



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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President: Mr. Milan KLUSÁK
(Czechoslovakia).

Present:

Representatives of the following States, members of the Council: Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, France, Gabon, Guatemala, India, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Sweden, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela.

Observers for the following Member States: Cuba, Japan.

The observer of the following non-member State: Switzerland.

Representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; World Health Organization.

The representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda
(E/4381)

1. The PRESIDENT drew the attention of the members of the Council to the letter which he had received from the Permanent Representative of Iran to the United Nations (E/4381) requesting the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an item entitled "Action to be taken following the flooding of the river Euphrates".

2. Mr. RAHNEMA (Iran) described the havoc caused by the flooding in Iraq and Syria, where the damage to agriculture and stock-raising would probably amount to hundreds of millions of dollars and would seriously affect economic development.

3. He proposed that the Council, as it had done in similar cases in the past, should take a decision, if possible immediately, on the action to be taken.

4. Mr. ASTAFYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the inclusion of the item in the agenda and the Iranian representative's proposal.

5. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should approve the inclusion in the agenda of the item entitled "Action to be taken following the flooding of the river Euphrates", which would be taken up as soon as the Council had before it the draft resolution that was being prepared.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 21

Review and reappraisal of the Council's role and functions (E/4313)

6. The PRESIDENT drew the Council's attention to the amendments (E/4313) which the Secretary-General suggested should be made to certain of the rules of procedure of the Council, in conformity with resolution 1156 (XLI), part III.

7. On the proposal of Mr. CHADHA (India), the PRESIDENT invited the members of the Council to consider the amendments rule by rule.

RULE 2

8. Mr. VARELA (Panama), supported by Mr. ATTIGA (Libya), said he regretted that the proposed text did not specify in which month of the second quarter the first session should be held. If, as in the case of the current session, it was to be held in May and June, delegations would be left with very little time for a proper study of the documentation prepared for the second session, which could not be convened later than 15 July, owing to the fact that there had to be an interval of six weeks between that session and the session of the General Assembly.

9. He would therefore hope, provided that his suggestion did not give rise to too lengthy a debate, that the words "the first month of" might be inserted before the words "the second quarter".

10. Mr. BLAU (United States of America) said that he shared the concern of the representatives of Panama and Libya. He pointed out, however, that it was only at the preceding session that the Council had adopted the new provisions which were intended to bring about a more balanced allocation of items to its two sessions and which necessitated changes in the calendar of meetings of the subsidiary organs of the Council. He therefore felt that it would be premature to include in the rules of procedure provisions which were too strict and might soon have to be amended again. For instance, the reason why it had not been possible to hold the current session in April was that the budget estimates needed for the survey of the Work Programme of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields had not been ready then (moreover, the Committee for Programme and Coordination would be making some proposals arising out of the difficulties it had experienced in its work). It was also unlikely that the first session in 1968

could be held in April, because of the sessions of the Trade and Development Board and the Industrial Development Board. In the view of his delegation, therefore, the wording of rule 2 of the rules of procedure should be left as flexible as possible.

11. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that, as he understood it, the purpose of the new method of allocating items to the two sessions of the Council was that the first session should be devoted to the consideration of the reports of the functional commissions (particularly in the social field) and the second to the consideration of economic questions and co-ordination. If that was so, he was inclined to support the suggestion made by the representatives of Panama and Libya; for the Council might be plagued with too much flexibility if it eliminated the setting of a precise date for the opening of the first session, which in turn made it possible to set the dates for the sessions of its subsidiary organs and facilitated the drawing up of the United Nations calendar of conferences.

12. As the United States representative had rightly pointed out, co-ordination could not be dealt with in April, but experience showed that even in May the budget estimates were not available to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. It would be better, therefore, if the Council held its first session in April, the dates of the sessions of the functional commissions being set accordingly, and if it included the consideration of the programme in the agenda of its summer session, in the same way as questions of co-ordination.

13. Mr. RANKIN (Canada) said that he agreed with the United States representative, although he appreciated the concern of the other speakers. Further changes would no doubt have to be made in the programme of meetings of the functional commissions, and in particular of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, which had the task of preparing the Council's work and should therefore meet before the session of the Council, and not at the same time. He therefore believed that the Council would do well to adopt the text suggested by the Secretary-General, on the understanding that it might be amended in the light of experience.

14. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) expressed his understanding of the desire of the representatives of the United States and Canada to allow the functional commissions sufficient latitude and to enable the Council to establish its time-table gradually in the light of experience; nevertheless, he agreed with the representative of France that, if the Council set the opening date for its first session as precisely as possible, it would facilitate the drawing up of the time-table of meetings of its subsidiary organs.

