



Thursday, 6 December 1956,  
at 10.45 a.m.

**New York**

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**Chairman: Mr. Omar LOUTFI (Egypt).**

*In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Calogercopoulos-Stratis (Greece), Vice Chairman, took the Chair.*

**AGENDA ITEM 66<sup>1</sup>**

**Question considered by the first emergency special session of the General Assembly from 1 to 10 November 1956 (A/3383 and Rev.1, A/3402) (*continued*)**

**Administrative and financial arrangements for the United Nations Emergency Force (*continued*)**

1. The CHAIRMAN asked the members of the Committee to restrict their comments to the administrative and financial aspects of the question and to avoid any reference to its political aspects, which were the concern of other organs of the General Assembly.

2. Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand) said that at the 544th meeting he had merely intended to point out that responsibility for the situation in the Middle East did not rest exclusively on the United Kingdom, France and Israel, but was broadly based. It was entirely proper therefore that the cost of maintaining the United Nations Emergency Force should be borne by the Organization as a whole.

3. In the course of the studies undertaken in 1951 and 1952 by the Collective Measures Committee, his delegation had expressed the view that the success of collective security action by the United Nations must depend first on the will and determination of individual States, and second on the need for any such action to be as universal as possible. His delegation had regarded it as entirely inappropriate that all expenditure incidental to the military operations undertaken by the United Nations should be borne exclusively by Member States which provided military elements. It had therefore urged that there should be a study of the ways in which the military, financial and other assistance accorded by the United Nations in the case of collective action might most equitably be shared. The Organization would make no headway until Member States acknowledged that membership involved responsibilities as well as privileges and that such responsibilities must

<sup>1</sup> Considered by the Fifth Committee in accordance with paragraph 4 of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its 596th plenary meeting on 26 November 1956.

be borne not by a fifth or a quarter of the Members or by one or two countries, but by all. That principle had been endorsed by the Collective Measures Committee and approved by the General Assembly itself (resolutions 503 (VI) and 703 (VII)) in its acceptance of the Committee's two reports (A/1891, A/2215).

4. His delegation was therefore opposed to any proposal to restrict financial obligation for the Emergency Force to any one country or group of countries. Apportionment of the obligation should be in accordance with the scale of budgetary assessments agreed upon for the coming year, as the Secretary-General proposed. If that were not done, the system of international collective security would have little meaning and a meagre future. The United Nations could not expect to be treated seriously if its Members displayed unwillingness to meet the cost of implementing their own decisions and if the burden of police action was always to fall on a few.

5. Mr. EL-MESSIRI (Egypt) wished to clarify a number of points concerning the statement which the New Zealand representative had made at the 544th meeting. As far as world public opinion and the United Nations were concerned, the record was clear. Any attempt to falsify it was doomed to failure and could only bring those who attempted it into disrepute. On the question of responsibility, the chain of events spoke eloquently on behalf of Egypt; there was no need for the New Zealand representative to try to prove who was responsible. It was now clear that the pioneers of international intrigue had been behind Israel when it had committed its act of treacherous banditry and that at the very moment when the eighteen Foreign Ministers had been meeting in London to discuss the possibility of forming a "Users' Association" an association of a very different character was being promoted, namely an "Aggressors' association".

6. Mr. LIVERAN (Israel) asked the Chairman whether it was not understood that the members of the Committee should restrict their remarks to the administrative and financial aspects of the question.

7. The CHAIRMAN again asked the members of the Committee to keep to those matters which were within the Committee's competence.

8. Mr. EL-MESSIRI (Egypt) said that he would try to comply with the Chairman's request as far as possible. The United Kingdom and France had most ingeniously explained that the purpose of their attack was to separate Egypt and Israel and to protect the Suez Canal from the threat of aggression by Israel. In fact, when the infamous ultimatum had been sent on 30 October 1956, Israel forces had been far from the Canal.

9. Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand) remarked that the Egyptian representative had not yet touched

on the administrative and financial aspects of the question, which were the only ones that the Committee was competent to discuss.

10. Mr. LIVERAN (Israel) objected to the Egyptian representative's unparliamentary language.

11. After a procedural discussion in which Mr. EL-MESSIRI (Egypt), Mr. LIVERAN (Israel), Mr. MARGAIN (Cambodia), Mr. HUSSEINI (Saudi Arabia) and Mr. POLLOCK (Canada) took part, the CHAIRMAN said that, in his opinion, the Egyptian representative had made his reply to the New Zealand representative, and he requested the members of the Committee to revert to the item under discussion.

