professional grades from being available for qualified young applicants. Other delegations pointed out that career advancement for deserving General Service staff should not be impeded by inflexible guidelines. Some representatives suggested that promotion to the Professional category should be made possible by means of competitive examinations where appropriate credit would also be given for experience and training, while others proposed, as an alternative, the introduction of additional General Service grades running parallel to the middle grades of the Professional category.

Recruitment

62. Several delegations welcomed the institution, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2736 A (XXV) of 17 December 1970, of competitive examinations for the recruitment of young professionals and the introduction of a computerized roster of candidates. One country was exploring with the Secretary-General the possibility of linking recruitment for the international civil service with its own national competitive examinations. Some delegations observed that this method of recruitment should also be used for the selection of General Service staff and supported its expansion, where possible, on a regional basis.

63. Some delegations doubted that recruitment by competitive examination would suit the needs and characteristics of developing countries, while others expressed the view that it would run counter to personnel methods employed in certain countries. It was also noted that difficulties might arise for competitive examinations on a regional basis, especially where the area of recruitment was geographically extensive and the opportunities for attaining high intellectual standards varied considerably. One delegation believed that, in view of the political nature of the United Nations, recruitment by competitive examination should be the exception.

64. As for the proposal by the Joint Inspection Unit to establish formal procedures for selecting the candidates to the highest posts in the Secretariat, some delegations agreed with the Secretary-General that this practice would restrict too much his authority and discretion in this delicate field. One delegation could not agree with the Joint Inspection Unit that a fixed proportion of posts at the Director and Principal Officer levels should be reserved for staff with at least 10 years of seniority in the international civil service.

65. The United States delegation offered the assistance of the Government in the new efforts made by the Secretariat to extend the recruitment of General Service staff at Headquarters beyond the New York metropolitan area. Two representatives believed that if it was intended to recruit General Service personnel from areas of the United States away from New York, they might also be recruited on an international basis from nearby countries.

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Staff management

66. The Secretary-General's proposal to establish career planning committees was supported and the need to revise the current performance evaluation was stressed to ensure that the evaluation of the staff members' performances was based on strictly objective criteria and that promotions would depend on capability rather than seniority.

67. Several representatives thought that a pre-recruitment training programme could be a useful instrument to improve the qualifications of persons who would later join the Secretariat. This programme could be particularly helpful for candidates from developing countries, they added. One delegation expressed the view that a token sum should be made available for this purpose in the form of fellowships for candidates for the Secretariat.

68. Several delegations approved in general the proposed intensification of professional in-service training programmes, provided that they did not serve to unduly bureaucratize the Secretariat. One representative emphasized the need to utilize the probationary period for intensive training and orientation. Another representative thought that professional training schemes should not be carried out at the expense of the language training programmes and opposed any restriction on the access of staff members to free language courses. Another delegation believed that the United Nations was spending an excessive amount of money on language training and placing exaggerated emphasis on it in comparison to professional training. One representative expressed his doubts about non-language training activities since they could never replace education in national institutions, and might tend to increase United Nations expenditures and encourage the recruitment of persons without adequate professional qualifications. He concluded that the only justifiable in-service training was in the area of languages.

69. The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management pointed out that the Secretariat had the responsibility to improve the performance of staff in service and to ensure that they were able to pursue satisfying careers. Thus far, little had been done in the field of career development. Language courses had initially been offered, and subsequently it had also been recognized that there was a need to strengthen management and administrative training activities, which, however, were still very limited. A balance had to be established between the two programmes, without, however, compromising the language courses. To that end, the ability of the Secretariat to provide management and administrative training had to be enhanced.

70. Some delegations underlined that a larger extent of delegation of authority could strengthen the morale of the staff while increasing its share in the decision-making process. Opposing this view, one representative disfavoured any decentralization of personnel management responsibilities because it would enable individual groups of staff members to influence personnel policies.

Organization of the Office of Personnel Services

71. Many delegations agreed upon the proposed structural changes in the Office of Personnel Services, designed to make it possible to carry out the reforms suggested

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to provide for policy formulation and to improve the division of responsibility. Several representatives, however, in accordance with the observations made by the Advisory Committee, stressed that the possibility of redistributing functions within the existing manning-table should be carefully examined in assessing any request by the Secretary-General for additional funds to restructure the Office. The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management pointed out that it would be impossible to launch the new programme without strengthening the capacity of the Office of Personnel Services to some extent.

C. Proposals and voting

72. At the 1679th meeting, the representative of the United States of America introduced a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1195), sponsored by Australia, Norway and the United States of America, which read as follows:

"The Fifth Committee recommends to the Secretary-General that he take the initiative by encouraging the establishment within the Joint Advisory Committee of a sub-committee whose role would be to assist in ending any discriminatory employment practices which may exist, as between men and women, and to ensure equality of opportunity for all. In furtherance of these objectives, the sub-committee should give special attention to recruitment, training, and promotion practices. The Committee also urges the Secretary-General through the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to recommend to the heads of all organizations within the United Nations system the implementation of similar initiatives within their respective secretariats."

