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Twenty-seventh session

ORGANIZATION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS

First report of the General Committee

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 2	2
II. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION	3 - 12	2
III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA	13 - 19	5
IV. ALLOCATION OF ITEMS	/to be issued/	

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 199th, 200th and 201st meetings, on 20 and 21 September 1972, the General Committee considered part of a memorandum by the Secretary-General relating to the organization of the twenty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly, the adoption of the agenda and the allocation of items (A/BUR/179/Rev.1). The recommendations of the General Committee relating to the remainder of the Secretary-General's memorandum will be issued subsequently.
2. A summary of the discussion will appear in the summary records of the meetings (A/BUR/SR.199, 200 and 201).

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

Schedule of meetings

3. On the proposal of the Secretary-General (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, paras. 2 and 3), the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly the following arrangements relating to the schedule of meetings:

(a) Plenary and committee meetings should begin at 10.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.;

(b) A five-day working week should be established, on the understanding that meetings on Saturdays, as well as night meetings, may be scheduled if necessary.

4. In this connexion, the General Committee wishes to stress the need for punctuality in opening meetings and to draw the General Assembly's attention to the amended text of rules 69 and 110 of the rules of procedure (A/520/Rev.11), whereby the President of the General Assembly may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one third of the members are present, and the Chairman of a Main Committee may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one quarter of the members are present.

General debate

5. At the suggestion of the Secretary-General (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 4), the General Committee wishes to draw the General Assembly's attention to the following conclusions of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly which were approved by the Assembly at its twenty-sixth session:

- (a) The length of the general debate should not normally exceed two and a half weeks (rules of procedure, annex V, para. 45);
 - (b) The list of speakers wishing to take part in the general debate should be closed at the end of the third day after the opening of the debate (ibid., para. 46);
 - (c) Speakers should, as far as possible, avoid putting down their names to speak on a given item and at the same time indicating an alternative meeting if they are unable to keep to their original schedule (ibid., para. 70);
 - (d) Representatives should speak in the order of their inscription on the list of speakers, on the understanding that those prevented from doing so should normally be moved to the end of the list, unless they have arranged to change places with other representatives (ibid., para. 71).
6. Also at the suggestion of the Secretary-General (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 5), the General Committee recommends:
- (a) That the general debate should begin on Monday, 25 September and end on Wednesday, 11 October 1972;
 - (b) That the list of speakers wishing to take part in the general debate should be closed on Wednesday, 27 September, at 6 p.m.

Right of reply

7. At the suggestion of the Secretary-General (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 6), the General Committee wishes to draw the General Assembly's attention to the recommendation of the Special Committee, which was approved by the Assembly, whereby statements made in the exercise of the right of reply should be delivered, as a general rule, at the end of the meetings (rules of procedure, annex V, para. 78). Furthermore, the General Committee recommends that delegations should exercise their right of reply at the end of the day whenever two meetings have been scheduled for that day.

Closing date of the session

8. At the suggestion of the Secretary-General (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 7), the General Committee proposes to the General Assembly, in accordance with rule 2 of the rules of procedure, that the closing date of the twenty-seventh session should be Tuesday, 19 December 1972.

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Records of the Main Committees

9. As pointed out by the Secretary-General (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 8), rule 60 of the rules of procedure, as amended at the twenty-sixth session, stipulates that the First Committee shall be provided with verbatim records and that no organ of the General Assembly shall have both verbatim and summary records. As previously, the verbatim records would be the official records of the First Committee and the summary records would remain the official records of all other Main Committees. In this connexion, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that the option that has traditionally been approved for the Special Political Committee to obtain, on specific request, transcriptions of the debates of some of its meetings, or portions thereof, should be maintained for the twenty-seventh session. Furthermore, the General Committee wishes to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 10 (e) of its resolution 2538 (XXIV) of 11 December 1969, which reads as follows:

"Speeches or statements by representatives, by the Secretary-General or his representative, or by persons presenting reports on behalf of committees or other bodies, may be reproduced in extenso in summary records or as official documents only if they serve as bases for discussion, provided that the relevant decision is taken by the body concerned after a statement of the financial implications has been submitted in accordance with regulation 13.1 of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations."