12. Mr. EL-MESSIRI (Egypt) thought that the tripartite conspiracy was the decisive factor in defining responsibility for the present situation in Egypt. The New Zealand representative should be the first to rejoice if an investigating body were set up to exonerate the United Kingdom Government from that conspiracy; but the latter had denied all efforts to that end in the House of Commons. As far as Egypt was concerned, it would welcome any investigating body. Investigation would establish not only responsibility for the expenses of maintaining the United Nations Emergency Force but also responsibility for paralysing the economy of very many countries and for the damage inflicted on Egypt and the Egyptian people. As several members of the Committee and representatives in the General Assembly had already stated, the aggressors should bear all the expenses, and it was inconceivable that the overwhelming majority of Member States should bear any responsibility for the aggressive action of three countries. If the many countries in question were not compensated for the damage inflicted on their economy as a result of the destruction of the Suez Canal, at least they should not be asked to bear any additional financial burden.

13. The CHAIRMAN asked the Committee to express an opinion on the admissibility of comments on the political aspects of the question.

14. After further procedural discussion in which Mr. LIVERAN (Israel), Mr. EL-MESSIRI (Egypt), Mr. RAJAPATHIRANA (Ceylon), Mr. KHALAF (Iraq), Mr. GEORGIEV (Bulgaria) and Mr. NAEVDAL (Norway) took part, Mr. CERULLI IRELLI (Italy) asked the Chairman to rule that the members of the Committee must refrain from all political considerations and expressions and keep to the aspects of the question which were within the Committee's competence.

*The Chairman so ruled.*

15. Mr. EL-MESSIRI (Egypt) said that the Suez Canal was not in danger when its safety had been invoked as a pretext for Anglo-French aggression; subsequent facts had shown that many countries faced a crisis because of the destruction of the Canal. The Committee should therefore decide, in the light of those facts, who should bear the expenses of the United Nations Emergency Force.

16. Mr. MARGAIN (Cambodia) wished to state his delegation's position not only on the proposal before the Committee but also on any other proposal that might be made in connexion with the expenses involved in the Emergency Force. Cambodia held firmly to the principles of equity and logic and did not see

why it should be asked to bear part of the expenses. It was in no way responsible for the events that had occurred and it had no direct interest in the operation of the Suez Canal as no Cambodian ships passed through the Canal. If the argument of international solidarity were to be invoked, a very costly precedent might be set. Cambodia feared war as much as other countries but that was not sufficient reason for asking it to pay to avoid war. The conflict in the Middle East and its consequences would have unfavourable repercussions on life in Cambodia, logically, therefore, Cambodia should rather be paid damages. His country could not agree to pay any contribution to cover the costs of maintaining the Force.

17. Mr. POLLOCK (Canada) reminded the Committee that the General Assembly had approved the establishment of the Emergency Force by an overwhelming majority and on the basis of Article 17 of the Charter the expenses of the Force should be borne by all Member States. Furthermore in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1001 (ES-I) adopted on 7 November 1956 by 64 votes in favour with 12 abstentions, Member States were requested to afford the United Nations Command the necessary assistance in the performance of its functions. The Canadian delegation would wholeheartedly support the recommendation put forward by the representative of the Secretary-General at the 541st meeting.

18. It was for the Fifth Committee to examine the administrative and financial implications of resolution 1001 (ES-I) and to advise the General Assembly on the steps to be taken to enable the United Nations to acquit itself of the task it had undertaken to accomplish. It was to be hoped that Member States would continue to honour their financial commitments as they had done in the past.

19. The Canadian delegation considered that the countries which had supplied troops should continue to pay such expenses as they would normally have incurred if the troops had remained on their own soil, and that the United Nations should reimburse them only for the additional expenditure directly linked with the Force's operations in Egypt.

20. The Canadian Government was happy to contribute to the vast collective effort undertaken with the object of maintaining peace and stability in the Middle East. He appealed to all Members of the Committee to support the Secretary-General's recommendation.

21. Mr. PEACHEY (Australia) said that the Australian Government was in favour of the Secretary-General's proposals submitted by the Controller at the 541st meeting and was prepared to assist in implementing them.

22. He thanked the Swiss Federal Government for defraying the cost of troop transport to the extent of some \$500,000. The United States Government was also to be commended for its great generosity in meeting the high cost of transporting troops by air and supplying the necessary equipment. He hoped that the example would be followed by the other countries which had supplied troops and equipment.

23. The Australian delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal that the expenses should be apportioned among the Member States in accordance with the scale of assessments to be adopted for contributions to the annual budget for the financial year 1957.

