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New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 2ND MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 4.05 p.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to begin my brief statement by extending, on behalf of all the members of the Committee and on my own behalf, a most cordial and friendly welcome to the new Member of the United Nations, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

When a new State joins our Organization, it brings with it a set of values which, by enriching plurality, is no doubt essential for the concept of universality embodied in the United Nations. We are certain that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will make a significant contribution to the work of the United Nations and, in particular, to the work of the First Committee of the General Assembly.

I wish to express my profound appreciation for the great honour and privilege that members have conferred upon me and my delegation by electing me as Chairman of the First Committee at this thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. I thank them all most warmly and sincerely for the confidence they have been kind enough to place in me.

Although I am indebted to all the representatives in the Committee, I hope I will be permitted to say that I am most grateful to my distinguished predecessor in this Committee, Ambassador Hepburn of the Bahamas, for having been gracious enough to propose my name for the chairmanship of this Committee.

It is gratifying to know that I can also count on the most valuable experience, competence and knowledge of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Sytenko, and the Assistant Secretary-General, Centre for Disarmament, Mr. ^OMartenson, and his colleagues sitting with me on the podium.

I am fully aware that the tasks assigned to the First Committee are not easy, but I count on your valuable help and co-operation to enable me to discharge my responsibilities properly. The Chair will always be available to assist delegations in the daily business of this Committee and, at the same time, will depend on their guidance in the conduct of our work. Members may rest assured

(The Chairman)

that I shall devote my efforts to serving the Committee and that I shall conduct the deliberations in a spirit of dedication and complete impartiality. I realize that we have a long session and a heavy programme of work ahead of us. Yet I believe that in a spirit of conciliation, accomodation and useful dialogue, we can achieve positive results.

The international community and world public opinion expect from the United Nations, and especially from this Committee, progress on the items before us dealing with disarmament and international security. But we shall come to those items in their substantive aspects later on.

The agenda for today's meeting concerns the election of officers of this Committee.

Before taking up our agenda, may I draw the attention of the members of the Committee to the decision of the General Assembly taken at its 1935th meeting on 22 September 1971 concerning the procedure regarding the election of officers of the Main Committees. According to that decision, the nomination of candidates should be limited to one statement for each candidate, after which the Committee should immediately proceed to the election. Therefore, the Committee will follow this procedure today.

ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMEN

Mr. SHEKH (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): First of all, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on my own behalf and on behalf of my delegation, upon your election as Chairman of the First Committee. My country is very closely linked with yours and has the best of relations with it.

On this occasion, and in accordance with tradition, it is my pleasure today to nominate Mr. Ferdinand Léopold Oyono, the Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to the United Nations of the United Republic of Cameroon, as Vice-Chairman of this Committee. Apart from the friendly relations between our two countries and his numerous qualifications, allow me to present his curriculum vitae.

He was born on 14 September 1929 in Ngo Limcong, in Cameroon, and his primary education took place there. He continued his preparatory and secondary education in France at the School of Law and Economic Science in Paris and then at the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, Political Section, also in Paris. He took a master's degree in law and economy followed by a doctorate of philosophy in economics.

He thereafter occupied the following positions. He served in different capacities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cameroon and also represented his country in consular and ambassadorial posts in France, Liberia, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Spain and the United Nations and has been ambassador to countries members of the European Community. He was chairman of the Security Council in 1975 and has headed his country's delegation to several regional and world conferences and has also undertaken several special missions.

Moreover, he has written several literary works which have been translated and published in France and widely circulated, and has delivered lectures in various universities on African and other problems.

He has been awarded several honours and medals, including the Medal for Courage of Cameroon, the High Distinction for the Liberation of Africa of Liberia, the Royal Crown award of Belgium, as well as other awards from Luxembourg, France and Morocco, to mention but a few.

(Mr. Shekh, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

He has great experience and many qualifications to offer, which he will bring to the Vice-Chairmanship of this Committee. I am certain that he will make a positive contribution to the success of the work of this Committee under your leadership, Mr. Chairman. I wish him, as I do you, Sir, every success in achieving the goals we seek together with the whole human community and in attaining the much sought after results in the field of disarmament and of securing peace and security for the world.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for his nomination of Ambassador Ferdinand Léopold Oyono of the United Republic of Cameroon for the post of Vice-Chairman. I thank him also for the kind sentiments and friendly remarks he addressed to me personally. I should like to request him to convey the Committee's appreciation to his colleague Mr. Burwin for his valuable contribution as last year's Vice-Chairman of this Committee.

