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**SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE, 795th
MEETING**



Wednesday, 8 December 1971,
at 10.50 a.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Cornelius C. CREMIN (Ireland).

AGENDA ITEM 39

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects: report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations (*continued*) (A/8550)

1. Mr. DE SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil) said that it was no surprise that the report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations (A/8550) showed that once more inactivity had prevailed in one of the most important committees of the United Nations. Although paragraph 6 of the fourth report of the Working Group (see A/8550, annex II) said that the difficulties which had confronted it and the Special Committee were not procedural, his delegation considered that no progress on substance would be achieved until the procedural aspects were corrected. Since its inception the Special Committee had suffered from the lack of agreement among some of the major Powers, and it was now facing an institutional crisis which pervaded the whole machinery of the United Nations entrusted with the task of finding ways and means to establish guidelines for peace keeping. For the past year, the Special Committee had been unable to elect a Chairman. Despite the competence and dedication of the two Vice-Chairmen, the procedure of rotating the Chair between them had led to paralysis of the Special Committee, which had met only three times in 1971. No debates of substance had taken place, and no proposals had been put forward. In fact, if it had not met at all, it would have made no difference to the work of the United Nations. Despite the precise instructions given it in General Assembly resolution 2670 (XXV), which had been adopted unanimously in both the Special Political Committee and the General Assembly, the Special Committee had not received a single document to work upon nor had proposals submitted to the General Assembly by some delegations, including his own, reached it.

2. The reason for that non-compliance with the unanimous decision of the General Assembly was given in the last sentence of paragraph 5 of the fourth report of the Working Group, which said that, while recognizing the importance of the question, the Working Group had concluded that in the absence of progress on issues of a fundamental political nature it would not be productive to pursue the Brazilian proposal or those contained in draft resolution A/SPC/L.193 submitted at the preceding session.¹ The General Assembly was entitled to ask what issues of a fundamental

political nature could prevail over unanimous decisions of the General Assembly itself and what terms of reference had led the Working Group to disregard those decisions.

3. The Working Group was composed of seven members: the two super-Powers, other major Powers and one developing country, Egypt. It was hard to believe that the four members with permanent seats on the Security Council, the two Vice-Chairmen or the only representative of the third world on the Working Group would have been in favour of disregarding the General Assembly decisions. The fact remained, however, that the Working Group had done so.

4. By a strange coincidence, the sponsors of the text unanimously adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 2670 (XXV) were the countries making up the Working Group that had decided not to comply with it. The Special Political Committee must either agree that the machinery established to deal with peace-keeping questions had failed or else continue to conceal from the General Assembly its failure to carry out its mandate.

5. Mr. SCHAUFLE (United States of America) said that the United States believed it to be more true than ever before that there were few, if any, more important issues before the General Assembly than peace keeping, since the primary purpose for which the United Nations had been established was the maintenance of international peace and security. It was therefore especially regrettable that the Special Committee had been unable to report any significant progress during the preceding year. Everyone was aware that the lack of progress in establishing guidelines for peace-keeping operations was due to disagreement between members on several basic concepts. Not only the major Powers but also many other countries had serious reservations concerning certain of those concepts. Many shared the United States view that while the Security Council had the ultimate responsibility for the peace-keeping missions it authorized, effective management of those missions required that the executive authority of the Secretary-General should not be impaired. The United States therefore supported paragraph 14 of the Special Committee's report which recommended that a renewed collective effort should be made to break the deadlock.

6. In the past, the United States had sought mutually acceptable peace-keeping arrangements that were realistic, flexible and operationally sound. It had made specific proposals regarding the complex issues of command and control of operations which it had thought might form the basis of a compromise. It was, of course, disappointed that so far those proposals had not met with acceptance but was dedicated to a renewed and sustained effort to seek a solution, in which it hoped others would join. It was not wedded to any particular formula and was neither rigid nor

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 36, document A/8175, para. 4.

doctrinaire about details. What was important was the end result—the development of the United Nations peace-keeping capacity and the removal of impediments to United Nations actions. The key to the problem was not the machinery but the political will.