Seating arrangements

10. The General Committee took note of the seating arrangements to be observed in the plenary and in the Main Committees (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 9).

Use of the General Assembly Hall by the Main Committees

11. The General Committee took note of the fact that, in addition to the General Assembly Hall, only five conference rooms (Conference Rooms 1 to 4 and the Trusteeship Council Chamber) can accommodate the membership of the Organization, making it possible to hold no more than six meetings simultaneously. At the suggestion of the Secretary-General (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 10), the Committee, therefore, proposes that all the Main Committees should make full use of the General Assembly Hall when no plenary meeting is being held.

Mechanical means of voting

12. At the suggestion of the Secretary-General (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 11), the General Committee proposes that the Main Committees make full use, on a rotating basis, of the mechanical means of voting available in both the General Assembly Hall and Conference Room 3.

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III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

13. The General Committee considered the draft agenda submitted by the Secretary-General in his memorandum (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 14). This draft was based on the following documents:

- (a) Provisional agenda of the twenty-seventh session (A/8760 and Corr.2);
- (b) Supplementary list of items (A/8780);
- (c) Requests for the inclusion of additional items (A/8791 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, A/8792 and A/8793).

14. In connexion with item 12 of the draft agenda (Report of the Economic and Social Council), the General Committee noted (A/BUR/179/Rev.1, para. 13) that:

- (a) A number of reports, which the General Assembly specifically requested or which the Economic and Social Council decided to transmit to the Assembly, will be considered under this item;
- (b) The General Assembly will be called upon to consider the draft resolution entitled "Measures to improve the organization of the work of the Council", recommended by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1622 (LI) of 30 July 1971, and the amendments thereto (A/8578/Add.1, paras. 44-46).

15. In the course of the discussion, it was proposed that the General Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that item 21 should be deleted from the agenda and that items 52, 92, 93 and 94 should be deleted from the agenda of the twenty-seventh session and included in the provisional agenda of the twenty-eighth session. The General Committee acted on those proposals as follows:

- (a) Item 21 (Installation of mechanical means of voting)

The Committee decided to recommend that the item should be deleted from the agenda;

- (b) Item 52 (Measures to be taken against ideologies and practices based on terror or on incitement to racial discrimination or any other form of group hatred)

The Committee decided to recommend that the item should be included in the provisional agenda of the twenty-eighth session.

- (c) Item 92 (Declaration on Universal Participation in the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties)

The Committee decided to recommend that the item should be included in the provisional agenda of the twenty-eighth session.

- (d) Item 93 (Question of issuing special invitations to States which are not Members of the United Nations or members of any of the specialized agencies)

or of the International Atomic Energy Agency or parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice to become parties to the Convention on Special Missions)

The Committee decided to recommend that the item should be included in the provisional agenda of the twenty-eighth session.

- (e) Item 94 (Amendment to Article 22 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice (Seat of the Court) and consequential amendments to Articles 23 and 28)

The Committee decided to recommend that the item should be included in the provisional agenda of the twenty-eighth session.

16. After a debate, in the course of which the General Committee discussed simultaneously the inclusion of items 35, 36, 37 and 96, the Committee took the following action:

- (a) Item 35 (Withdrawal of United States and all other foreign forces occupying South Korea under the flag of the United Nations) and item 36 (Dissolution of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea)

The Committee decided to recommend that the items should be deleted from the agenda.

- (b) Item 37 (Question of Korea: report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea) and item 96 (Creation of favourable conditions to accelerate the independent and peaceful reunification of Korea)

By 16 votes to 7, with 1 abstention, the Committee decided to recommend that the items should be included in the provisional agenda of the twenty-eighth session.

17. The General Committee decided, by 17 votes to 4, with 3 abstentions, to recommend that item 98 (Admission of new Members to the United Nations) should be included in the agenda.

18. In the course of its discussion of item 99 (Measures to prevent terrorism and other forms of violence which endanger or take innocent human lives or jeopardize fundamental freedoms), the General Committee decided, by 9 votes to 6, with 8 abstentions, to adjourn the meeting and to resume its consideration of the item at its next meeting, to be held on Friday, 22 September, at 10.30 a.m.

