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Chairman: Mr. Jiří NOSEK (Czechoslovakia).

AGENDA ITEM 44

Budget estimates for the financial year 1960 (A/4110, A/4119/Add.1, A/4170, A/4223, A/4259, A/4264, A/4283 and Corr.1, A/4295, A/C.5/777, A/C.5/796, A/C.5/798, A/C.5/808) (continued)*

Meeting at Buenos Aires of the fourteenth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (A/4310, A/C.5/808)

1. The CHAIRMAN said the Secretary-General estimated that the additional costs in connexion with the meeting at Buenos Aires of the Commission on the Status of Women, to be charged to sections 1, 8 and 13 of the budget, would amount to \$53,200. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 1202 (XII), the Argentine Government would reimburse the Organization for that amount. In its report (A/4310, paras. 4 and 5), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions expressed the belief that the number of staff members to be detailed from New York could be reduced and recommended an additional provision of \$48,000.

2. Mr. QUIJANO (Argentina) thanked the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council for having chosen Buenos Aires as the place of the Commission's next session. He was convinced that the holding of such meetings away from New York could not but be of benefit to the United Nations since they enabled its organs to come into contact with the various peoples of the world. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 1202 (XII), the Argentine Government was assuming responsibility for the additional costs; in addition, it would provide, at its own expense, the extra personnel required for the Commission's session.

3. Mr. HILLIS (United Kingdom) endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation; he agreed that

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it should be possible to reduce the number of staff members detailed from New York without serious detriment to the quality of the services provided.

4. With regard to the programme of conferences, he had one general observation to make: the information on conferences given in annex II to the budget estimates (A/4110) was very general. In fact, it showed only the gross expenditures. It was to be hoped that the explanatory annexes which the Secretary-General had promised to include in the next budget estimates—annexes showing, for example, the distribution of past expenditures by main fields of activity—would be more detailed. Under the terms of resolution 1202 (XII), the Secretary-General was required to submit a basic programme of conferences every year. To be as complete as possible, that document should be published shortly before the end of each session of the General Assembly; the Committee could consider it, for instance, immediately after the second reading of the budget estimates.

The recommendations of the Advisory Committee (A/4310, para. 5) were adopted unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council (Chapter X) (A/4143)

5. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee recommend the General Assembly to take note of chapter X of the report of the Economic and Social Council.

It was so decided.

6. The CHAIRMAN said that the Rapporteur would submit his report on that matter direct to the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 51

United Nations International School: report of the Secretary-General (A/4293, A/C.5/L.593 and Add.1, A/C.5/L.594, A/C.5/L.598) (continued)

7. Mr. FOBES (United States of America) informed the Committee that the sponsors of the two draft resolutions (A/C.5/L.593 and Add.1 and A/C.5/L.594) had reached agreement on a joint draft resolution. The new draft resolution (A/C.5/L.598) retained the idea of establishing an International School Fund. The sponsors had agreed that the Fund should be managed by the Board of Trustees of the School and that contributions and donations might be received from various sources. They provided that the School should be given the financial assistance which the General Assembly considered necessary for a period of five years, and for the year 1960 they proposed that the amount of the contribution to the Fund should be fixed at \$100,000.

* Resumed from the 754th meeting.

8. The Secretary-General's suggestion (A/4293, paras. 8 and 9) that part of the revenue from the Gift Centre should be earmarked for financing the International School had not been entirely discarded: the new draft resolution provided that the Secretary-General should submit to the General Assembly at its fifteenth session his recommendations and the comments of the Advisory Committee on the means of financing future contributions to the International School Fund. He hoped that the joint draft resolution, which had been made possible thanks to the conciliatory efforts of a number of delegations, would win the Committee's support.

9. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the meeting should be suspended until all the translations of the draft resolution had been circulated.

The meeting was suspended at 11.30 a.m. and resumed at 12.15 p.m.