7. Mr. AKATANI (Japan) said that the importance of strengthening the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations had been stressed not only in the Special Political Committee but also in the General Assembly and in the First Committee. The Chairman of his delegation had stated in the General Assembly that it was in the field of peace-keeping operations that the United Nations had made its most important contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2670 (XXV), the fourth preambular paragraph of which noted with regret that the mandate entrusted to the Special Committee had not as yet been fulfilled, that Committee had held very few meetings and achieved practically no progress because the minimum degree of agreement on the outstanding issues had been absent. The key to the peace-keeping problem was understanding and consensus at a higher political level, mainly among the great Powers, on controversial issues such as the respective roles of the Security Council and the Secretary-General in the management of peace-keeping operations and the financing of those operations. His delegation therefore shared the regret at the continuing impasse in reaching agreement even on Model I expressed by the Secretary-General in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization (A/8401/Add.1 and Corr.1, para. 171).

8. There were a number of examples of the useful and at times crucial role played by the United Nations in peace keeping. His Government placed a high value on the role played by such United Nations peace-keeping operations as those in the Middle East, in Cyprus, in the Congo and in Kashmir, despite some pessimistic views expressed in the Committee.

9. His delegation was fully aware of the wide divergence of views among the major Powers, and above all between the Eastern and Western groups, on the issue. Despite the constitutional problems involved, it had reason to believe that if a new conflict were to develop the Security Council would once again establish an appropriate peace-keeping operation on a voluntary basis to meet it. However, past peace-keeping operations had been established case by case on an *ad hoc* basis. His delegation believed that, in the future, adequate machinery and arrangements were needed for setting up peace-keeping operations on a more effective and stable basis. To explore that possibility was one of the most important aspects of the Special Committee's work. The need was felt with particular keenness in view of the present highly explosive situations in India and Pakistan and in the Middle East.

10. His delegation deplored the fact that, despite repeated appeals by many countries, including Japan, which had made voluntary contributions, many Member States, including some permanent members of the Security Council, had not so far responded to the consensus adopted by the General Assembly on 1 September 1965² that the

financial deficit resulting from past peace-keeping operations should be liquidated by voluntary contributions by Member States. His delegation was deeply concerned that the long-standing indebtedness of the United Nations to Governments which had provided contingents or logistical support might seriously jeopardize current and future peace-keeping operations. In view of the extremely serious financial crisis confronting the Organization, it was imperative that its deficit should be liquidated as soon as possible. His delegation therefore renewed its urgent appeal to all countries, especially those which had a special responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security as permanent members of the Security Council, to co-operate in restoring the Organization's solvency.

11. It was to be hoped that, in continuing its work, the Working Group would be able to discuss Models I and II in a constructive way and submit a detailed report to the Special Committee.

12. Mr. KIILU (Kenya) said that, when the United Nations had been founded immediately after the Second World War, representatives had naturally been unanimous that its primary purpose and in particular that of its main organ, the Security Council, should be the maintenance of international peace and security. The threat of another world war still existed, and the domination of the weak by the strong contributed to the weakening of international peace and security and created anxiety in particular in the developing countries, whose very existence was dependent on the United Nations. If the Organization failed in its primary role, small countries would have no chance of survival and it would have no reason for continued existence.

13. It was paradoxical that the Special Political Committee should be discussing ways and means of keeping peace when the General Assembly was seeking solutions to crises in the Middle East and in India and Pakistan. The statements made, however, gave the impression that even the parties concerned wanted permanent peace in those areas and were turning to the United Nations for assurance that once peace was established, it would be maintained.

14. It was sad that the United Nations had not so far been able to find machinery for maintaining peace. The problem of finding ways and means of establishing effective peace-keeping machinery lay with the Security Council, which had become powerless in the matter owing to the different ideological approaches and political motives of the super-Powers. The debate on the critical situation in the Indian sub-continent and the subsequent referral of the issue to the General Assembly showed that the Security Council had forfeited its claim to be the only organ charged with the maintenance of international peace and security. However, if the General Assembly was to succeed where the Security Council had failed, it must have the means of ensuring that once peace was achieved it would be maintained. In view of the Security Council's inability to act decisively, his Government believed that the General Assembly should apply itself seriously to the problem of finding ways and means of establishing peace-keeping machinery. The Special Committee must recommend effective measures for adoption and application by the Assembly. In addition, his delegation believed that the financing

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Nineteenth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1331st meeting, para. 3.

of peace-keeping operations should be undertaken collectively by all States Members of the United Nations. Perhaps the permanent members of the Security Council should not only play a leading role but also contribute personnel and material. Many Member States, such as Czechoslovakia, had indicated their willingness to earmark part of their armed forces for use in maintaining peace in troubled areas, but, because of the divergent views of the permanent members of the Security Council, no practical steps had been taken.

