

United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ELEVENTH SESSION
Official Records

26 SEP 1957



PLENARY MEETING 662nd

Wednesday, 27 February 1957,
at 10.30 a.m.

New York

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Agenda item 66: Question considered by the first emergency special session of the General Assembly from 1 to 10 November 1956 (continued) Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1233
Agenda item 47: United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund: annual report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (concluded) Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1233
Agenda item 45: Report of the Negotiating Committee for Extra-Budgetary Funds Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1233
Agenda item 46: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions (concluded) Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1233
Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapter XI) Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1233
Agenda item 50: Registration and publication of treaties and international agreements: report of the Secretary-General Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1233
Agenda item 44: Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly (concluded): (c) Board of Auditors Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1233
Agenda item 49: Administrative and budgetary co-ordination between the United Nations and the specialized agencies: reports of the Secretary-General and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1233
Agenda item 51: United Nations salary, allowance and benefits system: report of the Salary Review Committee Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1233
Agenda item 43: Budget estimates for the financial year 1957 (concluded) Report of the Fifth Committee.....	1234
Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters I, VIII, IX and X).....	1237

AGENDA ITEM 47

United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund: annual report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (concluded)

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3420/Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 45

Report of the Negotiating Committee for Extra-Budgetary Funds

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3548)

AGENDA ITEM 46

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions (concluded)

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3549)

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapter XI)

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3553)

AGENDA ITEM 50

Registration and publication of treaties and international agreements: report of the Secretary-General

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3509)

AGENDA ITEM 44

Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly (concluded):

(c) Board of Auditors

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3540)

AGENDA ITEM 49

Administrative and budgetary co-ordination between the United Nations and the specialized agencies: reports of the Secretary-General and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3547)

AGENDA ITEM 51

United Nations salary, allowance and benefits system: report of the Salary Review Committee

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3558)

President: Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON
(Thailand).

AGENDA ITEM 66

Question considered by the first emergency special session of the General Assembly from 1 to 10 November 1956 (continued)

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3560/Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 43

Budget estimates for the financial year 1957
(concluded)

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/3550)

1. The PRESIDENT: If there is no objection, I would suggest that the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee should present the reports of the Committee in connexion with agenda items 66, 47, 45, 46, 12, 50, 44 and 49 in one intervention. The reports on agenda items 51 and 43 will be submitted afterwards.

Mr. Forteza (Uruguay), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, presented the reports of that Committee on agenda items 66, 47, 45, 46, 12, 50, 44, and 49.

Pursuant to rule 68 of the rules of procedure, it was decided not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee.

2. The PRESIDENT: We shall now proceed to vote on the draft resolution submitted by the Fifth Committee in its report on agenda item 66 [A/3560/Add.1]. This concerns the administrative and financial arrangements for the United Nations Emergency Force.

The draft resolution was adopted by 52 votes to 8, with 3 abstentions.

3. The PRESIDENT: In its report on agenda item 47 [A/3420/Add.1], the Fifth Committee has recommended no action, leaving it to the Secretary-General to submit a new report in due course. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly takes note of the Fifth Committee's report.

It was so decided.

4. The PRESIDENT: We shall now proceed to vote on draft resolutions A and B submitted by the Fifth Committee in its report on agenda item 45 [A/3548].

Draft resolution A was adopted by 54 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

Draft resolution B was adopted by 53 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

5. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with resolution B which has just been adopted, I have to announce the composition of the Negotiating Committee for Extra-Budgetary Funds as follows: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, France, Lebanon, New Zealand, Pakistan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States.

6. As regards agenda item 46 [A/3549], the Fifth Committee in its report unanimously decided to recommend that consideration of the two questions involved in connexion with the scale of assessments be postponed until the twelfth session of the General Assembly. If there is no objection, I shall take it that it is so agreed.

It was so decided.

7. The PRESIDENT: In its report on agenda item 12 [A/3553], the Fifth Committee submits certain information on the report of the Economic and Social Council. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly takes note of the Fifth Committee's report.

