

## Facing 'cash-flow crisis,' the U.N. cuts hiring, heating, escalators and air conditioning

Heating and air conditioning will be curtailed. Expect fewer translations and no conference **freebies**, like water. And at the 39-story **Secretariat** building, some escalators and the decorative water fountain outside are shutting down.

freebie 赠品

secretariat 秘书处; 秘书 (书记, 部长)

These were among the money-saving measures announced by U.N. budget officials Friday, in response to what they called the most **acute** cash shortage in years confronting the global organization, which to keep operations running relies on prompt payment of the assessments billed to its 193 members.

acute 严重的; 急性的

The organization's \$2.87 billion budget for next year comes with an outstanding balance of \$1.3 billion still owed for this year.

Chandramouli Ramanathan, the Controller, said seven nations are responsible for 97% of the unpaid budget.

Unlike nations that can borrow money in global capital markets by issuing **bonds**, the United Nations has no such authority. So it is not so unusual for the organization's budget officials to express worry when they see their expenses outpacing revenue, which often happens in the final quarter of the calendar year.

bond 债券

But Ramanathan said that over the past decade, member states that have historically paid on time are increasingly delaying payments.

Asked if he envisioned the United Nations shutting down because of the cash-flow problem, Ramanathan supplied a diplomatic answer. "There will come a point when you do not have enough staff to run the place," he said, "if the trend continues."