24. Mr. DE PINIES (Spain) pointed out that under paragraph 1 of the draft resolution appearing in the annex to document A/3383, the expenses of the Force were to be apportioned among Member States in accordance with the scale of assessments adopted for contributions to the regular budget for the financial year 1957. But the provision had been omitted from the revised draft resolution (A/3383, Rev.1), doubtless because the Secretary-General and the Assembly had considered that it would be inexpedient to apportion the expenses in such a manner.

25. The United Nations Emergency Force had been established under a decision of the General Assembly, but since no precedent existed, the Committee could not apply the rules which customarily governed the financing of regular United Nations activities. Some representatives had argued that the expenses of the Force should be borne by the countries which had started the military operations in Egypt; but the argument was not tenable, because the General Assembly, in its resolutions, had considered the question from the political aspect only and it was not within the province of the Fifth Committee to say where the responsibility for the acts committed lay. On the other hand, since the resolutions on the establishment of the Force had been adopted by an overwhelming majority of the Assembly, it was logical that all Member States should participate in paying for it. But it would seem unfair to apportion the expenses in accordance with the scale of assessments adopted for contributions to the annual budget—a scale based on the national income of each Member State—since the expenses in the present instance were not a regular item but expenditure for the maintenance of international peace and security. There were two considerations governing the apportionment of the expenses of the Force: first, the maintenance of peace concerned all Members of the international community, and second, certain Powers, by virtue of Article 23 of the Charter, played a preponderant part in the maintenance of international peace and security.

26. The Spanish delegation wished to make it clear that Spain was ready to bear part of the expenditure necessitated by the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions, but it considered that the method of allocation applicable to normal circumstances should not be used in exceptional cases, and it requested the Secretary-General to furnish the Committee with a fresh plan for the apportionment of expenses without reference to the Assembly's scale of assessment. Finally, it hoped that any decision taken would be adopted unanimously, since the issue was the establishment of a procedure which had no precedent in the United Nations.

27. Mr. DE CASTRO (Brazil) said that the Brazilian Government approved in principle the statement made by the representative of the Secretary-General at the 541st meeting, since it held that it was reasonable to apportion the expenses among all Member States in accordance with the scale of contributions for 1957.

28. However, in the light of the statement made at the 544th meeting by the Danish representative concerning the countries which had supplied troops to the Emergency Force, it was the Brazilian delegation's view that the contributions by those countries should be reduced in proportion to the additional expenditure

they would incur in lending their assistance to the United Nations. If that principle were approved, the Fifth Committee should ask the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to prepare a report on its practical application.

29. With that reservation, the Brazilian delegation was prepared to vote for the Secretary-General's proposals.

30. Mr. RANSHOFEN-WERTHEIMER (Austria) said that his Government was ready to contribute to the maintenance of the Emergency Force. He considered that the expenses should be apportioned in accordance with the scale of assessments for 1957, but the arguments put forward by the Spanish representative were not lacking in cogency.

31. The Austrian Government would be very glad to make its contribution in its national currency.

32. Mr. LAVRIK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) recalled that the head of the Ukrainian delegation had told the General Assembly at the 595th plenary meeting that he saw no reason why his country should support part of the expenses of the United Nations Emergency Force. Those expenses should be borne by the countries which had committed the armed aggression.

33. He solemnly stated that the Ukrainian SSR would not consider itself bound by any obligations in connexion with the maintenance of the Emergency Force if any decisions were taken on that subject.

34. Mr. CHERNUSHCHENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) objected to the proposal that the expenses of the Emergency Force should be apportioned in accordance with the scale of assessments for 1957. Article 17 of the Charter in no sense provided that Governments were bound to contribute to special accounts. The expenses of the Emergency Force should be borne by France, the United Kingdom and Israel.

35. Byelorussia would not consider itself bound by any financial obligation relative to the upkeep of the United Nations Emergency Force.

36. Mr. DIEGUEZ (Guatemala) considered that the Committee could not adopt an entirely negative attitude to the maintenance of the Emergency Force, since the latter had been established by a General Assembly resolution, but it was important that the expenses should be fairly apportioned, and in that connexion there were certain aspects of the matter on which he would like to comment.

37. If the Emergency Force were considered to be a normal police force in the service of the United Nations, it would be difficult to refuse to contribute to its maintenance. But certain representatives had expressed doubts as to the nature of the Emergency Force, which they held to be of an exceptional character, thus raising doubts as to the financial responsibility of Member States.

38. If the principle of Member States' financial responsibility were accepted, two elements must be taken into account, namely the equity of the apportionment of expenses and the capacity of each State to contribute.

