



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

S/PV.2970 (Part I)*
20 December 1990

ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
NINE HUNDRED AND SEVENTIETH MEETING (Part I)

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 19 December 1990, at 10.30.m.

President: Mr. AL-ASHTAL

(Yemen)

Members: Canada
China
Colombia
Côte d'Ivoire
Cuba
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Malaysia
Romania
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland
United States of America
Zaire

Mr. FORTIER
Mr. LI Daoyu
Mr. PEÑALOSA
Mr. ANET
Mr. ALARCON de QUESADA
Mr. TADESSE
Mr. TÖRNUDD
Mr. ROCHEREAU DE LA SABLIERE
Mr. RAZALI
Mr. MUNTEANU
Mr. VORONTSOV

Sir David HANNAY
Mr. PICKERING
Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA

* Reissued for technical reasons.

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The meeting was called to order at 11.55 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

LETTER DATED 26 SEPTEMBER 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/21830)

REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 672 (1990) (S/21919 and Corr.1 and S/21919/Add.1-3)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I call on the representative of the United Kingdom.

Sir David HANNAY (United Kingdom): Mr. President, I had actually asked to speak on a point of order before we adopted the agenda.

As I mentioned to you at the meeting we had a few minutes ago, Mr. President, I should like to raise on this point of order the remit we gave to the representative of Finland when we last met, which was to explore the possibility of narrowing the differences between the members of the Council on the matter that is before us today. I should therefore like to request - on this point of order - that you call on the representative of Finland so that he may make a report on the contacts he has had since our last meeting. I should like to reserve the right to speak after that.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): In accordance with the request made by the representative of the United Kingdom during his statement on a point of order, I call on the representative of Finland.

Mr. TÖRNUDD (Finland): As this is my delegation's first opportunity to speak at a formal meeting of the Council during the month of December I should like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on Yemen's assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. We know that already during December a

(Mr. Törnudd, Finland)

lot of hard work has been required. I can assure you that it is always a pleasure to work with you. We shall, of course, continue to be ready to co-operate with you in order to help you so far as we can to fulfil your heavy duties as President.

I should also like to thank Ambassador Pickering for his performance as President of the Council during the month of November.

In response to the request made by the representative of the United Kingdom, I should like to report that, as was agreed in informal consultations of the Security Council, my delegation has tried to work for the achievement of a text on the matter before us that could be adopted unanimously by the Council. As all members of the Council know, we have for some time been working for an arrangement that would include the adoption of both a resolution and a presidential statement in connection with that resolution. Last night we circulated to the members of the Council a text that contains the working paper - the draft that we submitted yesterday - which has been the focus of the discussions during the last day or two.

So far as we understand it, the situation now is that the contents of this working paper are almost agreed; a couple of problems remain, but, in our opinion, they could be settled very quickly if we were to concentrate on doing away with these last difficulties.

As I tried to indicate in the message we distributed last night, these difficulties have to do with one preambular paragraph in the draft resolution - the one that contains a reference to the presidential statement that would need to be adopted at the same time.

(Mr. Törnudd, Finland)

The question is what wording should be used to describe the reference to the presidential statement. We have here the wording "Statement concerning an active negotiating process for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict". If this wording could be accepted, then that difficulty would be done away with; if not, it could be replaced by some other formula that would be acceptable to everybody. In other words, here it is a question of a few words in a preambular paragraph.

The other outstanding difficulties, as I understand it, have to do with the two last paragraphs of the draft presidential statement that has been discussed. They concern the reference to an international conference intended to facilitate efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement and a lasting peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Here the problems have to do with the reference to parties to such a conference - whether or not the word "parties" should be used.

Finally, there is a paragraph which emphasizes that the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iraq-Kuwait situation are two different items, which must be addressed independently, each on its own merit. In this case, there is a problem with only one word - its inclusion or exclusion.

That is as far as we have gone in our efforts to reach a generally acceptable result. As I said, in our opinion we are extremely close to a final settlement of these problems.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I call on the representative of the United Kingdom.

Sir David HANNAY (United Kingdom): I should like to begin by thanking the representative of Finland for his report and to pay homage to him for the quite remarkable work he has done over the last weeks, which I think has helped the Council come to the point he has described.

(Sir David Hannay,
United Kingdom)

In the light of his report and the very clear and specific points he has raised, I should like to propose, under rule 33.1 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, that the meeting be suspended and that we consider the report in informal consultations of the whole immediately, without further delay.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The representative of the United Kingdom has proposed that the meeting be suspended in accordance with rule 33.1 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure. Rule 33 stipulates:

"The following motions shall have precedence in the order named over all principal motions and draft resolutions relative to the subject before the meeting:"

Subparagraph 1 refers to suspension of the meeting. At the end of rule 33 it is stipulated that:

"Any motion for the suspension or for the simple adjournment of the meeting shall be decided without debate."

However, the rule does not specify whether or not there is a need to vote on the motion to suspend. If I hear no objection, we shall suspend the meeting to a further time to be decided by the President.

Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia): It is not my intention to exclude the rights of others on the basis of the Council's provisional rules of procedure. But if you posed the question, Mr. President, as to whether or not there is an objection to the request, under whatever rule is applicable, I am bound to say that I have an objection, because my understanding was, after the long, epic informal meeting we had on Monday, that we were coming here to take a vote.

I thank the representative of Finland for having given us a resumé of the progress he has made and the problems he has attempted to overcome. I have to say,

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

however, that the problems have yet to be overcome. He mentioned a few important words. Lots of important events indeed pivot on important words.

So I just want to make my point clear: we still have the understanding that we are here today to take a vote.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): There is an objection to the proposal put forward by the representative of the United Kingdom to suspend the meeting to a further date to be decided by the President. Consequently, I shall now put to the vote the motion of the United Kingdom.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Finland, Romania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zaire

Against: China, Colombia, Cuba, France, Malaysia, Yemen

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The result of the voting is as follows: 9 votes in favour and 6 against. The motion to suspend the meeting has therefore been adopted.

The meeting was suspended at 12.05 p.m.