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CONTENTS

	Page
Opening statement by the Chairman . . . . .	3
Election of the Vice-Chairman. . . . .	3
Election of the Rapporteur . . . . .	3
Organization of the Committee's work. . . . .	3

Chairman: Mr. Ismael THAJEB (Indonesia).

Opening statement by the Chairman

1. The CHAIRMAN thanked the Committee for having elected him and pledged that he would spare no effort to justify the confidence it had placed in him. As an Asian from a developing country, he felt particularly privileged to serve as chairman of a committee whose common task was the search for increased international co-operation in order to accelerate the economic development of developing countries in the context of an expanding world economy. The Committee had a very heavy agenda, but with patience, perseverance, goodwill and co-operation, he was sure that, as in past years, it would take action in a positive and effective manner.

Election of the Vice-Chairman

2. Mr. CHAKRAVARTY (India) nominated Mr. Fernandini (Peru).

3. Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America) and Mr. SMID (Czechoslovakia) supported the nomination.

*Mr. Fernandini (Peru) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.*

Election of the Rapporteur

4. Mr. KAPLANSKY (Canada) nominated Mr. Appiah (Ghana).

5. Mr. BERNARDES (Brazil), Mr. TELL (Jordan) and Mr. KANO (Nigeria) supported the nomination.

*Mr. Appiah (Ghana) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

Organization of the Committee's work  
(A/C.2/217; A/C.2/L.721)

6. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the letter from the President of the General Assembly (A/C.2/217) listing the items allocated to the Second Committee and to his own note concerning the organization of work (A/C.2/L.721).

7. Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America) felt that the Chairman's suggestions were basically sound and, if implemented, would expedite the Committee's work. He particularly applauded the suggestion that the

general debate should cover all items before the Committee. That would avoid repetition and at the same time give each delegation an opportunity of stressing those items of special interest to it. In paragraph 8 of document A/C.2/L.721, the Chairman had announced his intention of circulating a note containing suggestions for consideration by the Committee regarding the time schedule for taking up draft resolutions. It might be helpful if the note were to be circulated before any draft resolutions were actually submitted. In paragraph 10 it had been suggested that the Committee might wish to set 13 December 1963 as the date for the completion of its work. He wondered if an earlier target might be contemplated in view of the heavy agenda to be disposed of by the Economic and Social Council at its resumed thirty-sixth session, in December.

8. Mr. ARKADYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) saw no point in dividing the items into two groups if the Committee was in fact going to hold a general debate on all the items on its agenda. At the seventeenth session of the General Assembly, the Committee had divided the items into four groups, a procedure which had facilitated discussion. The new proposal put forward by the Chairman for a single general debate would mean that the Committee's attention would not be concentrated on specific problems. It was a question not merely of saving time but also of seeing that the agenda was dealt with in the most efficient manner. He suggested that the Committee should divide the items which had been referred to it into three groups: items 33, 35, 39 and 76; item 34 concerning the conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament, a vitally important subject which must be singled out for separate though not necessarily lengthy discussion; and items 36 and 37. After each group of items had been discussed, the necessary decision or draft resolution could be adopted.

9. Mr. BOLT (New Zealand) observed that there was much to be said for a general debate on all items. While the suggestions put forward by Mr. Arkadyev had merit, it must be remembered that the Committee did not have as much time at its disposal as it would wish. If the Committee had to reach a firm decision, he would favour the proposals put forward by the Chairman. However, if, as the Chairman had suggested, the proposals submitted under the first group of items were taken up during the second half of October, that would allow only fifteen days for general debate. At the preceding session, the general debate had lasted nearly a month, although the Committee had not always employed the full time available to it. If the general debate was to be concluded by 15 October, he therefore suggested that the list of speakers in that debate should be closed on 4 October. That would give all delegations a chance to speak and would also facilitate the Chairman's task of arranging a time-table.

10. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that the Chairman's suggestions were generally acceptable to his delegation, since a single general debate would expedite the Committee's work. It should be made clear, however, that the draft resolutions would be considered in two separate groups. The Chairman should, at the earliest possible date, circulate a time schedule for the consideration of the two groups of draft resolutions. The Committee could decide to give special and separate treatment to draft resolutions on certain items; there would no doubt be a separate discussion on any draft resolutions relating to the use of the resources released by disarmament. It was not clear from paragraph 10 of the Chairman's note whether the Economic and Social Council would need to meet before the third week of December. As it would not hold a spring session in 1964, the Council would have a lengthy agenda for its resumed thirty-sixth session. The Secretariat should consider on what dates the Committee would not meet during the later stages of its work; those dates could be offered for meetings of the Council.

