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MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Radha Krishna RAMPHUL
(Mauritius).

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Dr. Franz Matsch

1. The CHAIRMAN: Before the Committee takes up the items on the agenda for this morning's meeting, I would like to pay tribute to the memory of one of the staunchest supporters of the United Nations, Ambassador Franz Matsch, who died last July. Ambassador Matsch devoted a life-long career to the international community, first in the League of Nations and then in the United Nations as the Permanent Representative of Austria. Among the many posts he held I need only mention his chairmanship of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space from 1961 to 1964 and his chairmanship of the First Committee at the fourteenth session of the General Assembly in 1959.

2. I invite representatives to stand and observe a minute's silence in tribute to the memory of Ambassador Matsch.

The members of the Committee observed a minute of silence.

Opening statement by the Chairman

3. The CHAIRMAN: Both personally and on behalf of the delegation of Denmark, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all delegations for the confidence they have shown in me in electing me Chairman of the First Committee. I shall endeavour to discharge my functions with full impartiality. To perform my duties I shall need the support of the Committee and I am confident that that support will be extended to me.

4. I wish particularly to thank my predecessor, the representative of Mauritius, Ambassador Ramphul, who nominated me in such a generous manner. Allow me to pay sincere tribute to Ambassador Ramphul for his excellent guidance of last year's deliberations in this Committee and to express to him my appreciation for the continued and valuable advice which he has so graciously extended to me.

5. I extend a warm welcome to all members of this Committee, and a quite particular welcome to the three new members: the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany. I am sure that we all look forward to working with them also within the framework of this Committee.

6. It is with personal pleasure that I welcome at the officers' table the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Shevchenko, and the Secretary of the Committee, Ambassador Banerjee. They are both well known to this Committee and highly respected for their contributions to the work of the United Nations. I wish them well in their new duties and look forward with great expectation to working with them, as I do indeed with the other members of the Secretariat who have been assigned to serve the Committee.

Election of the Vice-Chairmen

7. The CHAIRMAN: In order further to rationalize the proceedings of the Committee, it has been agreed that nominations for the vice-chairmanships will be presented by one of the former Vice-Chairmen. I call on the representative of Kuwait.

8. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): Mr. Chairman, I should like to associate myself with you in conveying my profound condolences to the Mission of Austria on the passing of Ambassador Matsch.

9. I also note with sorrow the absence of a star of the First Committee, the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Chacko, who died last July.

10. Mr. Chairman, your election will contribute immensely to the success of the deliberations of this Committee. I am happy to express my felicitations to you on your election; I shall have another opportunity amply to express my delegation's sentiments of joy.

11. Today I have a pleasant task to discharge; it is simple yet fascinating. It is my honour and privilege to nominate my friend and colleague Ambassador Blaise Rabetafika, the Permanent Representative of Madagascar, and my friend Mr. Hayat Mehdi, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan, as Vice-Chairmen of the First Committee for the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

12. Ambassador Rabetafika has an impressive record of excellence and dedication. His university degrees are Bachelor of Arts, Post-Graduate Diploma in English, and Certificate of Aptitude for Secondary Teaching. He taught in England, France and in his own capital, Tananarive. He became a member of the Cabinet of the Minister as

Counsellor for Defence, in France, in 1960. He was a member of the delegation that negotiated independence from France. He was in charge of cultural affairs at the Mission of Madagascar in France. He held the post of Permanent Representative of his country to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization from 1961 to 1963. From 1964 to 1967 he was technical adviser to the Presidency of the Republic. In 1968 he became the Director of the Cabinet of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. After that he came to New York as Deputy Permanent Representative of his country to the United Nations. Since September 1969 he has been serving Madagascar as its Permanent Representative to the United Nations. He has also been a non-resident Ambassador to Canada since June 1970.

13. Ambassador Rabetafika's participation in 11 consecutive sessions of the General Assembly testifies to his vast experience in the work of this Organization. Moreover, he has participated in numerous international conferences. He was present at the birth of the Organization of African Unity in 1963 and took part in its conferences in 1964, 1965, 1966 and 1967. He was also present, as head of his country's delegation, at the historic Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries at Algiers in 1973 that prepared for the Conference of Heads of State or Government. In 1973 he was elected Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council.

14. His social manners are equally fascinating. He is serious; yet his seriousness is punctuated by sparks of humour and gaiety. He is jovial in business and convivial outside it.

