



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 24th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (Cameroon)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 6.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 121: PATTERN OF CONFERENCES: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES
(continued) (A/40/32; A/C.5/40/21 and 34)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Conferences in paragraph 1 of its report (A/40/32). The United States delegation had requested a separate recorded vote on paragraph 4 (f), which would be taken before voting on the resolution as a whole.
2. Mrs. KNEZEVIC (Yugoslavia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, expressed regret that the Committee had not been able to achieve consensus on the draft resolution and that a vote now had to be taken on one of its paragraphs. The point to be decided could have been raised at any time in the Committee on Conferences, where consensus had been achieved on the understanding that the draft resolution represented a package and would be treated as such. A number of delegations had shown flexibility on other parts of the draft resolution in the Committee on Conferences on that understanding. The Group of 77 could not accept the procedure now proposed and favoured retaining paragraph 4 (f) of the draft resolution as it stood.
3. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee was taking a decision only on the substance of the draft resolution, whose approval would also mean approval of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 1986-1987 contained in annex II to document A/40/32. The programme budget implications of holding meetings of ICSC and ECLAC at Nairobi and Mexico City respectively, as proposed in the calendar, were to be found in documents A/C.5/40/21 and 34. The Committee would take decisions on those matters only after they had been considered by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.
4. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) said that bodies such as ECLAC should meet away from their headquarters only when any additional costs involved were paid from sources other than the United Nations regular budget. In their general statements on the proposed programme budget for 1986-1987 most delegations had stressed the need for the efficient use of resources. Her own delegation did not consider meetings of regional commissions away from their headquarters to be an efficient use of resources. Regional commissions should seek to reduce their administrative costs so that a larger proportion of their budgets could be devoted to development programmes.
5. Her delegation had suggested amendments to the text of paragraph 4 (f) of the draft resolution in informal consultations and was disappointed that others had been unwilling to discuss them. She urged those who agreed with her delegation that the extra funds needed to enable regional commissions to meet away from their headquarters could be better spent on programme activities to join with her in voting for the deletion of paragraph 4 (f).

6. Mr. VISLYKH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation could support the draft resolution as an acceptable consensus. In particular, it entirely agreed with paragraph 4 (g), which provided that ICSC should hold its regular annual session in New York but that it might accept invitations to hold other sessions at the headquarters of participating organizations elsewhere. However, item 35 in the draft calendar for 1986 provided for ICSC to meet in Nairobi. That was at variance with paragraph 4 (g) of the draft resolution and he therefore proposed that the venue of the ICSC session be amended to read "to be determined". It could then be held at the headquarters of any specialized agency which invited the Commission. Otherwise, it should be held in New York.
7. Mrs. DEREGIBUS (Argentina) said that her delegation would vote to retain paragraph 4 (f) of the draft resolution because the issue was not a purely budgetary one. The usefulness of holding meetings of regional commissions away from their headquarters in some circumstances had long been accepted. Such meetings helped to spread awareness of United Nations activities and purposes in the economic and social fields. They also enabled regional commissions to observe at first hand conditions in various developing countries. Those reasons for holding meetings away from headquarters were still valid and justified the United Nations defraying, where necessary, the modest additional costs entailed. The draft resolution and calendar of conferences and meetings should therefore be approved as they stood. If the Committee on Conferences could achieve consensus, the Fifth Committee should try to do the same.
8. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) endorsed the view that it would not be consistent with paragraph 4 (g) of the draft resolution for ICSC to meet at Nairobi. Following the proposal by the representative of the USSR in that case, she proposed that item 67 of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings should also be amended so as to make the venue for the twenty-first session of ECLAC its headquarters in Santiago, not Mexico City.
9. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) inquired if the second United States proposal superseded the first and, if not, in what order the Committee would deal with the various points before it.
10. The CHAIRMAN said that the three proposals would be considered in the order in which they had been made and the Committee would then take a decision on the resolution as a whole.
11. Mr. DITZ (Austria) said that it had been suggested during informal consultations that conference facilities in Santiago might not be adequate for the ECLAC session. He wished to know if it was in fact possible to hold the session there.
12. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the difficulties raised in informal consultations had not appeared to relate to the principle of United Nations bodies holding sessions away from their headquarters, but to charging to the regular budget any additional costs arising from holding the next regular session of ECLAC in Mexico City. With regard to the United States proposal to change the venue of the next regular session of ECLAC from Mexico City to Santiago, therefore, he

(Mr. Pirson, Belgium)

wondered if it might not be better to ask the Committee to vote on whether any extra costs involved in holding the session at Mexico City instead of at ECLAC headquarters should or should not be included under the regular budget.

13. Mr. ANNAN (Director, Budget Division), in reply to the representative of Austria, said that the view of ECLAC was that its conference facilities were inadequate to service a regular session of the Commission. The Commission's tradition had been to rotate the venue of its regular sessions among its members; that arrangement had proved satisfactory as there had accordingly been no need for the Organization to incur the cost of building additional conference facilities. If the regular session of ECLAC was to be held in Santiago, additional facilities would have to be rented at an approximate cost of \$55,000.

