



TWENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

COMMITTEE B

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

Palais des Nations, Geneva
Tuesday, 11 May 1976 at 9.30 a.m.

CHAIRMAN: Dr E. AGUILAR PAZ (Honduras)

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FIFTH MEETING

Tuesday, 11 May 1976 at 9.30 a.m.

Chairman: Dr E. Aguilar Paz (Honduras)

1. SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET FOR 1976: Item 3.2 of the Agenda (Document A29/44) (continued)

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the draft resolution proposed by the delegations of Australia, Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom, the text of which had been distributed at the fourth meeting. He also drew attention to an amendment proposed by the delegation of the Central African Republic, to the draft resolution contained in document A29/44; that took the form of two additional operative paragraphs reading as follows:

4. REQUESTS the Director-General and the Executive Board to study:
 - (1) all possible sources of financing the increase in salaries of general service staff at headquarters;
 - (2) possible assumption by the International Civil Service Commission of the function of recommending or determining salaries and allowances of the general services category staff at the headquarters of the Organizations;
 - (3) the proper balance between the components of the regular budget to be devoted to staff costs and other elements of the programme;
 - (4) the use of casual income to finance unforeseen expenditures;
5. REQUESTS the Executive Board to report on the implementation of this resolution to the Thirtieth World Health Assembly.

Professor JAKOVLEJEVIC (Yugoslavia) said that the Director-General had made significant efforts to implement resolution WHA28.76. For that and other reasons, he did not think that the last paragraph of the preamble to the draft resolution proposed by Australia, Belgium and others was appropriate; it could be variously interpreted, and he proposed that it be deleted. If that change was not acceptable to the cosponsors of the draft resolution, his delegation would not be able to support the resolution.

Dr KILGOUR (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that the purpose of the preambular paragraph was to strengthen and to preserve the resources required to give effect to the resolution with which the Yugoslav delegation had been closely associated at the previous Health Assembly. However, the cosponsors of the draft resolution would accept the amendment proposed by the delegate of Yugoslavia.

Professor LISICYN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed the deletion of the second preambular paragraph, since it overlapped with operative paragraph 4, which was more explicit. He also proposed that the words "in the headquarters component of the budget, including in particular reductions in existing staff levels" be deleted from the operative paragraph 5. The Assistant Director-General had indicated that the appropriations for staff and other purposes at headquarters were considerably lower than in other organizations, and to economize on staff was only one of the measures that the Director-General might take. The Director-General should be free to consider economies not only as regards headquarters staff.

He noted that the amount of \$1 810 000 was required to cover additional expenditure for 1976. The Assistant Director-General's explanations had thrown light on only part of the complex problem. It seemed, on the basis of the available information and proposals from the International Civil Service Commission, that another solution might be found. Without making a formal proposal, he suggested that operative paragraphs 2 and 3 might be deleted and the matter be referred to the Executive Board at its fifth-ninth session in January 1977. If those paragraphs were retained, in that or another draft resolution, his delegation would be obliged to vote against the resolution, although it respected the aim of finding economies within WHO so as to avoid additional appropriations in the future. His delegation also reserved the right to ask that the draft resolution be voted upon section by section.

Dr KILGOUR (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that the amendments proposed by the delegate of the Soviet Union would be unacceptable to the cosponsors of the draft resolution.

Professor BEDAYA-NGARO (Central African Republic) suggested that the cosponsors of the draft resolution under discussion, and his own delegation, which had proposed the addition of two operative paragraphs to the draft resolution contained in document A29/44, should meet in order to reach a consensus on the text to be submitted for approval to the Committee.

Mr OSOGO (Kenya) expressed surprise that the cosponsors of the draft resolution intended to reject the amendments proposed by the delegate of the Soviet Union. The second paragraph of the preamble was redundant as its substance was contained in operative paragraph 4. His delegation also agreed with that of the Soviet Union as regards the words to be deleted from operative paragraph 5, since economies should be effected in the whole budget, not only at headquarters.

