



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NOWORYTA (Poland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Committee for his election, which was also a tribute to Poland. He invited the Committee to elect its two Vice-Chairmen, in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.
2. Mr. FREUDENSCHUSS (Austria) nominated Mr. Fasehun (Nigeria) for the office of Vice-Chairman.
3. Mr. DANUS (Chile) nominated Mr. Nogués Zubizarreta (Paraguay) for the office of Vice-Chairman.
4. Mr. Fasehun (Nigeria) and Mr. Nogués Zubizarreta (Paraguay) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.
5. In the absence of nominations, the CHAIRMAN proposed that the election of the Rapporteur should be postponed until the next meeting.
6. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/SPC/43/1; A/SPC/43/L.1/Rev.1)

7. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the recommendations concerning the organization and rationalization of the work contained in the report of the General Committee (A/43/250 and Corr.1). In view of the financial problems still being faced by the United Nations and the current process of renewal and reform, the Assembly had decided that for the time being no closing date for the forty-third session should be fixed and that every effort should be made to curtail the duration of the session.
8. As had been stressed by the Assembly, punctuality was of the utmost importance. According to information provided by the Secretariat, the Special Political Committee had, during the last session, lost more than 34 hours or the equivalent of 11 meetings. It was therefore essential that all the representatives should be punctual so that the Committee could begin its work on time. He also drew attention to the decision adopted by the General Assembly to waive, during the present session, the application of rule 108 of the rules of procedure regarding the quorum. It was understood that such a waiver did not in any way imply a permanent change in the relevant provisions of the rules of procedure and that, in accordance with those rules, the presence of a majority of members was required for any decision to be taken.
9. With respect to meetings, any extension of more than 30 minutes should be requested 24 hours before the meeting and any additional meeting required would probably have to be held on Saturdays.

(The Chairman)

10. In accordance with the recommendation in annex V of the rules of procedure, he intended to close the list of speakers on each item when one third of the meetings allocated to the item had been held. Members wishing to make statements should place their names on the list kept by the Secretariat and would be called on to speak in that order. Once the list had been closed, any changes in the order could be made only by mutual consent between two delegations which had agreed to exchange places on the list. Otherwise, any representative not ready to speak when his turn came would be placed at the end of the list.

11. The General Assembly had decided to limit to two the number of statements by any delegation in the exercise of the right of reply. The first would be limited to 10 minutes and the second to 5 minutes. If the same item was considered at two meetings on the same day, the delegations had to exercise the right of reply at the end of the day. Explanations of vote should be limited to 10 minutes, in conformity with the decisions of the General Assembly. When the same draft resolution was considered in a Main Committee and in a plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, either in the Committee or in the plenary meeting, unless the delegation's vote in the plenary meeting was different from its vote in the Committee.

12. The General Assembly had drawn attention to regulation 4.9 of the Regulations Governing Programme Planning which stipulated that "no Council, Commission or other competent body shall take a decision involving either a change in the programme budget approved by the General Assembly or the possible requirement of expenditure unless it has received and taken account of a report from the Secretary-General on the programme budget implications of the proposal". The Assembly had noted that it was imperative that Main Committees should allow sufficient time for the preparation of the estimate of expenditures by the Secretariat and for its consideration by the ACABQ and the Fifth Committee. The General Assembly had imposed a deadline of 1 December for submission to the Fifth Committee of all draft resolutions having financial implications and had decided that a minimum period of 48 hours should elapse between the submission of and voting on any proposal involving expenditure, in order to allow the Secretary-General to prepare and present the related statement of administrative and financial implications. Delegations were urged to keep those decisions in mind.

13. In view of the expense and the decisions of the General Assembly he urged delegations to limit as much as possible their requests for additional documentation and for duplicate copies of material already distributed. Likewise, it was important for delegations submitting draft resolutions to bear in mind that, owing to financial constraints, overnight processing of documents would not be possible.

