

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH SESSION

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## CONTENTS

	Page
Statement by the Chairman . . . . .	3
Election of the Vice-Chairman. . . . .	3
Election of the Rapporteur . . . . .	3
Organization of work . . . . .	3

**Chairman:** Mrs. Lina P. TSALDARIS (Greece).

### Statement by the Chairman

1. The CHAIRMAN thanked the Committee for having honoured her and her country by electing her Chairman. She assured the members of the Committee that she would make every effort to discharge her duties to the best of her ability and expressed confidence that the co-operation of all concerned would enable the Third Committee to do constructive work, during its thirteenth session, in the highly important fields with which it dealt.

### Election of the Vice-Chairman

2. Mis BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) nominated Mr. Calamari (Panama) as Vice-Chairman of the Committee. Mr. Calamari, who had often represented his country at the United Nations in the past, enjoyed the esteem of all who had worked with him and had been in a position to value his impartiality and competence.

3. Mr. ROSSIDES (Greece), Mr. LOPEZ (Philippines), Mr. LIMA (El Salvador) and Mr. ALDUNATE (Chile) supported the nomination.

Mr. Calamari (Panama) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

4. Mr. CALAMARI (Panama) expressed his appreciation of the honour which the members of the Committee had done him by electing him Vice-Chairman, and he thanked them for having thus paid a tribute to his country's devotion to the work of the United Nations. He voiced the hope that, by properly apportioning the time at its disposal, the Committee would make more substantial progress in considering certain issues of great importance to world peace which had been carried over from year to year and that it would arrive at compromise solutions as rapidly as possible. In concluding, he expressed his desire to justify the confidence placed in him by the members of the Committee by doing everything in his power to ensure that the work of the Committee should be properly carried out.

### Election of the Rapporteur

5. Miss IMRU (Ethiopia) nominated Miss Addison (Ghana) as Rapporteur. Miss Addison, who had occupied

important educational posts in her country and had worked devotedly for various youth movements and humanitarian organizations, seemed particularly well-suited for the position.

6. Mr. SAMY (United Arab Republic), Mr. CHALAPHI RAU (India), Mr. WISE (United States of America), Mr. CALDERON PUIG (Mexico) and Miss HORNSBY-SMITH (United Kingdom) supported the nomination.

Miss Addison (Ghana) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

7. Miss ADDISON (Ghana) thanked the Committee on behalf of her country and herself. She hoped that all concerned would assist her in discharging her duties conscientiously and impartially.

8. Mr. BARODY (Saudi Arabia) said he was expressing the sentiments of all the members of the Committee in congratulating Mrs. Tsaldaris on her election as Chairman. Everyone would recall the valuable contributions which she had made to the work of the Third Committee on earlier occasions, both as representative of Greece and as Rapporteur. He was glad to see Mr. Calamari as Vice-Chairman and was gratified that the representative of a young State which had already taken a very active part in the work of the United Nations had been elected Rapporteur.

### Organization of work (A/C.3/582, A/C.3/L.664)

9. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the members of the Committee to the letter from the President of the General Assembly (A/C.3/582), allocating agenda items to the Third Committee, and to her own note (A/C.3/L.664), concerning the agenda.

10. Mrs. ALI SOLYMAN (Afghanistan) wished to make several observations concerning the order in which she thought the Committee should consider the items allocated to it. She had no objection to considering first, and in the order indicated, the first three items listed in the letter from the President of the General Assembly, namely item 12 (Report of the Economic and Social Council), item 32 (Draft International Covenants on Human Rights) and item 31 (Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). However, she thought that the question of freedom of information (item 35), which was allocated to the Committee year after year and had not so far received all the attention it merited, should be fourth on the Committee's agenda for the current session. The item referred to was one of special importance in an age when information media constituted a dangerous weapon that could serve to prolong or aggravate world tension. It might be contended that many Governments had not yet indicated their opinion to the Secretary-General as requested and that a greater number of replies would probably be available if the question was not taken up until the latter part

of the session. On the other hand, it could be argued that all the Member States would be able to state their positions through their representatives at the Committee meetings devoted to the question of freedom of information. The prospect of a fairly early debate might even encourage them to make their views known without further delay. She therefore urged that the item in question should be placed fourth on the agenda for the session—or even third if it was possible to reschedule consideration of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. She suggested that item 71 (The organization of an international public health and medical year) should be considered next, followed by item 34 (Advisory services in the field of human rights: report of the Economic and Social Council) and, finally item 33. (Recommendations concerning international respect for the right of peoples and nations to self-determination). The last-mentioned item, though undeniably important, should be considered at the end because of the likelihood that it would give rise to political controversy which might consume too much of the Committee's limited time.

11. Mr. MASSOUD-ANSARI (Iran) felt that the Committee should begin by considering the report of the Economic and Social Council, as proposed. He recalled in that connexion that, the previous year, the Committee had considered first the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and then the other questions within its jurisdiction. He asked whether the same procedure would be followed at the current session.

