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Chairman: Mr. Victor A. BELAUNDE (Peru).

AGENDA ITEM 21

The Korean question (A/3172, A/3203, A/C.1/L.158, A/C.1/L.159) (*continued*):

- (a) Report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea;**
- (b) Problem of ex-prisoners of the Korean war: report of the Government of India**

1. Mr. URQUIA (El Salvador) stated that it would be only just and courteous of the General Assembly to indicate its appreciation and thanks to the Governments of India, Argentina and Brazil for the help which they had given toward the solution of the problem of the ex-prisoners of the Korean war. The draft resolution sponsored by Ecuador, Venezuela and El Salvador (A/C.1/L.159) was self-explanatory. The United States draft resolution (A/C.1/L.158) dealt with the political problem of Korea, while the joint draft resolution merely referred to the humanitarian problem of the ex-prisoners of the Korean war.

2. Mr. JAMALI (Iraq) stated that his delegation had consistently hailed the United Nations intervention in Korea as a step consonant with the principles of the Charter and as a great contribution toward peace and security. He regretted that the United Nations had not been able to apply the same principle of taking quick action everywhere in the world. Had the invasion of Egypt by Israel been met immediately with armed intervention, as had been the case in Korea, the situation in the Middle East would have been different.

3. The perpetuation of the partition of Korea was directly due to Communist designs for penetration and expansion in the world. It was due to Communist denial of free democratic practice that Korea had been divided into North and South. Korea, Germany and Viet-Nam provided typical patterns of Communist domination; they had been sadly partitioned in spite of the wishes and the best judgement of the inhabitants. Communism wished to have a united Korea, but united under communism, and turned into a satellite of Communist China. He was not surprised to read in the report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK) (A/3172) that there had been no basic change in the position since UNCURK's previous report (A/2947), in which

it had stated that it was still unable to contribute to the realization of its fundamental objective, the unification of Korea.

4. His delegation deemed it necessary that the United Nations should maintain the following principles: first, that it should be impressed on the Communists that the United Nations was not ready to tolerate aggression anywhere in the world; secondly that the United Nations was ready to protect the Republic of Korea from another invasion from the North; thirdly, that North Korea and Communist China should be persuaded that they could not impose their views on the United Nations by force. He believed that the Soviet Union could very well advise Communist China and North Korea to change their minds and yield to United Nations resolutions. He further believed that UNCURK should continue its work and that no relaxation of efforts towards peace should be permitted. It was his firm conviction that, had there been no Communist domination of North Korea, the Republic of Korea would have truly represented the national aspirations of all the people of Korea. A complete withdrawal of foreign volunteer forces from North Korea should be followed by free elections throughout Korea, under the auspices of the United Nations. For those reasons, he wholeheartedly supported the United States draft resolution and welcomed the draft resolution submitted by Ecuador, El Salvador and Venezuela.

5. Mr. SERRANO (Philippines) expressed appreciation at the happy outcome of the problem of the eighty-eight ex-prisoners of the Korean war under the temporary custody of the Government of India. He wished that it had been possible to assure a similar happy prospect in the solution of the infinitely difficult Korean question. However, there was little, if any, substantial progress towards achieving the declared aim of unifying Korea on the basis of free elections under United Nations supervision.

6. The current report of UNCURK was pathetically revealing when it stated that the North Koreans had not shown any sign of willingness to accept the principles laid down by the United Nations. The provisional suspension in May 1956 by the United Nations Command of the inspection teams of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC) had undoubtedly been done with a view to removing military restraint on one side where military restraint could not be successfully imposed on the other.

7. Time had not blunted Communist intransigence and now confronted the Organization with the possibility of a permanently divided Korean people. The Korean problem had lost none of its gravity and remained paramount among the issues of war and peace. The United Nations bore a heavy load of responsibility in dealing with the Korean question. That responsibility was not lightened by the failure of the Geneva Korean Political Conference of 1954

to achieve any practical results, though the conference did reassert the desire of the United Nations to create a unified, independent and democratic Korea. But in Geneva, the Communist bloc had openly repudiated the fundamental principles of the primacy of United Nations interest in Korea and its right to supervise free elections there, thus destroying the basis on which an agreement on the unification of Korea could be achieved.