15. Mr. VARELA (Panama) emphasized the fact that the consideration of the questions allocated to the second session under the terms of Council resolution 1156 (XLI) would involve a great deal of documentation (particularly in connexion with the reports of the regional commissions and co-ordination), which would have to be studied very carefully if the Council was to take reasoned decisions. The proposed text, with the amendment he had suggested, would still be more flexible than the existing text of rule 2, while ensuring

that there was a sufficient interval between the two sessions of the Council.

16. If the Council adopted the proposed text as it stood, it might at the same time request the Secretariat to ensure that the spring session began in April.

17. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) supported that suggestion, and proposed that the Council should place on record its desire that the first session should be held in April.

18. Mr. RAHNEMA (Iran) supported that proposal; although flexibility was necessary, he did not believe that it should be equated with irresolution, and the setting of the opening date for the first session in April would enable the other organs to draw up the time-table for their meetings at reasonable notice.

19. Mr. ASTAFYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) also agreed with that view and said he believed that the Council would do well to retain the existing wording of rule 2, which left it sufficient latitude, in that it could, if necessary, decide to postpone the opening of the first session.

20. After a discussion in which Mr. CHADHA (India), Mr. BLAU (United States of America), Mr. TAYLOR (United Kingdom), Mr. VARELA (Panama), Mr. ASTAFYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. RAHNEMA (Iran) and the PRESIDENT took part, Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) agreed that it would be pointless to adopt the text suggested by the Secretary-General while at the same time addressing to the Secretariat a recommendation which would amount in practice to a reinstatement of the provisions of the old text. He therefore withdrew his earlier suggestion and proposed that the Council should not amend rule 2 of its rules of procedure.

The existing text of rule 2 was retained.

21. Mr. HOGAN (Secretary of the Council) pointed out that the decision to hold the first session of the Council in April would have certain consequences. In 1968, for instance, it would probably have to meet at the same time as the Industrial Development Board and its session would probably coincide with the session of one of the functional commissions. Thus, the decision that had been taken seemed to diverge somewhat from Council resolution 1156 (XLI).

22. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that he found it hard to understand why the Council was more concerned about the sessions of the Industrial Development Board than about the sessions of the Trade and Development Board. As the activities of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) were to be largely independent of those of the Economic and Social Council, the decisions of the Council must not be influenced by extraneous considerations.

23. Mr. BLAU (United States of America) stressed what had been said before, namely, that the Council could, if necessary, take practical considerations into account.

24. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) said that provision must, in any event, be made for a period of transition. Although the Council would perhaps be unable in 1968 to con-

sider all the reports that would be submitted to it, that situation would only be a temporary one.

25. The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat would take the delegations' comments into account when the time came for applying rule 2 of the rules of procedure.

RULE 4

26. The PRESIDENT pointed out that the amendment consisted in increasing the number of Vice-Presidents from "two" to "three" and in supplementing foot-note 2 with the phrase: "it also includes the International Atomic Energy Agency".

The amendment to rule 4 was adopted.

RULE 19

27. The PRESIDENT pointed out that the proposed amendments were as follows: (a) in the first sentence, replace the expression "twenty-four hours" by the expression "one week"; (b) insert the sentence: "The credentials shall be issued either by the Head of the State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs."; and (c) in the last sentence, replace the word "representatives" by the word "representative".

28. Mr. CHADHA (India) said that he did not understand why those amendments were being made. As pointed out by the Secretary-General in paragraph 1 of his note (E/4313), the Economic and Social Council must consider what amendments might be necessary, having regard, in particular, to the enlargement of its membership and changes in its pattern of meetings. The first of the proposed amendments would not improve matters in any way; if the "twenty-four hour" rule was not being observed, the time-limit of "one week" would just as certainly be disregarded. The more advisable course would therefore be to ensure that the existing rule was observed. The second amendment seemed to be motivated solely by a desire to bring the Council's procedure into line with that of the other organs (General Assembly, Security Council, Trusteeship Council). In his view, that was not a sufficient reason; no amendments should be made unless they were indispensable.

29. He willingly accepted the third amendment, which seemed to be merely intended to rectify a misprint.

30. Mr. ASTAFYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he shared the Indian representative's views on the various proposed amendments. The twenty-four hour time-limit did not present any practical difficulty, and a one-week time-limit added nothing new. As to the authority issuing credentials, it was immaterial to him whether it was the Head of the State, the Head of the Government or the Minister for Foreign Affairs. In some countries, however, it did make a difference, and he could not see why those countries should be made to conform to that rule. The essence of the matter was that a representative should express the opinion of his country, and there was no known example where that had not been the case. Strictly speaking, the provision could be made more precise by stating that the credentials should be issued "officially". That should provide an adequate safeguard. He supported the third amendment.