73. At the 1687th meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management said that he fully agreed with the objectives of the draft decision and undertook to begin the actions it contemplated. However, he had reservations about having the Fifth Committee address a directive to the Secretary-General involving the Joint Advisory Committee, which was a body composed of both administration and staff representatives.

74. At the same meeting, the representative of the United States of America said that he believed the Fifth Committee had the right to make such a request. However, in view of the assurance given by the Under-Secretary-General that initiatives would be taken along the lines of the draft decision, he considered that the objective had been substantially achieved and on behalf of the sponsors, withdrew the draft decision.

75. At the same meeting, the Chairman proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it endorse the conclusions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 24 to 26 of its report (A/9608/Add.5). He also proposed that a draft resolution recommending the consequential amendments of the Staff Regulations should be placed before the Committee in the draft of its report on this item. The Committee decided, without objection, to adopt the Chairman's proposals. In addition to amending regulation 7.1 and annex IV to the Staff Regulations, the draft resolution removes the words "or service benefits" which followed the words "repatriation grants" in regulation 9.4. These words have become without force since the transitional arrangements consequent on the abolition of service benefits by the General Assembly in resolution 1929 (XVIII) of 11 December 1963 were completed.

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76. At the same meeting, the Chairman proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the amendments to the Staff Rules contained in the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1600). The Committee decided, without objection, to adopt the Chairman's proposal (see para. 85 below, draft resolution II).

77. At the 1689th meeting, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics submitted a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1212), which read as follows:

"The Committee takes note of the considerations and proposals concerning the reorganization of the system of recruitment and conditions of service of the international staff of the United Nations Secretariat set forth in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on personnel problems in the United Nations (A/8454), as also in the reports of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1601 and A/C.5/1601/Add.1) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9841).

"Considering that those proposals require more thorough study and that their administrative and financial implications are not yet susceptible of immediate assessment, and considering the various opinions of the delegations of States Members of the United Nations in the Fifth Committee, expressed during the discussion of personnel questions, the Fifth Committee recommends the General Assembly to transmit those documents, with the considerations and proposals contained in them, and the summary records and other material relating to the discussion of those documents in the Fifth Committee, to the International Civil Service Commission which is being established for its consideration and to instruct the Commission to prepare its recommendations to the thirtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly."

78. At the 1691st meeting, the representative of Iran submitted a draft decision (A/C.5/L.1211), which read as follows:

"The Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly, having considered the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on personnel questions (A/8454 and A/8826), the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service contained in document A/C.5/1601/Add.1, and the reports thereon of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1601) and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9841),

"(a) Authorize the Secretary-General to proceed with the implementation of his proposals contained in document A/C.5/1601, subject to the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

"(b) Request the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly, at its thirty-first session, on the progress made in the implementation of these proposals."

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79. At the 1693rd meeting, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee introduced a report (A/9608/Add.19) on the administrative and financial implications of the proposals by the Secretary-General contained in document A/C.5/1601. The Advisory Committee had decided not to recommend the establishment on a permanent basis of the posts requested for 1975 by the Secretary-General in paragraph 25 of his statement (A/C.5/1639), nor did it recommend the reclassification requested for 1975 in the same paragraph. Therefore, instead of the \$309,000 requested by the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee considered that temporary assistance in the net amount of \$250,000 should be made available to enable him to commence the implementation of his proposals regarding the United Nations personnel programme.

80. At the same meeting, the representative of Iran introduced a revised text of the draft decision (A/C.5/L.1211/Rev.1) (see para. 86 (c) below) and announced that the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago had joined in sponsoring it.

81. At the same meeting, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics withdrew his draft decision (A/C.5/L.1212). He also withdrew his amendments (A/C.5/L.1218) to the draft decision. The amendments read as follows:

(a) In paragraph (a), after the words "Secretary-General", add the words "to proceed with the implementation, within the limits of appropriations, of a reorganization of the Office of Personnel Services, the establishment of a candidates roster, and the introduction of an integrated computer-based personnel information system".

(b) After paragraph (a), add the following new paragraph (b):

"(b) Authorize the Secretary-General to transmit the recommendations relating to the establishment of a single job classification for the organizations within the United Nations system, the organization of competitive examinations, the preparation of appointments and promotions programmes, the training of staff and other recommendations falling within the competence of the International Civil Service Commission, as well as the records and other documentation concerning the discussions of the recommendations in the Fifth Committee, for consideration by the International Civil Service Commission now being established, and to entrust the Commission with preparing its recommendations for submission to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session."

(c) (i) Change the symbol "(b)" to the symbol "(c)".

(ii) Replace the words "these proposals" in this paragraph by the words "the proposals and recommendations referred to in paragraph (a)".

(iii) At the end of the paragraph, add the following words: "particularly those directed towards improving the geographical distribution of posts in the Professional and higher categories, giving attention to a more equitable distribution of the highest posts".

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82. With regard to draft decision A/C.5/L.1211/Rev.1, the representatives of Iran and the United Republic of Tanzania made statements in response to a request by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management for clarification on the intent of the draft decision. The details of those statements are contained in the summary record of the meeting (A/C.5/SR.1693).

