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President : Mr. Luis PADILLA NERVO (Mexico).

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations : report of the Committee on Contributions : report of the Fifth Committee (A/2019)

[Agenda item 44]

1. Mr. ASHA (Syria), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee : I have the honour to submit the report of the Fifth Committee on the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations. This report follows a very detailed consideration by the Fifth Committee of the report of the Committee on Contributions [A/1859]. I wish to draw your attention to a small typographical error in paragraph 2 of the report. The third sentence commences with the words "The priority which the Committee...". This should read "The relative weight which the Committee...".

2. The conclusions reached by the Committee are embodied in the draft resolution which appears at the end of the report and to those conclusions I invite the particular attention of the Assembly.

3. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*) : The draft scale of contributions to the United Nations budget for 1952 has been submitted to the General Assembly for approval. This draft provides for an increase of more than 40 per cent in the assessments of the USSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Byelorussian SSR, despite the fact that the assessments of these three countries were increased by 10 per cent last year.

4. In recommending so appreciable an increase in the assessments of the USSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Byelorussian SSR, the Committee on Contributions has ignored the resolution [14 (I)] adopted at the first session of the General Assembly, establishing the following criteria for assessing the contributions of States to the United Nations budget : the national income of the population as compared with its *per capita* income ; damage and destruction suffered by Members as the result of the Second World War ; the ability of Members to secure foreign currency.

5. As regards the criteria relating to damage and destruction suffered by Members as the result of the Second World War, it should be noted that during the Second World War the Soviet Union suffered enormous damage and destruction computed at more than 500,000 million dollars. The Soviet Union has been spending hundreds of milliards of roubles on restoring the national economy destroyed by the German occupiers. Like the Fifth Committee, the Committee on Contributions has completely overlooked this circumstance in submitting to the Assembly for its consideration a recommendation that the contributions of the USSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Byelorussian SSR should be increased by more than 40 per cent.

6. As regards the criteria relating to the ability of Members to secure foreign currency, it should be remembered that it has now become much more difficult for the USSR to obtain the United States currency in which contributions to the United Nations are paid. This is due to the artificial barriers to trade with the USSR created by the United States authorities, and their discrimination against it. As a result, the volume of trade between the USSR and the United States has declined in the last five years to less than one-sixth of what it was and is now insignificant.

7. In these circumstances, the proposal to increase the assessments of the USSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Byelorussian SSR by more than 40 per cent is in complete contradiction with the General Assembly resolution concerning the criteria for assessing contributions to the United Nations budget. This proposal also conflicts directly with the working rule of the Committee on Contributions, which was formulated as follows in the Committee's report approved by the General Assembly at its fifth session :

"As a working rule,... the Committee agreed, in this as in previous years, that generally no change either upwards or downwards of more than 10 per cent in any one year should be proposed in the percentage contribution of any country."

8. There is no doubt that the recommendation to increase the contributions of the USSR, the Ukrainian SSR and

¹ This correction applies to the mimeographed version only of document A/2019.

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Supplement No. 13*.

the Byelorussian SSR by more than 40 per cent is in contradiction with the General Assembly resolution concerning the criteria for assessing contributions to the United Nations budget, and with the established practice and rules of procedure of the Committee on Contributions. To adopt this recommendation would be to violate the most elementary and fundamental principles by which the General Assembly has at all times been guided in deciding the question of the scale of contributions.

9. For all these reasons, the USSR delegation will vote against the Fifth Committee's recommendation concerning the scale of contributions to the United Nations budget for 1952, bearing in mind the fact that the rejection of this recommendation would signify the maintenance in 1952 of the present scale of assessments.

10. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): We shall now proceed to the vote on the draft resolution of the Fifth Committee concerning the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations.

The draft resolution was adopted by 40 votes to 5, with 3 abstentions.

11. Mr. VORYS (United States of America): I wish to explain the vote of the United States delegation on the report of the Fifth Committee on contributions for 1952.

12. For the first time in the history of the United Nations my country has abstained from approving the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the Organization. We asked in the Fifth Committee that our contribution should be brought into line for 1952 with the resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1948 [238 A (III)] which recognizes that no Member State should contribute more than one-third of the ordinary expenses in normal times. We urged this as a matter of principle, not as a matter of money.