8. Neither North Korea nor the Soviet Union had shown any indication of budging from their current position. Four years after the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement (S/3079, appendix A), the ingredients of war remained vividly present in the Korean peninsula. There had been a continuous military build-up in North Korea in clear violation of the Armistice Agreement. He urged consideration of the need for a reconstituted NNSC, so that it might effectively carry out its functions under the Armistice Agreement.

9. His delegation was convinced that all channels must be utilized in order to seek a gradual or final solution to the intractable problem of Korea. He found a note of hope in the reported progress of the Republic of Korea as a national State and believed that the success of the Republic of Korea constituted a powerful argument for the democratization of the entire peninsula. The United Nations could assist by admitting the Republic of Korea to membership in the United Nations. The Republic of Korea had not only successfully conducted free elections and amply demonstrated its capacity for representative government, but it was also approaching economic stability and consolidating its position as a national State. He hoped that the admission of Korea would pave the way to the ultimate solution of Korean unification, either by free elections throughout the country or by the process of assimilating the North Koreans, who shared the South Koreans' yearning for freedom.

10. Finally, he supported the United States draft resolution.

11. Mr. Krishna MENON (India) dealt first with part (b) of the agenda item. He stated that the expression "ex-prisoners" was purely descriptive and that his Government had never agreed that the persons involved were ex-prisoners: they were people brought over from Korea under conditions in which India had no other option. Summarizing his Government's report (A/3203), he noted that, out of a total of 88 prisoners, 2 had been repatriated to China and 6 to North Korea; 55 had been sent to Brazil and 9 to Argentina in accordance with their option; 16 former prisoners remained in India. Of these, 9 had opted for Mexico; 2 had opted for Argentina, but had been found medically unfit; and 5 had opted for India. Five of those who had opted for Mexico now wished to go to Argentina. He requested the Secretary-General to pursue the discussions on the subject in order that there might be no further delay. He had been in continuous touch with the Government of Mexico and expressed the hope that that Government would soon take a favourable decision.

12. Referring to the report of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (A/2641), he noted that it had not been discussed by the General Assembly at any time although his Government had on many occasions suggested such a discussion. His Government had not pressed for a discussion for fear that it might lead to acrimonious controversy which would not assist in resolving the Korean question. Hence, he

stated on behalf of his Government that that report was still before the United Nations and should be taken up at an appropriate time.

13. Turning to part (a) of the Korean item, he stated that the United States draft resolution was not likely to achieve the desired objective. His delegation, having failed to persuade the United delegation to change the draft resolution so as to enable India to support it, had decided not to move any amendments. His delegation's reason was its anxiety that there should be as little controversy as possible. He did not think such a resolution would make any difference to the problem, which had to be settled by a political discussion on a realistic basis. Commenting on the draft resolution, he pointed out that in operative paragraph 2 the principle of free and general elections in Korea, which his Government heartily supported, was limited by the particular method embodied in the final declaration of the Geneva Conference, namely, that the elections should be under United Nations supervision. The door would have been left more open for achieving the objective of unification had the paragraph concluded with the word "objectives". Operative paragraph 3 went further than previous resolutions in nominating UNCURK as the authority supervising elections throughout Korea, which, however, had not been provided for. In his view such a decision was not calculated either to promote the purposes of the United Nations or to achieve Korean unification. To create an election commission as a by-product of a resolution would be a very great mistake since it could not work and the question of supervision would have to be decided after the political discussion. Such a step would move the problem back to the position in 1950, when the Commission had been appointed to supervise elections all over Korea. He recalled that the North Koreans had at that time refused to let the Commission in. Paragraph 3 also asked all states and authorities to assist the Commission to enter North Korea to force their way in. The matter could be effectively achieved only by a meeting of minds between the two sides. He drew a distinction between the principles of the Charter, for which his Government had the highest respect, and any particular resolution, remarking that any decision made must work in the context of the time.

14. Korea had been divided in 1945 as a result of the power politics of the great Powers. Its division into North and South Korea had not been brought about either by the Koreans or by the United Nations, nor had it been brought about by the war. The future of Korea lay in the coming together of North and South with the consent of their peoples. The objective of all decisions of the United Nations had been to bring about by peaceful means the establishment of a unified, independent, democratic Korea. There had been no reference to unification by force by any party except the Republic of Korea. He then cited statements made in 1955 by Mr. Syngman Rhee, President of the Republic of Korea, during a visit to the United States in which he had called upon the American people to bring about the unification of Korea by force.