83. At the same meeting, the Committee, in the light of the statements referred to in paragraph 80 above, adopted by consensus the draft decision contained in document A/C.5/L.1211/Rev.1 (see para. 86 (c) below).

84. At the same meeting, the Chairman proposed that the Committee should approve an amount, as recommended by the Advisory Committee, of \$250,000 under section 28 of the programme budget for 1974-1975, together with \$80,000 for staff assessment, offset by a similar amount in Income section 1. The Committee decided, by a vote of 51 to 9, with 3 abstentions, to adopt the Chairman's proposal.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

85. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Employment of women by the secretariats of organizations within the United Nations system

The General Assembly,

Recalling Article 8 of the Charter of the United Nations as well as its resolution 2716 (XXV) of 15 December 1970 on the programme of concerted international action for the advancement of women and the objectives and minimum targets to be achieved during the Second United Nations Development Decade set forth in the annex to that resolution, 6/ particularly those concerned with the increase in the number of women participating in public life at the international level,

Noting with appreciation that the reports of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat submitted to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth 7/ and twenty-eighth 8/ sessions included some information on the

6/ United Nations resolution 2626 (XXV).

7/ A/8483.

8/ A/9120 and Corr.1 and 2.

employment of women in senior and other professional positions in the secretariats of organizations in the United Nations system,

Noting also that the report of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, entitled The Situation of Women in the United Nations, 9/ confirms the imbalance in the proportion of women at the higher levels and gives statistics showing the unequal progress of women and men staff members in terms of promotion in the Secretariat,

Concerned that these reports reveal an unsatisfactory situation which calls for specific measures and programmes in order to achieve an equitable balance between the number of men and women, particularly in senior and policy-making positions, including those of Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General,

1. Requests the Secretary-General as well as the executive heads of all organizations of the United Nations system to take all necessary measures in order to ensure, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, bearing in mind in particular Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, that an equitable balance between men and women staff members, particularly in the positions described above, be achieved before the end of the Second United Nations Development Decade at all levels in the United Nations system;
2. Urges the Secretary-General as well as the executive heads of all organizations of the United Nations system, in order to obtain this objective, to give increased attention to the recruitment and promotion of women as well as to the assignments given to them;
3. Further requests the Secretary-General as well as the executive heads of all organizations of the United Nations system to report to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session on steps that have been taken to give effect to paragraphs 1 and 2 above;
4. Also requests the Secretary-General to continue to include in his reports on the composition of the Secretariat submitted to the General Assembly comprehensive data on the employment of women in the secretariats of the United Nations system of organizations so as to indicate clearly the nature of posts and types of duties performed by women at Professional and policy-making levels and their nationality composition, bearing in mind the principle of equitable geographical distribution;
5. Further requests that the Secretary-General report on the status of women employees in the General Service category in the secretariats.

9/ UNITAR RR/18 (1973).

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Amendments to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules
of the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 3007 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972 relating to the desire to ensure that, in accordance with Article 8 of the Charter of the United Nations, no restrictions are placed on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in the work of the Secretariat and the further desire to avoid any discrimination between staff members on grounds of sex,

Having considered the report by the Secretary-General on differential treatment based on sex under the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules 10/ and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, 11/

1. Decides that, with effect from 1 January 1975, regulations 7.1 and 9.4 of the Staff Regulations of the United Nations shall be amended to read as follows:

Regulation 7.1

"Subject to conditions and definitions prescribed by the Secretary-General, the United Nations shall in appropriate cases pay the travel expenses of staff members, their spouses and dependent children."

Regulation 9.4

"The Secretary-General shall establish a scheme for the payment of repatriation grants within the maximum rates and under the conditions specified in annex IV to the present regulations."

2. Decides that, with effect from 1 January 1975, annex IV to the Staff Regulations of the United Nations shall be amended by the substitution of the word "spouse" for the words "wife, dependent husband" where they occur.

3. Takes note of the changes made by the Secretary-General in the Staff Rules of the United Nations in the year ending 30 June 1974, as set forth in his report. 12/

10/ A/C.5/1603.

11/ A/9608/Add.5.

12/ A/C.5/1600.

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

(a) Take note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat; 13/

(b) Approve the decision of the Fifth Committee set forth in paragraphs 43 to 47 of the present report;

(c) Having considered the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on personnel questions (A/8454 and A/8826), the recommendations of the Administrative Management Service contained in document A/C.5/1601/Add.1, and the reports thereon of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1601 and A/C.5/1639) and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9841 and A/9608/Add.19):

- (i) Authorize the Secretary-General to proceed with the implementation of his proposals contained in document A/C.5/1601, subject to the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;
- (ii) Request the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the progress made in the implementation of these proposals;
- (iii) Request the International Civil Service Commission to review those aspects and proposals of the above-mentioned reports which fall within its competence, in particular those referred to in paragraphs 62, 63 and 64 of the Advisory Committee (A/9841) and in paragraph 47 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1601), and to report thereon to the General Assembly.

13/ A/9120 and Corr.1 and 2 and A/9724.