Dr KILGOUR (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) pointed out that the preambular paragraph was intended to set the scene and give the reason for operative paragraph 4. It described in general what was needed, and the operative paragraph asked the Director-General to take the necessary action. There was thus no duplication. The wording of operative paragraph 5, as it stood, was required in order to carry through the intention of the cosponsors. Those and the other amendments proposed by the delegation of the Soviet Union would be unacceptable to them.

Dr CUMMING (Australia), agreeing with the delegate of the United Kingdom, pointed out that the second preambular paragraph set out the basic idea behind the necessity for an independent review and operative paragraph 4 described the way in which it should be carried out. It was essential to retain the original wording of operative paragraph 5 since it was, after all, additional expenditure at headquarters that was giving rise to worry.

Professor LISICYN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wished to make it clear that he had not formally proposed the deletion of operative paragraphs 2 and 3 but had merely conveyed the views of his delegation on the matter. His reasons for proposing the deletion of the second preambular paragraph had been clearly put by the delegate of Kenya. He would agree to the retention of that paragraph in the words "an independent and impartial body" were replaced by "the International Civil Service Commission and other United Nations bodies".

Dr KILGOUR (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that the cosponsors of the draft resolution would not disagree to substituting "the International Civil Service Commission" for "an independent and impartial body".

Mr KHATIB (Libyan Arab Republic) said that the fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs expressed concern and warned against the consequences of the increased staff costs, whereas the supplementary budget was approved in the operative part of the draft resolution. He did not see how those two ideas could be reconciled in one and the same resolution; there was an inherent illogicality with which his delegation could not agree.

Mr FURTH (Assistant Director-General) asked for a clarification of the words "and of any expenditure approved for the same purpose in 1977" in operative paragraph 5, since they allowed more than one interpretation.

Dr KILGOUR (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) agreed that the phrase was somewhat ambiguous as it stood and proposed that "and" be replaced by "or".

Dr SACKS (Secretary) summarized the proposed amendments to the draft resolution under discussion. In the second preambular paragraph it was proposed that the words "an independent and impartial body" should be deleted and replaced by the words "the International Civil Service Commission"; that proposal had been accepted by the sponsors of the draft resolution. In operative paragraph 5 the words "in the headquarters component of the budget, including in particular reduction in existing staff levels" should be deleted; that proposal had not been

accepted by the sponsors and he understood that the delegation of the Soviet Union would wish it to be put to a separate vote. Again in operative paragraph 5, the sponsors were amending "... and of any expenditure" to read "... or of any expenditure".

The CHAIRMAN recalled that, under Rule 70 of the Rules of Procedure, a decision on the supplementary budget for 1976 should be made by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting.

Dr CAYLA (France) requested that before a vote was taken the proposed amendments to the draft resolution be circulated in writing.

Professor REXED (Sweden) said that all the Nordic delegations would support the draft resolution, since it offered an appropriate solution to the problem of the supplementary budget for the years 1975, 1976 and 1977, but considered that the terms of operative paragraph 5 were too strict in defining how the Director-General might solve the economic problems involved; a more flexible formula would have been preferable.

Professor LISICYN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) formally requested that the draft resolution be voted on paragraph by paragraph, since his delegation could not accept all parts of the draft resolution, although it considered that some parts offered an appropriate solution to the economic problems concerned. His delegation did not approve of the specific sums mentioned in the draft resolution since it was not convinced that the Secretariat and the Director-General had taken all possible measures to find the best solution. He supported the request that proposed amendments be circulated in writing.

Professor BEDAYA-NGARO (Central African Republic) considered that the draft resolution under discussion referred to aspects that went beyond the scope of the supplementary budget and were more closely related to programme budget matters that would be discussed by Committee A. It was therefore premature to discuss matters other than the question of salary increases.

Operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution he considered too restrictive. In that connexion he recalled that, in the amendment proposed by his own delegation to the draft resolution contained in document A29/44, the Director-General and the Executive Board were requested to study all possible sources of savings. His delegation would maintain that proposed amendment unless it was possible to achieve agreement on a new draft with the sponsors of the draft resolution under discussion. He therefore proposed that there be consultation between those sponsors and his delegation before any further discussion on item 3.2.

