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*Official Records**



SECOND COMMITTEE
2nd meeting
held on
Monday, 26 September 1983
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic)

CONTENTS

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. The CHAIRMAN said that he had been informed that consultations were still in progress within the regional groups on nominating candidates for the office of Vice-Chairman of the Committee. He therefore suggested that the item should be postponed until a later meeting.

2. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

3. The CHAIRMAN said that, the United Nations had achieved considerable results over the years in bringing international economic relations into line with current realities. Nevertheless, there was nothing to indicate that the economic crisis prevailing in much of the world would end soon. It was clear that world peace was a prerequisite for economic prosperity and the establishment of a new international economic order.

4. The Committee needed to take practical steps to help to ease international political tensions, bring about the normalization of economic co-operation and find solutions to the difficult problems faced by developing countries. The decisions taken nearly a decade earlier on establishing a new international economic order constituted a solid basis for such action. In the meantime, many new proposals had been put forward which required serious consideration. It was encouraging to note that more and more States were realizing the importance of re-establishing confidence in international economic relations.

5. In recent years the General Assembly had discussed the launching of global negotiations on world-wide economic issues. While that topic was essentially one for the plenary to discuss, it involved many of the problems that were before the Second Committee. It was therefore imperative that measures that would enable negotiations to be started should be considered.

6. Global economic issues and those in the spheres of science and technology, ecology, and international monetary and financial relations required global solutions and the co-operation of all States. The decisions which the General Assembly would take at the current session with regard to increased co-operation in those fields could certainly improve the current situation. One of the most pressing problems to be discussed was international trade. The results of the sixth session of UNCTAD, which had failed to meet expectations, should be taken as a basis for decisions that might solve pressing problems in international trade. In addition, the Committee would have to take decisions regarding operational activities for development and the continuation of negotiations on a code of conduct for transnational corporations. Preparations also had to be made for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third Development Decade.

(The Chairman)

7. If the Committee was to achieve its goals, it had to conduct its work in a business-like, constructive and reasonable manner. Delegations should be willing to adopt a realistic, balanced and flexible approach to the issues under consideration. Above all, proposals should be action-oriented and lead to the establishment of a new and democratic international economic order. In that connection, attention should be focused on problems for which solutions were both important and possible in existing circumstances.

8. He drew attention to the programme of work proposed by the Chairman (A/C.2/38/L.1). Account had been taken in that document of the organizational arrangements which the General Assembly had agreed upon at the outset of the current session and of the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council concerning the organization of work of the Second Committee (A/38/421). In that connection, it was extremely important that the Committee should adhere to the deadlines contained in the proposed programme of work.

9. On the basis of the experience of the Committee at the thirty-seventh session and that of the Economic and Social Council at its second session of 1983, he suggested that statements by the executive heads of United Nations organs, organizations and bodies should be made in the context of the consideration of specific reports under the relevant items, and that they should be brief and action-oriented. Arrangements would be made to promote a meaningful dialogue between Member States and the executive heads. The latter were requested to submit their statements in advance so that members of the Committee could become familiar with them prior to the consideration of the relevant agenda items.

10. In accordance with the Economic and Social Council's recommendation in decision 1983/164, he had set 6 p.m. on Wednesday of the subsequent week as the deadline for the submission of draft proposals under items which had been considered during the previous week. Delegations should do their best to abide by those deadlines so that the informal consultations on draft proposals could be scheduled in an orderly manner, thereby avoiding the complications which had arisen in the Committee's work towards the end of the thirty-seventh session.

11. Mr. SEVAN (Secretary of the Committee) read out a list of 12 documents relating to agenda items allocated to the Committee which were not yet available. There were several reasons for the fact that those documents were unavailable; unfortunately, the reasons included, in certain cases, sheer laziness on the part of the Secretariat. However, in drawing up the draft programme of work, the relative availability of documents had been taken into account, and he assured the Committee that all documents would be available at the appropriate time. An addendum to document A/C.2/38/L.1 would be issued giving further details on the status of Committee documentation.

