ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF UNDER-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Economic and social consequences of disarmament

Thirtieth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the General Assembly at its fifteenth session

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the statement of financial implications submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/845) in respect of the draft resolution on economic and social consequences of disarmament, which the Second Committee adopted at its 666th meeting (A/C.2/L.469/Rev.1).

2. Under the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to examine the economic and social consequences of disarmament in countries with different economic systems and at different stages of economic development. The draft resolution provides further that the Secretary-General should conduct the proposed examination with the assistance of expert consultants to be appointed by him with due regard to their qualifications and to the need of geographical representation and intimate knowledge of countries with different economic systems and at different stages of economic development.

3. The statement of financial implications submitted by the Secretary-General reflects a total anticipated expenditure of $48,300, of which some $28,500 would arise in 1961 and the balance of $19,800 in 1962. The costs would relate to consultant fees in respect of six consultants and two meetings of the consultant group, one in 1961 and the other in 1962. The Secretary-General also indicates that if it were eventually decided to print the report, there would be additional costs for contractual printing, which it is not possible to estimate at this time.
4. The Advisory Committee understands that, the subject to be examined being highly complex, the report might be expected to reflect a plurality of views covering a wide range of approach and opinion rather than a single consolidated view.

5. During the Advisory Committee's consideration of these estimates, some doubt arose as to whether the criteria enunciated in the draft resolution in respect of the expert consultants could be adequately met by a group of six such consultants. It is possible that this number may have to be varied; however, since the draft resolution does not specify the number of consultants whom the Secretary-General may appoint, this question might be left to the discretion of the Secretary-General.

6. As regards the monetary estimates, the Advisory Committee notes that the arrangements for the consultants would be similar to those applicable to individual consultants appointed by the Secretary-General for internal Secretariat work.1/ Inasmuch as the draft resolution stipulates the need for obtaining the assistance of expert consultants, the possibility of securing such service from or through governmental sources on the basis of payment by the United Nations of travel and per diem costs alone might be usefully explored.

7. On the basis of the foregoing observations, the Advisory Committee suggests that the General Assembly might be informed that the adoption of the draft resolution by the Assembly could give rise to additional costs of some $28,500 in 1961 and $19,800 in 1962. Subsequent to the adoption of the draft resolution, it would be necessary to increase the appropriations already recommended under section 3 of the 1961 budget estimates by an amount of $28,500.

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1/ Such arrangements would involve a consultant fee of $50 per day of actual work and, in addition, $20 per day of attendance at meetings at Headquarters. (The $20 subsistence allowance rate for New York is the rate applicable to senior officials of the Secretariat.) These rates, which are determined by the Secretary-General, are different from those established by the General Assembly for eligible cases of members of commissions and committees of various United Nations bodies. For the latter category, the Fifth Committee has recommended that the present rates of $25 a day at New York and $20 a day elsewhere should be increased to $30 and a maximum of $25 a day, respectively.