Dr SACKS (Secretary) said that, in accordance with Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure, the texts of the amendments under discussion would be circulated in writing at the next meeting and suggested that the proposed consultations take place between the present meeting and the next.

The CHAIRMAN proposed the deferment of further discussion of item 3.2 to the next meeting, when the relevant texts would be available.

It was so agreed.

2. COORDINATION WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: Item 3.14 of the Agenda

Special assistance to Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Republic of South Viet-Nam: Item 3.14.4 of the Agenda (Resolutions WHA28.79 and EB57.R56: Documents A29/38 and A29/Inf.Doc./2).

Dr JAYASUNDARA (Representative of the Executive Board) introduced the item, saying that the Executive Board at its fifty-seventh session, having considered a report by the Director-General that reflected the steps taken by WHO in consultation and cooperation with the Regional Director and the Regional Committee for the Western Pacific Region and having noted the decisions taken by the Regional Committee in resolution WPR/RC26.R4, had adopted resolution EB57.R56, which endorsed the steps taken by WHO and requested the Director-General to report further to the Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly. Further action had been foreseen by the Director-General regarding appropriate collaboration with other United Nations organizations in providing special assistance to the

Member States concerned, regarding the acceleration of the development of detailed programme proposals with those Members, and regarding specific appeals - based on those proposals - to be made to Member States and other possible sources of supplementary support. Further, the Executive Board recommended to the Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly that the Lao People's Democratic Republic be one of the countries authorized to receive special assistance under resolution WHA28.79.

Dr DY (Regional Director for the Western Pacific) said that background information was provided in document A29/38. Following the adoption of resolution WHA28.79, consultations had taken place with representatives of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and of the Republic of South Viet-Nam. In October 1975, a representative of the Director-General had visited both countries for discussions. That had been followed in December by a visit by the Director-General and himself. Representatives of both countries had indicated their needs and because of the magnitude of those needs had been invited to the regional office in Manila to discuss them in February 1976. Following the preparation of material indicating the problems of and inputs required by those countries and because, at that time, no external contributions had been received, a special meeting had been convened in Manila on 30-31 March 1976 in which Member States in the Western Pacific Region, Member States outside the region with administrative responsibilities within it, and the UNICEF representative in Viet-Nam had participated. The result of the meeting had been disappointing, since only two countries had offered assistance: the Philippines had offered BCG vaccine, smallpox freeze-dried vaccine, and cholera El Tor vaccine for a period of three years; and Malaysia had offered the sum of Malaysian \$ 20 000 to be managed by WHO for use in assistance to the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and the Republic of South Viet-Nam. The representatives present in Manila had agreed to consult with their governments and it was hoped that favourable consideration would be given to the appeals in resolutions WHA28.79 and EB57.R56.

Professor JAKOVLJEVIC (Yugoslavia) said that the Director-General's report (document A29/38) was realistic, especially in the conclusions drawn in section 4.1. While his delegation supported the views of the Director-General and the Executive Board it considered that the Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly should reaffirm the facts and seek to intensify the efforts being made to implement resolution WHA28.79. His delegation therefore proposed the following draft resolution:

The Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly,
Bearing in mind resolution WHA28.79 on special assistance to Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and the Republic of South Viet-Nam;
Having examined the report of the Director-General on the implementation of this resolution;

Considering resolution EB57.R56, in which the Executive Board recommended, inter alia, that the Lao People's Democratic Republic be added to the countries authorized to receive special assistance under resolution WHA28.79;

Concerned at the urgency with which immediate, effective and large-scale assistance is required for the reconstruction of health services in these countries, and at the slowness with which assistance has so far been forthcoming;

1. TAKES NOTE of the report;
2. DECIDES that the Lao People's Democratic Republic be one of the countries to receive special assistance under resolution WHA28.79;
3. REQUESTS the Director-General
 - (1) to intensify his efforts to provide all forms of assistance in the most expeditious and flexible way through simplified procedures without obligations for and the impositions of financial participation of governments concerned;
 - (2) to implement without delay the plans of assistance prepared with the governments concerned;
 - (3) to consult Member States as to the voluntary contributions they are in a position to provide for this operation;
4. REITERATES its appeal to all Member States to make voluntary contributions for this exceptional operation;

5. REQUESTS the Director-General to report to the fifty-ninth session of the Executive Board and the Thirtieth World Health Assembly on the assistance provided to these countries.