12. Mr. BRATUS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) pointed out that it was his delegation which had proposed the inclusion of the item concerning the organization of an international public health and medical research year on the General Assembly agenda. He would like that important item to be considered third. It was planned to interrupt consideration of the draft Covenants when the High Commissioner for Refugees arrived in New York at the beginning of November. The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) was expected to be in New York at the end of October. In view of the fact that the Director-General's presence was essential to the consideration of the Ukrainian proposal, and that the Chairman of the Ukrainian delegation, who was to leave New York before the end of the session, was anxious to participate personally in the consideration of the proposal, he (Mr. Bratus) requested that the item should be placed third on the agenda for the session, before the item concerning the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

13. Mr. ROSSIDES (Greece) suggested that the proposed order should be retained in order to limit procedural discussions which resulted in the loss of valuable time.

14. Mr. PALAR (Indonesia) thought that the order followed in the letter from the President of the General Assembly (A/C.3/582) was on the whole acceptable. He would have no objection, however, if item 71 were moved to the third position on the agenda, as requested by the representative of the Ukrainian SSR. On the other hand, he could not accept the Afghan proposal that consideration of the recommendations concerning respect for the right of peoples to self-determination should be deferred to the end of

the session. His delegation attached very great importance to that question, he suggested that far from being deferred to the end of the session, it should be given the second position on the agenda in place of the item concerning the draft Covenants, which would then become the fourth item.

15. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) felt that, to begin with, the Secretary of the Committee should indicate approximately how many meetings the Committee would be able to hold during the session. The Committee should then decide not to take up, during the consideration of the report of the Economic and Social Council, those questions dealt with in the report which appeared elsewhere on the agenda, for example, advisory services in the field of human rights, and freedom of information. Priority consideration should be given to the part of the Council report which related to UNICEF. The Afghan representative's suggestions as to the order of the items should be adopted. In view of the request made by the Ukrainian representative, it would be advisable to take up item 71 either before or after the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which, for practical reasons, would be considered at the end of October or the beginning of November. The question of freedom of information should be given thorough study during the current session. It was, of course, desirable to progress as rapidly as possible with the draft International Covenants on Human Rights, but care should be taken lest excessive haste should impair the quality of the work. Exactly what should be done with regard to the item on the right of peoples to self-determination was not very clear, and the matter was raising doubts in some minds; it would be helpful if those who wished the Committee to give early consideration to that item would state precisely what their reasons were.

16. Mr. MICHALOWSKI (Poland) said that, after completing consideration of the report of the Economic and Social Council and the draft Covenants, the Committee should take advantage of the presence in New York of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Director-General of WHO in order to study items 31 and 71.

17. Mrs. HAYDEN (Canada) also thought that the report of the Economic and Social Council should be given first place and that the Committee should also, as in previous years, make arrangements to hear the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Committee was required to make every effort to complete consideration of the draft Covenants before 10 December. She therefore made a formal proposal that the Committee should devote half of its meetings to consideration of the draft Covenants.

18. Miss ADDISON (Ghana) declared that, since items 32 and 33 were closely related, it was essential to consider them one after the other. Except for the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Committee should examine the questions allocated to it in the order in which they appeared in the letter from the President of the General Assembly.

19. Mr. LOPEZ (Philippines) held that, in view of the experience of the twelfth session, it would be preferable to examine the draft Covenants last. As soon as it concluded its consideration of the report of the Economic and Social Council, the Committee should in any event make a basic decision with regard to the

question of freedom of information: it must decide whether it was or was not prepared to continue its examination of the draft Convention. That decision would determine the amount of time that would be available for its other work.

20. Mrs. LEFLEROVÁ (Czechoslovakia) agreed with the Ukrainian representative that the question of the organization of an international public health and medical research year, which was of great social importance and significance, should be considered as soon as possible.

21. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) asked whether the Committee, when it examined the report of the Economic and Social Council, would take up the question of UNICEF separately, as it had done the year before.

22. The CHAIRMAN thought it would be preferable not to make provision for separate consideration of that question; in order to gain time, the representatives should be able to take up all the questions dealt with in the report if they wished. The question of UNICEF was, in any case, one of the most important of those questions.

23. Mr. DEHLAVI (Pakistan) wished the question of UNICEF to be discussed separately. He also agreed with the Canadian representative that until 10 December the Committee should devote itself primarily to the draft Covenants.