13. As is well known, my country has expended billions of dollars in recent years to uphold principles of the Charter which the United Nations was not in a position to implement. We have extended economic and military aid to regional organizations formed under the provisions of the Charter for defence against aggression. We believe, however, that in this Organization, based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members, there must be more equality in contribution. Rule 159, which refers to apportionment of the expenditures among Members "broadly according to capacity to pay", has been interpreted by many Members as requiring a strict application of relative capacity to pay, even though they do not apply such a principle at home. All Governments obtain revenues from excise taxes which are levied irrespective of individual capacity to pay. By this means every citizen is made aware that increased expenditures involve increased taxation. Similarly, the scale of contributions for this Organization must strike an equitable balance between voting strength and paying possibilities.

14. One step is that no nation should be asked or permitted to furnish more than one-third of the support—in fairness to that nation, in fairness to this Organization. There is nothing sacred or scientific about the fraction one-third as applied to contributions any more than when it is applied to voting in the Assembly, but two-thirds is the Charter symbol for voting on important questions and it has been recognized by the Assembly as the symbol of the proportionate contribution that should be borne by fifty-nine Members, leaving not more than one-third to be borne by any one Member.

15. If Members feel that times are not yet normal, our abnormal expenditures in the common cause might justify

us in asking for a subnormal assessment now. We believe, however, that the principle adopted in 1948 should now be applied, and any commitment of the United States to contribute more than thirty-three and a third per cent will be based on the provisions of the Charter, not on the vote of United States representatives.

16. My country has made far more than a one-third contribution or a two-thirds contribution to the United Nations effort in Korea in support of the principles of the Charter. This effort had the publicly announced support of fifty-three Member nations, and most of these nations have contributed material assistance, but I noted that only twenty-one flags were displayed over the Korean veterans who received our grateful tribute at the recent impressive ceremony in this chamber. We give full credit to the men and the nations fighting beside us in the common cause out there. We appreciate that future formal united action on Korean contributions depends on the outcome of the armistice negotiations now going on, but we must not forget that the struggle against aggression in Korea is everybody's struggle, not ours alone, not ours especially. The future of every nation in the free world is involved.

17. We believe that in this Organization of equals each nation has an equal duty to measure up to its own full responsibility in contributions of men and money in carrying forward our great principles. In a spirit of co-operation, and because there is much that is good in the report on contributions, we did not vote against it. For reasons which I have given, we felt we should not vote for it. Therefore, we have abstained, but we shall continue to do our part in the support of the United Nations to bring about peace on earth for men of goodwill.

18. Mr. BERROETA (Venezuela) (*translated from Spanish*): The Venezuelan delegation wishes to explain its vote on the draft resolution of the Committee on Contributions adopted by the General Assembly.

19. The report of the Committee on Contributions is based on statistics obtained in part from the governments themselves so that any increase in contributions would, as a rule, be warranted by an equivalent improvement in the economic situation of the country to which the increase applied.

20. Although at first sight the statistics supplied by Venezuela may appear to indicate a relative increase in national wealth, in fact Venezuela needs all its economic strength not to maintain or to develop a prosperous position but to lay the foundations of an economy which can guarantee to my country that equilibrium which many others, even those countries which suffered during the war, reached many years ago and which for Venezuela is still a goal to be attained.

21. As the Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs told the General Assembly, Venezuela is, and always will be, ready to co-operate unreservedly and with all its strength in United Nations efforts to build peace. He also stated that as Venezuela grew stronger, so its contribution to the international effort would be increased.

22. Accordingly, my delegation wishes to state that Venezuela is not making a small sacrifice in agreeing to the higher figure at which it had been assessed by the Committee on Contributions. Venezuela does so because it is sure that in this way it is helping to strengthen the United Nations and to furnish the means to enable its technical organs to work with ever greater efficiency and because, by the same token, it is furthering both its own development and world equilibrium and understanding between the nations.

Budget estimates for the financial year 1952 : report of the Fifth Committee (A/2022)

[Agenda item 41]

23. Mr. ASHA (Syria), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee : I have the honour to submit to the General Assembly the report of the Fifth Committee on the budget estimates for the financial year 1952.

24. The Committee in its series of thirty meetings made an exhaustive study of the budgetary proposals submitted by the Secretary-General on the basis of the very detailed examination undertaken by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. This year the Committee was faced with very unusual circumstances in that it had to prepare its report to the General Assembly within a very limited time and for adoption before the end of 1951. That report is now before you. It is not intended to be an exhaustive review of the Committee's budget discussions. A more detailed summary including the points of view expressed by individual delegations is contained in the official records. The purpose of the report is to provide a synopsis of the main points emerging from the Committee's discussions on the budget proposals.

25. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the approval of an estimate of \$US 48,096,780 gross. There is an estimated offset in miscellaneous income of \$US 6,399,800, so that the net expenditure for 1952 which will be assessed among the States will amount to \$US 41,696,980. The attention of the General Assembly is drawn particularly to the new section 33 [*part XII*] of the budget which was voted on a provisional basis pending detailed examination by the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly of the particular items which make up the global sum included in this section.

26. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*) : The Fifth Committee has submitted four draft resolutions to the General Assembly.

27. I shall put the first draft resolution to the vote ; it is the " draft appropriation resolution for the financial year 1952 ".

The draft resolution was adopted by 47 votes to 5.

28. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*) : We shall now vote on the draft resolution relating to " unforeseen and extraordinary expenses ".

The draft resolution was adopted by 52 votes to none.

29. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*) : We shall now proceed to the vote on the draft resolution concerning the Working Capital Fund.

The draft resolution was adopted by 45 votes to 5.

30. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*) : The last draft resolution is entitled : " Agreement between the United Nations and the Carnegie Foundation concerning the use of the premises of the Peace Palace at The Hague ".

The draft resolution was adopted by 52 votes to none.

31. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*) : My delegation has voted against approval of the budget estimates for 1952 submitted by the Fifth Committee for the following reasons. The budget estimates include appropriations for the maintenance of a number of committees and commissions and also for the execution of a considerable number of measures to which my delegation is opposed in principle. For example, it opposed the establishment of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the creation of the United Nations Field Service and of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, the

institution of medals and ribbons for personnel of the so-called " United Nations armed forces " in Korea, and so on.

32. During the discussion of the substance of these questions in committees and in plenary meetings of the General Assembly my delegation stated that the establishment and operations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, far from contributing to the fulfilment of the task laid down at the first session of the General Assembly [*resolutions 8 (I) and 62 (I)*], the speediest possible repatriation of displaced persons to their country of origin, actually constitutes an obstacle to its achievement.

33. The USSR delegation said that the creation of the United Nations Field Service was a violation of the Charter, which makes no provision for the establishment of a military body of this type to be administered by the United Nations Secretariat. The institution of medals and ribbons bears witness to the fact that the United Nations is being used as a weapon of United States policy. Furthermore, the total amount of the appropriations for 1952, \$48,096,000, and the total net expenditure, \$41,696,000, are considerably in excess of the level at which the United Nations budget must be stabilized.

34. When the Fifth Committee was discussing the question of the appropriations for 1952, the USSR delegation pointed to the need to stabilize the budget at the level of \$35,000,000 net. It pointed out that a budget of that size would be quite adequate to cover the regular activities of the United Nations. Stabilization at that level would strengthen and regularize the financial system of the Organization and would remove the legitimate complaints of some Member States regarding the extravagant appropriation of the funds contributed by them and the lack of economy in their expenditure.

35. The appropriations for 1952 show an increase of almost half a million dollars over the appropriations for last years, although there are good reasons for a substantial reduction. The budget estimates submitted for the General Assembly's approval provisionally include a global figure of five and a half million dollars, which will be subject to review and final approval in January, after the recess. Part of this global figure provides for the cost of completing the United Nations buildings in New York, which is estimated at a total figure of \$3,000,000. The USSR delegation considers it unsatisfactory that a loan of \$65,000,000 has proved insufficient for the construction of the United Nations buildings in New York and that supplementary appropriations are required for the purpose. It also considers it unsatisfactory and abnormal that more than \$5,000,000, or over 12 per cent of the total appropriations, should be spent on public information. It considers that there is no need for the yearly increase in the appropriations and expenditure of the United Nations. The volume of work of the different organs of the United Nations is not increasing ; the number of meetings of the General Assembly and its Committees has actually declined, while the Economic and Social Council has discontinued a number of its commissions and sub-commissions. In these circumstances, the increase in the estimates is due to an uneconomical and sometimes extravagant use of United Nations resources. Such a state of affairs is undermining the Organization's financial system and evoking legitimate criticism from many Member States, which attach great importance to the normalization and regularization of the Organization's finances. For these reasons the USSR delegation has voted against approval of the budget estimates for 1952.