15. The report of the Special Committee (A/8550) left much to be desired and amply reflected its inability to make progress. His delegation realized the difficulties the Special Committee was facing and appealed to its members to forget their differences and work together to devise effective machinery for peace-keeping operations. The world community could no longer tolerate obstructionism by super-Powers or groups of nations. While the current system of a rotating Chairmanship had worked so far, it was not the way to conduct the work of an important committee and a Chairman should be elected without delay, whether from the Latin American or any other group.

16. His delegation found it difficult to support the existence of a committee which had been making little progress in a field of such great importance. It would like the Special Committee to continue its work and apply itself more seriously and hoped that the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly would be able to commend the Special Committee for completing its work on all aspects of Model I and at least starting its work on Model II.

17. Mr. GALLAGHER (Ireland) recalled that, although his delegation had been extremely unhappy with the report of the Special Committee at the preceding session,³ it had voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 2670 (XXV) because it had welcomed the instructions given to the Special Committee to intensify its efforts with a view to completing its report on Model I by 1 May 1971. His delegation therefore noted with regret and disappointment that the report at the current session (A/8550) in no way fulfilled the mandate entrusted to the Special Committee by resolution 2670 (XXV) and previous resolutions. Obviously, the situation in the matter of peace keeping had not greatly changed since 1965, when the Special Committee had been established under General Assembly resolution 2006 (XIX).

18. At the twenty-fourth session, his delegation had welcomed the fact that five of the proposed eight chapters on Model I had been completed since 1969, but the remaining three chapters, including the one on financial arrangements, were of special importance. He noted in that connexion that the subject matter of Model I had certainly not been an important cause of the difficulties which had led to the establishment of the Special Committee; consequently, it could not be said that its deliberations in that context had had any real impact on the problem. It was also disturbing to note the limited number of meetings held by the Special Committee and its Working Group in pursuance of its terms of reference. Indeed, considering

that the Special Committee had not held its first meeting in 1971 until 1 April, it was in no way surprising that it had been unable to meet its reporting date of 1 May. It was perhaps symptomatic of the stalemate in the Special Committee and the lack of urgency which had marked its proceedings that, as the representative of Brazil had pointed out, it had not yet been able to elect a Chairman.

19. His delegation had been greatly impressed by the statements made by the representative of Brazil at the 51st meeting of the Special Committee⁴ on 1 December and at the current meeting. Over the years, Brazil had shown a very great interest in the question of peace keeping and had been a very active member of the Special Committee. Since its delegation was particularly well placed to assess the performance of the Special Committee during the preceding year, the statements made by the representative of Brazil deserved close examination by members.

20. The lack of urgency in the Special Committee's proceedings contrasted with the view of the great majority of Member States on the subject, as reflected, in particular, in the Declaration on the Occasion of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations and the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security (General Assembly resolutions 2627 (XXV) and 2734 (XXV), respectively). The latter resolution, which represented the views of almost all Members, had urged Member States to agree on guidelines for more effective peace-keeping operations and to support the Special Committee's efforts to reach agreement on all questions relating to such operations, as well as on provisions for their appropriate and equitable financing. In his statement at the 1956th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland had referred to the failure of the United Nations to take effective action in that connexion, stating that the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security would be nullified if the financial problems of peace keeping were not quickly resolved.

21. In the past, the United Nations had had considerable success in the field of peace-keeping operations and had in many cases been able to contain or terminate conflicts which, though local in character, had had dangerous implications for international peace and security. It was certainly a tragic paradox that at a time when the Organization might be called on at any moment to mount a peace-keeping mission, it still had no organized machinery for the purpose and so could not effectively carry out one of the chief tasks entrusted to it by the Charter, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. The Special Committee's report was particularly disappointing in view of the fact that peace-keeping operations were effectively contributing to the preservation of peace in Cyprus and the Middle East. Ireland was proud to be associated with both of those operations.