15. In pursuing its fundamental objective of unifying Korea, the United Nations had always proceeded from the assumption that two Koreas existed—not that the two Koreas would exist forever, but that there were in fact two Koreas, which must be brought together in the future. Yet at the previous meeting the representative of the Republic of Korea had reiterated that

the Armistice Agreement should be abrogated. Only the very firm stand taken by the United States had prevented the termination of the armistice ever since its conclusion. The Republic of Korea had not signed the Armistice Agreement, although it had been one of the belligerents, and was, strictly speaking, still at war with North Korea, since there was no peace between them.

16. The objective of the United Nations in Korea had been to halt aggression at the thirty-eighth parallel and to establish an armistice as a first step towards unification. If the United Nations was to accomplish its task of unification, direct negotiations between the two sides were necessary, or the United Nations must lay down plans whereby such negotiations would become possible. He drew the attention of the United States, in particular, to the fact that there was no great difficulty in doing that. He quoted statements made at the Geneva Korean Political Conference by the representatives of Belgium, France and Canada, which referred, *inter alia*, to the possibility of negotiations and to free elections in order to unify Korea, to be held under a form of international supervision acceptable to the United Nations. His Government considered free elections—including the secret ballot, freedom of propaganda, universal suffrage, and sufficient time for campaigning—essential to the unification of Korea. International supervision was important, but that did not necessarily mean United Nations supervision, though even United Nations supervision was capable of various forms which could be made acceptable to the other side. Supervision by a body of nations which was acceptable to both sides and in which the veto question would not arise was always possible. Peaceful elections required co-operation by the machinery of administration on both sides.

17. An election meant election to some body. The South Korean Government proposed election to its Parliament, but that was not the United Nations position. Some form of constituent assembly was necessary which could create a constitution, and that required the consent of the other side. Decision on the question of the number of representatives from each side should be based roughly on population. North Korea had a small population, South Korea had a large one. It was up to the two parties to come to some agreement. He felt that the pressure of world public opinion would lead North Korea to accept the idea. Then the constituent assembly would decide either to accept one of the two constitutions or to find some other method, with the two administrations carrying on in the interim.

18. With regard to the admission of Korea to the United Nations, his Government had subscribed to the admission of new Members at the tenth session on the basis that it did not include any country in which there was a problem of division. That applied to Germany, Viet-Nam and Korea.

19. Regarding freedom in North Korea, he pointed out that it was difficult for the United Nations to obtain information about what was going on there. It was equally necessary to make inquiries concerning the other side. He cited an article by Dorothy W. Allan of the Korean Affairs Institute, Washington, printed in the *Washington Post* of 21 May 1956 raising questions about certain actions of the South Korean authorities.

20. He expressed the hope that the United States would encourage the idea of informal contacts between the two sides with a view to developing and uniting

their common country. His delegation had refrained from submitting amendments to the United States draft resolution in order to avoid wrangling. The real problem was not a matter of formal amendments or finding words; it was a question of the willingness of both North and South Korea to unify, recognizing the differences that at present existed between them and had to be reconciled, and abandoning ideas of destroying the Armistice Agreement and of relying on reinforcements in the South and on alleged stockpiling of arms in the North. The task of seeking unification must go on because to leave Korea divided was to add one more point of possible explosion in the world.

21. Sir Percy SPENDER (Australia) viewed the question of Korea as a matter belonging peculiarly to the United Nations and urged that the passage of time should not be allowed to reduce its determination to achieve the noble objectives for which the United Nations had entered the war in Korea. Cautioning against the requests of Communist States for new proposals by the United Nations, when the North Korean authorities had not only ignored the views of the Assembly, but had frequently violated the terms of the Armistice Agreement they had solemnly undertaken to perform, he declared that the sole purpose of those requests was to test the patience of the United Nations and to move it ever closer to their objective, a Communist State in the whole of Korea.

