



support to the Secretariat in carrying out the mandates entrusted to it by the General Assembly. Allow me to highlight some of these issues.

In chapter I, on organizational matters, you will note from the Committee's membership in 2012 that one member from the Latin American and Caribbean States and one member from the Asia-Pacific States are to be appointed, leaving one seat from the latter group for the position of Vice-Chair vacant.

Chapter II deals with the calendar of conferences and meetings for 2013. In paragraph 16 of its resolution 66/233, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to propose, at its sixty-seventh session, a comprehensive review of conference servicing highlighting any duplications and redundancies, with a view to identifying innovative ideas, potential synergies and other cost-saving measures, without compromising the quality of its services. In response to that request, in paragraph 15 of his report on the pattern of conferences, the Secretary-General proposed that the General Assembly invite the Economic and Social Council to reconsider the necessity of reviewing its provisional biennial calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields. In section I, paragraph 8, of its draft resolution, the Committee concurred with the observations made by the Secretary-General in paragraph 13 of his report in relation to the biennial calendar of meetings of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. Chair, distinguished colleagues,

In Chapter III A, on meetings management, the Committee reviewed the statistical data presented on the utilization of conference-servicing resources and facilities at the four duty stations and at the conference centre at the Economic Commission for Africa. I presented an oral report on my mandate as Chair to hold consultations with the three intergovernmental bodies that had utilized less than the benchmark of 80 per cent of their allocated resources for the past three consecutive years from 2009 to 2011. Since the chairs of the Statistical Commission and the Commission for Social Development are not based in New York, I was unable to schedule a meeting with them. As in the past, the secretariat of the Committee on Conferences notified the secretariats of those bodies and provided suggestions for improvement.



internal reviews concerning accountability mechanisms and the clear delineation of responsibility between the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management and the directors-general of the United Nations offices at Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna for conference management policies, operations and resource utilization.

In section III paragraph 15, the Committee reiterated its request to the Secretary General to redouble his efforts to include in his next report on the pattern of conferences the information regarding the financial savings achieved through the implementation of the integrated global management projects as requested through previous resolutions of the Committee, including in its resolution 66/233, section III paragraph 14.

The Committee welcomed the proximity rule as an efficient approach to servicing meetings

Environment Programme in a paper smart way since 2008. In Vienna, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has been pioneering the use of digital audio files to record the contents of debates. In Geneva, the tremendous backlog of summary records of the Human Rights Council requires feasible solutions and alternatives to written official records .

The Committee held lengthy discussions on the statements by the duty stations and the proposal made by the Secretary-General in the conference room paper on paper-smart meetings following the lessons learned of servicing the Rio+20 conference in paper-smart mode. Recalling paragraphs 23 and 24 of its resolution 55/285 of 7 September 2001 and section IV, paragraph 23, of its resolution 66/233, , the Committee requested the Secretary-General to elaborate the scope of the paper-smart concept so that it would become a more comprehensive concept based on the use of modern technology in order to better serve Member States, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-eight session.

Mr. Chair, distinguished colleagues,

Chapter VI deals with translation and interpretation-related matters. Under this agenda item, Committee had a question and answer session on the Secretariat's outreach and training initiatives. It noted with appreciation the measures taken by the Secretary-General to address the issue of the replacement of retiring staff in the language services and also noted that recent efforts had led to the signing of two memorandums of understanding and two collaboration agreements with two universities in Africa, and one memorandum of understanding with a Latin American institution.

The Committee requested the Secretary-General to make further concerted efforts to promote outreach programmes, such as traineeships and internships, and to introduce innovative methods to increase awareness of the programmes, including through partnerships with Member States, relevant international organizations and language institutions in all regions, in particular to close the wide gap in Africa and Latin America.

Also, the Committee reiterated its request to the Secretary General to provide at all duty stations, adequate staff at the appropriate level, with the view to ensure appropriate quality control for external translation, with due consideration of the principle of equal grade for equal work.

Before I conclude, Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the Bureau and members of the Committee, as well as the observers, for participating actively and constructively during the Committee's session, which enabled the Committee to have meaningful and productive discussions in an open and friendly manner. I hope that we can continue to work in the same spirit during the Fifth Committee's consideration of the item on pattern of conferences.

I also wish to express on behalf of myself, the Bureau and members of the Committee on Conferences, our gratitude to Mr. Graisse, Acting Head of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, Mr. Baumann, Assistant-Secretary-General, the Secretariat of the Committee and all the staff of the Department, in addition to the conference management staff at the other duty stations, for providing substantive and technical support to the Committee throughout the year, and especially during its substantive session.

To all my colleagues in the Fifth Committee, I wish to present the report of the Committee on Conferences, together with the draft resolution and draft revised calendar of conferences and meetings for 2013, for your consideration and recommendation to the General Assembly.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

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