19. Taking into account paragraphs 13 to 18 above, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following agenda: 1/

1/ Abbreviations used in the present document:

- (P.) : item on the provisional agenda (A/8760 and Corr.2);
(S.) : item on the supplementary list (A/8780);
(A.) : additional item (A/8791 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, A/8792 and A/8793).

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1. Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Indonesia (P.1).
2. Minute of silent prayer or meditation (P.2).
3. Credentials of representatives to the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly (P.3):
 - (a) Appointment of the Credentials Committee;
 - (b) Report of the Credentials Committee.
4. Election of the President (P.4).
5. Constitution of the Main Committees and election of officers (P.5).
6. Election of the Vice-Presidents (P.6).
7. Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations (P.7).
8. Adoption of the agenda (P.8).
9. General debate (P.9).
10. Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (P.10).
11. Report of the Security Council (P.11).
12. Report of the Economic and Social Council (P.12) 2/
13. Report of the Trusteeship Council (P.13).
14. Report of the International Court of Justice (P.14).
15. Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (P.15).
16. Election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council (P.16).
17. Election of nine members of the Economic and Social Council (P.17).
18. Election of five members of the International Court of Justice (P.18).
19. Election of 15 members of the Industrial Development Board (P.19).
20. Co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (P.20).
21. Admission of new Members to the United Nations (S.2).

2/ See para. 14 above.

22. The situation in the Middle East (P.22).
23. Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (P.23).
24. Strengthening of the role of the United Nations with regard to the maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security, the development of co-operation among all nations and the promotion of the rules of international law in relations between States (A.2).
25. Non-use of force in international relations and permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons (A.3).
26. World Disarmament Conference: report of the Secretary-General (P.24).
27. Implementation of the results of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States: report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (P.25).
28. International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (P.26).
29. Preparation of an international treaty concerning the Moon: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (P.27).
30. General and complete disarmament (P.28):
 - (a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament;
 - (b) Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency.
31. Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (P.29).
32. Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests (P.30):
 - (a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament;
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General.
33. Implementation of General Assembly resolution 2830 (XXVI) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco): report of the Secretary-General (P.31).
34. Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace: report of the Secretary-General (P.32).
35. Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security: report of the Secretary-General (P.33).

36. Reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, underlying the high seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction and use of their resources in the interests of mankind, and convening of a conference on the law of the sea: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction (P.34).
37. Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting (S.1).
38. The policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa (P.38):
 - (a) Reports of the Special Committee on Apartheid;
 - (b) Reports of the Secretary-General.
39. Effects of atomic radiation: report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (P.39).
40. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (P.40):
 - (a) Report of the Commissioner-General;
 - (b) Report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;
 - (c) Report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine;
 - (d) Reports of the Secretary-General.
41. Comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects: report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations (P.41).
42. Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories (P.42).
43. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (P.43):
 - (a) Report of the Conference on its third session;
 - (b) Report of the Trade and Development Board;
 - (c) Confirmation of the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
44. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (P.44):
 - (a) Report of the Industrial Development Board;

- (b) Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Co-operation between the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization;
 - (c) Confirmation of the appointment of the Executive Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.
45. United Nations Institute for Training and Research: report of the Executive Director (P.45).
46. Operational activities for development: reports of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (P.46):
- (a) United Nations Development Programme;
 - (b) United Nations Capital Development Fund;
 - (c) Technical co-operation activities undertaken by the Secretary-General;
 - (d) United Nations Volunteers programme.
47. United Nations Conference on the Human Environment: report of the Secretary-General (P.47).
48. Question of the establishment of an international university (P.48).
49. Human rights in armed conflicts (P.49):
- (a) Respect for human rights in armed conflicts: report of the Secretary-General under General Assembly resolutions 2852 (XXVI), paragraph 8, and 2853 (XXVI);
 - (b) Protection of journalists engaged in dangerous missions in areas of armed conflict: report of the Secretary-General.
50. Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (P.50):
- (a) Reports of the Secretary-General under General Assembly resolutions 2784 (XXVI) and 2785 (XXVI);
 - (b) Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
 - (c) Status of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: report of the Secretary-General;
 - (d) Draft convention on the suppression and punishment of the crime of apartheid.
51. Importance of the universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination and of the speedy granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples for the effective guarantee and observance of human rights (P.51).