39. In the matter of apportioning the expenses, which were already very heavy and might become heavier still, it was only fair that some States should bear

heavier expenses than others. It would be absurd to ask a State to sign a blank cheque for the upkeep of the Emergency Force, because Governments, when assuming financial commitments, had to conform to the procedure laid down in their countries' constitution. In addition, if an equitable division of the expenses of the Force were arrived at, it should not be forgotten that equity was limited by the States' capacity to pay. The first thing to find out, therefore, was what the expenses amounted to, and information on that point had so far been somewhat vague.

40. With regard to expenditure already or about to be incurred, care should be taken that the Secretary-General was not placed in a particularly difficult situation, and a fair and practical solution should be found without delay.

41. The Guatemalan delegation had always honoured its commitments and it was still ready to abide by its obligations in connexion with the Emergency Force. In view, however, of the magnitude of the sums involved, it desired to make it quite clear that it could not commit itself without knowing the exact amount of its contribution.

42. He had noted with interest the proposals put forward by the Spanish representative on the apportionment of the expenses. He would study them with the greatest care, and hoped that other delegations would do the same, so that a satisfactory formula could be speedily found.

43. Mr. KEATING (Ireland) said that the maintenance of peace was the United Nations' first duty and that his Government has no intention of shirking its responsibilities in face of the events in the Middle East. However, Ireland was a poor country and had already been in the throes of an economic crisis when those events had occurred and added to its difficulties. It was nevertheless prepared to agree that the costs for the Force should be apportioned between Member States along the same lines as the expenditure for the regular budget for 1957 provided all other Member States also accepted the Secretary-General's proposals (A/C.5/687). It wished, however, to be allowed to pay its quota in currency other than dollars and hoped that all unnecessary expenditure would be avoided. The delegation of Ireland hoped, finally, that those countries which had so generously supplied troops would agree to confine their claims to repayment by the United Nations of their extraordinary expenses and to shoulder the costs that they would normally have had to bear, such as payments to military personnel.

44. Mr. MALILE (Albania) recalled that his delegation had already expressed its opposition to the apportionment between all Member States of the costs incurred for the Force. They should be borne entirely by the three States responsible—the United Kingdom, France and Israel. The Albanian Government would not consider itself bound by any resolution by any United Nations body which ruled that they should be borne by the Organization.

45. Mr. BING (Liberia) said he had received no instructions from his Government and would therefore be unable to accept commitments in its name. He would abstain on the vote on the Secretary-General's proposals.

46. Mr. Y. W. LIU (China) said that his country was one of the few Member States to include respect for the principles and decisions of the United Nations as one of the principles of its Constitution. For over ten years, China had not baulked at any difficulty in giving the United Nations its full support, and felt that all Member States should fully accept the responsibilities flowing from their decisions, and that, specifically, all collective action by the United Nations should be collectively financed. However, the Chinese delegation disagreed with the Secretary-General's conclusions on one point: the principle of payments based on the scale of assessments for the regular budget for 1957. The Chinese quota, whether fixed at 6.3 per cent as for 1947 or at 5.62 per cent as for 1955, had always been arbitrarily established in the absence of reliable statistics; it was out of proportion to what China could contribute, although capacity to pay should be the main criterion for establishing quotas. The Chinese delegation, while reaffirming its intention to participate in defraying the costs for the Emergency Force, was obliged, therefore, to make its participation subject to two conditions: the allocation to meet its quota must be voted by the Chinese Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, and the rate fixed must be acceptable to the Secretary-General and the Government of China.

47. Mr. FORTEZA (Uruguay) said that his Government considered that the establishment of an Emergency Force was of fundamental importance and significance for the very existence of the United Nations and that it was therefore one of the Organization's primary responsibilities to bear all the expenses involved in the establishment and maintenance of the Force, which should be considered as a charge against the United Nations as a whole. One reservation might be made, namely that the Organization's acceptance of responsibility for the expenses of the Emergency Force was without prejudice to any claims for compensation that might eventually be submitted to the competent international legal body. The proposal made by the representative of the Secretary-General at the 541st meeting was adequate to the circumstances and in keeping with the spirit of Article 17 of the Charter. Despite its slender resources, Uruguay was prepared, subject to the proper constitutional procedure, to pay its share as fixed under the scale of assessments for the regular budget for 1957.

48. Speaking as Rapporteur, he appealed to all the members of the Committee to act as soon as possible in adopting the Secretary-General's proposal, which was fair and took account of the exigencies of the situation.

