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**Chairman: Mr. Karel PETRŽELKA**  
 (Czechoslovakia).

***Statement by the Chairman***

1. The CHAIRMAN expressed appreciation for the tribute paid to his country by his election as Chairman.
2. He welcomed the representatives and expressed confidence that positive results would be achieved by the Committee at the current session.

***Election of the Vice-Chairman***

3. Mr. GARCIA AMADOR (Cuba) nominated Mr. Castañeda (Mexico).
4. Mr. WINKLER (Czechoslovakia), Mr. LACHS (Poland), Mr. TABIBI (Afghanistan), Mr. BELLOLIO (Chile), Mr. ELKOHEN (Morocco) and Mr. AYCINENA SALAZAR (Guatemala) supported the nomination.

*Mr. Castañeda was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.*

5. Mr. CASTAÑEDA (Mexico) said his election was a tribute to his country for which he was grateful to the Committee.

***Election of the Rapporteur***

6. Mr. SPIROPOULOS (Greece) congratulated the Chairman and Vice-Chairman on their election. He nominated Mr. Bailey (Australia) as Rapporteur. Mr. Bailey was Solicitor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and an expert in international law; he had taken a prominent part in the preparatory work leading to the formation of the United Nations and was eminently qualified to act as Rapporteur of the Committee.
7. Mr. HSUEH (China), Mr. PERERA (Ceylon), Mr. AMADO (Brazil) and Mr. SHAHA (Nepal) supported the nomination.

*Mr. Bailey was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

8. Mr. BAILEY (Australia), speaking on behalf of his country and on his own behalf, thanked the Committee for his election.

***Order of discussion of agenda items (A/C.6/350, A/C.6/351, A/C.6/L.379)***

9. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the letters regarding the Committee's agenda he had received

from the President of the General Assembly (A/C.6/350 and A/C.6/351) and to the Secretary-General's suggestions on the order in which the various items might be discussed (A/C.6/L.379).

10. Mr. ROBINSON (Israel) said that the relatively short agenda raised only one question: should the Committee first dispose of the less controversial items or should it immediately begin a debate concerning the complex question of the law of the sea? The former seemed the more logical choice. The Committee might, therefore, first consider the two questions relating to amendments of the Statute of the International Law Commission (items 53 (b) and 59). Then, after disposing of the question of certain minor amendments to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/C.6/351), which should not give rise to any protracted discussion, the Committee could promptly deal with the Secretary-General's short report on the subject of statelessness (item 54) and leave sufficient time for an unhurried debate of the International Law Commission's final report concerning the law of the sea (A/3159, chap. II).

11. Mr. MOROZOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the report on maritime matters (item 53 (a)) was certainly the most important on the Committee's agenda. It should consequently be taken up only after the other, less complex, items had been dealt with. Nevertheless, the USSR delegation could not give its unqualified support to the Secretary-General's suggestion that the Committee should begin with the question of amending article 2 of the International Law Commission's Statute (item 59). That question was of sufficient importance to warrant a few days' reflection, and delegations should be given some time for informal consultation. Such a procedure would indeed facilitate and speed final agreement. Meanwhile, the Committee could dispose of the trivial amendments to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General's report on the question of statelessness and the amendment of article 11 of the International Law Commission's Statute.

12. Mr. PATHAK (India) said that the report on the law of the sea represented the fruit of many years' work. In discussing it, the Committee would have to consider not only the International Law Commission's proposals and comments but also the vast volume of earlier work on the subject and certain decisions of the International Court of Justice. The subject consequently deserved the Committee's undivided attention and should be considered only after all the other items had been disposed of.

13. Mr. LETTS (Peru) said there was some danger in the suggestion that the most important item should be considered last. Experience had shown that the last item on the agenda usually received rather perfunctory treatment. For that reason, he would prefer the Committee to follow the order suggested by the Secretary-General (A/C.6/L.379).

14. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee might be well advised to start with the lesser items and leave the report on maritime matters (item 53 (a)) to the second stage of its discussions. The Committee would spend about twenty meetings on the law of the sea and only goodwill and punctuality would enable it to complete its work, in accordance with the desire of many delegations, before the Christmas recess.

15. Mr. WINKLER (Czechoslovakia) said that most delegations appeared to agree that the report on the law of the sea should be considered after the other items. As to the order in which the latter should be discussed, he agreed with the USSR representative that the question of amending article 2 of the International Law Commission's Statute (item 59) called for some informal exchanges of views. Furthermore, some delegations might not be in a position as yet to give the final views of their Governments on that point.

16. Mr. GLASER (Romania) said that, before debating the International Law Commission's report on the law of the sea, delegations should be given time to study the question and to prepare their statements. There would be much less risk of superficial treatment if the debate on the law of the sea were deferred until all other items had been dealt with.

17. He also agreed with the idea of allowing a few days to elapse before the suggested increase in the membership of the International Law Commission (item 59) was discussed. The Committee should first dispose of the residual items.

18. Mr. TREJOS (Costa Rica) formally proposed that the Committee should take up the items on its agenda in the following order: item 54; amendments to the General Assembly's rules of procedure; item 53 (b) and (c); item 59; and item 53 (a).

19. Mr. SALAMANCA (Bolivia), Mr. SPIROPOULOS (Greece), Mr. WINKLER (Czechoslova-

kia) and Mr. OSMAN (Sudan) supported the Costa Rican representative's proposal.

20. Mr. CASTAÑEDA (Mexico) and Mr. SHAHA (Nepal) expressed a preference for the order suggested by the Secretariat in document A/C.6/L.379.

21. Mr. STAVROPOULOS (Legal Counsel) pointed out that one advantage of leaving the discussion of item 54 to the close of the Committee's deliberations, as suggested by the Secretariat, was that the number of States willing to participate in a conference to conclude a multilateral convention relating to statelessness might by then have been brought up to the number required, under General Assembly resolution 896 (IX), before such a conference could be convened. It was moreover desirable that the Committee should begin its consideration of item 53 (a) at an early date.

22. Mr. GARCIA AMADOR (Cuba) proposed, in the light of the Legal Counsel's remarks, and as an amendment to the Costa Rican representative's proposal, that item 54 should be held over until after the debate on item 53 (a). He understood that four more meetings could be arranged during the current week; during those four meetings it should certainly be possible to dispose of the amendments to the General Assembly's rules of procedure and items 53 (b) and (c) and 59, so that the Committee would be able to take up item 53 (a) at the beginning of the following week.

23. Sir Gerald FITZMAURICE (United Kingdom) said that on that understanding he could support the Costa Rican proposal, subject to the amendment proposed by the Cuban representative.

24. Mr. TREJOS (Costa Rica) accepted the amendment proposed by the Cuban representative.

*The Costa Rican proposal was adopted, as amended.*

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.