52. Principles of international co-operation in the detection, arrest, extradition and punishment of persons guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity (P.53).
53. Crime prevention and control (P.54).
54. Youth, its education in the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, its problems and needs, and its active participation in national development and international co-operation (P.55):
 - (a) Channels of communication with youth and international youth organizations: report of the Secretary-General;
 - (b) Implementation of the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples.
55. Status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: report of the Secretary-General (P.56).
56. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (P.57):
 - (a) Report of the High Commissioner;
 - (b) Question of the continuation of the Office of the High Commissioner.
57. Freedom of information (P.58):
 - (a) Draft Declaration on Freedom of Information;
 - (b) Draft Convention on Freedom of Information.
58. Human rights and scientific and technological developments: report of the Secretary-General (P.59).
59. Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance (P.60):
 - (a) Draft Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance;
 - (b) Draft International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.
60. Programme for the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (P.61).
61. Assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations: report of the Secretary-General (P.62).
62. United Nations conference for a world convention on adoption law (P.95).

63. Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations (P.63):
- (a) Report of the Secretary-General;
 - (b) Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.
64. Question of Namibia (P.64):
- (a) Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;
 - (b) Report of the United Nations Council for Namibia;
 - (c) Question of the enlargement of the United Nations Council for Namibia: report of the Secretary-General;
 - (d) United Nations Fund for Namibia: report of the Secretary-General;
 - (e) Appointment of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia.
65. Question of Territories under Portuguese administration (P.65):
- (a) Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General.
66. Question of Southern Rhodesia (P.66):
- (a) Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General.
67. Activities of foreign economic and other interests which are impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Southern Rhodesia, Namibia and Territories under Portuguese domination and in all other Territories under colonial domination and efforts to eliminate colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination in southern Africa: report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (P.67).

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68. Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (P.68):
 - (a) Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;
 - (b) Reports of the Secretary-General.
69. United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa: report of the Secretary-General (P.69).
70. Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories: report of the Secretary-General (P.70).
71. Financial reports and accounts for the year 1971 and reports of the Board of Auditors (P.71):
 - (a) United Nations;
 - (b) United Nations Development Programme;
 - (c) United Nations Children's Fund;
 - (d) United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;
 - (e) United Nations Institute for Training and Research;
 - (f) Voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
72. Supplementary estimates for the financial year 1972 (P.72).
73. Budget estimates for the financial year 1973 (P.73).
74. Planning estimate for the financial year 1974 (P.74).
75. Pattern of conferences: report of the Secretary-General (P.75).
76. Appointments to fill vacancies in the membership of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly (P.76):
 - (a) Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;
 - (b) Committee on Contributions;
 - (c) Board of Auditors;

- (d) Investments Committee: confirmation of the appointments made by the Secretary-General;
 - (e) United Nations Administrative Tribunal.
77. Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions (P.77).
78. Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency: reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (P.78).
79. Joint Inspection Unit (P.79):
- (a) Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit;
 - (b) Question of the continuation of the Joint Inspection Unit: report of the Secretary-General.
80. Publications and documentation of the United Nations (P.80):
- (a) Report of the Secretary-General;
 - (b) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.
81. Personnel questions (P.81):
- (a) Composition of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General;
 - (b) Other personnel questions: report of the Secretary-General.
82. Report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (P.82).
83. United Nations salary system: report of the Special Committee for the Review of the United Nations Salary System (P.83).
84. United Nations International School: report of the Secretary-General (P.84).
85. Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its twenty-fourth session (P.85).
86. Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its fifth session (P.86).
87. Representation of States in their relations with international organizations (P.87).
88. Report of the Special Committee on the Question of Defining Aggression (P.88).

89. Need to consider suggestions regarding the review of the Charter of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General (P.89).
90. Review of the role of the International Court of Justice (P.90).
91. Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country (P.91).
