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Agenda item 77

PATTERN OF CONFERENCES

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Mahmoud M. OSMAN (Egypt)

1. The Fifth Committee considered agenda item 77, entitled "Pattern of conferences: (a) Report of the Joint Inspection Unit; (b) Report of the Secretary General", at its 1658th to 1665th, 1668th, 1670th, 1671st, 1673rd and 1674th meetings, from 8 November to 27 November 1974. For this purpose the Committee had before it:

(a) A report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the pattern of conferences of the United Nations and the possibilities for more rational and economic use of its conference resources (A/9795), together with the comments thereon of the Secretary-General and of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (A/9795/Add.1) and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/9795/Add.2);

(b) A report of the Secretary-General containing the calendar of meetings and conferences for 1975 and the preliminary calendar for 1976 (A/9768 and Corr.1);

(c) A revised "Memorandum of the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences and on the accommodation of additional units of the United Nations Secretariat in Vienna" submitted by the Government of Austria (A/9589/Rev.1).

2. The views and comments of delegations are reflected in the summary records of the meetings at which the item was discussed (A/C.5/SR.1658-1665, 1668, 1670, 1671, 1673 and 1674).

3. The Committee had before it a draft resolution relating to the inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences (A/C.5/L.1186) submitted by Austria, Czechoslovakia, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Greece, Hungary, India, Iraq, the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Singapore, Sweden, Togo, Tunisia and the Upper Volta.

4. At its 1668th meeting, on 21 November, the Committee adopted, without objection, draft resolution A/C.5/L.1186 (see para. 9 below, draft resolution I).

5. The Fifth Committee also had before it a revised draft resolution on the pattern of conferences (A/C.5/L.1187/Rev.1) submitted by Canada, Colombia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Iceland and Singapore. The revised draft incorporated changes to the original text (A/C.5/L.1187) announced by the representative of Canada, speaking on behalf of the sponsors, at the 1671st meeting of the Committee, on 25 November, including an oral amendment suggested by Morocco at the 1670th meeting, on 22 November. The operative paragraphs of the draft resolution, as revised, read:

I

"1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit and of the observations of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions thereon;

"2. Approves the calendar of meetings and conferences for 1975 as set forth in the report of the Secretary-General;

"3. Decides that no meetings or conferences other than those covered by the calendar of conferences for 1975 shall be convened, except under special or unusual circumstances;

"4. Reaffirms for application in 1975, as appropriate, the provisions of paragraphs 9 and 10 of its resolution 2609 (XXIV) of 16 December 1969;

"5. Decides that subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly should not under ordinary circumstances create new standing bodies or ad hoc sessional or intersessional bodies which require additional resources without the approval of the General Assembly and requests the other principal organs of the United Nations to take a similar decision with respect to their respective subsidiary bodies.

II

"1. Decides to establish, on an experimental basis and subject to review at its thirty-second session, a Committee on Conferences composed of 18 Member States;

"2. Requests the President of the General Assembly to designate Member States, on the basis of an equitable geographical balance, to serve on the Committee for three-year terms;

"3. Decides that the terms of reference of the Committee on Conferences shall be to:

(a) Recommend the pattern of conferences to be adopted by the General Assembly and changes to be made in that pattern as required, bearing in mind the provisions of paragraph 12 of resolution 2609 (XXIV);

/...

(b) Propose in accordance with the pattern of conferences the annual calendar of conferences to be approved by the General Assembly;

(c) Act after appropriate consultations on behalf of the General Assembly in dealing between sessions with requested departures from the calendar of conferences;

(d) Recommend to the General Assembly means to ensure the optimum apportionment of conference resources, facilities and services, in order to maximize their efficient and effective use and, in this respect, to consider the feasibility of a quota system to allocate resources among various fields of activity;

(e) Advise the General Assembly on the current and future requirements of the Organization for conference services and facilities;

(f) Advise the General Assembly on means to ensure improved co-ordination of conferences within the United Nations system, including conference services and facilities, and to conduct appropriate consultations to that end;

"4. Requests the Committee on Conferences to take into account, as appropriate, the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, as well as the comments of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions thereon, and relevant statements made by Member States in the Fifth Committee."

6. Algeria and Yugoslavia submitted amendments (A/C.5/L.1190) to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1187 (equally applicable to the revised draft resolution) as follows:

(a) To add to section II, paragraph 2, after the words "President of the General Assembly" the words "after consultations with the Chairmen of the regional groups";

(b) To replace, in section II, paragraph 3, the present subparagraph (a) by the following:

"Submit for the approval of the General Assembly the pattern of conferences and changes to be made in that pattern as required, bearing in mind the provisions of paragraph 12 of resolution 2609 (XXIV);"

(c) To replace, in section II, paragraph 3, the present subparagraph (b) by the following:

"Propose for adoption by the General Assembly, in accordance with the pattern of conferences, the annual calendar of conferences;"

and further orally proposed that the figure 18 in section II, paragraph 1, of the revised draft resolution should be changed to 21. At the 1671st meeting, the representative of Canada, on behalf of the sponsors, accepted the amendments contained in document A/C.5/L.1190, and, at the 1673rd meeting, on 26 November, accepted the oral amendment.

/...

7. Argentina, Brazil, Iran, and the United Republic of Tanzania submitted an amendment (A/C.5/L.1191) to the revised draft resolution reading as follows:

"In section I, add an operative paragraph 6 reading as follows:

'6. Endorses the recommendations regarding interpretation services contained in chapter VII, paragraph 4, of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, subject to the related comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions'."

