

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

MEETING

Tuesday, 28 November 1972,
at 3.40 p.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Hady TOURÉ (Guinea).

AGENDA ITEM 41

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/8669, A/8676, A/8888, A/SPC/152, A/SPC/L.256)

1. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Committee had before it draft resolution A/SPC/L.256 submitted by Canada, Czechoslovakia, Japan and Nigeria.

2. Mr. KOMATINA (Yugoslavia) said that peace-keeping operations played an important part in the efforts made by the international community to strengthen the principle of collective security based upon the Charter of the United Nations. His Government firmly believed that, by carrying out peace-keeping operations, the United Nations could strengthen its role in many situations that jeopardized world peace. It was with that aim in mind that his delegation, together with other delegations, had submitted or supported a number of constructive proposals designed to improve the effectiveness of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations.

3. The interest of the international community in those operations had been clearly demonstrated by concrete actions, as well as through resolutions and decisions of the United Nations, in particular General Assembly resolutions 2734 (XXV), containing the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, and 2880 (XXVI), on the implementation of that Declaration. The provisions of resolution 2835 (XXVI) under which Member States were requested to make available any views or suggestions which they might wish to submit on the implementation of peace-keeping operations were extremely important in so far as they enabled all Member States, particularly small and medium-sized States that were most liable to be subjected to pressure or to be the victims of acts of aggression, to participate in a more direct and committed manner in the review of a question so vital to their sovereignty and security. The non-aligned countries, for their part, had repeatedly affirmed, both at the Third Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Lusaka, in September 1970, and the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, held at George-

town, Guyana, in August 1972, their interest in and support for the strengthening of the peace-keeping machinery and the far-reaching importance of that question for most Member States, particularly the non-aligned and all small and medium-sized States.

4. Under the circumstances it was regrettable that only a relatively small number of States had replied to the Secretary-General's questionnaire. The lack of enthusiasm was undoubtedly due to the lack of progress in the work of the Special Committee and, especially, in the review of model I which was due, above all, to the lack of political will among those responsible for finding a solution. Nevertheless, recently the procedural problems had been resolved, reflecting a certain political development. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the Special Committee had finally been able to elect a chairman and that it had been democratized through the enlargement of its Working Group, a fact that should substantially change its working methods.

5. There were currently three documents before the Special Committee, submitted respectively by the Soviet Union (A/8669), the United States (A/8676) and Canada (A/SPC/152), which, even if they could not be accepted in their entirety as a basis for a solution to the highly complex question of peace-keeping operations, nevertheless marked some progress and a desire to break the deadlock and seek acceptable solutions. His delegation would welcome any suggestion that would lead to even a small step forward towards an acceptable solution and it welcomed the proposal, submitted by the representative of Brazil at the 843rd meeting, that the Working Group, with the assistance of the Secretariat, should draft a document containing a progress report and a comparative listing under specific headings of concrete proposals submitted by Member States. The Working Group should use that document as background material and should start its work as soon as the document was ready. In addition, it should keep all the members of the Special Committee informed of its progress and should consult them constantly.

6. In view of that modest progress, which offered hopes for substantive progress in 1973, his delegation felt that the mandate of the Special Committee should be extended for one year. However, if the Special Committee remained paralysed, the General Assembly itself, at its twenty-eighth session, would have to undertake a comprehensive review of the question of peace-keeping operations and formulate new recommendations and guidelines. In view of the close link

between peace-keeping operations and the strengthening of international security, the Assembly could also consider the possibility of referring the item to the First Committee. For its part, his delegation would, as in the past, make a constructive contribution to peace-keeping operations, in order to strengthen peace and security in the world.

7. Mr. CABALLERO (Colombia) said that, on the occasion of the consideration of the question of peace-keeping and the report of the Special Committee, his delegation intended to make its contribution to the task undertaken by the United Nations, namely, the formulation of rules of conduct applicable to all mankind which would guarantee that the world's resources were utilized for the benefit of man.

8. The Special Committee had encountered all kinds of difficulties and had not always found the co-operation it was entitled to expect from Member States. Selfish nationalism, pride and prejudice continued to delay the implementation of the provisions of the Charter, and the establishment of a mechanism to prevent or resolve conflicts remained an unattained ideal. The very fact that the Special Committee covered only operations authorized by the Security Council and taking place with the consent of the host country demonstrated how little the cause of peace had progressed and how remote the creation of means still was which, in the hands of a world authority, would make it possible to implement the provisions of the Charter. Although some progress had been made, no one could deny that the results achieved were indeed meagre compared with the time and effort expended, the work that remained to be done and, above all, mankind's hopes in the work on which its fate depended. The representatives of developing countries, in particular, could not help but be disappointed on hearing that the election of a new Chairman or the increase in the number of officers or members of the Working Group was regarded as significant progress.

