

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SIXTH SESSION

Official Records



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Chairman : Mrs. Ana FIGUEROA (Chile).

Election of the Vice-Chairman

1. Mr. BEAUFORT (Netherlands) nominated Mr. Dehousse (Belgium) as Vice-Chairman.

2. Mr. CASSIN (France), Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) and Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) seconded the nomination.

Mr. Dehousse (Belgium) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

3. Mr. DEHOUSSE (Belgium) thanked the Committee for the honour conferred on him.

Election of the Rapporteur

4. Mr. HUSAIN (Pakistan) nominated Mr. Azkoul (Lebanon) as Rapporteur.

5. Mrs. ROOSEVELT (United States of America), Miss HORSBRUGH (United Kingdom), AZMI Bey (Egypt) and Mr. GARCIA BAUER (Guatemala) seconded the nomination.

Mr. Azkoul (Lebanon) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

6. Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) thanked the Committee for the honour it had conferred on him.

Introduction of the new Assistant Secretary-General to the Committee

7. The CHAIRMAN introduced Mr. Georges-Picot, the new Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Social Affairs.

8. Mr. GEORGES-PICOT (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Social Affairs) thanked the Chairman for her welcome, and said he looked forward to working with the Committee.

Order of discussion of agenda items (A/C.3/561)

9. The CHAIRMAN suggested that chapter V, section I, of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/1884) might usefully be taken in conjunction with item 2¹ of the Committee's agenda (A/C.3/561), since both covered the draft international covenant on human rights and measures of implementation. Similarly, chapter VI of the report, dealing with refugees and stateless persons, might be considered jointly with items 3, 4 and 5 of the Committee's agenda.²

10. Some members of the Committee had suggested that the question of refugees should be taken first, because the Fifth Committee had also to consider some aspects of that question and might profit by acquaintance with the Third Committee's findings, and also because the question should if possible be discussed before the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees returned to Geneva in December.

11. Mrs. ROOSEVELT (United States of America) thought the Committee should discuss the draft covenant on human rights before the question of refugees and stateless persons. Refugees, after all, constituted only a small section of humanity, whereas the human rights covenant would affect men and women all over the world.

12. Mr. HARRY (Australia) proposed that the Committee should start by discussing chapter IV of the report, dealing with social questions, and should make that discussion the occasion for a general debate on the Economic and Social Council's work in that field; it should then proceed to chapter V, section I, relating to the draft covenant on human rights, and defer discussion of chapter V, section II, until later.

¹ Item 29 of the agenda of the General Assembly.

² Items 30, 31 and 58, respectively, of the agenda of the General Assembly.

13. If, however, it became clear that discussion of the draft covenant would last too long, the Committee might adjourn that particular debate, in order to deal with the question of refugees and stateless persons while the High Commissioner for Refugees was still in Paris.

14. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) proposed that the Committee should first hold a general debate on chapter IV of the report of the Economic and Social Council, during which members could express their views about the Council's work on social questions. The Committee could then proceed to consider the draft covenant, thus combining the examination of chapter V, section I, with that of item 2 of the Committee's agenda. Experience had shown that to fix a specific order for the agenda at the beginning of the work of Main Committees was rarely practical; moreover, to proceed from the general to the particular was the more logical course.

15. After the debate on item 2 had been concluded, the Chairman, in consultation with the Secretariat, should make proposals to the Committee regarding a suitable date for the discussion of items 3, 4 and 5, taking into consideration the state of the discussion in the Fifth Committee on the budget of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

16. Mrs. ROOSEVELT (United States of America) and Mr. HARRY (Australia) agreed to the Chilean representative's proposal.

17. Mr. DEDIJER (Yugoslavia) and Mr. PAZHWAQ (Afghanistan) observed that they had only recently received the Council's report and would have liked more time to study it before the general debate.

18. The CHAIRMAN, supported by Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile), accordingly proposed that the Committee should defer its next meeting until 19 November.

It was so agreed.

19. Mr. ROY (Haiti) proposed that, since all members were obviously agreed that the draft international covenant was the most important item on the Committee's agenda and that chapter IV of the report should be taken first, other matters in that report should be disposed of as soon as possible, the two major items being left for very thorough discussion.

20. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) suggested that the simplest way to meet the Haitian representative's suggestion would be to vote on the Chilean proposal in two parts.

21. The CHAIRMAN called for the vote on the Chilean representative's proposal that the Committee should start its work with chapter IV of the report.

That proposal was adopted by 49 votes to 2, with 5 abstentions.

22. Mr. ROY (Haiti) asked for a vote to determine whether an immediate vote should be taken on the second part of the Chilean representative's proposal. He still believed that the general debate on chapter IV would show the order in which the other items should be considered.

It was decided by 31 votes to 4, with 17 abstentions, to take a vote on the second part of the Chilean representative's proposal.

23. The CHAIRMAN called for the vote on the Chilean representative's proposal that chapter V, section I, of the report of the Economic and Social Council and item 2 of the agenda should be considered as the second item on the Committee's agenda, the order of the remaining items being provisionally left open.

The proposal was adopted by 42 votes to 1, with 12 abstentions.

24. Mr. ROY (Haiti) explained that he had cast the sole vote against the proposal because he firmly believed that the draft international covenant would have been far more effectively discussed after the other matters had been disposed of; his vote should not be interpreted as implying that he was less concerned than the other members with the problems of human rights, but precisely the contrary.

25. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the general debate should be held on chapter IV as a whole, any draft resolutions that might be submitted with respect to its four sections being debated separately.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.