



ORGANIZATION OF
AFRICAN UNITY

منظمة الوحدة الافريقية
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ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE
AFRICAINNE

Secretariat
P. O. Box 3243

Consideration of the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of 14 on ~~Structure~~

Secretariat

Review by

The Advisory Committee on Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Matters

As requested by the OAU Council of Ministers at its budgetary session in 1967; the Ad Hoc Committee of 14 on Structural Review submitted its final report to the Advisory Committee at its just ended session together with the financial implications of their recommendations as calculated by the OAU General Secretariat. The Advisory Committee considered the two documents and wishes to submit the following comments and recommendations to facilitate decision on them by the Council of Ministers.

Recruitment Criteria, Policies & Practices

The Advisory Committee believes that the report by the Ad Hoc Committee of 14 has many merits and deserves the serious attention of the Council of Ministers. Chapters IV and V of the report which deal respectively with the Recruitment practices of the OAU General Secretariat and the scheme of service of OAU staff members contain valuable information on the situation in the OAU Secretariat together with proposals which, if adopted, can help to enhance the efficiency of the General Secretariat. The Advisory Committee accordingly commends those proposals for adoption by the Council of Ministers. In particular the Advisory Committee endorses the recommendation that:

- (1) The recruitment procedures laid down in the Staff Rules and Regulations should be more closely observed and that the exercise of removing unsuitable staff already on the job should be pursued.
- (2) All vacancies should be subject to evaluation by the Recruitment Committee before being announced; this in order to ensure that the skills required meet the changing priorities of the OAU and the primary objectives of the Organization. The Recruitment Committee, taking into consideration the priorities of the Organization and the proposals of the Directors of the relevant Departments should suggest the list of vacancies to the Secretary-General who will approve them for publication.
- (3) Each vacancy notice should contain a clear job description, the minimum qualifications required for the job as well as the conditions of service attached thereto. Candidates should also be asked for references who should be consulted for their views as to the suitability of the candidates.

- (4) Vacancy notices should be given the widest possible publicity. All such notices should be sent to member states for publication in their national papers and should be communicated to all staff both at Headquarters and at the regional and sub-regional offices.
- (5) Sufficient time should be allowed for candidates to submit their applications.
- (6) All things being equal staff already in the service of the Organization should be given some edge over outsiders.
- (7) The practice of filling vacancies by internal and external competition should apply to both the Professional and General Services Grades.
- (8) However the General Services Staff must necessarily pass competitive examinations before being promoted to professional posts, unless of course they have been able to obtain the degrees or diplomas required for the higher post to which they are aspiring.
- (9) Where they have not obtained such degrees or diplomas, General Services Staff should be allowed to compete for the Professional Post only after they have reached the highest level of the General Services category or have served the Organization for at least five years in that category.
- (10) For the verification of degrees and diplomas, the Secretariat should obtain from the UNESCO and similar organizations the International "Black List" of spurious Education Institutions.
- (11) All candidates must be interviewed.
- (12) Meanwhile attempts must be made to re-deploy those already recruited into jobs for which their qualifications did not prepare them so that they can realise their full potential.

During the debate on the Secretariat's recruitment procedures, the Secretariat appealed to member states to help by not forcing unqualified candidates on the Secretary-General or exercising undue influence on recruitment decisions. The Advisory Committee believes that the Secretariat's appeal deserves serious consideration since some of the irregularities in staff recruitment are the direct result of undue pressures from some member states.

Regarding the Scheme of Service & Career Prospects of Staff Members

The Advisory Committee supports the Ad Hoc Committee's view that the near automatic accession by OAU staff members to permanent staff status and the resultant high percentage of permanent staff members in the Secretariat are unsatisfactory for the following reasons:

- (1) They reduce staff promotion prospects
- (2) Staff who have the security of permanent contracts risk being set in their ways, less open to new challenges and even less industrious;
- (3) Too large a proportion of permanent staff in the organization could impede Organization's ability to changing working conditions and
- (4) Should the Organization find itself obliged by budgetary constraints for example to reduce staff the high proportion of permanent contracts could increase the difficulties and cost of terminating staff.