11. Mr. TELL (Jordan) said that since it was not possible to dispense with the general debate completely, his delegation would endorse the procedure suggested by the Chairman. He agreed with the representative of New Zealand that a date should be fixed for the closure of the list of speakers in the general debate.

12. Mr. AYARI (Tunisia) said that the procedure suggested by the Chairman was generally acceptable. However, his delegation had reservations about the statement, in paragraph 5 of the Chairman's note, that under the first group of items the Committee could consider any questions which might arise in connexion with the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. While any delegation could state its views on the Conference, no proposal should be made which would in any way jeopardize the intensive preparatory work already accomplished in connexion with the Conference.

13. With regard to disarmament, the recent signing of the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water was an extremely important event which should be reflected in the work of the eighteenth session of the General Assembly. However, that event did not justify special treatment of the question of disarmament in the Second Committee, and his delegation would favour consideration of that subject in the first group of items. The peaceful use of the resources released by disarmament was a technical question which was already being studied by United Nations bodies and by Member States.

14. His delegation was not satisfied with the traditional procedure whereby the progress and operations of the Special Fund and the United Nations programmes of technical co-operation, instead of being the subject of a substantive discussion, were merely noted and endorsed. Those two items were closely linked with the whole subject of the accelerated flow of capital and technical assistance to the developing countries. He therefore suggested that the activities and policies of United Nations credit organs, in particular the Special Fund, should be discussed in detail when the Committee considered sub-items (d) and (e) of item 33.

15. Mr. HAKIM (Lebanon) thought that the procedure suggested by the Chairman was sufficiently flexible to

meet the points raised by various delegations. As stated in paragraph 6 of the Chairman's note, delegations wishing to make general remarks in the context of draft resolutions would have an opportunity to do so. It would be unwise to depart from a procedure which had proved its worth in the past. The general debate was extremely valuable, since delegations did not restrict their remarks to the agenda items but touched on general economic problems and the experience of their own countries. The procedure suggested by the Chairman did not preclude special discussion of the important matter of disarmament. Two weeks did not seem long enough for the general debate, which should continue through the second half of October.

16. Mr. CUMES (Australia) suggested that the statements by the Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs, the Managing Director of the Special Fund, the Executive Chairman of the Technical Assistance Board and the Commissioner for Technical Assistance should be made as early as possible in the proceedings, since delegations would wish to study them when preparing their own interventions.

17. Mr. COSIO VILLEGAS (Mexico) expressed support for the Chairman's suggestions. The statements made had related to points of detail or clarification of the Chairman's note and there was basic support for the procedure outlined therein. When certain points had been clarified, it should be possible to take a decision on the organization of work.

18. Mr. KANO (Nigeria) thought that the consideration of any questions which might arise in connexion with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should be approached with caution. The work of the Preparatory Committee should not be prejudiced by any discussion in the Second Committee. He agreed that it was not sufficient merely to note the progress and operations of the Special Fund and that the flow of capital, in which the developing countries were most interested, should be fully discussed. At least three weeks would be required for the general debate and a closing date should be fixed for the list of speakers. The developing countries wanted the matter of the resources released by disarmament to be discussed in detail, although not necessarily in a separate debate.

19. Mr. ARKADYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that the situation was not exactly the same as in the previous year, when it had been decided to hold a separate discussion of disarmament. No such decision had been taken at the current session, although the importance of the item had been recognized. On the basis of paragraph 6 of the Chairman's note, which mentioned flexibility in the Committee's deliberations, his delegation requested the separate discussion of item 34, even if no draft resolutions were submitted on the subject. The Economic and Social Council had adopted resolution 982 (XXXVI), which had advocated study by the United Nations of the economic and social aspects of disarmament.

20. Mr. SOUSSAN (Morocco) endorsed the Tunisian representative's warning against reopening the debate on the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, which might have an unfavourable effect on the work already done in fixing final dates for the Conference. He would be glad if the Chairman would amend the second sentence of paragraph 5 of his note in that sense. He also endorsed the Australian representative's suggestion that the Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs and the heads of the three operational programmes should speak at an early date.

21. Mr. UNWIN (United Kingdom) considered the Chairman's note acceptable as a whole, although it might be amended at some points. In particular, it would be highly desirable, as the United States representative had suggested, for the Committee to aim at an earlier closing date. Moreover, if a closing date for the list of speakers were established at the beginning, the Committee's work would make faster progress. There was much merit in the French representative's suggestion that meetings of the Economic and Social Council might be fitted in with meetings of the Second Committee in order to reduce the pressure on delegations in December. He also supported the Australian representative's suggestion that the four major Secretariat statements should be made as soon as possible.