14. Mr. ORTEGA (Mexico) said that, when his Government had issued an invitation to ECLAC to hold its twenty-first session at Mexico City early in 1986, it had based its decision on paragraph 4 (f) of General Assembly resolution 31/140 and not on paragraph 5 of that resolution. Paragraph 4 (f) had stipulated that regular sessions of the regional economic commissions might be held away from their headquarters provided that the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly approved. The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 1985/188, had decided that the venue of ECLAC's twenty-first session should be Mexico City and had based its decision on paragraph 4 (f) of resolution 31/140.

15. The CHAIRMAN invited the members of the Committee to take a decision on the United States proposal to delete paragraph 4 (f) of the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Conferences in paragraph 1 of its report (A/40/32).

16. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that the draft resolution had been approved by the Committee on Conferences following long negotiations which had produced a well-balanced draft resolution on the understanding that it would be adopted as a package. Proposals had now been made which would reopen the discussion. He therefore suggested that the draft resolution should be voted on as a whole and that, in accordance with rule 129 of the rules of procedure, the United States motion should not be considered.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that the applicable rule was rule 130. The proposal of the United States was not a motion for division but for an amendment. That amendment must therefore be put to the vote first.

18. Mr. LADJOUI (Algeria) urged the retention of paragraph 4 (f). A discussion which would challenge the consensus reached in the Committee on Conferences would not be constructive.

19. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Economic Community, expressed the view that paragraph 4 (f) should be interpreted in the light of paragraph 5. The situation was therefore quite clear; the ECLAC session should be held at the Commission's headquarters but, if there was a departure from that principle, there should be no additional cost to the United Nations. That position had always been accepted by the regional economic commissions.

20. Mr. DITZ (Austria) said that his delegation favoured the general rule that regional economic commissions should meet at their respective headquarters. Apart from paragraph 4 (f), other exceptions to the general rule were proposed in subparagraphs (a), (b), (c) and (e) of paragraph 4. The whole issue of the meeting cycle of regional economic commissions should have been given proper consideration in the Committee on Conferences. His delegation would abstain in the vote.

21. Mr. ODUYEMI (Nigeria) said that he would vote against the United States proposal and reserved the right to revert later to the proposal made by the representative of the Soviet Union.

22. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) said that decisions had been taken in the past that the additional costs of holding meetings away from headquarters could be defrayed from the regular United Nations budget. General Assembly resolution 31/140 had made provision for exceptions to the general rule. There was no contradiction between paragraphs 4 (f) and 5 of the draft resolution before the Committee. He therefore opposed the United States proposal.

23. Mr. MESSI BEKONO (Cameroon) said that the offer by his Government to serve as host to the twenty-first session of the Economic Commission for Africa and the 12th meeting of the Conference of Ministers of the Commission should not be regarded as a precedent. His Government's purpose had been to enable ministers and members of the Commission to witness at first hand in Yaoundé the problems confronting the countries of the region. His delegation supported the report of the Committee on Conferences.

24. A recorded vote was taken on the amendment proposed by the United States of America to delete paragraph 4 (f) of the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Conferences in paragraph 1 of its report (A/40/32).

In favour: Israel, United States of America.

Against: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

25. The amendment was rejected by 81 votes to 2, with 23 abstentions.

26. Mr. TAKASU (Japan), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that his delegation had voted against the amendment. The Committee on Conferences had been requested by the General Assembly to review the rules and procedures relating to conferences but to date no such review had taken place. There was therefore no reason currently for change. It was essential, however, to review the application of existing rules on a continuing basis, particularly in relation to the issue of the availability of conference facilities. As proposed in paragraph 12 of the draft resolution, the Committee on Conferences should undertake such a review, bearing in mind the point made by the representative of Belgium.

27. Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden) said that his delegation had voted for the retention of paragraph 4 (f) but also attached great importance to paragraph 5. It therefore considered that the provisions of paragraph 4 (f) should be applied in a restrictive manner.

28. Mr. VAHER (Canada) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote. It was of the view that paragraph 4 (f) was redundant and that the procedure which should be followed was that set out in paragraph 5.

29. Ms. HILLYER (New Zealand) expressed the view that meetings of regional economic commissions should be held away from their respective headquarters only if there were pressing reasons for doing so. In such cases, however, the host Government should cover any additional costs entailed. Paragraph 4 (f) was qualified by the provisions of paragraph 5. Her delegation had abstained in the vote.

30. Ms. MUSTONEN (Finland) said that her delegation had supported the retention of paragraph 4 (f). It was possible that similar cases might arise in future and the Committee should adopt a restrictive approach to such cases, bearing in mind the provisions of paragraph 5.

31. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the proposal of the Soviet Union that the twenty-third session of the International Civil Service Commission should meet at a location "to be determined" rather than at Nairobi, as proposed by the Committee on Conferences in item 35 of the draft calendar of conferences for 1986.

32. Mr. ODUYEMI (Nigeria) said that his delegation would be obliged to vote against the amendment proposed by the representative of the Soviet Union, who had

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argued that holding the session in Nairobi would be at variance with paragraph 4 (g) of the draft resolution. That paragraph, however, specified that ICSC might accept an invitation from one of the participating organizations to hold a session at the headquarters of that particular organization. UNEP was a participating organization and there was therefore no basis for the Soviet Union's amendment.

33. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria), said that his delegation would vote against the Soviet proposal for the reasons that had prompted him to oppose the United States proposal. Moreover, the principle of equitable geographical representation should be strictly applied to ICSC.

34. A recorded vote was taken on the Soviet proposal.

In favour: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Abstaining: Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

35. The Soviet proposal was rejected by 72 votes to 31, with 1 abstention.

36. The CHAIRMAN invited delegations to speak in explanation of vote before the vote on the United States proposal that in item 67 of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for 1986 the word "Mexico City" should be replaced by the word "Santiago".

37. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that his delegation would vote against the United States amendment under consideration because it was related to the United States amendment concerning Paragraph 4 (f) of the draft resolution.

38. Mr. HERIJANTO (Indonesia) said that his delegation saw no difficulty in adopting item 67 of the draft calendar for 1986 as it stood, particularly taking account of Economic and Social Council decision 1985/188 and in view of the fact that the Committee had just rejected the United States amendment concerning paragraph 4 (f) of the draft resolution.

39. Mr. DITZ (Austria) said that his delegation would not support the United States proposal before the Committee because it did not appear to be possible to hold the twenty-first session of ECLAC at Santiago.

40. A recorded vote was taken on the second United States oral amendment.

In favour: Australia, Canada, Germany, Federal Republic of, Israel, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Abstaining: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Rwanda, Spain, Sweden.

41. The second United States oral amendment was rejected by 83 votes to 7, with 15 abstentions.

42. Mr. ORSATELLI (France), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that his delegation had been unable to support the second United States amendment because what was really at issue was the question of the additional costs incurred when regular sessions of the regional commissions were held away from their headquarters.

43. Mr. BESTMAN (Liberia) said that his delegation had voted against the second United States amendment because the conference facilities at Santiago were not adequate and would need to be expanded.

44. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that it was quite clear that the regional commissions could hold their regular sessions away from their headquarters, if the additional costs were borne by the host country. His delegation hoped that all the bodies concerned would take note of the debate that had just taken place in the Committee and take appropriate steps to settle the problem definitively.
45. Ms. VAN DRUNEN LITTEL (Netherlands) said that her delegation had abstained in the vote on the second United States amendment for the reasons given by the representative of France.
46. Mrs. ARCHINI (Italy) said that as a general rule, the regional commissions should hold their regular sessions at their headquarters. However, the special circumstances at ECLAC headquarters had prompted her delegation to abstain in the vote on the second United States amendment.
47. Ms. HILLYER (New Zealand) said that at the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council in 1985 New Zealand had been unable to support the proposal that ECLAC should hold its regular session at Mexico City, despite the offer made by the Mexican Government to meet some of the additional costs. However, the form in which the second United States amendment had been proposed had given rise to certain difficulties, as the representative of Belgium and others had already pointed out. Her delegation had therefore felt obliged to abstain in the vote.
48. The CHAIRMAN said that there was an error in item 45 of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for 1987 and that "New York" should be replaced by "Geneva".
49. The draft resolution as a whole was adopted without a vote.
50. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) said that her delegation had supported the consensus on the draft resolution just adopted on the understanding that the Committee had not been considering the financial implications, if any, of the text. Moreover, her delegation would oppose any additional financing when the text was considered in plenary meeting.
51. Mr. VISLYKH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had intended from the outset not to oppose adoption of the draft resolution on the pattern of conferences without a vote. It hoped that ICSC would review its decision to hold its session scheduled for March 1986 at Nairobi, in order to comply with the draft resolution just adopted.
52. His delegation had been dismayed by the distortion of facts in the statement made earlier by the representative of Nigeria in explaining his vote on the Soviet amendment. The statute of ICSC indicated that the term "participating organizations" referred to the specialized agencies only.
53. Mr. ODUYEMI (Nigeria) said that he had asked the representative of the Soviet Union a number of relevant questions, which had, quite understandably, not been answered. His delegation still maintained that the United Nations was one of the participating organizations of ICSC.

54. Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden) said that he hoped that in future issues such as the ones that had been considered at the current meeting would be dealt with adequately by the Committee on Conferences, so that they would not have to be discussed at length in the Fifth Committee.

55. Mr. ARAD (Israel) said that his delegation had supported the consensus on the draft resolution just adopted by the Committee. However, if there had been a separate vote on items 68, 151 and 174 of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for 1986 and items 54, 126 and 149 of the draft calendar for 1987, his delegation would have voted against their inclusion.

56. Mr. MUDHO (Kenya) said that in future it might be possible to avoid problems such as the ones that had arisen at the current meeting, particularly in connection with paragraph 4 (f) of the draft resolution just adopted, if the Committee were to refer the matter in question to the Office of the Legal Counsel.

57. Mr. DUQUE (Secretary of the Committee), clarifying points raised by the representatives of Cuba and Mexico, said that, if the draft resolution just adopted by the Committee was adopted in plenary meeting, ECLAC would be authorized to meet at Mexico City.

The meeting rose at 8 p.m.