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FORTY-SECOND SESSION
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GENERAL COMMITTEE
1st meeting
held on
Wednesday, 16 September 1987
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. FLORIN (President of the General Assembly)

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ORGANIZATION OF THE FORTY-SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

ORGANIZATION OF THE FORTY-SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/BUR/42/1)

Section I. Introduction

1. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the provisions reproduced in annexes V, VI and VII to its rules of procedure.

Section II. Organization of the session

2. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to Section II of document A/BUR/42/1, relating to the organization of the session. By decision 34/401, reproduced as annex VI to its rules of procedure, the General Assembly had adopted a number of provisions aimed at rationalizing its procedures and organization. Many of those provisions had already been implemented at previous sessions and were therefore not referred to in document A/BUR/42/1. The Committee might, however, wish to draw the General Assembly's attention to those provisions which had not yet been or had been only partly implemented.

Paragraph 4 (General Committee)

3. The Committee took note of paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 5 to 8 (Rationalization of work)

4. The Committee took note of paragraphs 5 to 8 of the Secretary-General's memorandum and decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 7 of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations; it also decided that the practice of not holding concurrent meetings of the Special Political Committee and the Fourth Committee should continue.

Paragraph 9 (Closing date of the session)

5. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that no closing date should be decided upon at the present time, but that every effort should be made to curtail the duration of the session.

Paragraphs 10 to 12 (Schedule of meetings)

6. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly, as a cost-saving measure, that all morning meetings should begin at 10.00 a.m., not 10.30.

7. It was so decided.

8. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that delegations should be reminded of the importance of punctuality in the interests of ensuring an effective and orderly organization of work and achieving economies for the United Nations.

Paragraphs 13 to 15 (General debate)

9. The CHAIRMAN said that, in view of the large number of delegations already inscribed on the list of speakers for the general debate in the General Assembly, representatives were urged to speak in the order listed. Those unable to speak at the scheduled time would be put at the end of the list for the following day.

10. The Committee decided to endorse the suggestions contained in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the Secretary-General's memorandum, and to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 15.

Paragraphs 16 and 17 (Explanations of vote, right of reply and length of statements)

11. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of decision 34/401, and to rules 72 and 114 of the rules of procedure and paragraph 22 of annex VI thereto, for appropriate action to be taken by the Assembly in plenary meeting and by the Main Committees.

Paragraph 18 (Records of meetings)

12. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should adopt the suggestions in paragraph 18 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 20 (Election of the Chairmen of the Main Committees)

13. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraphs 18 and 19 of decision 34/401, to the fact that they had been only partly implemented so far and to the importance of their implementation.

Paragraph 21 (Concluding statements)

14. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the need for full implementation of paragraph 17 of decision 34/401.

Paragraphs 22 and 23 (Questions related to the programme budget)

15. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the provisions of paragraphs 25 and 26 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 24 and 25 (Documentation)

16. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 28 of decision 34/401, and to examine the question of the volume of documentation in depth with a view to proposing the adoption of stricter measures by the General Assembly.

Paragraphs 26 to 28 (Resolutions)

17. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 32 of decision 34/401 and to recommendation 3 (f) by the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts.

Paragraphs 29 and 30 (Special conferences)

18. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the recommendations referred to in paragraph 29 of the Secretary-General's memorandum and to the relevant provisions of recommendation 4 by the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts.

Paragraph 31 (Meetings of subsidiary organs)

19. Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), supported by Mr. ENGO (Cameroon), proposed that the Special Committee against Apartheid should be authorized to meet during the forty-second session, because circumstances might require it to meet at any time.

20. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should authorize the nine subsidiary organs referred to in paragraph 31 of the Secretary-General's memorandum and the Special Committee against Apartheid to meet during the forty-second session.

Section III. Adoption of the agenda

21. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with rule 40 of the rules of procedure, the Committee would not consider the substance of any item except in so far as it bore directly on the question of whether or not to recommend the inclusion of that item in the agenda. The draft agenda consisted of 147 items.

22. The Committee took note of paragraph 33 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

23. The Committee noted that, if the General Assembly adopted the draft resolution annexed to decision 14/4 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, it might decide not to hold elections in the current year but to extend by one year the terms of office of Council members whose terms would expire on 31 December 1987.

Inclusion of items

Items 1 to 6

24. The CHAIRMAN said that items 1 to 6 had already been considered; he would therefore take it that there were no comments on their inclusion in the agenda.

Items 7 to 23

25. Mr. AZZAROUK (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), commenting on item 21, said that the economic situation in Africa remained as serious as before and that it would be desirable for the wording of the item to refer first to the critical economic situation in Africa, and then to the Programme of Action.

26. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to incorporate a reference to the critical economic situation in Africa in the wording of agenda item 21.

27. It was so decided.

28. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 7 to 23 in the agenda.

Items 24 to 28

29. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 24 to 28 in the agenda.

Item 29

30. Mr. BLANC (France) said that it would be regrettable if the General Assembly had to consider the item again. Consideration of the item would constitute a violation of Article 7, paragraph 2, of the Charter, since the island of Mayotte was under French sovereignty. Moreover, France and Comoros regularly reviewed the question together.

31. Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros) said that the question was not exclusively France's concern. The various resolutions the United Nations had adopted on the subject of the island of Mayotte all affirmed that the island belonged to Comoros. It was thus inaccurate to speak of the United Nations interfering in the internal affairs of France. The item should remain on the agenda.

32. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 29 in the agenda.

Item 30

33. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 30 in the agenda.

Item 31

34. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of Afghanistan had asked to participate in the discussion of the item; if there was no objection, he would invite him to take a place at the Committee table.

35. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Dost (Afghanistan) took a place at the Committee table.

36. Mr. DOST (Afghanistan) protested against the inclusion of the item in the agenda of the forty-second session, on the grounds that it would violate Article 2, paragraph 7 of the Charter. The imperialist and reactionary circles which had introduced the item were seeking only to interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs and to divert the attention of the world community from the evils for which they were responsible all over the world. Far from seeking to solve the problems which existed in that part of the world, they missed no opportunity of preventing a political solution. The proposals submitted by the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in 1980 and 1981 constituted the most realistic basis for finding a comprehensive solution to the points at issue between Afghanistan and its neighbours. The policy of national reconciliation designed to normalize the situation within and outside the country had been welcomed by the people, and had thus been able to make headway. Thanks to the determination and flexibility shown by the Afghan side, the Geneva talks, with the untiring support of the Secretary-General's personal representative, had enabled the two sides to narrow their differences. Under the circumstances, a debate in the General Assembly would only complicate matters. In the event that the Committee should nevertheless decide to recommend the inclusion of item 31, the outcome of the debate, whatever it might be, would not be binding upon Afghanistan.

37. Mr. LOZINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the arguments of Afghanistan that the inclusion of the item would be a violation of the Charter and of international law. The request for its inclusion was an attempt to impose on a sovereign State something which the people and Government of that State rejected and if it succeeded would constitute a dangerous precedent. The process of national reconciliation and normalization had advanced substantially in Afghanistan during the past year, and progress had also been made in the talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan. A debate on the question at the forty-second session would contribute nothing to a settlement.

38. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of Pakistan had asked to participate in the discussion of the item; if there was no objection, he would invite him to take a place at the Committee table.

39. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Omar (Pakistan) took a place at the Committee table.

40. Mr. OMAR (Pakistan) said that the proposal of the representative of the Kabul régime, supported by the Soviet Union, was indefensible and unacceptable. He recalled that the General Assembly had taken up the question of the situation in Afghanistan in 1980 following the foreign intervention in that country, and that since then it had adopted by an overwhelming majority resolutions calling for the withdrawal of the foreign forces, respect for the country's territorial sovereignty and independence, and the return of the Afghan refugees to their country.

(Mr. Omar, Pakistan)

41. However, none of those demands had been met. The occupation, and the resistance, continued. The sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Afghanistan were still threatened. The foreign intervention in Afghanistan was a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibited the use of force in relations between States. The situation in Afghanistan was a threat to regional and world peace and security. In paragraph 9 of resolution 41/33, the General Assembly had decided to include the item in the agenda of its forty-second session. It was in fact the Assembly's duty to take up and consider the question.

42. Mr. HUANG (China) said that the occupation of Afghanistan was a violation of that country's territorial integrity and independence. Although the international community had for eight years been calling for the withdrawal of the foreign troops, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, the occupation continued. China considered that, in order to maintain respect for the Charter and to safeguard peace and stability in the region, the General Assembly should continue considering the question.

43. Mr. NYAMDOO (Mongolia) said that a decision to include the item in the agenda of the General Assembly would constitute interference in a country's internal affairs.

44. Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros) said that the question related to international security, and should thus remain on the agenda.

45. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 31 in the agenda.

46. Mr. Dost (Afghanistan) and Mr. Omar (Pakistan) withdrew.

Items 32 to 34

47. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 32 to 34 in the agenda.

Item 35

48. Mr. OKUN (United States of America) said that United States practice had always been not to raise any objection to the inclusion of an item in the agenda, and that it would not change its attitude in the present instance. He nevertheless wished to point out that the question had already been discussed in depth in the Security Council and at the General Assembly's forty-first session. Moreover, the agenda of the forty-second session was already overburdened to the point at which some doubts had been felt that the Assembly could complete its work within the allotted time. Lastly, there was no point in going over the same ground again, thus giving the Libyan Government an opportunity of presenting yet again a distorted version of the facts.

