

cite only one example, we could not read without concern the vague and general recommendations given in sub-paragraph F of paragraph 70. It does not inspire confidence that real efforts will in fact be made to improve the linguistic composition of the staff or to expand the language instructions programme within the Secretariat.

Admittedly the fact that the United Nations headquarters is in New York has contributed to a certain degree in making English the dominant working language but I must stress the increase in efficiency that would result for the United Nations from an equitable balance among the working languages and from the possibility for every officer to use his own language if it is one of the working languages. In all objectivity we must admit that the obstacles mentioned in the present report do not constitute sufficient grounds to justify so negative an attitude.

At the same time if we recognize that the simultaneous distribution of documents in the various working languages is a corollary of the principle of linguistic equality then it would be advisable to remedy the current situation with regard to the distribution of documents which is far from satisfactory. One can indeed find many cases where the French version of documents has not been available at the meetings of Committees or other bodies of the United Nations until long after the release of the documents in English. This is certainly not the way to ensure effective progress in the work of this Organization. We realize that there are budgetary obstacles in the way of the simultaneous release of documents in the various languages of the Organization. Nonetheless we believe these obstacles could be overcome if the services responsible for the preparation and distribution of documents would use their imagination and their resources to a maximum within, as far as possible, their budgetary limits.

In conclusion my delegation is convinced that only energetic and sustained action will, in the long run, ensure a more equitable balance among the working languages used in the Secretariat and a better balance among those languages in the recruitment of staff. This is why the Canadian delegation is happy to be one of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution which is before the Fifth Committee. We believe that the operative paragraphs of this draft propose constructive, concrete and practical ways of attaining these goals. For these reasons, my delegation hopes that the draft resolution contained in Document A/C.5/L.914 will receive the support of all members of the Committee.