



Ninth session
Agenda item 73

COMMEMORATION OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE UNITED NATIONS IN 1955

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. A. LIVERAN (Israel)

1. At its 513th meeting held on 15 December 1954, the General Assembly referred to the Fifth Committee for consideration and report an additional item proposed by the Secretary-General and entitled "Commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations in 1955".
2. The Fifth Committee considered the item at its 484th meeting on 16 December. It noted an explanatory memorandum from the Secretary-General (A/2864) together with two annexes: the first annex contained the text of a letter dated 7 December 1954 from the Mayor of the City of San Francisco addressed to the General Assembly of the United Nations, which had been transmitted to the Secretary-General by the Representative of the United States of America; the second annex contained a draft resolution prepared by the Secretary-General. A preliminary statement of financial implications (A/C.5/620) was also drawn up by the Secretary-General.
3. The Secretary-General informed the Fifth Committee that, in the light of the discussion which had taken place at the 101st meeting of the General Committee during the discussion on the question of the inclusion of the item, and of subsequent consultations with regard to this matter, he had considered it advisable to prepare a new draft resolution taking into account the points made by several delegations in the General Committee. Under the revised proposal, a seven-day commemoration would take place at San Francisco from 20 to 26 June 1955, and would include four days of unofficial meetings of

the Members of the United Nations. Under the circumstances, the Secretary-General hoped that discussion in the Fifth Committee would centre around his revised draft resolution (A/C.5/L.329). He stated that Section A of the revised draft resolution was in effect a call for a special effort to be made throughout the world in 1955 - the tenth anniversary year of the signing of the Charter - to promote wider understanding and support for the United Nations throughout the world, and affirmed the importance that the General Assembly had attached to the two anniversaries, 26 June and 24 October.

4. Section B of the draft resolution was submitted in response to the deeply appreciated invitation by the City of San Francisco and dealt specifically with the plans for a commemoration in that city in June 1955 of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Charter. The Secretary-General stated that, in accordance with the view that appeared to be widely held, United Nations active participation in such a commemoration should be limited to seven days, three days being devoted to a serious general programme on the United Nations, and four days, to unofficial meetings of the Members of the United Nations. These latter meetings would be conducted in the form of meetings of the General Assembly at which representatives of the sixty Member States would make statements relating to the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations and on the origins and purposes of the world Organization and its plans in world affairs, in a broad perspective which would be appropriate to a commemorative occasion and which would contribute to wider understanding of and support for the United Nations.

5. The Acting Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions stated that that Committee had been notified in advance of the Secretary-General's views and had had an opportunity of considering the financial implications of his revised proposal, which, of necessity, modified the statement of financial implications submitted earlier by the Secretary-General.

6. In respect of expenditures for the travel of representatives, the Advisory Committee observed that the Secretary-General had rightly attached importance to the attendance, wherever possible, of the Foreign Ministers of Member States, and noted that the estimate of \$59,500 submitted by the Secretary-General was based on the expectation and hope that at least fifty of the sixty Member States

would be so represented. While fully agreeing with this approach, the Advisory Committee proposed a slightly different budgetary arrangement, which it did not consider would prejudice in any way the efforts of the Secretary-General to ensure the attendance at the commemoration of the largest possible number of Foreign Ministers. It recommended that a separate provision of \$40,000 should be included in the budget for travel of representatives, on the understanding that if this sum should prove insufficient, the Secretary-General should have authority to draw the balance required from the Working Capital Fund. It considered, however, that if, on the contrary, a sum of \$40,000 should prove more than adequate to meet the cost of travel expenditures for representatives, any savings realized should not be used for any other purpose.

7. Regarding the remaining items in the Secretary-General's original estimates, the Advisory Committee noted that the shortening of the meeting period would have an appreciable effect on the budgetary provision required for a number of items. Emphasizing the necessity to restrict travel of staff members to be sent from Headquarters only to those whose presence the Secretary-General considered essential for servicing the meetings or for substantive duties, the Advisory Committee recommended that, for this second and separate part of the estimates, a total provision for \$60,000 should be approved.

