

United Nations

**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-THIRD SESSION

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THIRD COMMITTEE

2nd meeting

held on

Friday, 22 September 1978

at 3 p.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

CONTENTS

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMEN

ELECTION OF THE RAPPOREUR

OTHER MATTERS

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The meeting was called to order at 3.55 p.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

1. The CHAIRMAN expressed her gratitude for the support which members of the Committee had given to the candidature of her country for the office of Chairman. She noted that 1978 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was of particular importance to the Third Committee, as could be seen from an examination of the agenda items allocated to it by the General Committee. Concepts of human rights had evolved since the adoption of the Universal Declaration as the result of decisions taken at United Nations conferences relating to human rights and the comprehensive series of conventions, declarations and recommendations on human rights developed in the United Nations system. The machinery within the United Nations for reviewing the implementation by States parties of conventions and covenants relating to human rights had likewise been evolving. She noted that the Committee was increasingly aware of the close relationship between human rights and development.

2. She drew attention to the length of the Committee's agenda and the need to develop effective procedures for dealing with the many complex items of which it consisted. In that connexion she expressed the hope that the spirit of consensus would continue to prevail, together with the spirit of co-operation, understanding and self-discipline, so that the work of the session would contribute to progress in the areas of fundamental concern to the Committee.

ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMEN

3. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, under which the Committee must elect two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

4. Mr. PEDERSEN (Denmark) nominated Mr. Papastephanou (Greece) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

5. Mr. Papastephanou (Greece) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

6. Mr. MODISI (Botswana) requested that the election of the second Vice-Chairman should be postponed until a later meeting.

7. The CHAIRMAN said that, if she heard no objections, she would take it that the Committee wished to accede to the request made by the representative of Botswana.

8. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

9. Mr. MAKKI (Oman) nominated Miss Richter (Argentina) for the office of Rapporteur.

10. Miss Richter (Argentina) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

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## OTHER MATTERS

11. Mr. MERKEL (Federal Republic of Germany) expressed his profound concern at the lack of documents available for the Committee's work. The numerous items on the agenda would have to be grouped together, as in previous years, but it was difficult to make any suggestions concerning the programme of work without having the documents on each item available. He addressed an urgent appeal to the Secretariat to complete the preparation of the documents as soon as possible and to provide members with a schedule informing them when they could expect to receive each document.
12. Mr. LAMB (Australia) said he shared the concern expressed by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany and requested the Secretariat to provide a full and coherent account of the status of documentation at the next meeting and to explain why the necessary documents were not ready. It was quite impossible for representatives to obtain instructions from their Governments without the relevant documentation. He noted that many of the items were recurrent ones and it was difficult to understand why the documents on those items were not available. His delegation was particularly concerned about the report of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women; that report had been adopted at the end of June 1978 and should be available.
13. Mr. PAPADEMAS (Secretary of the Committee) said that he would give a full account of the status of documentation at the Committee's next meeting.
14. Ms. SIPILA (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that she fully shared the concern of delegations with regard to the status of documentation. However, members of the Committee should realize that there were numerous stages involved in the preparation of documents and some texts had had to be revised at a very late stage because of resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its summer session.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.