



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RITTER (Panama)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

1. The CHAIRMAN said that his election to the chairmanship of the Third Committee for the forty-second session was an honour for himself and even more for the country he represented, namely Panama, and expressed thanks to the members of the Committee.

2. The questions which the Committee had to consider were numerous and, as always, extremely important. The question of racism, and in particular racial discrimination in its most cruel form, apartheid, deserved special attention. If he mentioned only that particular point, it was not only because he could not ask representatives to make their statements brief without setting the example himself, but also because that question illustrated better than any other the need for specific action by the international community. Long procedural debates and statements devoid of new ideas were synonymous with inefficacy. What was needed was the political will to go deeply into problems and solve them. In that connection, the resolutions adopted could not be considered as ends in themselves. He recommended members of delegations to approach the discussions in a new spirit, open to dialogue and understanding.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

3. Mr. RADA (Czechoslovakia) nominated Mr. Paul Laberge (Canada) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

4. Mr. MUGUME (Uganda) nominated Mr. Osman Dirar (Sudan) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

5. Mr. Laberge (Canada) and Mr. Dirar (Sudan) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

6. Mr. AGUILAR-HECHT (Guatemala) nominated Mrs. Anie Santhoso (Indonesia) for the office of Rapporteur.

7. Mrs. Santhoso (Indonesia) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

8. Mr. HAMER (Netherlands), after congratulating the officers on their election, pointed out that, in view of the pressure being exercised to reduce the duration of the session and the fact that the Committee's agenda was particularly heavy, some rationalization of its work was necessary. In that connection, he expressed his confidence in the co-operation always shown by representatives on the Third Committee and assured the Chairman that he could count on that of the Netherlands delegation.

## ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C.3/42/3)

9. The CHAIRMAN emphasized the importance of certain recommendations on the organization of the session contained in section II of document A/42/250 and Corr.1, which had been approved by the General Assembly at its 3rd plenary meeting. He drew attention to the need to ensure that the meetings started on time and that full use was made of the meeting time allotted, and pointed out that a Committee could hold meetings with one quarter of its members present. With regard to explanations of vote, he drew attention to General Assembly decision 34/401, in which it was recommended that, as far as possible, delegations should explain their votes only once, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless their vote in plenary meeting was different from that in the Committee. The General Assembly had also decided that the practice not to reproduce in extenso statements made in a Main Committee should be maintained for the forty-second session. In addition, to save time, the practice of making concluding statements should be dispensed with except for statements by the presiding officer.

10. With respect to questions relating to the programme budget, no draft resolution involving expenditure could be adopted unless it was accompanied by an estimate of expenditure prepared by the Secretariat. He also reminded the Committee of the need to allow sufficient time for the preparation of such estimates of expenditure and for their consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee.

11. He also drew attention to paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 35/10 A, in which the General Assembly had decided that all proposals affecting the schedule of conferences and meetings made at sessions of the General Assembly should be reviewed by the Committee on Conferences.

12. In view of the financial problems facing the United Nations, the General Assembly had not decided on a closing date for the forty-second session and had recommended that every effort should be made to curtail its duration.

13. With regard to the programme of work itself, a tentative timetable had been prepared, based on the usual criteria: items had been grouped in clusters and would be considered in the same order as in previous years, in the light of the availability of documents and the presence in New York of the officials who would be directly involved in the Committee's deliberations. In order to utilize the conference services to the maximum, he recommended that the timetable should be respected as far as possible, particularly with respect to deadlines for the submission of draft proposals. In that connection, the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions was 3 p.m. The reason for that was the need to reduce the expenses connected with the issuing of those texts, the cost of which, including translation, reproduction and related operations, was \$650 a page. It was also extremely important that representatives should enter their names on the list of speakers as early as possible.

(The Chairman)

14. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 41/151 of 4 December 1986, the Working Group on the drafting of an International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families was to meet at the beginning of the forty-second session. The Department of Conference Services had assured him that the Working Group could meet during the period from 22 September to 2 October 1987. In the absence of any objection, he would take it that the Committee decided that the Working Group should meet during that period.

15. It was so decided.

16. The CHAIRMAN reported that, in the interest of economy, 24 hours' notice was needed for night meetings or for extensions or cancellations of meetings. Lastly, owing to financial constraints, the summaries of meetings reproduced in the Journal would often appear a day late.

17. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) drew attention to some amendments to document A/C.3/42/L.1 concerning the state of preparation of documentation. In the annex to that document, on page 2, the projected date of issue for the report of the Secretary-General (A/42/493) should be 30 September and the date indicated for submission of the report to the Division of General Assembly Affairs should be deleted. With regard to document A/42/492, the date of issue given, namely 30 September, should be deleted and the date of submission of the report to the Division of General Assembly Affairs should be 17 September. On page 12, under item 12, after the words "Report of the Economic and Social Council for the year 1987 (A/42/3)", the words "Assistance to refugees in Somalia: report of the Secretary-General" should be inserted. The date of submission of that report to the Division of General Assembly Affairs should be 9 October. Finally, on page 13, after the words "Assistance to refugees in Somalia: report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/42/498)", the words "and Add.1" should be added.