8. In the light of these statements, the Fifth Committee discussed the Secretary-General's revised draft resolution (A/C.5/L.329). Sweden had proposed an amendment thereto (A/C.5/L.330) which would provide that the unofficial meetings envisaged under section B should be presided over by Mr. Eelco van Kleffens, President of the ninth session of the General Assembly.

9. The draft resolution proposed by the Secretary-General received the warm support of many delegations. They also desired to record their wholehearted appreciation of the generous invitation from the officials and people of the City of San Francisco, and for the allocation of funds by its Board of Supervisors, which would make the event possible.

10. Many delegations agreed that the event should be commemorative in nature and that it should not be an occasion for political controversy or for debate on specific issues, since that would be unprofitable and not fitting to the commemoration of an historic occasion with which the City of San Francisco was so memorably linked.
11. Some disappointment was expressed at the restrictive nature of the proposed ceremonies, but delegations expressing this attitude were none the less prepared to support the Secretary-General's proposals in view of the widespread support they had received.
12. The amendment proposed by Sweden also received widespread support in the Fifth Committee. The point was raised, however, by one delegation that, in view of the unofficial character of the event, it felt a little hesitant about the constitutionality and precedent of having the current session of the General Assembly decide upon a matter which appeared to fall more appropriately within the province of the Members attending the meetings.
13. Many delegations considered it to be important that any impression of extravagance should be avoided as that would be harmful to the event. In consequence, they welcomed the revised proposals of the Secretary-General and expressed their keen support and agreement for the approach taken by the Advisory Committee regarding the financing of the project.
14. Referring to the limitation in total expenditure for the Secretariat participation in the conference, the Secretary-General stated that he was prepared to follow the line recommended by the Advisory Committee on the understanding that he would do his best to provide for all necessary arrangements on that basis, but if he should find it impossible to undertake those arrangements adequately, he would consult with the Advisory Committee regarding ways and means of obtaining additional help. The Secretary-General recognized that the Advisory Committee's recommendations implied an appreciable reduction, both in the travel of staff members and in the services to be provided, as compared with his original estimates based upon a ceremony of longer duration, and a scaling down of his original plan.
15. The Committee accordingly approved, by 40 votes to none, with 2 abstentions, the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that, in respect of this item, the 1955 budget estimates for section 1 should be increased by an amount of \$100,000, comprising a separate provision of \$40,000 for the travel of

representatives and \$60,000 for all other items. The Committee then approved the draft resolution without objection.

16. In the light of its consideration of this item, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

COMMEMORATION OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE UNITED NATIONS IN 1955

A

The General Assembly,

Recalling that the Charter of the United Nations was signed on 26 June 1945 in the City of San Francisco and that it came into force on 24 October 1945,

Considering that both the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Charter and the tenth anniversary of its coming into force on the date which the General Assembly has designated as United Nations Day provide fitting occasions to promote greater understanding of the purposes and of the work of the United Nations,

1. Calls upon the Governments of all Member States and invites the Governments of non-member States to give all appropriate support to programmes in their own countries designed to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the United Nations in 1955;

2. Invites the specialized agencies to assist in the observance of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations in 1955.

B

The General Assembly,

Noting the invitation of the City of San Francisco of 7 December 1954,

1. Recommends the acceptance, by the Government of each Member State, of the invitation of the City of San Francisco to hold a commemorative meeting in that City in 1955, and thanks the officials and the people of the City for their hospitality;

2. Decides to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Charter in the City of San Francisco by arranging a seven-day commemoration, including four days of unofficial meetings of the Members of the United Nations, to be held in San Francisco from 20 to 26 June 1955, the unofficial meetings to be presided over by Mr. Eelco van Kleffens, President of the ninth session of the General Assembly;

3. Requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with a committee consisting of the representatives of _____ and in consultation with the civic authorities of the City of San Francisco, to arrange the programme for the commemoration;

4. Authorizes the Secretary-General to conclude an agreement with the City of San Francisco on the allocation of costs of such a commemoration;

5. Authorizes the payment of the travel of one representative of each Member from the capital of the country or from Headquarters, as the case may be, to San Francisco and return;

6. Authorizes the Secretary-General to provide the necessary staff and services within the budget approved for the commemoration.
