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GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1976-1977

Administrative and financial implications of draft resolution B
recommended by the First Committee (A/31/386, para. 16)

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. E. Brian NASON (Ireland)

1. At its 47th meeting, on 13 December 1976, the Fifth Committee, pursuant to rule 153 of the rules of procedures of the General Assembly, considered a statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/31/68) on the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution B recommended by the First Committee (A/31/386, para. 16).
2. Under the terms of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would:
 - (a) Decide to convene a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to be held in New York in May/June 1978;
 - (b) Further decide to establish a Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, composed of 54 Member States appointed by the President of the Assembly on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, with the mandate of examining all relevant questions relating to the special session, including its agenda, and to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-second session appropriate recommendations thereon;
 - (c) Request the Secretary-General to transmit the replies of Member States to the Preparatory Committee and to render it all necessary assistance, including the provision of essential background information, relevant documents and summary records;
 - (d) Request the Preparatory Committee to meet for a short organizational

session not longer than one week before 31 March 1977, inter alia, to set the dates for its substantive sessions.

3. In his statement, the Secretary-General estimated the requirements for 1977 at \$90,000 for consultants and \$202,800 in conference servicing costs of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament. As regards the latter amount, he indicated that those costs would be reviewed towards the end of the current session of the General Assembly, and a report would be made to the Fifth Committee as to how much could be absorbed from within resources in the light of the over-all pattern of conferences for 1977 and how much would be required in net additional appropriations for the biennium 1976-1977. Therefore, only the amount of \$90,000 was being requested at this stage.

4. As for the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Secretary-General provided the estimates of conference servicing costs for one week in respect of plenary meetings and also meetings of a Main Committee, as indicative of orders of magnitude. He also indicated that a statement of financial implications in this regard would be submitted to the Assembly at its thirty-second session, taking into consideration the recommendations and observations of the Preparatory Committee.

5. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, introducing the report of that Committee (A/31/8/Add.14, paras. 25 through 30), stated that in the Advisory Committee's opinion the provision of essential background information, for which the Secretary-General requested \$90,000 for consultants, would appear to relate to work more in the nature of compilation than of original research, and that the Committee was not convinced that it would require much expertise that was not already available within the Secretariat. The Advisory Committee recommended in this connexion that the estimate for consultants be reduced from \$90,000 to \$30,000.

6. The delegation of Mexico, supported by another delegation, stated, regarding the provision of essential background information, that in its view it was necessary to obtain required expertise which would not be available from within the Secretariat and would have to be secured from outside the Organization. Consequently, it proposed that an additional amount of \$90,000 for this purpose, as had been requested by the Secretary-General, be appropriated.

7. Some delegations expressed their regret that this background information could not be provided from within the Organization, and that the Secretary-General had not tried to absorb the costs relating to activities in disarmament affairs and others by redistributing already appropriated resources.

DECISIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

8. The Committee adopted, by 47 votes to 9, with 27 abstentions, the proposal by Mexico that an additional amount of \$90,000 be provided in respect of consultant services.

9. The Fifth Committee then decided, without objection, to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution B recommended by the First Committee (A/31/386, para. 16), additional appropriations of \$90,000 under section 2C of the programme budget for the biennium 1976-1977 would be required. Conference servicing costs not exceeding \$203,000 would be considered by the Assembly in the context of its consideration of the total requirements for the revised calendar of conferences for 1977. Appropriations with regard to the special session of the General Assembly would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for 1978-1979.