31. Mr. BLAU (United States of America) said that he, too, shared the Indian representative's views. With regard to the second amendment, he noted that the credentials must be "issued" by one of the authorities specified but not "signed" by that authority. Where, therefore, the credentials were signed by some other authority empowered by the issuing authority, they must also be valid. In any event, there was no reason for changing the existing rule.

32. Mr. RAHNEMA (Iran) noted that all the members of the Council seemed to agree on the need for the third amendment. As to the second amendment, his delegation had no preference one way or the other. The first amendment seemed above all to have a psychological value. It was more difficult to find reasons to justify an infringement of the "one week" rule than was the case with the "twenty-four hour" rule, and that was the advantage of the proposed change.

33. Mr. BERGQUIST (Sweden) said that while supporting the opinion expressed by the preceding speakers with regard to the first two proposed amendments, he was opposed also to the third amendment. It was sometimes useful to have two representatives instead of one, and that had been the case in other organs. Rule 18, moreover, did not specifically prohibit that arrangement.

34. Mr. HUDA (Pakistan) said that he supported the ideas expressed by the representative of India. He would prefer that the "twenty-four hour" rule should be retained. Rule 19 would likewise seem to be more flexible without the insertion of the second amendment. As to the third amendment, the same change could be made in the remainder of the text, and specifically in the first line.

35. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) said that he regarded the Indian representative's suggestions as quite useful. With regard, however, to credentials, there was one point that deserved particular attention. As the chief of mission of a country was very often its representative as well, the representative would, under the second amendment, have to be specially accredited by the competent authority referred to in the second sentence. Because practical difficulties would arise from that arrangement, he would prefer that the present text should be left unchanged. It would be sufficient to ensure that the credentials were issued in good and due form. With regard to the Swedish representative's objection to the third amendment, it should be noted that in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as in the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council and those of other United Nations organs, provision was made for only one representative.

36. Mr. FERNANDINI (Peru) said that in so far as the first two proposed amendments were concerned, he was in favour of retaining the existing text of rule 19. Governments must, after all, be allowed a certain latitude in regard to the authority issuing the credentials of their representatives. The first amendment, moreover, did not seem to be desirable even from a psychological point of view. He approved of the third amendment, namely, the appointment of a single representative.

The existing text of the first sentence of rule 19 was retained.

37. The PRESIDENT, noting that the second amendment had not received any support, declared it to be discarded.

38. The PRESIDENT said he regarded the term "representatives" as having a very general meaning. He was, however, prepared to put the question to the vote, and in that case the amendment would affect the term "representatives" in the first and last sentences of rule 19.

39. Mr. BERGQUIST (Sweden) said that he would not press for a vote on his proposal. He wished, however, to point out that rule 18 had been incorporated in the rules of procedure of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council.

40. Mr. ASTAFYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in the Russian version, the existing wording of rule 19 was satisfactory. It sometimes happened, moreover, that a country changed its representative in the middle of a Council session. It might therefore be a mistake to adopt the rule of a single representative.

41. The PRESIDENT said that if a change was needed, the English text of the rule was the one mainly affected; by putting the term in the singular, rule 19 would be brought into conformity with rule 18.

42. Mr. UY (Philippines) said he was gratified that the representative of Sweden had agreed to the term being left in the singular in the last sentence of rule 19. There could not in any event ever be more than one representative at a time. On the other hand, the Philippine delegation could not agree to the same change being made in the first sentence of rule 19 because there the reference was to all the representatives of all the countries that were members of the Council.

43. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya), supported by Mr. CHADHA (India), said that he fully supported that argument. He drew attention in that connexion to the wording of Article 61 (4) in Chapter X of the Charter of the United Nations.

44. The PRESIDENT suggested that, in accordance with the general feeling in the Council, the amendment should apply only to the last sentence, where the term "representatives" would be put in the singular.

The third amendment to rule 19 was adopted.

RULE 23

45. Mr. VIAUD (France) supported the proposed amendment in relation to the Vice-Presidents of the Council, who were chosen mainly on a geographical basis. He did not, however, think it suitable to provide for such automatic replacement of the President himself. Because of the place held by the Council among the organs of the United Nations, the President was chosen not only by nationality, but also for his personal qualities. Consequently, if it was thought necessary to provide for replacement of the President when the Council was not in session, it would be better for the President himself or for the Secretary-General to consult members of the Council by telegram regarding the next incumbent.

