

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTIETH SESSION

Official Records

**SIXTH COMMITTEE, 838th
MEETING**

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at 11 a.m.



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*Chairman: Mr. Abdullah EL-ERIAN
(United Arab Republic).*

Statement by the Chairman

1. The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Committee for their recognition of his country's interest in the legal work of the United Nations by electing him Chairman. He would endeavour to follow the admirable example of his predecessor in the Chair, Mr. Ruda of Argentina. He welcomed most warmly the representatives of Gambia, the Maldiv Islands and Singapore, who were participating in the Committee's work for the first time.

2. The current session of the General Assembly was being held in circumstances which combined to create a sobering and reflective mood: the United Nations was in the twentieth year of its existence, a moment which inspired reflection on its achievements and shortcomings; it had just surmounted a crisis during which its effectiveness and prestige had been seriously called into question; it was meeting at a time when the deteriorating international situation was fraught with threats to the peace and the cause of international co-operation. In those circumstances, the Sixth Committee should continue its efforts to develop international law with a view to strengthening international peace and security, developing friendly relations and co-operation among States, providing peaceful means for the settlement of disputes and advancing economic and social progress throughout the world. The Committee should seek to ensure that all States, large and small, participated on a basis of equality in the formulation of universal law, not the classical regulatory law governing bilateral relations between States, but a body of new institutional law which would effectively govern the pursuit of human aspirations. It should bear in mind that since force had been categorically eliminated as an instrument of policy, international law must inevitably become the primary instrument of peaceful co-operation.

Election of the Vice-Chairman

3. Mr. DADZIE (Ghana) nominated Mr. Flitan (Romania).

4. Mr. CASTAÑEDA (Mexico), Mr. LACHS (Poland) and Mr. VATTANI (Italy) supported the nomination.

Mr. Flitan (Romania) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

Election of the Rapporteur

5. Mr. MONTERO (Costa Rica) nominated Mr. Alcivar (Ecuador).

6. Mr. CHAMMAS (Lebanon) and Mr. PECHOTA (Czechoslovakia) supported the nomination.

Mr. Alcivar (Ecuador) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

Organization of the Committee's work (A/C.6/369),
A/C.6/L.558)

7. Mr. MOROZOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted with satisfaction the evident trouble which the Secretariat had taken to make its note on the organization of work of the Sixth Committee (A/C.6/L.558) a document which could serve as a solid and helpful basis for the discussion of the most rational way of organizing that work. Even the most cursory glance at the list of the number of meetings which it was proposed to devote to the various items on the Committee's agenda was sufficient to give some idea of the intensive programme of work which lay ahead, and the Committee must bear the Secretariat's recommendations in mind throughout its session. The present meeting, however, came after a lengthy break in the Committee's work, and it would be desirable for the members of the Committee to hold private consultations before any decisions regarding the organization of work were taken. Unfortunately, as a number of representatives had not yet arrived, it was not yet possible to hold those consultations, and he therefore considered that the Committee should content itself for the time being with deciding which of the items on its agenda should be discussed first. In his opinion, the most suitable item for immediate discussion was item 87 of the agenda (item 1 of document A/C.6/369)—reports of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions. Not only was it a tradition of the Sixth Committee to begin each session with consideration of the report of the International Law Commission, but the Chairman of the seventeenth session of the Commission was already present and the Chairman of the sixteenth session would be arriving very shortly, so that there was nothing to stop the Committee from taking up that item immediately. During the discussion, the Committee would have an opportunity to engage in private consultations regarding the organization of the rest of its work and members would also have a chance

to acquaint themselves with the background documentation for the session.

8. Mr. AMADO (Brazil) observed that the Chairman's quality of realistic humanity, which was perhaps his most striking attribute, was exactly the quality which the Committee as a whole needed most in the challenging session which lay before it. The Committee must strive, like the Italian school of international jurists of the later nineteenth century, to work in the field of the possible rather than lose itself in vain hypotheses.

9. As far as the organization of the Committee's work was concerned, he agreed with the suggestions made by the USSR representative and also wished to express his satisfaction that such a substantial number of meetings had been set aside for discussion of the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among States, for that question was one of the most important facing man-

kind, and on its successful solution depended all mankind's dearest aspirations, including improvement of the standard of living, the achievement of disarmament and the establishment and safeguarding of universal peace. As far as friendly relations and co-operation among States were concerned, mankind really had no option but to do its utmost to establish workable principles for their promotion; if it failed to do so it would rapidly sink towards a fate too horrible even to imagine.

10. The CHAIRMAN noted that the suggestion put forward by the USSR representative and supported by the representative of Brazil was in keeping with the customs of the Committee and raised no practical difficulty. If there were no objections he would therefore assume that the Committee wished to follow the suggested procedure.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.