22. Mr. STANOVNIK (Yugoslavia) said that the Chairman's note was fully satisfactory. A general debate covering all items, as the Chairman had suggested, was equivalent to a general debate on the report of the Council. There was a great advantage to having such a debate at the beginning of the Committee's work because representation was likely to be at a high level and the debate would concentrate attention on the most important economic questions of the day. Delegations would have every opportunity to emphasize all points to which they attached particular importance. It was most unlikely that any delegation would fail to refer to the economic and social consequences of disarmament, which not only constituted the subject matter of item 34 but was also included in item 12 because it was dealt with in chapter I of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/5503). Delegations would also have ample opportunity to refer to that matter in the debate on draft resolutions. It therefore made little difference whether the item was discussed separately or as part of the general debate.

23. Noting that it was legally impossible for the Committee to change any of the organizational arrangements already made for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, he pointed out that the general debate in the Second Committee nevertheless provided an excellent opportunity for delegations not represented on the Preparatory Committee, in particular, to state their views on the problems to be discussed at the Conference; indeed, their views would be very helpful to the Preparatory Committee at its third session.

24. Since it was difficult to foresee what draft resolutions would be proposed, he wondered if it might not be a good idea for the Chairman to set deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions on individual items. If that procedure was adopted, it would eliminate possible disputes about priority between draft resolutions, and if two resolutions concerned the same subject, they could be discussed simultaneously or in immediate sequence.

25. Mr. HIREMATH (India) felt that the difference of opinion on the Chairman's note was mainly one of emphasis, since no one denied that the Committee must study all the items before it adequately, in an orderly manner and within the time-limit set. It would be useful to start with a general debate on all items, which would give delegations a comprehensive understanding of the views of others. As the Australian representative had suggested, it would also be useful for the Committee to hear the statements of the Under-Secretary and the heads of the three operational programmes as early as possible. It would also be wise to set an

early date for closing the list of speakers. He endorsed the Lebanese representative's suggestion that provision should be made for a general debate lasting three weeks. While he agreed that a general debate covering all items should not preclude the adequate consideration of any individual item, he felt that the Chairman's suggestions provided ample time for the discussion of individual issues.

26. Mr. AUGUSTE (Haiti) endorsed the Chairman's suggestions but preferred a general debate of three weeks, which would give the smaller delegations a better opportunity to make their voices heard. He also endorsed the suggestion that the four Secretariat statements should be made as soon as possible.

27. Mr. GHÉBEH (Syria) felt that the Chairman's suggestions were not incompatible with the desire of the Soviet Union representative to give particular importance to some items, such as that on disarmament, provided that flexibility was maintained. He also felt that the general debate should last three weeks.

28. Mr. CUMES (Australia) said that he had certain misgivings about the suggestion to intersperse meetings of the Council with meetings of the Second Committee, since such a procedure might merely hamper the work of both bodies. Some delegations sent special representatives to the Council, but it would be difficult for them to do so unless specific dates were fixed for its meetings. He therefore suggested that a fixed date should be set for the resumed thirty-sixth session of the Council, which should not last longer than a week. The Second Committee might try to conclude its work by 6 December in order to leave adequate time for the Council's meetings.

29. The CHAIRMAN noted that many delegations supported the approach he had taken in his note but that some had made qualifications and one had proposed an alternative approach. He called attention to his remark in paragraph 4 of the note, that the approach he was suggesting was designed not merely to save time but also to provide a better balance between the two groups of items, which were interconnected at least at the policy level, and to paragraph 6, in which he had said that delegations wishing to make general remarks in the context of any draft resolution would have an opportunity to do so. He hoped that that explanation would satisfy the Soviet Union representative.

30. He would take into consideration the reservations expressed with regard to particular sentences of the document. Since he was not yet in a position to prepare the note referred to in paragraph 8 dealing with the time-table for the submission of draft resolutions, some draft resolutions would undoubtedly be circulated before the note appeared.

31. He proposed that the target date for the completion of the Committee's work should provisionally be advanced to 6 December, that the general debate might be prolonged to three weeks if the need arose, and that the list of speakers in the general debate should be closed on 4 October. He would urge the heads of the three operational programmes to speak earlier. The Secretariat would contact the members of the Council with regard to its resumed session, and he would bring the matter up again at a later stage.

32. If there were no objections, he would assume that the Committee endorsed his note with those clarifications.

*It was so decided.*

33. In reply to a question from Mr. ARKADYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), the CHAIRMAN said that only a provisional decision could be taken on the date for the completion of the Committee's work since it was impossible to foresee how the debate would develop. He understood the Committee's decision

to mean approval of his note with the clarifications and changes he had made, taking into consideration those suggested by members.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.