18. Mr. HOPPE (Denmark) said that the Committee might enhance the efficiency of its work by focusing on certain clusters of items, especially on issues which had been the subject of special conferences during the year. Following informal consultations which he had had with many delegations, he wished to propose that the Committee's draft programme of work should be amended by allocating: (a) one extra day to consideration of the voluminous report of the Economic and Social Council, which comprised the eighth cluster, that day coming out of the eight days devoted to the first cluster (racism); (b) one extra day to the seventh cluster, which concerned the most disquieting issue, that of refugees, the extra day coming out of the six allocated to the second cluster; and (c) an extra day to the fourth cluster (drugs), in the light of the Conference held earlier in the year at Vienna on that question, the extra day coming out of the six allocated to consideration of the third cluster (women).

19. Mrs. MUKHERJEE (India), supported by Miss AIOUAZE (Algeria), Mr. BOOTO (Zaire), Mr. GALAL (Egypt), Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Mr. KAEORE (Burkina Faso) and Mrs. BUTIKU (United Republic of Tanzania), said that she was surprised at the Danish proposal, her delegation not having been included among the many which the representative of Denmark had consulted. She therefore asked him to withdraw his amendments, particularly the first, which she considered unacceptable.

20. Mr. TROUVÉROY (Belgium) said he would like to know the Committee's view on the Danish amendments, especially the second and third, which he found reasonable.
21. Mr. LY (Senegal) said that he, too, was surprised at not having been consulted, and was especially surprised at the amendment concerning the first cluster, given the importance, as the Chairman had pointed out, of the struggle against racism and apartheid. He was not convinced of the relevance of the second amendment, but felt that the third could be adopted, provided the consultations were broadened with a view to reaching a consensus.
22. Mr. AGUILAR-HECHT (Guatemala) suggested that the Danish representative should withdraw his amendments, which he found premature, and that the informal consultations should continue, after which a decision might be taken.
23. Mr. LABERGE (Canada) supported the Guatemalan suggestion, since he felt that the programme of work had been drawn up as a guide and could be amended in due course.
24. Mr. QUINN (Australia) expressed the view that it was for the officers of the Committee, and not the Third Committee as a whole, to settle that question. The officers would therefore need to hold consultations on the matter and submit their conclusions to the Committee at a later date.
25. Mr. HOUFFANE (Djibouti) reminded the Committee that, at the previous session, it had already been necessary to hold night meetings in order to conclude the first cluster of items. It was therefore hard to see how consideration of that cluster could be shortened by one day. He also stressed that the officers were expected to meet before the draft programme of work was submitted to delegations. At the current stage, either the draft should be accepted as it stood, or the consultations should be continued.
26. Mr. HOPPE (Denmark) took note of the observations of delegations and supported the proposal for consultations among the officers:
27. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the draft programme of work submitted by the Secretariat should be adopted provisionally, pending the outcome of the consultations which the officers would hold with the representatives of the regional groups.
28. Mrs. MUKHERJEE (India) requested that the Chairman of the Group of 77 should attend those consultations.
29. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted the draft programme of work prepared by the Secretariat, pending the outcome of the consultations to be held among the officers of the Committee.
30. It was so decided.

31. Mr. QUINN (Australia) said that the United Nations was currently engaged in a process of reform and that the Third Committee might associate itself with that effort by taking account, in its work, of the proposals made by such bodies as the Group of 18, especially in connection with the rationalization of its agenda. It might also take into account, on a provisional basis, the important, new proposals just put forward by the Special Commission on the In-Depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields. He also recommended that delegations should not leave it to the high-level groups to adopt reforms, but should themselves seek to rationalize the Committee's work, even if that called for some sacrifices.

32. Mr. AGUILAR-HECHT (Guatemala), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, recalled that the idea of rationalizing the work, especially spreading it over a two-year cycle, had been mooted for the first time in the General Assembly at its forty-first session and continued to gain ground. The Special Commission, whose study had a direct effect on the work of the Third Committee, was open to participation by all States Members of the United Nations. The Group of 77 had prepared, within that Commission, proposals which were currently being studied. It would therefore be desirable, before taking decisions which at the current stage would be premature, to wait until the Special Commission had announced the outcome of its deliberations.

33. Mr. TROUVEROY (Belgium) reaffirmed his delegation's commitment to promoting rationalization of the Third Committee's work, or spreading it over a two-year cycle, with the assistance of all interested parties. He stressed the urgent nature of the reforms being studied by the Special Commission and pointed out that, as experts in the social field, the members of the Third Committee must, if they did not wish the decisions to be taken for them, without fail associate themselves with the reform effort in the field which concerned them.

34. The CHAIRMAN announced that the next meeting of the Committee, devoted to racism, would be held on 5 October with the participation of the Director of the Centre for Human Rights. He asked those representatives who wished to join in the discussion on that item to enter their names as soon as possible on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.