10. Mr. CRISTOBAL (Philippines) thought that the United Nations International School was to be congratulated on the results it had already achieved, which, incidentally, could not have been brought about without the financial assistance granted by the General Assembly. It was clear from the report by the Secretary-General and the Board of Trustees that the School would need financial support for several years to come. The only funds available to it were the school fees, which owing to the small number of pupils were not enough to prevent a deficit. There could be no question of raising the fees, which were already too high for many members of the Secretariat. The ten-Power draft resolution (A/C.5/L.598) proposed a solution which would ensure the financial stability of the School. The Philippine delegation hoped that the Board of Trustees would consider the establishment of a scholarship programme which would enable a greater number of pupils to attend the International School. It would vote in favour of the ten-Power draft resolution.

11. Mr. KITTANI (Iraq) said that the International School's financial difficulties were mainly due to its small number of pupils. Accordingly, the reasons for that state of affairs should be explored. He thought he could distinguish four: first, the school fees were too high; secondly, instruction at the International School was not given in the mother tongue of numbers of children, who were consequently obliged to take private lessons; thirdly, owing to the School's precarious financial position, parents did not know from year to year whether they would be able to go on sending their children there; fourthly, the School buildings and facilities left much to be desired.

12. The ten-Power draft resolution would do much to overcome those difficulties. The establishment of a Fund would enable the Board of Trustees to study the question of school fees and to set up a system of scholarships. The Board would also be able to arrange for teaching to be given in Arabic and in various other languages, beginning with the next school year. Moreover, the existence of a Fund would give the School an adequate financial basis, so that it would no longer be in a precarious position. The question of school facilities was of course linked to that of permanent accommodation; but while awaiting a final solution the Board of Trustees would be able to improve some of the temporary facilities.

13. His delegation would have preferred the School to be able to depend on an assured source of revenue.

It did not agree with the statements of the United Kingdom and New Zealand representatives at the 755th meeting that the United Nations had no obligations towards the International School. Until the School was in a position to provide for its own needs, it would be the duty of the General Assembly to grant it assistance. The ten-Power draft resolution represented a considerable step towards a permanent solution and his delegation would vote in favour of it.

14. Mr. HSUEH (China) paid tribute to the International School for the services it rendered the Secretariat and the personnel of the permanent missions. The School was not only useful but necessary, as was evident from the steady increase in the number of pupils between 1947 and 1959.

15. So far, no satisfactory solution had been found to the problem of financing the School. The Secretary-General was to be congratulated on the useful proposals he had made in his report (A/4293, paras. 7 to 11) and the sponsors of the two draft resolutions (A/C.5/L.593 and Add.1 and A/C.5/L.594) on the compromise upon which they had agreed. The Chinese delegation would support the new text (A/C.5/L.598), which would make it possible not only for the existing deficit to be liquidated but also for the programme contemplated by the Board of Trustees in its report to be put into effect.

16. Mr. GREZ (Chile) supported the joint draft resolution for the establishment of an International School Fund. The School was playing an increasingly important role and its development entailed increasingly heavy expenses. It would therefore be advisable for the Board of Trustees to redouble its efforts to interest certain private foundations and institutions in financing the construction of permanent premises.

17. Mr. VENKATARAMAN (India) thanked the delegations of Argentina and the United States, which had co-sponsored draft resolution A/C.5/L.594, for the co-operative spirit they had shown, without which no compromise would have been possible. Having said that, he wished to make it clear that the sponsors of the six-Power draft resolution (A/C.5/L.593), together with the two additional sponsors who had joined them (A/C.5/L.593/Add.1), thought that the best way of dealing with the financial difficulties of the International School would be to grant it a permanent source of income; they wholeheartedly endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal that the net revenue from the operation of the United Nations Gift Centre should be allocated to the International School. They agreed, however, that the problem needed thorough study, and they had therefore accepted operative paragraph 6 (b) of the new joint draft resolution (A/C.5/L.598), under which the consideration of the question would be deferred to the next session. The sponsors of the eight-Power draft resolution had been glad to see that the Argentine and United States representatives had accepted the central idea of the Secretary-General's report, by acknowledging the need for the International School to be established on a permanent basis. The next step would be to try to obtain assistance from private foundations; he hoped that the Secretary-General and the Board of Trustees would spare no efforts in that direction. The sponsors of the eight-Power draft resolution were glad that the United Nations contribution to the proposed Fund had been raised to \$100,000; that would enable the School to liquidate its deficit, which would probably amount

to some \$65,000, and to undertake various programmes.