Mr CHUN (Republic of Korea) said that his government supported, in principle, WHO's humanitarian activities, and had actively participated in, the special meeting held in Manila in March 1976 that the Regional Director for the Western Pacific had referred to. He hoped that WHO's efforts would be fruitful, contributing to the easing of health difficulties in the Western Pacific Region. His delegation supported the draft resolution.

Mr SWEGER (Sweden) said that his delegation had noted the results of the Manila meeting and the great gap between the resources available and the needs, even in terms of an emergency programme to cover assistance to Viet-Nam in the field of health. Progress had been made, but the needs were still enormous; that was only to be expected after nearly 30 years of war. Since 1973, his country had been involved in the financing and construction of two hospital projects in the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. The Swedish contribution to those projects would amount to some US\$ 25-30 million. These contributions formed part of the total Swedish development programme for that country, which amounted to approximately Swedish kroner 300 million for the coming year. Noting that for 1976 approximately US\$ 1 390 000 had been set aside for assistance to Viet-Nam and approximately the same sum for 1977, he wondered why no increase had been foreseen for the latter year. He wished to know whether any part of the additional US\$ 2 million made available for technical assistance in 1977 had been set aside for Viet-Nam and suggested that a fair share of the WHO's regular budget available for technical assistance should be made available to that country. Given the immediate needs and the exceptional problems caused by the recent war, he hoped that further substantial contributions from the international community would permit WHO to meet the wishes of Viet-Nam and engage actively in the reconstruction and development programme of that country.

Miss KIM Mun Gyong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that resolution WHA28.79 had been adopted on the initiative of many countries, including her own. The recurrence of the question of medical aid to the Member States concerned was a reflection of the unanimous demand of the world's progressive peoples. After a successful conclusion to the war, those countries were now struggling vigorously to achieve prosperity. The after-effects of the war were still seriously affecting the economic and social life in those countries, particularly in the domain of health. The honest-minded and progressive peoples of the world sent their entire support and encouragement to those countries in their struggle to build a new life and society under the banner of independence. Her delegation wished them success. She hoped that WHO would work actively to give them more effective and substantial medical aid. Her delegation supported the proposal that the Lao People's Democratic Republic be one of the countries authorized to receive special assistance under resolution WHA28.79. She expressed her Government's continued support to the Governments of Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Republic of South Viet-Nam. Her delegation fully supported the draft resolution under consideration.

Dr CAYLA (France) said that his delegation, taking into account resolution EB57.R56 of the Executive Board and the contents of the Director-General's report (document A29/38), supported the draft resolution proposed by the Yugoslav delegation.

Mrs KUO SHAN-HU (China) said that after heroic and protracted struggles, the peoples of Cambodia, the two Viet-Nams and Laos had eventually defeated imperialism and its lackies. The battle had been a hard one, and immense sacrifices had been made. Her delegation believed that WHO should strengthen the assistance it was providing to the peoples of those countries, and should stipulate specific measures for the implementation of that assistance.

Dr PHOLSENA (Lao People's Democratic Republic) thanked the Regional Director for the Western Pacific, for the aid he had given, and the Executive Board for having recommended that his country should be included among those authorized to receive special assistance in accordance with resolution WHA28.79. His country, together with its neighbours, Viet-Nam and Cambodia, had undergone the most intense sufferings in its history in the course of a war which had lasted thirty years, with all the destruction of life and property that that

entailed. After three million tons of bombs and toxic substances had been dropped on Lao territory, its schools, hospitals and other sectors of the economic infrastructure had been almost totally obliterated. Thousands of people, almost one-third of a population of three million, had been made homeless, and thousands of others had been injured or orphaned. Numerous diseases had been rampant during the war and persisted in the postwar period.

