

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TENTH SESSION

Official Records



Wednesday, 5 October 1955,
at 10.45 a.m.

New York

CONTENTS

	Page
Tribute to the memory of Marshal Alexandros Papagos, Prime Minister of Greece	9
Agenda item 25:	
Report of the Agent General of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (<i>continued</i>)	9

Chairman: Mr. Ernest G. CHAUVET (Haiti).

Tribute to the memory of Marshal Alexandros Papagos, Prime Minister of Greece

1. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of his country and of the members of the Committee, expressed his sympathy with the Greek delegation on the death of Marshal Papagos, the Prime Minister of Greece.

AGENDA ITEM 25

Report of the Agent General of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (A/2936, A/ 2982, A/C.2/L.260) (*continued*)

2. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to continue its consideration of the report of the Agent General of the United Nation Korean Reconstruction Agency (A/2936).

3. Mr. KUMYKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted that the Agent General's report contained a number of factual data indicative of the economic situation in South Korea. It reported an increase in the production of coal, electric power and textiles, and in certain other fields, such as fisheries. These results had certainly been achieved primarily through the persevering efforts of the Korean people. There were still some disturbing features in the economic picture of South Korea, especially the increase in military expenditure, with the resultant budgetary deficit and rise in prices, which adversely affected the population's standard of living. He nevertheless wished to join in the earlier expressions of sympathy with the Korean people and hoped that South Korea would overcome the existing difficulties and raise its still unsatisfactory standard of living.

4. The primary objectives of international assistance to Korea should be the restoration and development of the civilian sector of the economy. He cited as an example the Democratic People's Republic of Korea which had achieved considerable progress in restoring and developing the national economy through the persistent efforts and spirit of sacrifice of its people, as well as through international assistance. Thus, according to official information, in the two years since the signing of the armistice, 290 civilian under-

takings had been built or partly or wholly reconstructed. Coal production had increased six-fold and that of electric power stations more than three-fold; while the production of ploughs had increased 4.6 times, textile production had doubled and the landings of fish had risen 3.3 times, et cetera. In 1954, the general level of production had exceeded the 1949 level. Agriculture had also made great progress, thanks to land reform and the development of irrigation and mechanization. The prices of products sold by State and co-operative organizations had decreased by 50 per cent and the real wages of workers had more than doubled since 1953. Many dwellings had been built, as well as stores, restaurants, theatres, cinemas, hospitals and educational centres. All those achievements were part of the three-year plan (1954-1956) which the Supreme People's Congress of the Republic had approved; it was designed to ensure, by 1956, a 50 per cent increase over the 1949 figures in general production and a 100 per cent increase in the production of consumer goods.

5. In the task of rebuilding its civilian economy, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had received assistance from the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and all the peoples' democracies. The Soviet Union itself had devoted, as a gift, 1,000 million roubles assistance to North Korea, and the Chinese People's Republic had allocated 800 million yuan. He gave information about the deliveries made in that connexion.

6. The problems of Korea would obviously be easier to solve if economic and cultural relations between North and South Korea were resumed and developed. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had made specific proposals to South Korea along those lines at the Korean Political Conference at Geneva in 1954¹, and the Supreme People's Congress of the People's Republic had repeated the proposals on 30 October 1954. They had been well received by the South Korean population, but the Government had taken no action on them. He nevertheless hoped that economic and cultural relations between North and South Korea would soon be re-established and that the resumption of trade would assist the economic reconstruction of Korea.

7. With regard to the joint draft resolution (A/C.2/L.260), he felt that it was not advisable to repeat the text of a previous resolution at the present session. In his opinion, the General Assembly should confine itself to taking note of the Agent General's report. The Second Committee's recommendations should be as brief and explicit as possible. He would ask that the first and second paragraphs of the preamble be put to the vote separately.

¹See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 17, document A/2833.

8. Mr. STEWART (New Zealand) said that, according to the Agent General's report, more than half of the countless projects undertaken by the Agency in Korea had been completed by the middle of 1955. Moreover, most of the remaining projects were expected to be finished by the end of 1956. The Agent General's report afforded conclusive evidence of the contribution that the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (UNKRA) had made, and was still making, towards the re-birth of the Korean economy. The Agent General and his staff had put the limited resources at their disposal to the most effective use. New Zealand was happy to note that the Korean people had frequently expressed its appreciation of the aid it had received. The New Zealand Government felt that all the Members of the United Nations who had contributed to the support of the Agency had a right to believe that they had played a very useful part in a unique experiment. The New Zealand Government had recently provided tangible evidence of its confidence in UNKRA in the form of an additional contribution of \$279,000, which was over and above the amount pledged and brought the total New Zealand contribution to approximately \$837,000.

9. Under the joint draft resolution, of which New Zealand was a sponsor, the General Assembly would take note of the progress in the Agency's work and draw attention to the need to pursue the reconstruction programme methodically and to complete it as soon as possible. Much of the wording had been taken from resolution 828 (IX) adopted by a very large majority of the Assembly at its ninth session.

10. He recalled how much had been accomplished since the Korean conflict and expressed the New Zealand people's appreciation of the economic and humanitarian task carried out by UNKRA, for which that Agency would long be remembered.