18. He hoped that the joint draft resolution would be adopted unanimously.

19. Mr. GANEM (France) said he wished to congratulate and thank the ten delegations which had succeeded in submitting a compromise resolution. All delegations had signified their wish to take practical steps to assist the International School. The United States delegation had expressed certain doubts as to the utilization of the profits of the Gift Centre. The present draft resolution brought the different views closer together and postponed consideration of the question of financing the International School until the next session, a reasonable solution inasmuch as the problem needed some thought. His delegation would vote for the joint draft resolution as it stood even though the financial sacrifice it provided for might appear considerable. The International School was an important element in the working conditions of the Secretariat; moreover, it had the advantage of offering its pupils an international atmosphere while at the same time preserving their ties, particularly their linguistic ties, with their countries of origin.

20. Mr. AHANEEN (Iran) observed that his delegation was one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/L.593. In view of certain objections which had been made against their text, the co-sponsors had agreed to a new draft (A/C.5/L.598). It was obvious that the International School would not be able to obtain funds from private sources until it had achieved a stable financial position. Accordingly, some means had to be found which would help the Board of Trustees to solve the problem of administering the School. The authors of the eight-Power draft resolution had thought that the net profits of the Gift Centre should logically revert to the staff of the Secretariat and of the permanent missions, and that it could be used to contribute to the education of their children. Since it had been impossible to reach unanimity on that proposal, however, they had agreed to a new text providing for a temporary solution; but they wished to make it clear that they had not changed their views on the soundness of the measures proposed in their first draft.

21. Mr. URABE (Japan) said that he by no means underestimated the importance and value of the work done by the International School; he regretted, however, that he could not respond to the Indian representative's appeal and support the proposal before the Committee.

22. His delegation thanked the sponsors of the new draft resolution (A/C.5/L.598) for having refrained in the end from mentioning the use of the Gift Centre's profits to finance the School; on that point, it could not agree with the view just expressed by the representative of Iran. Last year, the Secretary-General had considered and then dropped the idea of placing the Gift Centre under the same management as the restaurants and related services; at the present session, he was suddenly proposing to "give away" the Gift Centre, so to speak, to the International School. Before taking a decision of that kind, the Gift Centre's position with respect to the United Nations, and the latter's relationship to the Co-operative, ought to be defined in precise terms.

23. The joint draft resolution provided for the establishment, for the benefit of the School, of a Fund to

which the Assembly would make a contribution of \$100,000 in 1960 and to which it would undertake to furnish financial assistance for the four following years. Although the amount of that assistance was not specified, it was obvious that the total sum paid for that five-year period would be of the order of several hundred thousand dollars. There again, the Committee could not reasonably undertake a commitment of such magnitude before clearly defining the relationship between the United Nations and the International School. On that subject, there appeared to be two contrary viewpoints in the Committee: some apparently regarded the School as an integral part of the United Nations, whereas others considered it to be entirely independent of the Organization. That was obviously an antecedent which had to be decided on. If the United Nations was to furnish the School assistance on the scale proposed, it would be entirely proper to ask, for example, whether the General Assembly should not appoint the members of the School's Board of Trustees and lay down their terms of reference, or exercise some control over the School's curriculum, the salaries of its teaching staff, the qualifications of the children to be admitted, and various other aspects of its work. If, on the other hand, the School was to be an autonomous entity, various ways could be considered—the representatives of New Zealand and the United Kingdom had suggested several—by which it could be made an economically viable institution. His delegation, for one, preferred that the School should remain independent and endeavour to meet its own needs as quickly as possible. At the very least, it felt that only children whose parents were associated with the United Nations should benefit by any assistance which might be granted to the School.