15. Mr. Mehdi of Pakistan has all the attributes that qualify him to occupy the important post of Vice-Chairman of this Committee. Born in 1936, he obtained his master's degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Massachusetts, in the United States. He practised law until he joined the diplomatic service in 1958. He spent three years studying in the United States, the United Kingdom and France. He served in Bangkok between 1961 and 1964 with the Embassy of Pakistan. He was in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 1964 and 1965. From 1965 to 1969 he was assigned to Pakistan's High Commission in New Delhi. He joined Pakistan's Mission to the United Nations in 1969. Mr. Mehdi has dealt continuously with issues before the First Committee since the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly. He also dealt with matters considered by the Security Council when Pakistan was a member of that organ. In addition, Mr. Mehdi has represented his country and at times led his delegation at meetings of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme.

16. Mr. Mehdi combines youth with experience. He is affable and objective, and his target is perfection.

17. Mr. Rabetafika and Mr. Mehdi have laboured assiduously for the protection of the lofty ideals embodied in the Charter. Both of them possess discernible marks of internationalism, a trait so desperately needed for the attainment of the objective this body aspires to. I trust that this Committee will endorse the nomination of such veterans of peace.

18. In you, Mr. Chairman, and in our candidates for the vice-chairmanships we shall have a consummate assembly of brains devoted to a single goal: the accomplishment of successful deliberations on issues so crucial and vital to peace.

19. The CHAIRMAN: Since there are no other nominations, I declare Mr. Rabetafika of Madagascar and Mr. Mehdi of Pakistan elected Vice-Chairmen of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. Rabetafika (Madagascar) and Mr. Mehdi (Pakistan) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

20. The CHAIRMAN: May I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Rabetafika and Mr. Mehdi on their election and say how much I look forward to co-operating with them during the coming months.

21. Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) (*interpretation from French*): First of all, I should like to convey to you, Mr. Chairman, my sincere and warm congratulations on your election to the very important post of Chairman of the First Committee. As my colleagues will realize, this is both a tribute to your country for the very important role it has played in political and security questions and also a tribute to you, because of your dedication to peace and security.

22. When I was listening to my colleague and brother, Mr. Bishara of Kuwait, I wondered whether he was really talking about me. Obviously, when a friend is asked to give one's curriculum vitae, the friend, in expressing his sentiments, may perhaps tend to add things which one is not sure really apply to one. But, having said that, I must assure you, Sir, of my complete co-operation and also that of my delegation in the coming months. We are sure that under your enlightened guidance the First Committee will achieve the hoped-for results in the proper time, which will help to strengthen international peace and security.

23. I should also like to thank my friend Mr. Bishara very warmly for the too complimentary remarks he made about my nomination.

24. Mr. MEHDI (Pakistan): May I through you, Mr. Chairman, express my most sincere appreciation to the members of the Committee for the honour they have done me and my country and the region to which I have the privilege of belonging. I should like to extend the assurance that I shall strive fully to deserve the confidence and trust reposed in me.

25. May I also take this opportunity of offering my felicitations and those of my delegation to you, Mr. Chairman, on your unanimous election, and to say that I look forward to the pleasure of working with you and with my other colleagues, the officers of the Committee, and to the privilege of serving the Committee in the best manner that I can. The least I can do at the moment is offer my very sincere thanks to my esteemed friend and dear colleague, Mr. Bishara of Kuwait, whose charmed eloquence has transmuted my very modest accomplishments into glittering achievements. I must frankly admit that I had the same feelings as Mr. Rabetafika of not being able to

recognize myself, but I do wish to thank Mr. Bishara very sincerely for the kind sentiments that he expressed about me.

Election of the Rapporteur

26. Mr. MENDEZ-MONTENEGRO (Guatemala) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of Mr. Santiso-Gálvez, who is in Washington at the moment, I have the personal satisfaction of submitting the candidacy of Mr. Alvaro de Soto of Peru for the post of Rapporteur of the First Committee. I have the greatest personal satisfaction, as I said, because I have known Mr. de Soto since 1968, when we both arrived at the United Nations for the first time. We have worked together a number of times in the same committees and I have been able to appreciate the fact that Mr. de Soto shows the enthusiasm and energy which are the hallmarks of his age as well as a knowledge and experience of the work of the United Nations which are far wider than one would expect in a man of his age.