24. Mr. CHENG (China) thought it was less important to fix the order in which the various agenda items were to be considered than it was to decide how many meetings would be devoted to each of them. Some questions, such as the report of the Economic and Social Council, the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the advisory services in the field of human rights, required close study. Another item—that of the draft Covenants—had to be given priority consideration in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1041 (XI). Still others—those dealing with the right of peoples to self-determination and with freedom of information—appeared periodically on the agenda and must not be neglected. Finally, a new item (item 71) had been proposed for consideration by the Committee at the current session. In order to organize its work in the most efficient possible way, the Committee should first examine the question of UNICEF under the item concerning the report of the Economic and Social Council. In the meantime, the Secretary of the Committee could prepare a memorandum indicating how many meetings were expected to be held in all and how many could be devoted to each item; the Committee would subsequently determine the order in which the items were to be considered. As for the draft Covenants and the draft Convention on Freedom of Information, discussion of the procedure to be followed was essential if the Committee was to discharge its responsibilities.

25. Mr. VAKIL (Secretary of the Committee) said that it could already be estimated that the Committee would hold about seventy meetings during the session.

26. Mr. THIERRY (France) noted that with regard to the draft Covenants the Committee was legally bound by the General Assembly's decisions—particularly by resolution 1041 (XI), which required it to give the

question priority in its debates. The French delegation therefore associated itself with the Canadian proposal.

27. Miss FUJITA (Japan) agreed with the Greek representative that the Committee should adhere to the order suggested by the President of the General Assembly, with the exception of item 71, the position of which might be changed.

28. Mr. PANCHENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) also felt that item 71 should be taken up as soon as possible, and he supported the suggestions made to that effect.

29. Mr. YNSFRAN (Paraguay) did not think it desirable to change the order of the items before the Committee.

30. The CHAIRMAN noted that all the representatives were apparently in agreement that the Committee should begin its work by considering the report of the Economic and Social Council. She requested their opinion on the formal proposal submitted by the Canadian representative.

31. Mr. TOSCANO (Italy) expressed satisfaction with the Canadian proposal. Indeed, the Committee should not limit itself to thirty-five meetings for consideration of the draft Covenants but should hold as many as were necessary to complete that task.

32. Mr. ROSSIDES (Greece) said that, even if the Committee devoted thirty-five meetings to the draft Covenants, it would be able to complete consideration of no more than five or six articles. Recalling the fourteen-Power draft resolution submitted at the twelfth session (A/C.3/L.663),<sup>1</sup> he said that it was essential for the Committee to examine other means of completing the drafting of the Covenants within the prescribed time and that it would be advisable to do so at once. Referring to the statement of the Philippine representative, he pointed out that the Committee was bound by only two formal decisions of the General Assembly, which dealt respectively with the draft Covenants and the question of the right of peoples to self-determination. It was those two questions which should be given priority.

33. Mr. ELMANDJRA (Morocco) thought that excessive rigidity—in the sense of assigning a specified number of meetings to each item on the agenda—might have serious disadvantages. He pointed out that General Assembly resolution 1041 (XI), which had been cited by the French representative, contained the words "if possible" and, consequently, did not impose an absolute obligation on the Committee to complete consideration of the draft Covenants at the current session.

34. The Moroccan delegation supported the Indonesian proposal that item 33, regarding the right of peoples and nations to self-determination, should be considered immediately after item 12, concerning the report of the Economic and Social Council.

35. Mr. YAPOU (Israel) supported the Canadian proposal. The Committee should be in a position to make substantial progress on the drafting of the Covenants in the course of the session at which the tenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of

<sup>1</sup>/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Session, Annexes, agenda item 33, document A/3764 and Add.1, para. 122.

Human Rights and of the Genocide Convention was celebrated.

36. Mr. LOPEZ (Philippines) said that it was physically impossible to complete consideration of the draft Covenants by the end of the thirteenth session and that, in his opinion, the question of freedom of information was becoming increasingly urgent and should be given priority consideration. It was therefore essential for the Committee to reach a decision on the Canadian proposal without delay.

37. Miss MacENTEE (Ireland) referred to the contention of the French delegation that the Committee was bound by resolution 1041 (XI) to complete the drafting of the Covenants at the current session and drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that the resolution merely required the Committee to accomplish that task "if possible".

38. Mr. VAKIL (Secretary of the Committee) said he could draw up a scheme for apportioning the meetings with the assistance of the officers of the Committee. However, the task was an extremely delicate one,

and past Committee decisions had been based on precedents. The Committee was apparently ready to arrive at a decision on the Canadian proposal, but he would first wish to ask whether, in considering the report of the Economic and Social Council, representatives intended to study the question of UNICEF separately or hold a general discussion of chapters VI and VII of the report. A decision on that point would facilitate preparation of the document requested.

39. Mr. BARODY (Saudi Arabia) suggested that the Committee start with a general discussion of the report of the Economic and Social Council. Those representatives who took a special interest in UNICEF would always be free to deal with that question, particularly if they had draft resolutions to submit. When the Committee had the document which was to be prepared by the Secretariat, it would be able to apportion the meetings among the various agenda items.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.5 p.m.