24. When, in 1958, the General Assembly had been asked to make a grant-in-aid to the School and had adopted resolution 1297 (XIII), the request submitted to it had appeared to be an exceptional one; but a similar request had been made towards the end of the current session—in other words, at a moment when the Committee was pressed for time and therefore unable to make a thorough study of the proposals submitted to it. It was very unfortunate that the question should again be coming up for discussion at a time when the session was drawing to an end.

25. For those reasons, his delegation would be unable to support the joint draft resolution; it would be prepared, however, to vote in favour of a proposal for a grant-in-aid on an ad hoc basis to the School.

26. Mr. IRWIN (Canada) said that his delegation had always wished the International School the greatest success, and was fully aware of the tremendous effort involved in its operation. Nevertheless, it had always had some reservations as to the advisability of direct United Nations participation in the financing of the School, sharing the views of the Advisory Committee in that regard. In the past his delegation had not sought to press its own point of view, since the grants involved had been modest and, as it has appeared, exceptional. The present situation was different: what was being proposed was to make a substantial grant to the School and to furnish it with direct financial assistance for a five-year period.

27. His delegation readily acknowledged that the United Nations had an obligation so far as concerned the education of children of internationally-recruited members of the Secretariat; and in any event, that

obligation was explicitly recognized in the present Staff Rules, which provided for the payment of education grants. That did not apply with regard to the education of children of members of the staffs of permanent missions, or of children whose parents were not associated with the United Nations; the responsibility for those two categories rested on the parents' employers—in the case of the staffs of permanent missions, on the Governments, most of which granted appropriate allowances. At the International School there were 134 children—or about 40 per cent of the total enrolment—whose parents were members of the United Nations Secretariat. Thus, the adoption of the proposal before the Committee would amount to making a grant of approximately \$750 for every child in that category. Even if their number were to double, the amount per pupil which would be added to the education grant of \$400 already paid would be substantial. Furthermore, it seemed rather unfair to pay the additional amount solely in the case of children who attended the International School, while limiting to \$400 the amount paid to staff members whose children attended other educational institutions.

28. It had been asserted on various occasions that the amount of the education grant was inadequate for the New York area. If a study of that question were to establish that that was indeed the case, Member States might contemplate increasing the grant, the increase to apply equally to all internationally-recruited members of the Secretariat. Apart from being more equitable, that would be a more reasonable means of helping the School to increase its enrolment and thereby to stabilize its financial position.

29. Delegations should weigh well the long-term consequences of a system such as the one envisaged. If the United Nations assumed such positive responsibility for the financing of the School, it was entirely possible that the General Assembly would subsequently be asked to finance the construction of a permanent School building, if the appeals to private donors for funds did not produce the desired results, or that it would be asked to supervise the School's curricula

(the Committee had already had an example of that type of request), something which was hardly desirable, from the point of view either of the School or of the Organization.

30. His delegation regretted that the item had come up for discussion so late in the session and that the Advisory Committee had not been able to consider the matter. It understood the School's difficulties, and was prepared to support a special grant to liquidate the 1958-1959 deficit and the deficit anticipated for 1959-1960; but it thought that the General Assembly should not commit itself beyond 1960. It hoped that the reports which had been requested for the fifteenth session would be submitted early enough to enable the Committee to examine them carefully.

31. Mr. EL HAKIM (United Arab Republic) stressed the importance of the International School, not only because of the services it rendered to members of the Secretariat and of delegations, but because of the opportunity it offered to children from many countries to establish contacts which would inevitably serve the cause of international understanding. In so far as the development of that understanding was a basic objective of the United Nations, the Organization's responsibility to the School was unquestionable, and Member States should be prepared without hesitation to make some sacrifices in the School's interests.

32. If the School's enrolment was inadequate, the reason was undoubtedly its excessively high fees. If its fees were cut, its enrolment would rise, and in the long run the School's deficit could be reduced. He therefore proposed the addition at the end of operative paragraph 4 of the words "especially by granting scholarships or by reducing the level of fees to those associated with the United Nations".

33. He would support the joint draft resolution. He thanked the Director of Personnel for the assurances he had given concerning the teaching of Arabic at the International School.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.