



GENERAL

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Seventh Session
Santiago, Chile, 28 March 1960

UNITED NATIONS BUILDING IN SANTIAGO

Report by the secretariat

On 1 October 1958, an Extraordinary Session of the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America was held in New York to discuss the financing of the construction of a United Nations building in Santiago on the site donated for this purpose by the Government of Chile. At this session the following resolution (147 (AC.41)) was adopted:

The Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America,

Bearing in mind that the General Assembly in its resolution 1224 (XII) requested the Secretary-General to accept with thanks the generous offer of the Government of Chile of a plot of land for the construction of a building to house United Nations Office in Santiago, Chile, and authorized him to open with the Governments of States members of the Commission such negotiations as may be necessary with regard to the financing of the construction of that building,

Having considered the proposals of the Secretary-General and of members of the Commission,

Considering that the provisional estimate of the cost of construction is not more than \$850,000,

Considering that the Commission at the sixth session of its Committee of the Whole adopted a resolution (143 (AC.40)) in which it expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would expedite the work he has undertaken in this connexion so that the United Nations building in Santiago would soon become a reality,

Requests the Secretary-General to submit for the consideration of the General Assembly a proposal that it take a decision in this matter along the following lines:

/1. Authorizing

1. Authorizing the Secretary-General to proceed with the planning and construction of a building on the site in Santiago within the cost estimate above
2. Appropriating for 1959 the amount of \$50,000 in the regular United Nations budget for initial expenses in planning and construction of the building;
3. Deciding, in principle, that the remaining cost of the building should be included in the regular United Nations budget in annual instalments. These instalments might be \$200,000;
4. Inviting Governments members of the Commission to make repayable interest-free advances to the United Nations in order to meet the cash needs for construction if the Secretary-General finds this to be necessary;
5. Authorizing the Secretary-General to meet any cash deficiencies for construction from the Working Capital Fund.

At the thirteenth session of the General Assembly, pursuant to a resolution adopted at the preceding session, the Secretary-General presented a report (A/3952), and, taking into consideration the resolution of the Committee of the Whole reproduced above, made recommendations for the financing of the projected building.

On this basis, the General Assembly, on 17 November 1958, adopted resolution 1273 (XIII), the text of which is as follows:

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 1224 (XII) of 14 December 1957, in accordance with which the Secretary-General accepted the generous offer by the Government of Chile of a plot of land for the construction of a building to house the United Nations offices in Chile,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General^{1/} in which financial proposals for the construction of the building, based on resolution 147 (AC.41) adopted on 3 October 1958 by the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America, are presented,

Taking note of the thirteenth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the thirteenth session of the General Assembly,^{2/}

^{1/} A/3952.

^{2/} A/3972.

1. Authorizes the Secretary-General to proceed with the preparation of plans and with the construction of the United Nations building in Santiago, Chile, at a cost not to exceed \$850,000;
2. Decides to appropriate in the regular United Nations budget for 1959 the sum of \$50,000 for initial preparatory and construction expenses for the building;
3. Decides, in principle, that the balance of the building cost shall be included in the regular United Nations budget in annual instalments of \$200,000 for each of the ensuing four years;
4. Authorizes the Secretary-General to initiate negotiations, if he finds it necessary, with the Governments of States members of the Economic Commission for Latin America with a view to their making reimbursable interest-free advances to the United Nations to meet cash requirements for the construction;
5. Authorizes the Secretary-General to advance out of the Working Capital Fund the moneys required for building costs for which no cash is available;
6. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions informed of developments in 1959 and to present a progress report on this project to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session.

During the year 1959 considerable progress was made with the preliminary arrangements and negotiations required to carry out the project. The site for the erection of the building - an area of 4.5 hectares - was chosen, on the basis of studies and reports, within the 60 hectares of the Parque Vitacura in a residential district of the city of Santiago, and the legal formalities empowering the Government of Chile to transfer to the United Nations the selected site, which originally belonged to the Municipality of Las Condes, are on the point of completion. Study has been devoted to the bases for a preliminary agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Chile, under the terms of which the Government will assume responsibility for specific works relating to the urbanization of the site to be transferred. The local authorities are implementing a programme for the construction of new avenues and the general improvement of the area in which the building will be situated. The procedure for choosing the architect who is to design the building has also been under consideration.

The Chilean Act authorizing the transfer of the site to the United Nations free of charge stipulated as a condition of transfer that work should be begun within a specific time limit. The United Nations has fulfilled this condition, and this fact has been expressly placed on record by the Government of Chile in a decree enacted in December 1959.

Careful and thorough study was given to the question of the total area which the building would have to occupy in order to provide proper accommodation - with due allowance for future expansion - for all the United Nations bodies established in Santiago. It was found necessary to revise the original estimates, and to increase the building area from 6,800 to 8,620 square metres.

This change, in combination with another, equally unavoidable, relating to the unit cost of building (which was risen considerably during the two years that have elapsed since the first estimates were prepared), made it evident that a request for an increase in the funds earmarked for the construction of the building would have to be submitted to the General Assembly. The new estimate contained specifications of the cost of supplementary works. These items included the laying-out of the surrounding park and gardens; the construction of roads within the United Nations property, as well as of ornamental railing and of parking areas; fees of architects and engineers; etc.

The Secretary-General presented to the General Assembly a report with recommendations (A/4239), in which he proposed that the sum allocated to the Santiago building should be raised from 850,000 dollars to 1,550,000 dollars. This latter figure included an item of 200,000 dollars for unforeseen expenses.

The recommendations of the Secretary-General were considered by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, whose report (A/4277) was subsequently adopted by the Fifth Committee and submitted to the plenary General Assembly.

/On 1 December

On 1 December 1959, the General Assembly, at its fourteenth session, adopted the following resolution (A/Res/1407 (XIV)):

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 1224 (XII) of 14 December 1957 and 1273 (XIII) of 14 November 1958 concerning the construction of the United Nations building in Santiago, Chile,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,^{1/} in which revised proposals for the construction of the building are presented, and the twenty-sixth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session,^{2/}

1. Authorizes the Secretary-General to proceed with the preparation of plans for, and the construction of, the United Nations building in Santiago, Chile, at a cost not to exceed \$1,550,000;
2. Decides to appropriate in the regular United Nations budget for 1959 the sum of \$20,000 for initial preparatory and construction expenses for the building;
3. Decides that the balance of the building cost shall be included in the regular United Nations budget in annual instalments of \$382,500 for each of the ensuing four years;
4. Decides that the remaining provisions of resolution 1273 (XIII) shall continue in force;
5. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions informed of developments relating to the present project, including the detailed plans and cost estimates, and to present a progress report to the General Assembly at its fifteenth session.

The new financial arrangements for the project having been approved by the General Assembly at the end of last year, the way now lies open for its execution to be expedited. Work is proceeding actively on its various aspects, and there is every indication that it will be possible for building to begin very shortly.

^{1/} A/4239.

^{2/} A/4277.