At the 1673rd meeting, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.1187/Rev.1 accepted the amendment.

8. At its 1673rd meeting, on 26 November, the Fifth Committee voted on revised draft resolution A/C.5/L.1187/Rev.1, as amended, as follows:

(a) Section I, paragraph 6, was adopted by 53 votes to 10, with 24 abstentions;

(b) The revised draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 93 votes to none, with 1 abstention (see para. 9 below, draft resolution II).

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

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

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Inclusion of Vienna in the pattern of conferences

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2960 (XXVII) of 13 December 1972,

Having considered the communication received by the Secretary-General from the Government of Austria, 1/

Noting the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in chapter VI of its report, 2/

Noting further the observations of the Secretary-General 3/ and the comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, 4/

1/ A/9589/Rev.1.

2/ A/9795.

3/ A/9795/Add.1.

4/ A/9795/Add.2.

Taking into account the additional information made available in the course of the debate in the Fifth Committee,

1. Welcomes the invitation extended by the Government of Austria to the United Nations to make use of the facilities available in the Donaupark project in Vienna after 1978;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to enter into negotiations with the Government of Austria and the International Atomic Energy Agency and report to the General Assembly for consideration at its thirtieth session on the following:

(a) The most rational and economic use of the premises available in the Donaupark project in Vienna after completion of construction in 1978;

(b) The best possible use of the office space provided by the Government of Austria in the Donaupark project;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to submit, after consultations with the International Atomic Energy Agency, his recommendations to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session on the joint utilization of the International Conference Building in the Donaupark project;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to report fully to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session on the administrative and financial implications which may arise from all the recommendations and proposals to be submitted pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 3 above so as to enable the Assembly to arrive at a decision on this matter;

5. Approves the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit to the effect that certain bodies specified in paragraph 500 of its report may also meet in Vienna for the period 1975-1977, taking into account the observations of the Joint Inspection Unit in paragraphs 501 and 502 of its report and subject to the related comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions 5/ and in the light of the standing invitation of the Government of Austria as set forth in its memorandum. 6/

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Pattern of conferences

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 1202 (XII) of 13 December 1957, 1851 (XVII) of 19 December 1962, 1987 (XVIII) of 17 December 1963, 2116 (XX) of 21 December 1965,

5/ Ibid., para. 43.

6/ A/9589/Rev.1, para. 16.

2239 (XXI) of 20 December 1966, 2361 (XXII) of 19 December 1967, 2478 (XXIII) of 21 December 1968, 2609 (XXIV) of 16 December 1969, 2693 (XXV) of 11 December 1970, 2834 (XXVI) of 17 December 1971 and 2960 (XXVII) of 13 December 1972,

Having considered the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the pattern of conferences of the United Nations and the possibilities for more rational and economic use of its conference services 7/ and the comments of the Secretary-General 8/ and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions 9/ thereon,

Having also considered the report of the Secretary-General 10/ submitting the calendar of meetings and conferences for 1975 and the tentative calendar for 1976,

I

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit and of the observations of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions thereon;
2. Approves the calendar of meetings and conferences for 1975 as set forth in the report of the Secretary-General;
3. Decides that no meetings or conferences other than those covered by the calendar of conferences for 1975 shall be convened, except under special or unusual circumstances;
4. Reaffirms for application in 1975, as appropriate, the provisions of paragraphs 9 and 10 of its resolution 2609 (XXIV);
5. Decides that subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly should not under ordinary circumstances create new standing bodies or ad hoc sessional or intersessional bodies which require additional resources without the approval of the General Assembly and requests the other principal organs of the United Nations to take a similar decision with respect to their respective subsidiary bodies;
6. Endorses the recommendations regarding interpretation services contained in chapter VII, paragraph 4, of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, subject to the related comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

II

1. Decides to establish, on an experimental basis and subject to review at its thirty-second session, a Committee on Conferences composed of 21 Member States;

7/ A/9795.

8/ A/9795/Add.1.

9/ A/9795/Add.2.

10/ A/9768 and Corr.1.

2. Requests the President of the General Assembly, after consultations with the Chairmen of the regional groups, to designate Member States, on the basis of an equitable geographical balance, to serve on the Committee for three-year terms;

3. Decides that the terms of reference of the Committee on Conferences shall be:

(a) To submit for the approval of the General Assembly the pattern of conferences and changes to be made in that pattern as required, bearing in mind the provisions of paragraph 12 of resolution 2609 (XXIV);

(b) To propose for adoption by the General Assembly, in accordance with the pattern of conferences, the annual calendar of conferences;

(c) To act after appropriate consultations on behalf of the General Assembly in dealing between sessions with requested departures from the calendar of conferences;

(d) To recommend to the General Assembly means to ensure the optimum apportionment of conference resources, facilities and services, in order to maximize their efficient and effective use and, in this respect, to consider the feasibility of a quota system to allocate resources among various fields of activity;

(e) To advise the General Assembly on the current and future requirements of the Organization for conference services and facilities;

(f) To advise the General Assembly on means to ensure improved co-ordination of conferences within the United Nations system, including conference services and facilities, and to conduct appropriate consultations to that end;

4. Requests the Committee on Conferences to take into account, as appropriate, the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, as well as the comments of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions thereon, and relevant statements made by Member States in the Fifth Committee.