There being no other nomination, I take it that, in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure and with established practice, the Committee wishes to dispense with the secret ballot and to declare Ambassador Ferdinand Léopold Oyono elected Vice-Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. Ferdinand Léopold Oyono (United Republic of Cameroon) was elected Vice-Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to express to the Vice-Chairman my warmest congratulations on the distinction that has been conferred upon him and assure him of my confidence that we shall co-operate in a harmonious manner so that we can jointly discharge the responsibilities incumbent upon us.

ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

Mr. OUNAIES (Tunisia)(interpretation from French): I should like first of all, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee for the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. The Tunisian delegation has witnessed the immense contribution you have made to the work of the United Nations and is especially happy to see you preside over the work of this very important Committee during this crucial session.

As chairman of the Candidatures Committee of the African Group, the Tunisian delegation ventures to recall, first of all, that the African Group unanimously recommended the candidacy of Egypt for the post of Rapporteur of the First Committee. There is no doubt that, among the

(Mr. Ounaies, Tunisia)

African countries, Egypt is among the best qualified to deal with the problem of disarmament; therefore, its candidacy seemed to us to be one of the most appropriate and most strongly to be recommended. The African Group endorsed its candidacy unanimously.

At this stage in our work we have learned that the Latin American Group is also a candidate for the same post. Thus, while aware of the earnestness with which the African Group has sought to further the candidacy of Egypt, I would venture, as the representative of a brother country, the oldest of our Group, and above all with the aim of facilitating the work of the First Committee and as a gesture to the Latin American Group, to ask Egypt to reconsider its candidacy, not because the African Group withdraws it, but because, aware of the quality of Egypt's contribution to the work of the United Nations and the feeling of solidarity which have always motivated it, we feel it is for the Egyptian delegation to express itself on the continuation of its candidacy for the post. Thus, I make a fraternal appeal to it, on behalf of the African Group, to make this gesture towards the Latin American Group in order to facilitate the work of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Tunisia for the kind remarks he has addressed to me personally. I am grateful that he has helped us in facilitating the election of the Bureau, and I join him in his appeal to our brother from Egypt. I hope that the representative of Egypt will respond to the appeal of the Ambassador of Tunisia.

Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt): Mr. Chairman, allow me first to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this Committee, which represents a well deserved choice, and I wish both you and my colleague from Cameroon complete success.

Egypt is extremely grateful to the African Group and to the Candidatures Committee of our Group for having proposed our candidate for election as Rapporteur of this Committee. I am sure that our candidate would have greatly contributed to the success of the work of the Committee. However, in response to your appeal and to the appeal of my colleague from Tunisia, and after consultations with some of my African colleagues, I now realize that it is necessary for us to withdraw in favour of the candidate from the Latin American Group. The Egyptian delegation does this in a spirit of goodwill and co-operation. We are sure that the candidate of the Latin American Group will also do an excellent job.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Ambassador of Egypt for his statement and for the kind words that he has addressed to me. I am confident that I speak on behalf of the Committee in expressing our appreciation to him for having demonstrated such a wonderful spirit of accomodation and understanding.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil): Mr. Chairman, may I first of all wish you the best of luck. We trust that under your able guidance this Committee will achieve most positive results.

On behalf of the Latin American Group, of which Brazil is the Chairman for the month of September allow me to express our deep gratitude to the representative of Egypt for the gesture he has made in allowing a representative from Latin America to occupy the post of Rapporteur. My delegation, in particular, has maintained the closest relations with the Egyptian delegation and, in particular, with the Egyptian candidate, Mr. Mahmoud, whose merits and expertise in questions related to disarmament we know well. Once again let me express our profound gratitude for that gesture of which we have taken note with deep appreciation.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Brazil for his statement and for the kind words he has addressed to me personally.

Mr. LEHNE (Austria): Mr. Chairman, allow me at the outset to extend to you the warm congratulations of my delegation on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. As this session will without doubt be a difficult and important one, it is indeed a comforting thought to all of us that we shall be guided in our work by your wisdom and diligence.

I now have the honour of presenting the candidacy of Mr. Ronald Kensmil for the post of Rapporteur of the First Committee.

Mr. Kensmil was born in Suriname in 1945. After legal studies and a distinguished career in banking he joined the Foreign Service of Suriname in 1975. Since 1976 Mr. Kensmil has been posted with the Permanent Mission of Suriname to the United Nations. During that time he has in various functions accumulated extensive experience in multilateral diplomacy.