49. Mr. TREIKI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the comments of the United States representative on the subject of item 35 gave away the truth. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, having been unable to obtain justice in the Security Council, had been obliged to turn to the General Assembly, the conscience of the international community. The question had indeed been considered, and the General Assembly had condemned the United States attack. The debate had thus served some purpose. Moreover, the General Assembly had adopted a resolution providing for the continuation of the debate and had requested the Secretary-General to report on the matter. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya therefore requested that the item be retained in the agenda.

50. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 35 in the agenda.

Items 36 to 42

51. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 36 to 42 in the agenda.

Item 43

52. Mr. ENGO (Cameroon) noted that items 41 and 43 were closely linked and proposed that they should be discussed together.

53. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had already decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 41 in the agenda. He suggested that the Committee should defer its decision on item 43 until later.

54. It was so decided.

Items 44 to 46

55. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 44 to 46 in the agenda.

Item 47

56. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, at the last meeting of the forty-first session, on 14 December 1987, the General Assembly had decided to defer consideration of that item to its forty-third session and to include the question in the provisional agenda of that session. The Committee had therefore no decision to take on that point.

Items 48 to 66

57. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 48 to 66 in the agenda.

Item 67

58. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, at the last meeting of the forty-first session, held on 14 September 1987, the General Assembly had decided to include in the draft agenda of the forty-second session a sub-item (n) of item 67, entitled "Comprehensive programme of disarmament: report of the Conference on Disarmament".

59. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee recommended the inclusion of that item, including sub-item (n), in the agenda.

60. It was so decided.

Items 68 to 72

61. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 68 to 72 in the agenda.

Item 73

62. The CHAIRMAN said that the author of the proposal to include that item in the agenda had requested that consideration of sub-item (c), entitled "Need for result-oriented political dialogue to improve the international situation", should be deferred to the forty-third session so that more time could be devoted to it.

63. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee recommended that item 73 should be included with sub-items (a) and (b) only.

64. It was so decided.

Items 74 to 80

65. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 74 to 80 in the agenda.

Item 81

66. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of Madagascar had asked to participate in the discussion of the item; if there was no objection, he would invite him to take a place at the Committee table.

67. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Rabetafika (Madagascar) took a place at the Committee table.

68. Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) said that the exchanges of views which had taken place periodically between the French and Malagasy authorities over several years had not led to a settlement of the dispute. He hoped that contacts would be continued in accordance with resolutions 34/91 and 35/123. The Malagasy Government requested, however, that the item should be retained in the agenda in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/416, because it was convinced that, with the

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

assistance of the international community, the problems could be settled with due respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter.

69. Mr. BLANC (France) expressed regret that the Committee should have to consider the question of the inclusion of item 81 in the agenda. His delegation maintained the position which it had already expressed and considered that the inclusion of that item would be contrary to Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter, since the French and Malagasy authorities were continuing their consultations.

70. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 81 in the agenda.

71. Mr. Rabetafika (Madagascar) withdrew.

Items 82 to 113

72. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 82 to 113 in the agenda.

Item 114

73. Mr. JACOBVITS DE SZEGED (Netherlands) drew attention to the progress report of the Secretary-General (A/42/539), which provided useful information on the talks between the Indonesian and Portuguese Governments concerning East Timor. The many encouraging signs noted in the report gave grounds for hoping for concrete progress towards an agreement taking account of the characteristics, in particular the religious ones, of the population. In the circumstances, his delegation proposed that the Committee should recommend that consideration of item 114 should be deferred to the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

74. Mr. MESFURI (Tunisia) said that his country greatly appreciated the action taken by the Secretary-General to arrive at an acceptable settlement in accordance with international law. He noted that, according to the report contained in document A/42/539, the negotiations between Indonesia and Portugal had reached a sensitive stage. He thought that a decision to defer consideration of item 114 to the forty-third session would help to create a propitious atmosphere for a satisfactory result.

75. His delegation therefore supported the proposal of the Netherlands delegation.

76. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to recommend that consideration of item 114 should be deferred to the forty-third session of the General Assembly and that the question should be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

77. It was so decided.

Items 115 to 127

78. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 115 to 127 in the agenda.

Item 128

79. The CHAIRMAN recalled that there had been a request for the inclusion of an additional item (item 147) under this item. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to discuss item 128 concurrently with the additional item (item 147).

80. It was so decided.

Items 129 to 141

81. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 129 to 141 in the agenda.

