

The seriousness of the organization's financial position makes it most important that every effort be made by all concerned, that is, the originators of expenditure proposals, those who scrutinize and endorse them and those who implement them, to establish and observe a system of carefully thought-out priorities. In particular the Economic and Social Council has a special responsibility in this respect because of the expansion of the work programmes under its sponsorship. If member states and their taxpayers - are to feel justified in their support of the organization the utmost efficiency and economy must be exercised in the carrying out of General Assembly decisions. It therefore falls upon members of this Committee to make every effort possible to ensure that unavoidable statutory increases, or increases resulting from proposals for new urgent projects, are offset by reductions in programmes which no longer command priority rating. Only through the constant review of the various activities and staffing arrangements can work of lesser importance or of doubtful continued justification be eliminated and staff transferred to more vital areas. With this thought in mind, Mr. Chairman, I might say that my delegation was pleased to note, in the report of the Committee of Experts which reviewed the activities and organization of the Secretariat, the proposal that the Fifth Committee might systematically each year examine in detail one or two main areas of expenditure. It is our firm hope that such reviews would be occasions for re-examining the conditions and assumptions under which programmes have been developed and expanded. In this way it will be possible to ensure that scarce resources are being properly and effectively utilized.

My delegation was interested to note, and fully endorses, the Advisory Committee's remarks concerning the desirability of prolonging the use of furniture and office equipment and the pressing need to keep the general pattern of meetings within manageable bounds. The serious staffing problems created by the holding of numerous and lengthy conferences is rightly a matter of concern for all.

The Advisory Committee, after careful review of the Secretary-General's initial estimates, has recommended reductions totalling approximately \$1 million and the Controller has informed us he does not intend to contest any of the proposed reductions. My delegation considers the recommendations are reasonable and intends to support them.

The rise in the budget of the UN over the last few years is a sign that this growing organization is being asked to undertake an increasing number of tasks in ever widening fields of responsibility: this is a sign of its vitality. Because of this expansion it is our duty to scrutinize most carefully each new programme and new expenditure to ensure that the growing calls on the resources - which are not limitless - of all nations, are wisely conceived. At the same time we must express satisfaction that the instrument forged by the framers of the Charter has become so essential a part of the fabric of international life and activity.

In one of his last reports to the Assembly, the Secretary-General proposed a substantial reduction in the amount of funds required to undertake what the Economic and Social Council had recommended. In this report the late Secretary-General described his plan to arrange the work which had been entrusted to him in such a way that the financial burden on all member states was lessened.