In the light of his professional and personal qualities, Mr. Kensmil is eminently qualified to discharge the functions of Rapporteur. Therefore I have the honour and pleasure to nominate him for that office.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Austria for his nomination of Mr. Ronald Kensmil of Suriname for election to the post of Rapporteur of the First Committee. I thank him also for his very kind words addressed to me personally. I am sure that I am expressing the sentiments of the Committee when I offer our thanks to him for the important contribution of his delegation to the work of the Committee during the last session.

Members of the Committee have just heard the representative of Austria nominating Mr. Ronald Kensmil of Suriname for the post of Rapporteur. As there are no other nominations, I take it that the Committee wishes to follow the same procedure to dispense with the secret ballot and to declare Mr. Ronald Kensmil elected Rapporteur of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. Ronald Kensmil (Suriname) was elected Rapporteur of the First Committee by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to express my cordial congratulations to the representative of Suriname, Mr. Ronald Kensmil, upon his election as Rapporteur of the First Committee and I now invite him to take his place on the podium.

Mr. HEIDWEILLER (Suriname): Allow me, Sir, to congratulate you, as well as the Vice Chairman, on your election. Your excellent qualities as a diplomat almost guarantee the success of the meetings of this very important Committee.

I also wish to thank the members of the Committee for the trust they have shown in the candidate from Suriname for the post of Rapporteur. My special thanks go to Ambassador Meguid of Egypt, who is well known as one of the most qualified diplomats in our United Nations community, for his most gracious and generous gesture which allowed the candidate from Suriname to be elected. Ambassador Meguid made that gesture notwithstanding the excellent qualities and expertise of his own candidate and once again I should like to thank him through you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Ambassador of Suriname for his statement and for the kind words that he has addressed to me personally.

May I now draw the attention of members to rule 110 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly which reads as follows:

"Congratulations to the officers of a Main Committee shall not be expressed except by the Chairman of the previous session -- or, in his absence, by a member of his delegation -- after all the officers of the Committee have been elected:

I hope that this rule will be applied and respected today and in the future and I shall be personally grateful to delegations if they could dispense with that customary passage at the beginning of their statements.

I now call on the representative of the Bahamas, Ambassador Hepburn, the Chairman of the First Committee during the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas). Today, Mr. Chairman, upon reflection, I can say that predecessors have an easier role to play than their successors to office in main committees. For example, rather than having to worry about organization of work, points of order and final decisions, they simply congratulate the new Chairman and members of the Bureau. Next year, you will have this honour. In the meantime, however, you must be content with your lot and perform your duties with the aplomb and sagacity for which you are justifiably well known.

I had the privilege of nominating you a few days ago, and today I am equally pleased not only to congratulate you, but also to give credit to your country, Pakistan, for producing nationals of your quality. Your leadership is sorely needed at a time when deadlocks are stifling solutions to many important negotiations of universal scope. The items on the agenda of this Committee indicate some very significant yet controversial issues which require the guidance of a Chairman who is humble and courageous, a Chairman who has good judgement and humour, a Chairman who welcomes challenges, a Chairman who is selfless in his efforts to find solutions to world crises.

Having had the honour of sitting where you are at this present moment, I can admit to having experienced moments of concern, perhaps of fear not only of falling asleep during a debate or an intervention, but also of displaying a lack of patience, tolerance and impartiality. You will soon learn - although I am sure experience has taught you already - that these fears have little basis in this Committee, where the Chairman is surrounded by colleagues who respect firmness, order and decisiveness. Besides, you have a Bureau of very capable diplomats in the persons of the Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Oyono of Cameroon, the Rapporteur, Mr. Kensmiel of Suriname and the other vice-chairmen who will be elected later, on whom I am sure you can rely. I would venture a step further and say that it would be in the best interest of the Chairman to do so. If the members of the Bureau of the last session are used as a yardstick, I feel confident in saying that you can depend on the support and goodwill of your Bureau, to whom, on behalf

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

of the members of the First Committee, I extend warmest congratulations and best wishes for a successful session.

Last, but not least, experience has shown that the Chairman may also count on the invaluable counsel and co-operation of the Secretariat staff assigned to this Committee.

Let me close by saying that, taking full advantage of the powers vested in me under the rules of procedure, I hereby express the sentiments of the entire Committee by pledging total support for and co-operation with any programme you may deem necessary to make the work of this Committee a fruitful and enjoyable one, not only for the representatives but for the Chairman and the Bureau as well.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Bureau of the Committee, as well as on my own behalf, I thank the representative of the Bahamas, Ambassador Hepburn, for his very kind and gracious words addressed to the Vice-Chairmen, to the Rapporteur and to me personally. I shall have a further opportunity to respond to such eloquent expressions of goodwill, but at this stage I should like to convey our deep appreciation to him and to other members of the Committee for their statements of their intention to extend full co-operation to the officers of this Committee in the performance of our very heavy duties.