Item 142

82. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of Chad had asked to participate in the discussion of the item; if there was no objection, he would invite him to take a place at the Committee table.

83. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Adoum (Chad) took a place at the Committee table.

84. Mr. ADOUM (Chad) said that international peace and security continued to be threatened in many parts of the world, and in particular by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's aggression against Chad, which had been going on for more than 14 years, leaving Chad no respite or tranquility.

85. Since March 1987, when the Chadian Government had requested that the question should be included in the agenda, major developments in the situation had taken place. With the help of friendly countries, the Chadian patriots had recovered two thirds of the 550,000 square kilometres of the national territory previously occupied by Libyan troops. However, despite repeated appeals by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations Security Council, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya still favoured the escalation of violence.

86. The right of existence claimed by Chad was in conformity with international law. It was therefore the duty of the international community to give a ruling, within the universal framework of the General Assembly, in favour of peace and the rule of law in inter-State relations.

87. Mr. TREIKI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the dispute between Chad and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was a direct inheritance of French colonization. The difficulties encountered by Chad were a result of the action taken by France to

(Mr. Treiki, Libya: Arab Jamahiriya)

impose on that country a régime favourable to it, and the peoples of Chad and Libya had fought together against French and Italian colonization.

88. During the many years of internal strife Chad had experienced, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had spared no effort to encourage reconciliation at numerous meetings. After the rebellion of certain elements supported by non-African countries, the legitimate Chadian Government had requested the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's assistance to fight a colonialist Power which was invading Chad from a neighbouring State.

89. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya fully respected Chad's territorial integrity. It was itself one of the few countries which had gained its independence under a General Assembly resolution. Its frontiers were therefore precisely defined. In that connection, it respected the Cairo Agreement of 1954.

90. As the Committee's earlier decision to recommend the inclusion of item 35 in the agenda of the General Assembly showed, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was in fact being subjected to aggression from both north and south. It was co-operating and would continue to co-operate with OAU in its efforts to settle the question, especially within the Special Committee of Heads of State which was to meet at Lusaka in September 1987, under the chairmanship of President Bongo of Gabon. Frontier disputes in Africa had always been settled in an African context, in accordance with the provisions of Article 52 of the Charter, which encouraged such a procedure. The Jamahiriya had no objection to the inclusion of any item in the agenda, but pointed out nevertheless that a wrong approach to the question might do more harm than good. It would be preferable to give the process set in motion by OAU a chance to succeed; he requested the Committee not to give way to the manoeuvres aimed at the inclusion of item 142 in the agenda of the General Assembly, which might undermine OAU's efforts by increasing the number of bodies in which the question was being discussed.

91. THE CHAIRMAN said that the representative of Gabon had asked to participate in the discussion of the item; if there was no objection, he would invite him to take a place at the Committee table.

92. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Biffot (Gabon) took a place at the Committee table.

93. Mr. BIFFOT (Gabon) read out a communiqué from the spokesman of the office of the President of the Gabonese Republic, dated 11 September 1987, announcing that, in accordance with the resolutions of the twenty-third session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of OAU held at Addis Ababa on 27, 28 and 29 July 1987, the President, El Hadji Omar Bongo, as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Mediation Committee on the Chad/Libya frontier dispute, had decided, in agreement with the current Chairman of OAU, to convene the Committee at Lusaka (Zambia) on 24 and 25 September 1987. He sincerely hoped that the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya could give a solemn undertaking that the Libyan Head of State would attend that meeting.

(Mr. Biffot, Gabon)

94. He then read out an extract from the communiqué of the Gabonese Council of Ministers dated 15 September 1987 in which the Council expressed its confidence concerning the possibility of a settlement of the conflict between Chad and Libya on the basis of dialogue and welcomed President Bongo's most recent initiatives concerning the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of Mediation on the Chad/Libya frontier dispute and the visit of the Committee's members to the Aozou strip, N'Djamena and Tripoli, in order to lead the two parties towards a negotiated solution to the conflict.

95. The CHAIRMEN said that the representative of Zambia had asked to participate in the discussion of the item; if there was no objection, he would invite him to take a place at the Committee table.

96. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Mfula (Zambia) took a place at the Committee table.

97. Mr. MFULA (Zambia) expressed regret that the dispute between two fraternal countries, Chad and Libya, should have lasted so long. As the Committee had learned, OAU was considering the question and the Ad Hoc Mediation Committee, under the chairmanship of the President of Gabon, was to meet at Lusaka at the end of the month. Although it had no objection to the inclusion of the item in the agenda of the General Assembly, his delegation thought it preferable to leave to the OAU Committee the task of conducting the delicate negotiations in search of a solution to the conflict.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.