12. The CHAIRMAN said that he intended to review the programme of work periodically with the Committee in order to make any adjustments necessary to enable the Committee to complete its work on time. He also intended to follow the established practice of requesting the two Vice-Chairmen of the Committee to be

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(The Chairman)

responsible for specific agenda items and to co-ordinate all the informal consultations on draft proposals submitted under those items. He would announce the distribution of responsibilities between the two Vice-Chairmen after consulting the officers of the Committee. The officers would co-ordinate the scheduling of informal consultations and, to the extent possible, establish a weekly programme of work for them, as recommended in Council decision 1983/164.

13. With regard to the recommendation made by the Economic and Social Council in section II of decision 1983/164 concerning the adoption of a biennial programme of work of the Second Committee, apart from the general debate, he suggested that informal consultations should be held on the subject at the current session.

14. In conclusion, he drew attention to the need to utilize conference service facilities efficiently.

15. Mr. SOBHAN (Bangladesh), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that he shared the Chairman's concern about the international economic situation. It was the earnest hope of the Group of 77 that at the thirty-eighth session the Committee would strive to find solutions to some of the most pressing problems facing the world.

16. The Group of 77 attached great importance to the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council (A/38/421) regarding the Committee's programme of work. The Group would focus on the international economic situation in the general debate in order to give momentum to the Committee's work. The general debate should not be conducted as a series of monologues but rather as a dialogue. The Chairman of the Group of 77 would be making a comprehensive statement and would welcome a similar approach by the regional and other groupings by individual States. Although one week of concentrated exchanges, from 11 to 14 October, should be sufficient for the general debate, the time-table should be flexible enough to allow a second week to be set aside for that purpose, if necessary.

17. The Group of 77 intended to submit a number of draft resolutions, as in previous years, and expected to do so by the stipulated deadlines, provided the necessary documentation was furnished in time by the Secretariat. The Group was dismayed by the reason just given by the Secretary of the Committee for the unavailability of some reports; laziness was an unacceptable explanation. It therefore requested the Chairman to convey to the Secretariat its firm expectation that all documentation would be issued without further delay.

18. The Group of 77 attached great significance to agenda item 78, for which two weeks had been set aside in the proposed programme of work. It would be useful if delegations could make statements covering all sub-items collectively. The Group suggested that any time saved from the general debate should be made available for additional consideration of agenda item 78, given its importance.

19. The Group endorsed the Chairman's proposal to assign responsibility for certain agenda items to the Vice-Chairmen. There was every reason to believe that consultations on the designation of candidates for those two posts would soon be completed to the general satisfaction of the Committee.

20. Ms. ZHANG Zhong-an (China) said that China considered the Economic and Social Council's recommendations regarding the organization of work to be constructive and agreed with the proposals of the Chairman and the views of the Group of 77 on the matter. Her delegation believed that as much time as was needed should be allotted for the general debate. Statements by delegations should be brief and should, given the limited time available, focus on the main international economic issues of the day. The kind of dialogue urged by the Group of 77 should lead to solutions.

21. Her delegation agreed that when the Committee considered the work of United Nations agencies, the heads of those agencies should be invited to make brief replies in the interest of enhanced communication and efficiency.

22. It would be desirable to begin informal consultations on the more complex questions as early as possible, so as to avoid a heavy work load at the end of the session. Co-operation within the Committee, and especially the good will of the developed countries, was of primary importance. China intended to work with all delegations and with the Chairman to achieve results.

23. The CHAIRMAN said that he would take into account the proposals of the Group of 77 and China, and would firmly convey to the Secretariat the Committee's concern over the delay in issuing certain documents, which would, he hoped, be made available to the Committee without further delay.

24. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the programme of work outlined in document A/C.2/38/L.1.

25. It was so decided.

26. The CHAIRMAN said that it was his understanding that all groups and delegations would use the time remaining before the start of the general debate to prepare their positions and any draft resolutions they would be submitting. He had been informed by the Group of 77 that it would start drafting its resolutions as soon as possible and he hoped that others would do the same. It was also his understanding that the preparatory work of the Group of 77 for its ministerial meeting was part and parcel of the preparatory work of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.