14. In accordance with General Assembly decision 40/472 of 9 May 1986, the Special Political Committee would no longer be entitled to verbatim records of debates and would receive summary records only. Nevertheless, the General Assembly had once again approved the recommendation of the General Committee that the Special Political Committee should be authorized to receive, on specific request, transcriptions of the debates of all or part of some of its meetings. Those

(The Chairman)

transcriptions, which were not part of the official records, did not entail any extrabudgetary expenses, as they were prepared from tapes by verbatim reporters and typists when such staff was available. Consequently, the transcriptions appeared later than the summary records. The requirement of simultaneous distribution of the summary records in all the official languages had often resulted in delays in their distribution. With the financial crisis, those delays might be even longer. Therefore, it was proposed to distribute the summary records in the languages in which they were originally prepared as soon as the records were ready. It was understood that summary records would appear in the other languages as soon as they had been translated.

15. If there were no objections he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the proposal.

16. It was so decided.

17. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the organization of work, drew the attention of the Committee to a letter (A/SPC/43/1) addressed to him by the President of the General Assembly regarding the allocation of agenda items to the Special Political Committee. He also invited attention to document A/SPC/43/L.1/Rev.1 containing the provisional timetable for the work of the Committee. The timetable should be interpreted flexibly in order to co-ordinate the Committee's work with that of the General Assembly and other organs. The Special Political Committee would in particular maintain the close co-ordination with the Fourth Committee which had made it possible during the two preceding sessions to avoid to a great extent the convening of overlapping meetings, it being understood that such co-ordination would be sufficiently flexible to permit the two bodies to finish their work on schedule.

18. During the preparation of the programme of work, available documentation and the expected date of publication of the other basic documents had been taken into account. It should be noted that no basic document was planned for items 80 and 81. For item 79 (Questions relating to information), the report of the Committee on Information (A/43/21) and the report of the Director-General of UNESCO would be issued before the Committee started work on the item. The report of the Secretary-General requested in resolution 42/162 A would be published shortly as document A/43/639. As regards item 140 (Science and peace), the letter of the representative of Costa Rica requesting its inclusion in the agenda was contained in document A/43/141. On item 76 (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), the report of the Commissioner-General (A/43/13 and Add.1) would be issued shortly. The report of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA would be available before the Committee had started its consideration of the item. In connection with item 77, the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories would be distributed as soon as it had been received from Geneva. The other basic documents mentioned in the Chairman's note (A/SPC/43/L.1/Rev.1) had already been issued.

(The Chairman)

19. As further consultations would be needed before the complete timetable of the Special Political Committee's work could be adopted, he proposed that no decisions should be taken except on item 74 (Effects of atomic radiation) to which it was planned to devote two meetings on 12 and 13 October.

20. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to accept his proposal.

21. It was so decided.

HEARINGS CONCERNING APARTHEID

22. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, in connection with item 36 (Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa) which was to be considered directly in plenary, the General Assembly had decided that organizations and individuals having a special interest in the item would be permitted to be heard by the Special Political Committee. Two meetings would be devoted to such hearings on 9 and 10 November. Organizations and individuals wishing to be heard by the Committee should submit their requests in writing to the Chairman no later than Monday, 31 October. Communications containing requests for hearings would be circulated as Committee documents and considered at a subsequent meeting prior to the hearings. The Secretariat would inform organizations and individuals approved by the Committee of the date of the meeting.

23. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that procedure.

24. It was so decided.

WORKING GROUP ON QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION

25. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, as in previous sessions and in order to expedite the work, an open-ended working group presided over by one of the two Vice-Chairmen of the Committee should be established to prepare the draft resolution on item 79 (Questions relating to information).

26. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that proposal.

27. It was so decided.

WORKING GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

28. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee, as in previous sessions, should establish an open-ended working group to be chaired by the delegation of Austria, to prepare the draft resolution on item 75 (International co-operation on the peaceful uses of outer space).

(The Chairman)

29. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that proposal.

30. It was so decided.

31. The CHAIRMAN invited delegations preparing draft resolutions on item 74 to submit their texts to the Secretariat before Wednesday, 12 October, when the first meeting on the item would be held. The speakers' list on the item was open and would be closed at the end of the meeting on Wednesday, 12 October.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.