It was so decided.

8. The PRESIDENT: We shall proceed to vote on the draft resolution submitted by the Fifth Committee in its report on agenda item 50 [A/3509].

The draft resolution was adopted by 61 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

9. The PRESIDENT: In its report on agenda item 44 (c) [A/3540], the Fifth Committee has submitted

a recommendation that the General Assembly appoint the Auditor-General of Colombia as a member of the Board of Auditors for a three-year term. If there is no objection, I shall assume that the Assembly adopts this recommendation.

It was so decided.

10. The PRESIDENT: In its report on agenda item 49 [A/3547], the Fifth Committee unanimously recommended the adoption of a draft resolution. If there is no objection, I will consider the draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

11. The PRESIDENT: I now invite the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee to present the reports on agenda items 51 and 43.

Mr. Forteza (Uruguay) Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, presented the reports of that Committee on agenda items 51 and 43 and then spoke as follows:

12. Mr. FORTEZA (Uruguay), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee (*translated from Spanish*): I should like to convey the Fifth Committee's gratitude to the Salary Review Committee and, in particular, to Mr. J. K. Hunn of New Zealand, that Committee's Rapporteur, for their valuable work.

13. I should also mention that the members of the Fifth Committee fully appreciate the Secretary-General's work in connexion with the administrative questions of the United Nations. The Fifth Committee had occasion to consider various aspects of this field of the Secretary-General's activity, and in the final stages of its deliberations paid a tribute to him and to his efforts and successes in this respect.

14. I should like to add that during all our discussion of this problem, and of all the other items referred to the Fifth Committee, we enjoyed the help of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions who, as in past years, took part in all the debates of the Fifth Committee. The Fifth Committee wishes to express its gratitude for the invaluable aid received from the Advisory Committee, whose prior study of the details of all the drafts and estimates considered during the present session greatly facilitated its proceedings.

Pursuant to rule 68 of the rules of procedure, it was decided not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee.

15. Mr. WADSWORTH (United States of America): I wish to explain why the United States delegation will vote against paragraph 2 of draft resolution B in the Fifth Committee's report [A/3558], which provides for Class 5 post adjustment for New York.

16. It is a matter of deep regret that this is an issue upon which we find ourselves compelled to differ with the Secretary-General. We have the highest respect for his judgement and have been among his strongest supporters in the Fifth Committee and in all other Committees. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that in other fields we have not only supported but have also relied heavily upon the Secretary-General and have, on a number of occasions, reiterated our admiration for the leadership he has shown and the untiring efforts he has made on behalf of the Organization.

17. Perhaps the primary reason that we differ with the Secretary-General on this issue is that not only the interests of the United Nations but also the interests of the specialized agencies are deeply involved.

18. It is also a matter of regret that in the minds of many the issue before us is apparently viewed as involving a simple question of whether one is for or against the interests of the United Nations staff in New York. This formulation of the issue is not only inaccurate but it is also meaningless. There is no delegation here today which is opposed to the interests of the New York staff of the United Nations. We all respect the New York staff highly and are grateful for all they have accomplished as officials of the United Nations. In this connexion, I should like to point out that more than 25 per cent of the professional staff of the United Nations consists of United States nationals, concerning whose contribution to the work of the United Nations the United States is justly proud and in whose welfare the United States has a deep interest.

19. But, as I have said, the issue here is not simply that of what is in the interest of the United Nations staff in New York. That interest is, of course, involved, but there are also many other interests which must be taken into account. If our decision were confined wholly to the situation in New York and we were free to disregard the interests of international staff elsewhere and to abandon the efforts to set up a common pay and personnel administration equitable to all, then we might be prepared to go along with the proposal before us.

20. However, as a responsible Government we are not free to follow this course. We must face up to the fact that there are involved in the present issue important questions of principle which simply cannot be ignored by anyone who is seriously interested in the future of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and their secretariats wherever located.