46. Mr. BLAU (United States of America) felt that the amendment, like some others before it, was unnecessary. The officers did not have too much to do between sessions of the Council and in any event, if a vacancy occurred, the remaining officers could readily cope with the work. Moreover, if a person not very familiar with the Council's proceedings were to be chosen Acting President, it might limit the Council's choice at the following session. He therefore felt that if a vacancy occurred between sessions of the Council, nomination should be postponed until the following session.

47. Mr. UY (Philippines) remarked that the proposed amendment seemed to unduly anticipate events. As the United States representative had said, the work to be done in the interval between sessions was rather limited. On the other hand, if a sessional committee had to meet, it could turn itself into a plenary meeting of the Council and one of the Vice-Presidents could simply be elected to fill the vacant post, as the rules now provided. The proposed amendment would only complicate procedure and impair the efficient operation of the Council. He would therefore prefer the present text to be maintained.

48. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya), supported by Mr. HUDA (Pakistan), also stated that he saw no reason to amend rule 23 which, as it stood, provided for all eventualities.

49. Mr. VIAUD (France) said he would have preferred rule 23 to be amended as he had proposed, but he would bow to the general view and would not press for a vote.

The text of rule 23 was maintained.

RULES 26 AND 27

50. Mr. BERGQUIST (Sweden) failed to see any need to amend rule 26, since the first sentence now read: "At each session, the Council may set up such committees as it deems necessary..." That phrasing was general enough to cover both committees of the whole and committees of limited membership.

51. The PRESIDENT took the view that the amendment was justified by the change made in rule 27, which would now state that committees of "limited membership" would be nominated by the President. That provision was the reason for the amendment to rule 26.

52. Mr. UY (Philippines) supported the amendments in question.

53. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) also thought that the amendments to rules 26 and 27 were fully justified. In particular, the expression "committees of the whole" would thus be clearly defined.

54. Mr. ASTAFYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wondered whether the proposed amendments concerned both committees of the whole and committees of limited membership, or only the latter. Under the new text of rule 26, the President was apparently empowered to nominate the members of both types of committees, whereas under rule 27 he would nominate only the members of committees of limited membership; and that had always been the case.

55. Mr. UY (Philippines) said that the phrase "committees of limited membership" in rule 27 referred to committees set up to discharge definite functions when rapid action was necessary. There was no incompatibility between such committees and committees of the whole. The latter, three in number—the social, economic, and co-ordination committees—normally dealt with all the items on the Council's agenda. He therefore failed to see why there should be any need to appoint other committees of the whole.

56. The proposed amendments were therefore logical and had the merit of making the rules clearer.

57. The PRESIDENT agreed with a Philippine representative's interpretation and added that the establishment of committees of the whole and committees of limited membership was dealt with in rule 26 and that rule 27 applied only to committees of limited membership.

58. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) remarked that if the Council had had the new text of rule 26 a few days earlier, its work would have been greatly facilitated.

59. Mr. ASTAFYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) did not share the Philippine representative's view. It was difficult to tell in advance whether a committee's membership would be limited or not. At the same time, his delegation had no objection to the amendments to rules 26 and 27.



60. Mr. UY (Philippines) said that his delegation would vote for the new text of rule 27, on the understanding that it implied no restriction of the Council's authority.

The amendments to rules 26 and 27 were adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 29

Action to be taken following the flooding of the river Euphrates (E/L.1161)

61. Mr. RAHNEMA (Iran) said that the situation required no comment. As far as Iraq was concerned, the President of the Iraqi Red Crescent had stated that more than 5,000 families were in need of assistance, that the situation was deteriorating rapidly and that Red Crescent volunteers were already at work in the area. The situation was equally tragic in Syria; more than 30,000 persons were without shelter, and the effects of the floods were already more severe than those of the 1928 disaster.

62. In view of the bonds uniting it with the inhabitants of the affected areas, Iran had joined the other sponsors of the draft resolution before the Council (E/L.1161) in conveying its sympathy to the peoples and Governments of the two countries. In addition to that expression of moral support, the draft resolution recalled General Assembly resolution 2034 (XX) on assistance in cases of natural disaster, which approved the Secretary-General's proposal that he should be authorized to draw on the Working Capital Fund for emergency aid. The draft resolution also appealed to Member es to provide such assistance as they might be position to make available to the affected areas.

63. His delegation had just been informed that the Secretary-General had sent a message to the Governments of Iraq and Syria and had instructed the Resident

Representatives in those two countries to discuss with the competent authorities the procedures for providing aid.

64. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the draft resolution would receive the unanimous support of the Council and that the latter would be able to adopt it without delay so as to give it greater psychological impact.

65. Mr. BLAU (United States of America) said that one of the advantages offered by international organizations was their ability to respond quickly when one of their members was struck by a natural disaster. His Government, which had already offered \$10,000 in relief aid to the Euphrates flood victims, would be glad to join in the international effort as well.

66. Mr. VIAUD (France) observed that the Economic and Social Council had dealt with similar tragedies on a number of past occasions and had always endeavoured to take prompt action. He recalled, in that connexion, that General Assembly resolution 2034 (XX) had resulted from the disasters suffered by Chile and Morocco. In any event, his delegation, which had sympathy for the countries and peoples affected by the latest tragedy, would support draft resolution E/L.1161. It felt, however, that if the resolution was to have the moral and psychological effect desired by the Iranian representative, it would be helpful for all members of the Council to be included in the list of sponsors. His delegation was prepared to add its name to the list.

67. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) said that his delegation appreciated the French representative's suggestion. Since the value of a resolution of the kind now under discussion was primarily psychological, the people of the affected areas would derive even greater moral support from it if it was sponsored by all the members of the Council.

68. Mr. CHADHA (India), Mr. UY (Philippines), Mr. ASTAFYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. BERGQUIST (Sweden), Mr. BILGE (Turkey) and Mr. CHAMFOR (Cameroon) expressed the sympathy of their delegations to the peoples and Governments of Iraq and Syria and said that they would vote for the draft resolution.

69. Mr. CONSTANTIN (Romania), Mr. VARELA (Panama), Mr. RANKIN (Canada), Mr. TEVOEDJRE (Dahomey), Mr. MEYER PICON (Mexico), Mr. DELPREE (Guatemala), Mr. WOULBROUN (Belgium), Mr. NAVA CARRILLO (Venezuela), Mr. JURZA (Czechoslovakia) and Mr. TAYLOR (United Kingdom) expressed the sympathy of their delegations to the peoples and Governments of Iraq and Syria; they would vote for draft resolution E/L.1161 and wished to join the list of sponsors.

70. Mr. RAHNEMA (Iran) said he regretted that the urgency of the situation had prevented him from consulting all the delegations before submitting draft resolution E/L.1161. The sponsors of the resolution were therefore all the more appreciative of the expressions of sympathy by members of the Council.

71. Mr. HILL (Under-Secretary for Inter-Agency Affairs) said that, in his message of sympathy to the Governments of Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic,

the Secretary-General had offered on behalf of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, to provide all possible assistance within the available means. In accordance with the procedure prescribed by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, he had communicated with the Resident Representatives in the two countries affected, with a view to determining what kind of assistance would be most useful; a reply had already been received from one of the countries in question. The Secretary-General had also communicated with the specialized agencies, the World Food Programme and the League of Red Cross Societies.

72. In view of the inadequacy of the available resources, the Secretary-General could provide only token assistance under Assembly resolution 2034 (XX), and voluntary contributions by States would be needed to supplement it. Over a longer period of time, however, substantial aid could be provided through the efforts of the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization the Red Cross and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

73. In conclusion, he pointed out that there was a manual on international action in case of disaster. Every Resident Representative had a copy of the manual, and copies were available to any delegations wishing to have them.

74. Mr. ASTAFYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that the French representative's suggestion created certain difficulties in view of the fact that some delegations were not present. He therefore thought it best to endorse the proposal and then consult the absent delegations.

75. The President, noting that the Council was in general agreement, suggested that all members now

present should be listed as sponsors of the draft resolution before the Council (E/L.1161) on the understanding that the absent delegations would be consulted as soon as possible with a view to determining whether they also wished to become sponsors.

It was so decided.

The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

76. The PRESIDENT thanked the members of the Council for their prompt response and expressed the hope that, besides giving moral support to the people of the affected areas, the resolution just adopted would be followed by practical measures. Steps would be taken to transmit the text of the resolution as quickly as possible to the Governments of Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Organization of work

77. Mr. HOGAN (Secretary of the Council) said that the Council would not be able to complete its consideration of the social questions by the end of the week and that it would be extremely difficult to postpone their consideration until the next session. The Secretariat therefore suggested that the Social Committee should hold regular meetings throughout the week and, if necessary, until the beginning of the following week, it being understood that the Council would complete its discussion of all the other agenda items by the end of the week and would then hold an additional meeting for the purpose of considering the Social Committee's reports.

78. The PRESIDENT asked delegations to consult on the matter so that the Council could take a decision at the next meeting.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.