22. His delegation was greatly concerned, however, at the unsatisfactory system of financing the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), which, as the Secretary-General had stated in the introduction to his report (A/8401/Add.1 and Corr.1), was undergoing a crisis. In his report on the United Nations operation in Cyprus for

³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Annexes, agenda item 36, document A/8081.*

⁴ See A/AC.121/SR.51.

the period 20 May to 30 November 1971⁵ the Secretary-General had stressed that the maintenance of international peace and security was a collective responsibility which must be shared by all Members, pointed out the obvious inequities in the present system, which seemed difficult to reconcile with the spirit of the Charter, and noted that the cost of maintaining UNFICYP was relatively small compared with the consequences of a recurrence of fighting in Cyprus.

23. In connexion with the dangers inherent in a voluntary and *ad hoc* system of financing peace-keeping operations, he recalled that his country's Foreign Minister had stated:

"... Putting the financial system right is primarily the duty of the permanent members of the Security Council, for it is with them that power resides. The problem derives from differences of principle.

"But there is surely an element of paradox in the fact that, when the Security Council set up one peace-keeping mission—the Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)—it decided that its costs should be met from voluntary contributions. If the Council thought right to set up the Force, and to extend the mandate every three or six months over the past seven years, it should have decided on means to pay for it or should now remedy that defect, which only it can do" (1956th plenary meeting).

24. In accordance with its policy on the matter, his delegation had joined with others in the past in submitting specific proposals designed to place future operations on a firm and reliable footing. It considered it extremely urgent at the current stage, in the light of the Secretary-General's warnings, that immediate and effective action should be taken to that end. As the Secretary-General had observed in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization, the missing ingredient was the required degree of political accommodation by the principal members of the Special Committee. In the same document, he had gone on to suggest that if no appreciable progress was made in the near future, the question of peace-keeping operations should be considered at a periodic meeting of the Security Council, as provided for in Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter. His delegation hoped that at a time when some of the most intractable problems of the age were being resolved by negotiation and good will, the understanding necessary to reach agreement on the issues before the Special Committee could soon be found. If that was to happen, the major Powers must be receptive to exhortations from the membership generally for a satisfactory system of organizing and financing peace keeping.

25. Mr. PESMAZOGLU (Greece), recalling that the preservation of peace was the main purpose of the United Nations, said that the Organization had played an important role in that regard and had often prevented critical situations from turning into tragedy.

26. The United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) was performing an important mission in his country's own area of direct interest. It was to the credit of

the United Nations that the mandate of UNFICYP had been regularly extended by unanimous vote of the Security Council. It was unfortunate, however, that discussions on the establishment of permanent machinery for financing peace-keeping operations had dragged on for so many years. The *ad hoc* arrangements which existed met the need in a rather superficial way; the situation with regard to UNFICYP was well known. His delegation could only express its disappointment at the lack of progress on the question of peace keeping. Nevertheless, it wished to pay a tribute to the work done by the Special Committee and by its able Rapporteur. His delegation's attention had been especially drawn to paragraph 9 of the Special Committee's report (A/8550) and to the statements made by certain members of that Committee, which contained some extremely positive elements.

27. His delegation would support any concrete proposal for solving the problem, which was of concern to all nations, great and small, since peace was a universal responsibility. It would vote for any draft resolution calling for the extension of the Special Committee's mandate.

28. In conclusion, he appealed to the major Powers to play a more constructive role in connexion with the matter under consideration and called upon all countries to dedicate themselves to the maintenance of peace.

29. Mr. OVINNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted with regret the lack of substantive progress in the work of the Special Committee. To a considerable extent, that situation could be explained by the special nature of the problems dealt with by the Special Committee in regard to the establishment, direction and control of military observers. It was easy to understand why many delegations were disappointed at the existing situation and why the representative of Brazil had attempted to seek other reasons for the lack of progress. However, he did not agree with some of the statements which had been made on the question and felt that it was wrong to take a pessimistic view and concentrate exclusively on the failures of the past.