21. In establishing the post adjustment system we have fixed a base date and place. We have fixed a basic salary structure and we have established a system of post adjustments. In connexion with these adjustments, we have adopted rules which permit changes in post adjustment as a result of changes in cost of living. These rules which we have adopted are more liberal than rules previously in effect with respect to changes in Headquarters pay scale. They permit a change in a post adjustment from one class to a higher class when there has been an increase in the cost of living of five points averaged over a period of nine months.

22. Now the situation that we are faced with is the following. The Secretary-General and the Fifth Committee have accepted all the elements of the post adjustment system which I have just described. In particular, the Secretary-General accepted the recommendation that New York be placed in Class 4 as of 1 January 1956 and both he and the Fifth Committee approved the principles to be applied in changing that post adjustment.

23. However, the Secretary-General and the Fifth Committee have now recommended in the very first case in which we are to apply the principles which have been accepted, that we ignore these principles. They have proposed that even though the rules for changing a post adjustment have not been complied with, nevertheless we should decide to fix New York at Class 5 as of 1 January 1957.

24. There are no extraordinary circumstances here and there are no inequities in the proposal of the Salary Review Committee which warrant a violation of the rules for changing post adjustments as is now proposed in the draft resolution before us. The facts of the situation are aptly described in paragraph 64 of the report

accompanying this draft resolution. [A/3558]. Thus, the record is clear that the fixing of the post adjustment for New York at class 4 as of January 1956 was not inequitable to the staff in New York. But the Secretary-General and the Fifth Committee proposed a class 5 post adjustment for New York as of January 1957. Now, on what have they based this proposal? They have based it on statistics indicating that the cost of living increased by 3.7 per cent in New York between January 1956 and January 1957. They have argued that the 3.7 per cent rise indicated that New York "was approaching" the class 5 level and that accordingly, despite the rules for a change in post adjustment which they themselves have approved, New York should be placed in class 5 as of January 1957.

25. This statement of what is proposed should be sufficient to indicate why we cannot accept the proposal. It not only violates the rules of the system, but it also refuses to apply the same modification of the rules to other posts. In this connexion, I wish to refer to the comments of the Rapporteur of the Salary Review Committee, as set forth in paragraph 65 of the report of the Fifth Committee.

26. To those who have stressed the issue of staff morale in New York, let me ask how, in view of the discrimination just mentioned, they believe that the morale of the staff at other posts will be affected. Let me ask further whether, if we are free to raise post adjustments when there is a 3.7 increase in the cost of living, we are also free in the future to lower post adjustments when there is a corresponding decrease. I must say frankly that we feel that if we support the proposal before us, then we should all be prepared to concede that the post adjustment system, *per se*, is lost. If we support this proposal, then there is good reason to believe that all the time and effort and money spent by the Salary Review Committee was wasted. If we make the decisions which we are here requested to make, then we should be right back to where we were before we established the Salary Review Committee. We would be in a position where rules are established only to be broken and in which the various governing bodies will feel free to take decisions based upon pressures wholly without regard to the principles which have been adopted and without regard to their effect on the other organizations in the so-called "common system".

27. I think we should all understand that the strict enforcement and application of the rules and procedures are in the interests of the staff. There is nothing worse for staff morale than to know that the rules which exist are not necessarily applied in all cases, or that they have been liberally applied to some and strictly applied to others. If the rules can be ignored in the interests of the staff, as is now proposed, they can also be ignored when against the interests of the staff.

28. It has been said that we should be careful to make decisions which would be respected by the specialized agencies, but how can we expect the specialized agencies to respect a decision which applies accepted principles to those agencies but ignores those principles with respect to one section of the staff of the United Nations? How can it be explained, even to the United Nations staff in Geneva, why the principles are strictly applied to them but are ignored with respect to New York? Are we not concerned with their morale as well?

