

General Conference

GC(52)/COM.5/OR.1

Issued: November 2008

General Distribution

Original: English

Fifty-second regular session

Committee of the Whole

Record of the First Meeting

Held at the Austria Center, Vienna, on Tuesday, 30 September 2008, at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mr NIEWODNICZAŃSKI (Poland)

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¹ GC(52)/COM.5/1.

Abbreviations used in this record:

TCF

Technical Cooperation Fund

– Election of Vice-Chairmen and organization of work

1. The CHAIRMAN, having expressed appreciation for the confidence which the General Conference had placed in him, said that, as provided for in Rule 46 of the Rules of Procedure and following group consultations, it had been proposed that Mr Steinmann of Switzerland and Mr Monawar of Afghanistan serve as Vice-Chairmen of the Committee. He took it that the Committee wished to accept the proposal.

2. It was so agreed.

3. He drew attention to document GC(52)/COM.5/1, which listed the agenda items referred to the Committee of the Whole by the General Conference. He proposed that, in line with past practice, he report orally on the Committee's deliberations at a plenary meeting of the Conference. Also, he took it that the Committee wished to continue, to the extent practicable, the practice of clustering the draft resolutions recommended to the Conference by the Committee for adoption.

4. It was so agreed.

9. The Agency's Accounts for 2007 (GC(52)/11)

5. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no Committee members wished to take the floor, assumed that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution on page "i" of document GC(52)/11.

6. It was so agreed.

10. The Agency's Budget for 2009 (GC(52)/5/Rev.1)

7. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to draft resolutions "A. Regular Budget Appropriations for 2009", "B. Technical Cooperation Fund Allocation for 2009" and "C. The Working Capital Fund in 2009" contained in document GC(52)/5/Rev.1, all recommended by the Board of Governors for adoption.

8. In 2007, the Agency's programme for the biennium 2008-2009 had been adopted by the Board and presented to the General Conference, which had approved the 2008 portion of the budget for that programme. The document before the Conference contained the adjustments for the second year of the biennium.

9. A budget for Agency programme activities in 2009 amounting to €299.2 million had been recommended by the Programme and Budget Committee in May and by the Board in June.

Subsequently, the recommended budget had had to be revised by the Board, at its September session, to take account of two recent developments: firstly, the implementation of a revised salary scale resulting in a reduction in General Service staff costs; and secondly, an increase in the safeguards budget to cover additional verification activities in India, further to the Board's approval on 1 August of a safeguards agreement with India.

10. The result was a marginal increase in the budget level over that agreed by the Board in June. The recommended budget for Agency programme activities in 2009 was now €299.3 million.

11. Noting that no Committee member wished to take the floor, he assumed that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it approve a total Regular Budget figure for 2009 of €293 790 656 on the basis of an exchange rate of €1.00 to \$1.00 and, accordingly, that it adopt draft resolution "A. Regular Budget Appropriations for 2009".

12. It was so agreed.

13. The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it approve a target for voluntary contributions to the TCF for 2009 of \$85 million and, accordingly, that it adopt draft resolution "B. Technical Cooperation Fund Allocation for 2009".

14. It was so agreed.

15. The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it approve the level of the Working Capital Fund in 2009 at €15 210 000 and, accordingly, that it adopt draft resolution "C. The Working Capital Fund in 2009".

16. It was so agreed.

11. Amendment to Article XIV.A of the Statute (GC(52)/INF/9, (GC(52)/INF/9/Add.1 and GC(52)/25)

17. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Secretariat had, in document GC(52)/25, just distributed the text of the decision taken by the General Conference in 2007 on the subject of Article XIV.A, updated for 2008. He suggested that the Committee recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the updated text at its current session.

18. Mr EIDET (Director, Division of Budget and Finance) said that, although nine years had passed since the approval by the General Conference of the amendment to Article XIV.A designed to permit biennial budgeting, not much progress had been made towards the amendment's entry into force. Thus, the Agency was the last body within the United Nations common system that still engaged in annual rather than biennial budgeting.

19. Entry into force of the amendment would remove the need to produce a budget update document every second year — a document whose production entailed costly Secretariat effort and Member State deliberations and that had to be issued in six languages.

20. With an amended Article XIV.A, the Agency would have only one Regular Budget and one Regular Budget appropriations resolution for an entire biennium. That would leave more time to focus on programme and budget implementation and help to make the Agency more efficient. However,

acceptance of the amendment was moving at a glacial pace. The Agency would benefit greatly if Member States could find some way of accelerating the acceptance process.

21. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no Committee member wished to take the floor, assumed that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the decision set out in document GC(52)/25.

22. It was so agreed.

12. Scale of assessment of Members' contributions towards the Regular Budget

(GC(52)/15)

23. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no Committee members wished to take the floor, assumed that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution in document GC(52)/15.

24. It was so agreed.

18. Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Additional Protocol

(GC(52)/13 and GC(52)/COM.5/L.2)

25. The CHAIRMAN said that, in the light of the experience of previous years, he proposed that the Committee establish a working group under the chairmanship of a member of the delegation of one of the Vice-Chairmen — namely, Mr. Kessler of the delegation of Switzerland — with a view to achieving consensus on the draft resolution contained in document GC(52)/COM.5/L.2. He assumed that the proposal was acceptable to the Committee.

26. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.