30. There were two quite distinct points of view with regard to United Nations peace-keeping operations. One group of countries was attempting to maintain obsolete practices which by-passed the Security Council and were not in keeping with the Charter. Another group, which included his own country, insisted that the basic provisions of the Charter should be respected and that the Security Council and its subsidiary organs should remain responsible for the direction and control of peace-keeping operations. The obstructionist tactics of those who desired to maintain obsolete practices must be overcome if the effectiveness of the United Nations in the peace-keeping field was to be improved. In that connexion, it was important to bear in mind the manner in which peace-keeping operations had been established and financed in the past.

31. In the course of consultations concerning the work of the Special Committee's Working Group, his delegation had submitted proposals calling for the provision of assistance by the Security Council on military matters either through the Military Staff Committee or through an *ad hoc* subsidiary body of the Council established pursuant to Article 29 of the Charter. Those detailed proposals did not

⁵ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-sixth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1971*, document S/10401, para. 106.

relate only to Model I but provided a basis for agreement on guidelines for peace-keeping operations. As yet, however, they had received little response.

32. Many Member States had stressed the importance they attached to an agreement on guidelines for peace-keeping operations in accordance with the Charter, and it was essential to expedite the work being done in that regard. Otherwise, future operations would be imposed by one-sided decisions that weakened the United Nations, as had happened in the past. It was important to recognize that some genuine progress had been made and that there was no alternative but to pursue the current efforts if the United Nations was to become an effective instrument for peace. The ultimate results would give both large and small countries cause for satisfaction.

33. His delegation would not oppose a resolution extending the mandate of the Special Committee if it was acceptable to members. However, it was also desirable to provide the Special Committee with clear instructions which would hasten the development of guidelines for peace-keeping operations based on the Charter. Delegations must make a concerted effort towards that end.

34. Mr. MAHJOUBI (Morocco) said that the recent paralysis of the Security Council, where the will of one State had permitted the current tragedy to continue and worsen, demonstrated the great importance of the item dealing with peace keeping. Member States not only had spoken in favour of the strengthening of international peace and security in their statements in the General Assembly but were pledged to the maintenance of peace and security under Article 1 of the Charter. In addition, the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly had adopted the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Peace and Security, and there had been similar declarations at the regional level. Nevertheless, wide differences of opinion had become apparent in the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations immediately after its establishment and very little progress had been made. Agreement could not be expected among the major Powers. In certain cases like Cyprus and the Congo, the great Powers had not committed forces and had even been reluctant to make financial contributions. The difficulties resulted not only from the polarization among the major Powers but also from the great complexity of the problem, which was not only financial but also institutional in nature. In view of the current deadlock, he felt that it was unwise simply to prolong the Special Committee's mandate from year to year. He therefore suggested that thought should be given to the possibility of asking all Member States to complete a

detailed questionnaire on guidelines for peace-keeping forces and the means of financing them. The Special Committee could study the replies received and inform the Special Political Committee at the next session of the views of Governments on the matter. When a draft resolution on the item was submitted, he hoped that his suggestion could be incorporated into it.

35. Mr. HOLDER (Liberia) asked the representative of Morocco to make his proposal available in writing so that it could be carefully studied.

36. Mr. MAHJOUBI (Morocco) said that he had not made a formal proposal and would not do so until the members of the Committee had had more time to consider his suggestion.

37. After a brief procedural discussion in which Mr. PESMAZOGLU (Greece), Mr. GROOS (Canada) and Mr. VACLÍK (Czechoslovakia) participated, the CHAIRMAN suggested that the members of the Special Committee's Working Group and any other interested representatives should hold informal consultations after the current meeting in order to consider a possible draft resolution on the item.

It was so decided.

38. Mr. CAHANA (Israel) said that the summary of his statement in the record of the 792nd meeting contained many inaccuracies. He would submit corrections in the normal manner but felt that, in view of the nature of the debate in question, he needed to draw the Committee's attention to that fact without delay.

39. Mr. MAHJOUBI (Morocco) said that he hoped that the corrected version of the statement would be made available at the current session, since the representative of Israel should not be given an opportunity to submit to the Secretariat a text which might be completely different from the statement he had made at the meeting in question.

40. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the representative of Israel, in correcting his statement as summarized in the provisional record of the 792nd meeting, should follow the normal procedure as stated on the first page of each provisional summary record.

41. Mr. CAHANA (Israel) concurred with the suggestion made by the Chairman.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.