22. With respect to the question of free elections in Korea, the United Nations had consistently maintained that elections should be held under United Nations supervision for the purpose of electing representatives to a national assembly, in which representation should be in direct proportion to the indigenous population of all parts of Korea. The only Communist proposals called for equal representation by each side on the so-called "all Korean Commission" which would prepare and conduct the elections, with international supervision limited to a body composed of an equal number of Communist and non-Communist nations and operating only by unanimous agreement. The United Nations must have no part in such a cynical procedure, since it could only lead to a Czechoslovak or Hungarian "solution". He emphasized that the Australian delegation was not adopting an intractable position; it would give the closest consideration to some alternative approach which would secure under some acceptable form of United Nations supervision an impartial expression of the wishes of the people of both North and South Korea. He asked whether there was no form of United Nations supervision acceptable to the Communist representatives.

23. Reviewing the Communist actions with regard to the Korean Armistice Agreement, which, he thought, had been cynically and deliberately disregarded, he declared that there could be no sense in talking of a further Korean political conference until the North Korean authorities showed some respect for United Nations principles and observed their commitments under the Armistice Agreement. In that connexion, he singled out violations of the military clauses of the Armistice Agreement and warned that the Communists should not expect that they could indefinitely continue their violations with impunity or that no redress would be sought by the United Nations.

24. There could be no question of making concessions even to gain as important an objective as a settlement in Korea unless the other party showed itself willing

to make reasonable concessions and to abide by its undertakings. Reaffirming his Government's strict adherence to the Declaration by the Sixteen of 15 June 1954 (A/2786, annex) and to the terms of the Armistice Agreement, he declared his delegation's approval of the United States draft resolution and his Government's intention to continue to contribute to the work of UNCURK.

25. Mr. PERERA (Ceylon) stated that his delegation felt obliged to support in principle the United States draft resolution because it stood for the unification of Korea, though he associated himself with remarks of the representative of India in feeling that it did not go far enough. Referring to his delegation's earlier support of the proposal to invite representatives of both South and North Korea to participate in the Committee's debate (814th meeting), he declared that to consider the Korean question on an *ex parte* basis was both futile and fraught with peril for the Far East.

26. His Government believed that the determination of the Korean people and the absence of a denunciation of the Armistice Agreement on the part of North Korea gave hope for the future of Korean independence. In that connexion, he cited paragraphs 9 and 10 of UNCURK's report, which indicated the lines of a possible solution, and expressed the view that paragraph 3 of the United States draft resolution did not take into account the developments reported by UNCURK. He felt that paragraph 3 should be expanded to include concrete programmes which would grant North Korea the same status as South Korea. Specifically, his delegation favoured the holding of a conference, similar to the Conference of the Heads of Government of the four great Powers held in Geneva in 1954, as a means of solving the Korean question. He doubted whether there was any conflict between the desire of the North Korean people for a conference outside the framework of the United Nations and the provisions of paragraph 60 of the Armistice Agreement. He added that it would be absurd to ignore the existence of the People's Republic of China in seeking a solution of the problem of Korea.

27. Mr. CARBAJAL VICTORICA (Uruguay) said that his delegation would support the United States draft resolution. It was not a panacea but it was the only one which could be drawn up in the present circumstances, given the fact that the Korean question must not be solved by opening further horizons to totalitarianism. The draft reaffirmed the principles of the Organization which must not be surrendered however difficult the path chosen. Only if the atmosphere were to become more propitious would the time be ripe for an attempt to find solutions of more general scope. He felt that it was quite correct to entrust to UNCURK the task of supervising free elections. He expressed agreement with much that the representative of Australia had said.

28. Mr. BAYULKEN (Turkey) noted with regret that the primary objective of the United Nations in Korea—namely, the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic government for all Korea—remained unfulfilled because of the unchanged attitude of the North Korean authorities, who had so far shown no signs of accepting the principles on which the United Nations believed progress could be based. He reaffirmed his Government's adherence to the principles enunciated in the Declaration by the Sixteen at Geneva in 1954, which still provided the basis for an equitable solution of the Korean problem. For the

United Nations to persevere in behalf of its objectives in Korea was of vital concern to the Organization. If the heroic sacrifices of the Korean people and the Member States which had sent their youth to Korea in defence of freedom and security were not to be in vain, the United Nations should not shirk its responsibility to achieve the peaceful unification of Korea.

29. The violations by the North Korean authorities of important provisions of the Armistice Agreement were a matter of concern and should retain the attention of the General Assembly. The Turkish Government also wished to recall the views it had expressed at the tenth session (790th meeting) regarding the illegal detention of United Nations military and civilian personnel by the Communist Chinese and North Korean authorities. He emphasized his delegation's particular concern over the fate of 166 Turkish soldiers missing in action in Korea and so far unaccounted for by the Communist authorities.