36. The delegation of the USSR has opposed the adoption of the draft resolution on the Working Capital Fund submitted for the General Assembly's approval, for the following reasons. The draft resolution provides for an increase of \$1,239,000 in the Working Capital Fund. My delegation considers that the existing level of the Fund, \$20,000,000, is adequate to ensure the normal and uninterrupted financing of the United Nations. The proposal to increase the fund is an expression of the United Nations practice of increasing appropriations for expenditure from year to year, a practice which leads to an uneconomical and sometimes extravagant use of the Organization's resources. Nor can my delegation concur in the proposal made in the draft resolution for the reimbursement of national income taxes paid by staff members of the United Nations to the United States Treasury. The reimbursement of national income tax to staff members of the United Nations is tantamount to imposing a tax on the Organization as a whole for the benefit of States which have so far not exempted their nationals employed in the United Nations from the payment of income taxes, in the present instance, for the benefit of the United States Treasury. My delegation cannot subscribe to such a state of affairs in the United Nations. For these reasons my delegation has voted against the draft resolution on the Working Capital Fund.

37. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia): In explaining, on behalf of the Czechoslovak delegation, our vote on the resolution concerning the budget estimates for the financial year 1952, I should like to express appreciation to the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Asha, and to the Committee's secretariat for the high quality of the report which has been submitted today to the General Assembly in document A/2022. While generally approving of the report, my delegation voted against the draft resolution covering the budget estimates of the United Nations for the financial year 1952. I should like briefly to state the reasons for my delegation's position in this regard.

38. In studying budget estimates of the United Nations, my delegation has in view, as we have already stressed in the Fifth Committee, three basic considerations. The first consideration is the Organization's purposes, as set forth in the Charter, that is, the maintenance of international peace and security, the development of friendly relations among nations and the achievement of international co-operation. The second consideration is the staff and material equipment which our Organization requires to fulfil its task, and the relationship between the tasks, on the one hand, and the expenditure, on the other. The third consideration has to do with the stress which my delegation lays on the necessity for the highest utilization of the staff and material equipment, the greatest efficiency and the strictest economy.

39. On the basis of these three considerations, my delegation must state that the budget estimates for the financial year 1952 contain certain expenditures for purposes which in no way contribute to the fulfilment of the fundamental tasks of the United Nations. I have in mind particularly section 33—or perhaps I had better say part XII—entitled "Investigations, inquiries and other activities". This section includes costs of various illegally established

commissions and committees which, through their activities, directly harm the mission entrusted to the United Nations. Among such commissions and committees I refer especially to the so-called United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans, whether under the old or the new composition, the so-called United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea, the so-called *Ad Hoc* Committee on Forced Labour, and so forth.

40. The same is true of section 20 (a), which has to do with the expenditure for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. My delegation voted against the establishment of this Office during the fourth session of the General Assembly. In our opinion, the Office in no way contributes to the fulfilment of the tasks of the United Nations; on the contrary, it harms the Organization. My delegation is strongly opposed to such an expenditure.

41. As regards the ratio between the activities and the purpose of certain sections of the United Nations Secretariat, on the one hand, and the expenditure for such activities, on the other, my delegation believes that some of the expenditures are disproportionately high, which in turn leads to a disproportionately high overall budget estimate for the Organization's expenses during 1952.

42. In this connexion, I wish to stress the fact that the gross budget for the financial year 1952, contained in the draft resolution, amounting to \$US 48,096,780, substantially exceeds the total United Nations expenditure in 1950: \$US 43,746,264. It also substantially exceeds the budget approved for 1951, amounting to \$US 47,798,600. A mere comparison of these three figures shows that our Organization's budgets are constantly rising. This does not correspond to the principle of stabilizing the United Nations budgets, a principle which has been stressed here by the USSR representative and which my delegation fully supports.

43. For this reason, and for the other reasons which I have already stated, my delegation voted against the draft appropriation resolution for the financial year 1952.

Suspension of the work of the General Assembly

44. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): We have now finished our agenda for today's meeting which is our last meeting before the Christmas recess. I should like to remind representatives that the Committees will resume work on 2 January next and that the programme for Wednesday, 2 January, has already been published in the *Journal of the United Nations*.

45. I should like to take this opportunity of wishing you most sincerely an enjoyable holiday and a happy New Year. I hope that after this rest we shall be able to set to work with renewed vigour in order to end the session on the target date, 26 January. I also hope that next year we shall be able to go on working towards an improvement in the international situation.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.