11. Referring to the Soviet representative's comments on the joint draft resolution, he welcomed the conciliatory tone of the speech but said that the text of the draft resolution did no more than record what had already happened. He did not believe that the Committee would wish in any way to suggest a disavowal of its past actions. The New Zealand delegation could not, therefore, accept an appreciable shortening of the draft resolution in the manner proposed by the Soviet representative.

12. Mr. BIRECKI (Poland) noted with satisfaction the further progress achieved in North Korea in the sphere of economic reconstruction and development, through the efforts, energy and spirit of sacrifice of the Korean people, as well as through aid furnished in every sector by the USSR, the People's Republic of China and the peoples' democracies. Under the three-year plan, the situation in industry and food supplies had improved considerably, making possible four successive reductions in the prices of essential commodities. The reconstruction programme was of a demonstrably peaceful nature, as 77.9 per cent of the expenditures listed in the 1955 budget were for economic development and social and cultural purposes.

13. Poland was helping in the reconstruction and economic development of Korea. It was sending capital equipment, participating in the work of reconstruction and making available the services of architects and physicians. Furthermore, in 1955, the Polish Red Cross had given the North Korean authorities a hospital which was also used as a professional training

centre for the Korean health services. However, the losses caused by the war had been so heavy that the country's economy was in a difficult situation and, although much successful work had been done, serious problems were still arising.

14. As regards South Korea, the Agent General's report showed that there had been tangible, but very inadequate, progress in a number of sectors. The increasing budgetary deficit, the sharp increase in prices of essential commodities and the number of unemployed were other difficulties which had to be overcome. The situation was all the more serious, as was confirmed by the reports of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East and UNKRA, because military expenditures were increasing, to the detriment of peaceful investment.

15. Korean reconstruction and economic development would be facilitated and speeded if economic co-operation was organized between the two Koreas, which were complementary to each other both from the industrial viewpoint and in the agricultural field. The Government of North Korea, which was anxious for the welfare of the entire Korean population, had made many proposals to that effect. The Polish delegation was convinced that only the peaceful and democratic unification of Korea could lead to the full development of the country, by giving free rein to the Korean people's creative ability. Moreover, unification was essential to a continuing relaxation of international tension and the consolidation of peace in the Far East.

16. Mr. MANSOUR (Iran) thanked the Agent General for his remarkable report and recalled that Iran had always given its moral support to United Nations efforts in the reconstruction of Korea. He hoped that the Koreans would soon be able to complete the reconstruction of their country and enjoy a lasting peace.

17. The Iranian delegation would support the joint draft resolution.

18. General COULTER (Agent General of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency) replied to a number of questions raised by various representatives.

19. In reply to the Netherlands representative, he said that, out of the \$121 million spent or obligated for the reconstruction programme, the amount spent up to 30 June had been \$75 million. Since then, more than \$6,500,000 had been expended. Of the funds which had been obligated, one-half represented commitments for capital investment projects and the remainder for materials, essential imports and other expenses. In that connexion, the Agency was precluded by its financial regulations from undertaking any activity without immediately committing sufficient funds for its completion. Most of the projects envisaged would probably be completed by the end of 1956, although some of the larger construction jobs might not be finished until 1957 or, possibly, even 1958.

20. The Chilean representative had referred to his Government's contribution of 5,000 tons of nitrate. Under the Agency's financial regulations, that contribution could not be shown as received until the full consignment was delivered to Korea. He was pleased to report that those goods were on the high seas and would soon reach their destination. The same applied to the generous donation of rice by Pakistan.

21. With respect to the Australian representative's comment concerning the entries in annex I of the report, under the column "Balance outstanding", that table had been displayed in the same manner in previous reports. The practice was to show both pledges and balances, without regard to any special conditions which had been attached to them.

22. In conclusion, he thanked the representatives of the Scandinavian countries, Mexico and New Zealand for the contributions recently made by their Governments.

23. Mr. STANOVNIK (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation had clearly stated its position at the preceding session (341st meeting). He wished only to make some comments on the third paragraph of the preamble and on operative paragraph 1 of the joint draft resolution.

24. As regards the third paragraph of the preamble, it should be remembered that the entire Korean people ought to benefit from the work of reconstruction and assistance. He realized that the failure to attain that objective was in no way attributable to the Agent General, but, as was implicit in General Assembly resolution 410 (V), the aim of all economic and humanitarian action in Korea was, first and foremost, the unification of the country.

25. As to operative paragraph 1, he did not fully share the New Zealand representative's opinion; some features of the past were best forgotten.

26. The Yugoslav delegation would, nevertheless, vote in favour of the joint draft resolution, as UNKRA was making an effective contribution to the unification of Korea.

27. The CHAIRMAN put the joint draft resolution (A/C.2/L.260) on the Agent General's report (A/2936) to the vote.

The first paragraph of the preamble was adopted by 44 votes to 5, with 4 abstentions.

The second paragraph of the preamble was adopted by 51 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

The remainder of the draft resolution was adopted by 48 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 48 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

28. General COULTER (Agent General of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency) thanked the Committee for its expression of confidence in the Agency. The Agency would spare no effort in bringing to a successful conclusion the task the General Assembly had entrusted to it.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.