9. His delegation did not intend to submit new proposals or to consider for the time being those formulated by the members of the Special Committee, in particular, the Canadian memorandum on command and control of peace-keeping operations, which, in the opinion of his delegation, was an extremely positive contribution to the work of the Special Committee. He would merely recall the main points in the view and suggestions for the revisions of the Charter submitted on 19 June 1972 by the Government of Colombia¹ which had pointed out, *inter alia*, that the provisions of chapter VII regarding measures of coercion—without which the implementation of any law remained impossible—were inadequate. If the United Nations was unable to intervene in order to bring a speedy halt to any act that jeopardized peace, it would be failing in one of its principal duties. That, unfortunately, was what had happened several times during the 27 years of its existence, and was due to the

loopholes in the system envisaged in Chapter VII of the Charter. His Government proposed that a "Permanent Peace-keeping Force" should be established for use, as stipulated in the Charter, only in the common interest. It would therefore be called on to fight only in exceptional cases, but would be able, if necessary, to guarantee observance of the terms of an armistice agreed upon between two States and to participate in rescue operations in cases of natural disasters. Gradually, it would in effect become a school of civics. Obviously a definition of aggression would have to be agreed on—that had not yet been possible—and incorporated in the Charter. In addition, if disarmament—the other principal objective of the Organization—was achieved, the major Powers would have funds available for the upkeep of the Force. The privileges conferred on those Powers under Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter were the counterpart to the additional obligations they had had to assume in 1945, but it would be unfair for them to enjoy such privileges without carrying out the duties incumbent upon them. It was therefore the permanent members of the Security Council who should bear the principal responsibility for the cost of the permanent force which, in order to be truly universal like the Organization, would have to be composed of equal contingents provided by five Member States elected for a three-year term by the General Assembly. Lastly, the technical and operational aspects of the Force's operation would be laid down in a Statute which would form part of the Charter in the same way as the Statute of the International Court of Justice.

10. If the Special Committee's work was to endure, it was not enough to determine which bodies and authorities were responsible for peace-keeping and to define their machinery and technical operation; the peace sought for should be a just one and not a brutal remedy which had to be administered by force. His delegation wondered whether the Committee could make progress in its work as long as Member States did not give evidence of a political outlook which justified optimism, as long as the situation was not sufficiently favourable for the Force and its military staff to be anything more than mere abstractions, and as long as solutions to conflicts were sought without regard to their causes. The goodwill shown by Member States and the few advances that had been made were not enough: to maintain peace, the existing machinery must be strengthened and new machinery set up which should be exactly commensurate with the evils it was intended to combat—neither insufficient nor excessive. Peace was an indivisible concept none of whose aspects, either material or intangible, should be neglected, and its maintenance demanded that it should not be considered in its legal aspect alone, without regard to the human element. Certain rules should be accepted by all so that peace did not become a cunning stratagem devised by certain nations to secure advantages at the expense of others. The violations of international regulations drawn up to strengthen it should also be made impossible.

11. His delegation was afraid that the measures adopted to maintain peace would have no effect if the

¹ See document A/8746 (mimeographed), pertaining to agenda item 89.

United Nations could not curb the arms race and prevent certain countries from selling their arms surplus to the smaller or the developing countries, thus destroying any possibility of improvement in the condition of human beings who wanted to live in dignity and law. As long as the armaments market remained open, peace-keeping would be only a dream and the campaigns waged by the United Nations in favour of the disinherited masses would remain an illusion. That was a danger that was even more immediate than that of seeing the universe disappear in a nuclear conflict since the latter prospect was in itself a reason for moderation among the Powers of the nuclear club. But there were still other dangers, such as the new forms of warfare which had recently appeared, genocide, the kidnapping of individuals for political purposes, blind terrorism, aerial hijacking and forms of warfare that could only be described as marking a return to barbarism in the history of mankind. There was also the fact that certain nations claimed the right to buy raw materials from the developing countries cheaply and to sell to them at high prices goods manufactured in their own factories, thus reducing more than half of mankind to destitution. The struggle against poverty, under-education and under-development were just as important as the search for concrete and technical means for maintaining peace, which, in order to deserve that name, had to be based on justice.

12. Mr. NEWLANDS (Canada) introduced draft resolution A/SPC/L.256. It had been prepared in the light of the views and suggestions made during the debate, namely, that guidelines should be worked out without delay for the conduct of peace-keeping operations, that the replies received from Member States to the questionnaire of the Secretary-General were satisfactory and that there was general agreement on

the need for the Special Committee to pursue and intensify its work. The sponsors hoped that the draft would be adopted unanimously.

13. Mr. CLARK (Nigeria) said that his delegation, which was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution, saw in it the means of giving the Special Committee the authority it needed to carry out the task entrusted to it. It hoped that the Committee would take due note of the report of the Special Committee and its Working Group. He recalled that at the 843rd meeting his country's representative had stated that he was convinced that, if the Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should renew the Special Committee's mandate, the Special Committee could undertake fruitful negotiations and exchanges of views geared to the completion of model I and that the inflow of fresh ideas made possible by the increase in the number of officers and the enlargement of the Working Group would promote real progress. Co-operation among all Member States was essential: how indeed could they speak of the failure of a body if they were not prepared to give it all the necessary support?

14. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should defer the vote on the draft resolution until its meeting on the morning of Thursday, 30 November, and decide to take up at the same meeting the following item on its agenda, namely, the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.