In order to undertake the task of reconstruction and to heal the grievous wounds inflicted by the war, his country had not only to deal with a wide range of diseases - such as malaria, parasitic diseases, tuberculosis, gastrointestinal diseases, leprosy, and venereal disease - but also to give aid to orphans, uprooted families, drug addicts and psychotics. He felt that with such a range of serious health problems to solve, his country, with its inadequate infrastructure, particularly merited special assistance.

He urged delegates to give favourable consideration to the provision of special assistance to Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, the Republic of South Viet-Nam, and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Professor LISICYN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said his delegation wished to commend WHO for assisting the four countries under discussion in several important fields, notably that of maternal and child health. He would like to see that assistance increased, and also urged that efforts should be made to find additional resources to assist the countries concerned. His delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution proposed by Yugoslavia.

Mr FRESTA (Angola) noted with interest the Yugoslav delegate's concern that immediate, effective and large-scale assistance should be provided as a matter of urgency for the reconstruction of health services in the countries mentioned in the draft resolution, and his concern at the slowness with which that assistance had been forthcoming until now. His own country, which had just emerged from a war that had lasted fifteen years, fully sympathized with the problems confronting Cambodia, Viet-Nam and Laos. He had already drawn the Director-General's attention to the need to avoid delays caused by the slowness of bureaucratic procedures, and wished to take the opportunity to impress on the Assembly that all the problems confronting peoples emerging from a period of war should be treated with the utmost urgency.

Dr TARCICI (Yemen) said the draft resolution submitted by Yugoslavia had commendable humanitarian aims, and his delegation would be pleased to give it its support.

Dr RINČINDORJ (Mongolia) also supported the draft resolution.

Dr LEBENTRAU (German Democratic Republic) said his delegation had read with great attention the letter A29/INF.DOC/2 circulated by the Director-General from the Vice-Minister of Health of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. His country was already assisting on a multilateral basis the countries mentioned in the draft resolution, notably the two Viet-Nams; for example, it was at present assisting in the reconstruction of hospitals in Hanoi. In view of the conclusions of the Director-General in document A29/38 that the steps so far taken by the Organization did not fulfil the expectations aroused by resolution WHA28.79, or by Economic and Social Council, resolution 1944 (LVIII), his country would be offering further assistance. His delegation supported the draft resolution.

Dr DY (Regional Director for the Western Pacific), in reply to the question raised by the Swedish delegate, said that it was true that the allocation for the Democratic Republic for Viet-Nam and the Republic of South Viet-Nam was to remain at the level of \$ 1.5 million for some years to come. He had felt that that level should be maintained in order not to deprive the governments of other Members in the region of WHO's technical collaboration. As was indicated in document A29/38, the resources currently available to WHO and to the United Nations system as a whole were not adequate to meet either the immediate needs of these countries or their needs in long-term rehabilitation. In fact, WHO was not able to meet even the most urgent priority needs of the governments; for example, it was even unable to provide DDT, although malaria was a very serious disease in the two Viet-Nams. He hoped that some of those needs could be provided for by contributions to the Voluntary Fund for Health Promotion or by bilateral arrangements between donor countries and countries in need.

Decision: The draft resolution proposed by the delegation of Yugoslavia was approved.

3. EARTHQUAKE IN ITALY: EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY WITH THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE

Dr TARCICI (Yemen) said that Italy was now suffering a painful human tragedy as a result of the earthquake which had demolished homes and caused thousands of casualties. He welcomed the assistance that was being provided by the Organization in the emergency, and suggested that the Director-General be requested to increase WHO's aid in order to alleviate the sufferings of the victims of the disaster. He offered the Italian delegation his fullest sympathy and support, and expressed the conviction that all delegates would join in his concern for a country that had made so great a contribution to civilization.

Professor CANAPERIA (Italy) thanked the previous speaker for the sympathy he had expressed for his country in the catastrophe which had befallen it. The Director-General and Regional Director for Europe had offered the necessary assistance, and he was sure that his country would make good use of it. He also wished to thank the Chair and all the delegations which had expressed their condolence and their support.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.