30. With regard to the report of the Government of India on the problem of ex-prisoners of the Korean war, his delegation was gratified that nearly all of them were being settled with the co-operation of the Governments of Argentina, Brazil, India and Mexico.

31. The Turkish delegation would vote in favour of the United States draft resolution (A/C.1/L.158) and the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.159) concerning the resettlement of the ex-prisoners of war.

32. Mr. MEZINCESCU (Romania) regretted that the Committee was once again pursuing an unrealistic course in discussing the Korean question in the absence of a representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, without whose co-operation and agreement no solution could be implemented by peaceful means. He warned that by allowing a representative of the Government of South Korea to state before the Committee his Government's devotion to the purposes and principles of the United Nations while another policy was practised and proclaimed in his country with a view to the invasion of North Korea, the First Committee was giving dangerous encouragement to the aggressive circles in South Korea.

33. Observing that the South Korean Government had armed forces numbering 650,000 men and that 54 per cent of its budget and millions of dollars of United States assistance were being spent for military purposes, he contrasted with that the policy of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which had reduced its armed forces by 80,000 men in May 1956 and had solemnly declared that it would not use its army against South Korea as long as South Korea did not launch a war against it.

34. Repeated violations of the Armistice Agreement by the United States and South Korea and the suspension of the NNSC inspection teams constituted dangerous steps toward breaking the Agreement.

35. Objecting to the United States draft resolution as a reaffirmation of the old unrealistic policy, he declared that the unification of Korea could be achieved only by a *rapprochement* between the two parts of the country, which now constituted separate States. It was absolutely necessary that there should be a withdrawal of all foreign military forces from Korea as soon as possible, including the United States military forces and the Chinese volunteer detachments.

36. In view of the importance of a solution of the Korean problem, the Romanian delegation would vote against the United States draft resolution and would

support any initiative based on a realistic estimate of the situation.

37. Mr. SCHIFF (Netherlands) stated that the decision of the Committee to begin its work by considering the Korean item reflected quite properly both the importance of the question and the sustained interest of the United Nations in the fate of Korea. He recalled that the States participating in the 1954 Korean Political Conference on behalf of the United Nations had formulated two fundamental principles: first, that the United Nations had complete authority to take part in attempts to settle the Korean question, and, secondly, the establishment of a free and united Korean state must be based on free elections held under the supervision of the United Nations. The failure to reach those objectives could not be blamed on a too-rigid attitude on the part of the United Nations; the blame lay squarely with the other side, which only had in mind the extension of the North Korean régime over South Korea.

38. The situation left the United Nations no choice but to reaffirm its objectives, to maintain the armistice, to continue rendering assistance to the Republic of Korea, which was making such gratifying progress, and in general, to carry out its responsibilities towards the people of Korea.

39. Accordingly, the Netherlands delegation would support the United States draft resolution. It would also support the draft resolution submitted by Ecuador, El Salvador and Venezuela on the question of the ex-prisoners of war.

40. Mr. PEREZ PEREZ (Venezuela) considered that, notwithstanding the failure of the North Korean authorities to co-operate with UNCURK, it was perfectly logical that a new appeal by the General Assembly should be made for a removal of the obstacles placed in the path of the United Nations.

41. Even if proposals to settle the Korean question at a conference outside the United Nations were accepted, any discussion of the Korean problem should be based upon the principles set forth, at the 1954 Geneva Conference and reiterated by the General Assembly.

42. The Venezuelan delegation would, therefore, support the United States draft resolution. It also agreed entirely with the sentiments expressed by the representative of El Salvador in submitting the draft resolution on the question of the ex-prisoners of war (A/C.1/L.159), which the Venezuelan delegation had been pleased to co-sponsor. In addition, it hoped for the early admission of the Republic of Korea to membership in the United Nations.

43. Mr. DE GUIRINGAUD (France) reiterated his Government's devotion to the principle, enunciated at Geneva in 1954, of free elections on both sides of the 38th parallel under the safeguard of international supervision. The United States draft resolution, which the French delegation supported, was a modest but real step toward the desired goal. His delegation would also support the Three-Power draft resolution, dealing with the humanitarian question of ex-prisoners of war.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.