The Advisory Committee accordingly recommends that the percentage of permanent staff members be reduced to about 51 % as suggested by the Ad Hoc Committee and that the threshold at which a staff member can be considered for permanent appointment be raised so as to revalorise the permanent status and make it a distinction reserved for the best.

The Advisory Committee also recommends that the salary scale of certain grades where the risks of stagnation have proved highest should be extended by a few steps as suggested by the Ad Hoc Committee of 14. The Committee also endorses the creation of a new Grade of D2 (vide Ad Hoc Committee of 14 Report Doc.C14/1571 (LI) paragraph 5.11)

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The Language Staff

The Advisory Committee also supports the other proposals on the scheme of service especially regarding training of staff members, but would suggest that proposals on the language staff should be reviewed by the Ad Hoc Committee in close collaboration with the Secretary-General in order to find a way of reducing the high cost of interpretation.

The Structure

The Advisory Committee noted that the new structure recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee of 14 had not taken account of the proposals now being discussed in the Permanent Steering Committee of the OAU that the Secretariat of the proposed African Economic Community should be merged with the OAU Secretariat. Since such a merger is likely to radically alter the nature and structure of the OAU Secretariat, the Advisory Committee was of the view that Council should await decision on the Permanent Steering Committee's proposal before adopting any new structure for the OAU Secretariat. Meanwhile the Committee believed that there was need to remove duplication of efforts within the Secretariat and ensure better co-ordination of the Secretariat's activities. The Advisory Committee accordingly endorsed the proposal by the Ad Hoc Committee.

- (1) Establish a Policy and Programme Co-ordinating Unit within the office of the OAU Secretary-General as a matter of priority;
- (2) To merge the Hamey office on Linguistic and Historical Studies with the Division of African languages which is now part of the Department of ESCAS. Both bodies deal with very similar issues. They can therefore benefit from sharing the same facilities and be mutually reinforcing if located at the same place.

The Advisory Committee however expressed the wish that the new Policy and Programme Co-ordination Unit should have direct access to the Secretary-General and should therefore not be made part of any Department.

Job Evaluation & Reclassification

The Advisory Committee shared the view that the Job Evaluation and Reclassification Exercise initiated by the Ad Hoc Committee of 14 had to be pursued and would indeed recommend that the reclassification so far made should be looked at again. The Committee is aware that most of the Job Descriptions used by the Ad Hoc Committee in its exercise were very hurriedly prepared by the Secretariat which has never actually kept any up-to-date job descriptions for the

majority of its posts. In the absence of scientifically composed job descriptions posts could be wrongly classified and thereby give rise to staff complaints and dissatisfaction. A job reclassification expert should therefore be commissioned to help in the reclassification exercise. Meanwhile the Advisory Committee supports the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of 14 that :

- (1) **the salaries and fringe benefits** of those staff members whose posts may finally be downgraded should not be reduced (as a result of the reduction of their posts)
- (2) all their emoluments should be considered as personal to them. Emoluments attached to the downgraded posts should be reduced only when new appointments are made to the posts.
- (3) Similarly the fact that certain posts are upgraded through reclassification should not lead to the automatic promotion of the incumbents. In other words, a staff member occupying an upgraded post should be promoted only after the normal performance evaluation proves that he is fit for promotion to a higher grade.

Conditions of Service of OAU Secretariat Staff Members

The Advisory Committee devoted considerable attention to that portion of the Ad Hoc Committee's report which deals with the Conditions of Service of the OAU Staff. While appreciating the high quality of the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee on this aspect of its terms of reference, the Advisory Committee was of the view that the recommendation made by the Ad Hoc Committee did not take sufficient account of the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the majority of OAU member states. Similarly it was clear that the Ad Hoc Committee tended to base its recommendations too closely on working conditions in the UH system rather than those prevailing in other African Intergovernmental Organizations. The Advisory Committee therefore believes that the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations in this area need to be thoroughly reviewed so as not to unduly increase the financial burden on OAU member states. However the Advisory Committee clearly appreciates the inappropriateness of the existing arrangements regarding housing allowances and the need to do something about the reactivation of staff Post Adjustment allowances. The Council may therefore wish to focus attention on the two issues and see what could be done.