29. In view of the foregoing, any decision we may make to change the post adjustment for New York

to class 5 can scarcely be respected by the specialized agencies. Neither do I see how, after such a decision, they could be expected to pay attention to the rules of the system recommended by the Salary Review Committee. In the future, any one of them could point to the New York precedent as a basis for changing the post adjustment, even if such a change were not warranted by the statistics or by the rules.

30. For the foregoing reasons, the United States delegation requests a separate vote on paragraph 2 of draft resolution B, so that we may be able to vote against that paragraph. My delegation believes that it has the right to record this view in the plenary meeting and that it should not be compelled to record its view on the paragraph by voting against the draft resolution as a whole, particularly since we fully support the balance of these long and complex resolutions. Further, I assume that since the draft resolutions constitute a decision on a budgetary question they will be considered as requiring, under paragraph 2 of Article 18 of the Charter, a two-thirds majority for adoption. I should add that if paragraph 2 of draft resolution B is rejected by the Assembly, the United States will move a separate proposal concerning the post adjustment for New York.

31. Mr. TURPIN (France) (*translated from French*): The principle which has guided the French delegation in its attitude towards the remuneration of international civil servants is that life in Paris is not so expensive as in New York. It would therefore be unfair for international civil servants in Paris to receive the same pay as those in New York.

32. It is unfortunate, we feel, that the Salary Review Committee did not take into account the advantages which France grants to all foreign officials of Grade P-4 and above who are resident in Paris. These advantages include the purchase of motor-cars without payment of indirect taxes or customs duties, exemption from tax on alcoholic beverages and certain food products, and the use of a co-operative which sells goods at prices below market rates. As the United States Government has not been able to grant comparable advantages to officials at Headquarters, the Committee's omission is even more unfortunate for it invalidates any comparison between New York and Paris.

33. We consider that these advantages which we accord to international civil servants justify a difference in classification between Paris and New York, since statistics show that the cost of living is almost the same in both cities.

34. If the proposal just made by the United States representative were accepted and New York were placed in Class 4, the remuneration would be the same in both New York and Paris. In accordance with the principles which I have just mentioned, I shall be compelled to request that the proposal for placing Paris in Class 4 be put to the vote separately and that its approval require a two-thirds majority. If this majority were not to be secured, I would propose that Paris be placed in Class 3 provisionally for 1957. I repeat that the classification would be provisional for 1957. I do not submit this as a formal proposal. I shall do so only if New York is classified in Class 4 as a result of the request just made.

35. Mr. NATARAJAN (India): The Indian delegation will vote in favour of the two draft resolutions which have been submitted by the Fifth Committee in its report [A/3558]. My delegation endorses the Fifth

Committee's recommendation that, with effect from 1 January 1957, the post adjustment for United Nations headquarters shall be class 5 within the system proposed by the Salary Review Committee. Any decision to down grade New York from class 5 to class 4 at this stage, particularly since this question has received the fullest consideration by the Fifth Committee, would, in the judgement of my delegation, be unfortunate and unjustified. The Secretariat of the United Nations, more particularly the staff members at Headquarters, is called upon in these days to assume great responsibilities, responsibilities which are being thrust upon it by this Assembly. It would therefore be fitting if, in all these circumstances, the General Assembly accepted the recommendations contained in paragraph 2 of draft resolution B, which would place New York in class 5.

36. With regard to paragraph 3 of draft resolution B, my delegation agrees with the recommendation of the Fifth Committee that Paris should be placed in class 4, as was recommended by the Salary Review Committee. On this point, we have attached the greatest importance to the views of the heads of the specialized agencies, particularly that of the Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It should be borne in mind that this paragraph of the draft resolution is merely a recommendation to the specialized agencies and we have reason to believe that the specialized agencies would welcome class 4. Since it is not for the General Assembly to dictate to the specialized agencies, and since the specialized agencies are autonomous in this respect, in the judgement of my delegation it would be futile to adopt a recommendation which would not have any chance of being accepted. Apart from considerations of merit, it is of first-rate importance that we should preserve our own dignity by endorsing the recommendations of the Fifth Committee that Paris should be placed in class 4.