49. Mr. ENGEN (Norway) argued that since the General Assembly had decided to set up a United Nations Emergency Force by an overwhelming majority the Member States had the onus of footing the bill. The implementation procedure specified in the Secretary-General's proposals was reasonable, but the Norwegian delegation considered that the expenses incurred by its Government exceeded the quota it would normally have had to pay. The share repayable by the United Nations could be worked out in discussions with the Secretary-General.

50. Mr. VAN ASCH VAN WIJCK (Netherlands) emphasized that General Assembly resolutions 1000 (ES-I) and 1001 (ES-I) which had set up the United Nations Emergency Force and the resolution adopted

by the General Assembly at its 596th plenary meeting establishing a United Nations Emergency Force Special Account had been adopted by a very large majority, and there was every reason to believe that the Member States had voted on those two questions after ripe reflection. Their decisions were United Nations decisions and had to be implemented without fail. The Netherlands delegation, for its part, fully approved the proposals made by the representative of the Secretary-General at the 541st meeting and considered them to be in accordance with the spirit of Article 17 of the Charter. It was prepared to take the necessary steps to ensure rapid payment. Certain representatives, however, had recommended a different system of allocation, while others again had even declared that their Governments were not prepared to pay their quotas into the Special Account. If that were to happen, the sums which the Organization was unable to collect would represent a fairly high proportion, and the Netherlands delegation might in that case have to reconsider its position.

51. Mr. KURA (Turkey) said he would vote in favour of the Secretary-General's proposals, which he considered fair and reasonable. His delegation would point out, however, as it had done at the 596th plenary meeting of the General Assembly when it had voted on the resolution establishing a United Nations Emergency Force Special Account, that it had no authority to involve the Turkish Government in financial commitments, since all credits had to be voted by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.

52. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) observed that as his delegation had voted against the resolution authorizing the Secretary-General to establish a Special Account, it was only logical for it to vote against the Secretary-General's proposals. The only reasonable solution was to make the three States responsible bear the entire costs. The Polish Government would therefore consider itself uncommitted by any decision which the Committee might take on that point.

53. Mr. DAN (Romania) opposed the adoption of the Secretary-General's proposals and said that his Government would not consider itself bound if the proposals were approved.

54. Mr. GEORGIEV (Bulgaria) felt that the costs for the Force should be borne only by the countries which had committed aggression against Egypt and not by all Member States. Articles 17 and 43 of the Charter were not applicable in the case under discussion for they made no provision for meeting expenditure resulting from aggression. The Bulgarian Government would therefore not consider itself bound by any decision taken by a United Nations body which sought to saddle it with part of the costs.

55. Apart from the fact that the final bill might well exceed the \$10 million envisaged at present, the adoption of the Secretary-General's proposals would establish a bad precedent in the event of another case of aggression. Moreover, certain distinctions had to be made if a reasonable position was to be taken up and over-emphasis of political considerations avoided. In the first place, a distinction should be made between the immediate costs to be borne by Member States and those they would have to bear once operations were completed and the costs finally allocated. Secondly, the economic difficulties in which some of them might find themselves should not be confused with the principles of justice and equity. Lastly, a distinction should be drawn between the resolution laying down the principle of participation in the costs and that establishing responsibility. The question of who should rightly bear the costs had not only a legal but also a political aspect: there were important political principles which required that the costs should be borne by the aggressors. The very fact that certain countries, while prepared to pay part of the costs, objected to the Secretary-General's proposed scale proved that they shared those preoccupations. However, any change in the scale would tend to minimize the question of responsibility. The Bulgarian delegation considered that the aggressor countries should bear the whole of the costs of clearing the Suez Canal and maintaining the Emergency Force, and would therefore vote against the Secretary-General's proposals.

56. Mr. RAEYMAECKERS (Belgium) fully endorsed the Secretary-General's proposals. There had never been any question that the expenses of the Force were United Nations expenses in the spirit of Article 17 of the Charter. Any system of allocation other than that envisaged by the Secretary-General would be regarded by the Belgian delegation as unwarranted and would call for the most categorical reservations on its part.

57. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) said that his country, in its desire to support the United Nations' every effort and to see the Middle East restored to normality, would vote in favour of the Secretary-General's proposals subject to approval by the Congress of his country.

58. Mr. CHACON (El Salvador) endorsed the Secretary-General's proposals subject to approval by the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador. However, he shared the views of the representative of Uruguay concerning possible compensation claims which might be brought before the International Court of Justice.

59. Mr. RAJAPATHIRANA (Ceylon) proposed the adjournment of the debate until the afternoon meeting.

*It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.