



General Assembly

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ENGLISH

Fortieth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 9 May 1986, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. DE PINIÉS

(Spain)

- CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS OF THE UNITED NATIONS [150] (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

(b) REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY
QUESTIONS

(c) REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

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The meeting was called to order at 9.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 150 (continued)

CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/40/1102 and Corr.1 to 3, Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, and Add.2 and Add.2/Corr.1
- (b) REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS (A/40/1106)
- (c) REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/40/1111)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I must apologize for the considerable delay in opening this meeting. I trust that in the circumstances of the long and arduous negotiations Members realize the delay was inevitable.

It will be recalled that the Assembly concluded the debate on this item at its 130th plenary meeting held on Thursday afternoon, 1 May.

At this stage of our proceedings, I wish to give an account of my impression as to where our consideration of item 150 has led us.

Intensive consultations have been taking place since our last meeting. A rather wide variety of views have been expressed in those consultations which generally reflected the positions advanced here during the general debate on this item.

Despite efforts to reconcile differences, a certain divergence of views about the desirability of one or the other economy measures presented in the Secretary-General's report has continued. This is not surprising, considering that many delegations and groups of delegations have their own sense of what activities deserve the highest priority and hence should not be subject to modification. Nevertheless, I am encouraged to find widespread recognition of the seriousness of the financial crisis facing the Organization.

(The President)

Notwithstanding the concerns and reservations which have been expressed, the proposals that the Secretary-General presented to the Assembly have, by and large, been acknowledged as being unavoidable, though regrettable, in order to keep the Organization in a state of solvency.

I am sure that the entire membership will agree that it is most important that the Organization, as a whole, should be strengthened by the decisions that are to be taken.

(The President)

I believe it is especially important that these decisions represent a consensus. They should give a signal that the membership can act together now on a matter than threatens the Organization's viability, as it must, in the future, act in resolving the underlying causes of the budgetary crisis.

Following extensive consultations with all groups and with the Secretary-General, I believe that a consensus can be reached on the following basis.

First, the Secretary-General's suggestion that the forty-first session of the General Assembly be curtailed by three weeks is obviously dependent on the way in which the General Assembly at that session organizes its work and the progress that it makes. The Assembly is the master of its own procedure. In the autumn, at its forty-first session, it will certainly give consideration to the action to be taken on the Secretary-General's proposals, in the light of the financial situation then prevailing. I have noted that the Economic and Social Council has already acted to reduce the length of its current session. I appreciate that decision, and I am sure that both it and the Trusteeship Council will take the decisions that are most appropriate in organizing their work this year.

Secondly, with regard to the special session on Namibia, I believe there should be no problem in holding it in a manner that could achieve substantial savings. After consultations, I suggest that if the forty-first session, after opening on 16 September, were to be adjourned until the following Monday, and the special session were held in that period, including the Saturday, the regular session could resume immediately thereafter. In our following that procedure, additional travel costs of that special session would be avoided.

Thirdly, the Secretary-General has indicated that he will review the other items in his report in the light of the evolving financial situation and report to the General Assembly at its forty-first session. It is understood that no project or programme will be eliminated for which adequate financial resources are

(The President)

available. After holding consultations with the Secretary-General on the matter, I wish to add that he is fully determined to request that the fortieth session be resumed if and when the situation requires, and that he will keep all members regularly informed on all relevant events.

I wish to stress that the proposals made by the Secretary-General are temporary measures relating expressly to 1986 and not extending beyond this year.

At this point, I wish to re-emphasize that all Members have a contractual obligation under the Charter to pay their duly assessed contributions. I therefore urge all Members to remain up to date in the payment of their assessments. I also appeal for generous voluntary contributions to the special account in order to help the Organization overcome the present financial difficulties.

In the circumstances, and since no resolution has been introduced to dispose of the item after the debate, I suggest that the Secretary-General proceed according to the proposals he has suggested in his report (A/40/1102 and Corr.1 to 3, Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, Add.2 and Add.2/Corr.1 and Add.3), in line with the comments I have just made and taking into account the report of the Fifth Committee (A/40/1111). I sense there is widespread recognition of the fact that, as Chief Administrative Officer, the Secretary-General has the responsibility prudently to administer the ongoing work of the Organization, with due regard both for the wishes of the General Assembly and for the resources available to implement them.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it the General Assembly agrees that the Secretary-General should proceed on the basis I have just described.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to thank all representatives for their understanding and co-operation.

The meeting rose at 9.40 p.m.