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Meanwhile the Advisory Committee would recommend that for the next financial year the following measures be taken to improve the fringe benefits of the elected officials and other members of the OAU staff:

- (1) The Secretary-General should be given a utility vehicle in addition to his representational car.
- (2) The Assistant Secretaries General should be given one Security Guard each in their residencies at the organization's expense;
- (3) The Education Allowance payable in respect of all staff members children should be reviewed upwards but that the number of children who could benefit from such an allowance be reduced from 6 to 4. The maximum amount payable in respect of each child should however not exceed US \$4,000 per annum.

The financial implications of the measures recommended for acceptance by Council are shown below:

NEW EDUCATION ALLOWANCE

- i) The request to revise the Education Allowance from US\$ 2,500 to US\$ 4,000 per child per annum was accepted provided that US\$ 4,000 would be treated as a maximum benefit.
- ii) Number of dependent children to benefit from the allowance was reduced from 6 to 4.
- iii) Beneficiaries of the allowance should be up to age of 21 years.

TOTAL COST US\$ 1,011,000

2.

REVISED BENEFITS FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

The Committee considered the submission of the Ad-Hoc Committee of 14 and accepted to recommend approval of the additional benefits as follows:-

i) Secretary-General

- One utility car
- One driver
- One guard
- One gardener

TOTAL COST

32,130

ii) Assistant Secretaries-General

- One guard each

TOTAL COST

16,775

3. SCHEME OF SERVICE

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TOTAL COST US\$ 52,200

The Committee accepted to recommend for approval the extended salary steps in the established grades as recommended by the Committee of 14.

4. NEW POSTS

- i) The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend the setting up of the Co-ordination Unit in the proposed Policy and Programme Co-ordination Department and that all posts be filled during 1990/91 Financial Year

TOTAL COST 181,492

- ii) It also agreed to recommend for approval the funding of:

- a) Education Officer's post in Education, Scientific, Cultural and Social Affairs Department

TOTAL COST 48,795

- b) Personnel Officer's Post in Administration and Conferences Department

TOTAL COST 44,875

- c) Post of Head of Budget Planning Division in Finance Department during Financial Year 1990/91

TOTAL COST 55,042

GRAND TOTAL US\$ 1,442,309

Should Council accept those recommendations, it is proposed that the necessary appropriations be made in the 1990/91 Budget.

However, the Ad-Hoc Committee had recommended the following summary:-

1. EXISTING POSTS: (RECOMMENDED SOLUTION)

BASIC SALARY

HOUSING ALLOWANCE

POST ADJUSTMENT

SUB-TOTAL

US\$ 3,166,342

2. NEW POSTS

BASIC SALARY US\$ 1,367,910

HOUSING ALLOWANCE 815,652

POST ADJUSTMENT 554,004

EDUCATION ALLOWANCE 132,000

DEPENDENCY ALLOWANCE 23,100

SUB-TOTAL

2,892,666

3. SCHEME OF SERVICE & CAREER

PROSPECTS OF STAFF

SUB-TOTAL

52,500

4. COST OF REVISED BENEFITS

FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

SUB-TOTAL

43,695

5. EDUCATION ALLOWANCE

SUB-TOTAL

1,737,587

SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEME

- a) PENSION SCHEME US\$ 66,079
- b) EVACUATION/MEDICAL SCHEME INSURANCE 242,112

7. DEPENDENCY ALLOWANCE

SUB-TOTAL US\$ 303,300

GRAND TOTAL US\$ 8,504,172

N.B. These figures were calculated by the OAU General Secretariat.

With regard to opening of new offices or closing some of the existing ones, the Committee stressed that the matter is highly political and it should be referred to the Council of Ministers for further guidance.

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