37. Mr. ASHA (Syria): My delegation was indeed perturbed by the statement made this morning by the representative of the United States. We think that the statement did not altogether correspond to the facts. The Fifth Committee began its consideration of the salary, allowance and benefits system on 23 January and completed its consideration on 25 February, that is, two days ago. I mention these dates in order to show that it was not a cursory examination of this important matter that was undertaken by the Fifth Committee. On the contrary, the discussion occupied a span of more than four weeks. The system of post adjustments, as proposed by the Salary Review Committee, was one of the most complex and lengthy questions with which the Fifth Committee has had to deal, and it goes without saying that the fullest opportunity was afforded for discussion when this question came before the Fifth Committee. Every delegation fully expressed its views on the system of post adjustment as a whole and, in particular, on the appropriate classification of the principal duty stations, namely, New York, Geneva, Paris, Rome and Montreal. The Fifth Committee, in its wisdom and after listening to the last statement of the Secretary-General, saw fit to recommend that New York be placed in class 5. The decision was taken by 45 votes to 22, with 5 abstentions. This represents a majority of more than two thirds of the votes cast, although a simple majority was all that was required.

38. I should like to recall to the Members of the Assembly that even the United States delegation, which presented a statement this morning, recognized that the staff, which had not received any new benefits

since 1950, should be given at least a two per cent increase. The United States delegation suggested in a statement in the Fifth Committee that a two per cent increase in the base salary should be recommended. Fortunately for the Fifth Committee and for the United Nations, that proposal was withdrawn.

39. The Secretary-General spoke at length on this matter in the Fifth Committee, and I could speak for at least one or two hours, but I do not wish at this late stage of the debate, to explain why we recommended that New York should be placed in class 5 rather than class 4. It is sufficient to ask one question: could anybody really believe that the cost of living in Montreal, which it is recommended should be placed in class 4, is the same as that in New York? I do hope that the Members of this august Assembly will do justice to the staff, which is the backbone of the Organization, and vote in favour of New York being placed in class 5.

40. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly will now proceed to vote on draft resolutions A and B submitted by the Fifth Committee in its report on agenda item 51 [A/3558].

41. Draft resolution A was unanimously recommended for adoption. Unless there is objection, I shall consider that the General Assembly has unanimously adopted that draft resolution.

Draft resolution A was adopted unanimously.

42. The PRESIDENT: A separate vote by roll-call has been requested on operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution B.

A vote was taken by roll call.

Sweden, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Syria, Thailand, Tunisia, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Laos, Liberia, Libya, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sudan.

Against: Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of South Africa, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Albania, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania.

Abstaining: Turkey, Argentina, Cuba, Denmark, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Portugal.

Operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution B was adopted by 48 votes to 21, with 8 abstentions.

Draft resolution B, as a whole, was adopted by 66 votes to 9, with 2 abstentions.

43. The PRESIDENT: We shall now proceed to vote on draft resolutions E to K submitted by the Fifth Committee in its report on agenda item 43 [A/3550].

Draft resolution E was adopted by 69 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

Draft resolution F was adopted unanimously.

Draft resolution G was adopted unanimously.

Draft resolution H was adopted unanimously.

Draft resolution I was adopted by 63 votes to 8, with 6 abstentions.

Draft resolution J was adopted by 66 votes to 8, with 1 abstention.

44. The PRESIDENT: Draft resolution K has been recommended for adoption unanimously. If there is no objection, I shall declare this draft resolution adopted.

Draft resolution K was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters I, VIII, IX and X)

45. The PRESIDENT: Chapters I, VIII, IX and X of the report of the Economic and Social Council [A/3154] call for no specific action by the General Assembly: in taking note of them the Assembly completed its consideration of the Council's report.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.