I now call on the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon, Ambassador Oyono, the Vice-Chairman.

Mr. OYONO (United Republic of Cameroon, Vice-Chairman) (interpretation from French): First of all, Sir, I should like to associate myself with the preceding speakers in extending to you warmest and most sincere congratulations on your unanimous election to the Chairmanship of the First Committee of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

At this time of grave uncertainty, tensions and rivalries with which the international community is at grips, we can only express our pleasure at the fact that a person of your intelligence, experience and authority has been called upon to guide our work. I can assure you of my delegation's whole-hearted co-operation.

(Mr. Oyono, United Republic
of Cameroon)

I should also like to thank my colleagues, the representatives of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Egypt, for their kind words addressed to me and to my country on the election of our delegation to the vice-chairmanship of this Committee.

I should also like to thank the outgoing Chairman, His Excellency Mr. Hepburn of the Bahamas, and all the representatives here for the great honour they have done me and the trust they have shown in me and my country in entrusting me with these great responsibilities.

We consider our election to be an honour and a privilege. In fact, my country, Cameroon, is not a great Power. It does not possess the means to unleash or threaten to unleash a world catastrophe. Nor is my country a medium-sized Power that aspires to possess such means. Cameroon is just a developing country, a non-aligned country, that has mobilized all its human resources to overcome poverty, hunger and illiteracy, a country that remains totally open to all outside contributions likely to second our own efforts. In order to attain this objective, we must rely on international co-operation, which itself implies, above all, a climate of peace, a peace which rests not on this balance of terror but on détente, understanding and co-operation, without prejudice to the special responsibilities incumbent upon the nuclear Powers in the maintenance of international peace and security. We believe, nevertheless, that because this peace and this security are of major concern to all States, they, whether they be, large, medium-sized or small, are in duty bound to make their contribution to establishing and maintaining this peace and this security. It is in this spirit that we believe that countries of the same size as my own can make a just and disinterested contribution within the framework of the major concerns of the international community. And it is also in this spirit that my delegation will participate in the work of this Committee.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon, Vice-Chairman of the First Committee, Ambassador Oyono, for his very important statement and for the kind words that he addressed to me. I look forward to his active co-operation and I am sure that I can count on his assistance in the discharge of my responsibilities.

I now call on the representative of Suriname, Mr. Kensmil, Rapporteur of the First Committee.

Mr. KENS MIL (Suriname), Rapporteur: First allow me to express to you, Sir, the congratulations of my delegation on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. We are indeed confident that your diplomatic skill and ability, well known to all of us, amply guarantee that this Committee will be guided through a successful session.

Allow me, furthermore, to express my sincere appreciation to the members of the Committee for the honour conferred upon me in electing me Rapporteur of this Committee. I consider my election as Rapporteur of this important Committee not only a personal honour but, more important, as a tribute to my country, and I wish to pledge to you, Sir, and to the members of the Committee my full co-operation, in order to bring our work to a successful conclusion.

Finally, I should also like to extend my congratulations to our Vice-Chairman, the Ambassador of Cameroon, on his election to that position and to thank my colleague from Austria for the eloquent manner in which he nominated me for this post.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Rapporteur of the Committee for his generous remarks and for his willingness to co-operate with me and the other officers of the Committee. I am certain that I am expressing not only my own views but also those of the Vice-Chairman when I say that we are all looking forward to close co-operation with him during this session.

(The Chairman)

As members of the Committee know, we should have proceeded to the election of another Vice-Chairman of this Committee. But in this connexion I am still conducting informal consultations, which I expect to conclude very shortly. We might perhaps revert to this matter at our next meeting.

We have thus concluded the consideration of the items on our agenda for today, but before we adjourn I should like to state that it is my intention to convene another meeting of the First Committee to consider its organization of work. The announcement regarding the date, time and conference room will be made in due course.

In the meantime, the Secretariat is dealing with the documentation to be submitted to this Committee. Some of the relevant documents have already been issued, while others are being processed. The recently concluded Eleventh Special Session of the General Assembly placed additional burdens on the technical services of the Secretariat, but I can assure you that everything possible is being done by all concerned to ensure adequate documentation for the Committee, and I am confident that we can count on the understanding of members in this regard.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.