27. Mr. de Soto had his primary and secondary education at the International School in Geneva, Switzerland. He studied literature at the Catholic University of Peru and law at the University of San Marcos, and he did his diplomatic studies at Lima in Peru. In the service of the Foreign Ministry of Peru since 1961, he has primarily been occupied in the Departments of International Organizations and Conferences and of Economic Affairs. He has been a member of the Peruvian Mission to the United Nations since 1968. Since 1968 he has been a member of the delegation of Peru to the sea-bed Committee, and the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. He was representative of his country on the Committee for the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations and a member of the delegation of Peru to the Security Council. He has also been a member of the Peruvian delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations since the twenty-third session. Mr. de Soto has given lectures and has participated in panels and seminars in universities and institutions of academic learning in Canada, the United States and Europe. He has contributed to periodicals in Canada, the United States and India. At present he occupies the post of First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations.

28. In putting forward the name of Mr. de Soto for unanimous election as Rapporteur I express the hope that he will be completely successful in the fulfilment of his duties.

29. The CHAIRMAN: Since there are no other nominations, I declare Mr. de Soto of Peru elected Rapporteur of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. de Soto (Peru) was elected Rapporteur of the First Committee by acclamation.

30. The CHAIRMAN: May I take this opportunity of congratulating Mr. de Soto on his election and say how much I look forward to co-operating with him. I invite him to take his place at the officers' table.

31. Mr. DE SOTO (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): This election is an honour done to both my delegation and

me, and I am extremely grateful to the First Committee for it.

32. It will be a pleasure, Mr. Chairman, to work with all the members of the First Committee, and particularly with you and our Vice-Chairmen.

33. I should like to express my special thanks for the very kind and generous words addressed to me by the representative of Guatemala, Mr. Méndez-Montenegro.

34. The CHAIRMAN: We have now completed the elections and the congratulations, and I should like to say the following. I think that vanity is a common human trait; some even say that diplomats are not without it. At the same time, I want to draw attention to a certain paragraph in the report of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly. That paragraph reads:

“With regard to subsidiary organs of the General Assembly, the Special Committee recommends that, in the case of a newly established organ or of the rotation of officers on an existing one,”—as in the present case—“congratulations to the Chairman should be expressed only by the temporary Chairman and congratulations to other officers should be expressed only by the Chairman”.¹

That has now been done, and I hope that members will keep that paragraph in mind during the coming weeks.

Organization of work

35. The CHAIRMAN: I would like now to refer briefly to the organization of our work. As is evident from the agenda items allocated to the First Committee—and I refer to document A/C.1/1030—we have before us many items, and they are important ones. I feel certain that in order to complete consideration of these items, a great deal of discipline, co-operation and goodwill will be necessary.

36. I should like to say at the very outset that I have calculated that 25 per cent of 135 is no more, in any case, than 34, and therefore the meetings will start when there are 34 members present.

37. It is my intention to have consultations in the next few days with the members in order to present to the Committee a draft programme of work indicating a target date for the conclusion of the work, the approximate dates of consideration of items, and, if possible, the number of meetings to be allocated to each item, thus fulfilling rule 101 of the rules of procedure.

38. In preparing this draft I shall rely on the co-operation of the other officers of the Committee and carefully take into account the wishes of members. It is my hope that the draft programme may be ready for presentation to the Committee before the end of this week, or, at the latest, at the very beginning of next week.

¹ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 26, sect. XII, annex II, para. 81.

39. The next meeting of the First Committee will thus be determined in the light of the progress made in these consultations. I shall convene the Committee as soon as possible.

40. I should like to raise one other matter with the Committee. It is my understanding that informal consultations have taken place and that there is a consensus to invite the two Korean delegations to participate in the discussion on the question of Korea without the right to vote.

41. If I hear no objections, I shall take it that the Committee agrees.

It was so decided.

42. Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria): Mr. Chairman, my delegation will certainly be respectful of your request so far as congratulations to you and the other officers of the Committee are concerned, but I should like to speak briefly this morning to thank you for the moving tribute you have

paid to the memory of Ambassador Franz Matsch. Through you, may I also thank the members of this Committee for having honoured his memory.

43. You have said, most fittingly, Sir, that Ambassador Matsch dedicated his life to peace and international understanding, and in his rich international career, which stretched over more than 50 years, he was witness to the work of the League of Nations and the United Nations.

44. I should like to pledge to you, Sir, and to members of this Committee that the delegation of Austria will continue, in this Committee as well as in all other bodies of the United Nations, to work in the spirit exemplified by Ambassador Matsch and many other distinguished representatives of his generation, the founders of the League of Nations and of the United Nations.

45. I again thank you and the members of this Committee for having honoured him this morning.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.