



Trusteeship Council

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Nineteenth Special Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 17 March 1989, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GAUSSOT (France)

- Report of the Secretary-General on credentials (continued)
- Letters dated 1 and 3 March 1989, respectively, from the Acting Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General inviting the Trusteeship Council at its earliest convenience to send a visiting mission to observe current conditions in Palau, and requesting that a special session of the Council be convened at the earliest possible date to consider that invitation
- Examination of petitions related to item 3 of the agenda
- Written communications and petitions received by the Trusteeship Council
- Report of the Trusteeship Council covering the nineteenth special session
- Closure of the session

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON CREDENTIALS (T/1932) (continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I wish to draw members' attention to the report of the Secretary-General on credentials, in document T/L.1932.

If there are no comments, I propose that the Council decide to take note of the Secretary-General's report.

It was so decided.

LETTERS DATED 1 AND 3 MARCH 1989, RESPECTIVELY, FROM THE ACTING PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL INVITING THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL AT ITS EARLIEST CONVENIENCE TO SEND A VISITING MISSION TO OBSERVE CURRENT CONDITIONS IN PALAU (T/1928), AND REQUESTING THAT A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL BE CONVENED AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE TO CONSIDER THAT INVITATION (T/1929) (continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): As agreed at our meeting yesterday, the Council will now take up the draft resolution contained in document T/L.1267 concerning arrangements for the dispatch of a visiting mission to Palau to study the situation there. The Council will then take a decision on the draft resolution.

First, however, I wish to respond to the question put by the representative of the Soviet Union at our meeting yesterday on paragraph 2 of document T/L.1268 submitted by the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution contained in document T/L.1267. The representative of the Soviet Union was surprised that the financial implications of the draft resolution had been prepared before the draft resolution itself was put before the Council.

The Secretariat has looked into this matter and found that this has been the customary procedure at special sessions of the Council over the past three years. If the representative of the Soviet Union so wishes, I shall give precise examples in this regard.

(The President)

In order to respond to another concern raised by the representative of the Soviet Union, let me add that the financial implications were based on the participation of two delegates because, as I am told by the Secretariat, that was the case in the last three regular visiting missions, which took place in 1980, 1982 and 1985.

Of course, that is a mere working hypothesis. Moreover, paragraph 1 (b) (T/L.1268) recalls that the visiting mission should be composed of members of the Council wishing to participate - hence there might be more than two - with the exception, of course, of the Administering Authority.

If there are no comments on the specific points I have just raised, I shall now call on Mr. Duval, from the Programme Planning and Budget Division, who will provide clarification in response to the question of the representative of the Soviet Union on paragraph 3 of document T/L.1268 concerning the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution.

Mr. DUVAL (Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance)

(interpretation from French): I believe that the question raised at the last meeting by the representative of the Soviet Union can be summed up as follows: On what basis were drawn up the appropriations for the Trusteeship Council approved by the General Assembly at its forty-second session which, we read in document T/1268, amount to \$127,400?

This figure has to be considered in connection with that adopted for 1986-1987, which was \$116,800. During the preparation of the budget, the estimates are prepared in close co-operation with the representatives of the Departments. They are broadly based on past experience. In the case of the Trusteeship Council, this is not easy, and the budget and experience of preceding bienniums have to be interpreted. Taking the bienniums 1984-1985 and 1986-1987, one finds that the number of missions dispatched were one for the 1984-1985 biennium and four for the 1986-1987 biennium. The financial results reflect this disparity: out of a budget of \$111,100 only \$43,900 was disbursed for 1984-1985, whereas in the case of the biennium 1986-1987 the amount of \$116,800 proved quite inadequate since expenditures amounted to \$170,400, requiring the redistribution of funds under section 3 of the budget.

Bearing that financial experience in mind, in preparing the 1988-1989 budget it was decided to retain unchanged the basis on which the estimate for 1986-1987 was arrived at, except for the usual adjustments to allow for inflation. Thus we arrived at our estimate of \$127,400.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): If there are no further comments on financial matters, I shall now call on members of the Council wishing to comment on the draft resolution submitted yesterday by the United Kingdom, which we shall now continue to consider.

If there are no comments on the draft resolution, I suggest that the Council now proceed to vote on the draft resolution.

(The President)

I now put to the vote draft resolution T/L.1267.

Draft resolution T/L.1267 was adopted by 3 votes to 1.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Does any member wish to speak?

Mr. BYKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): At the outset my delegation thought that in explaining our vote we should proceed on quite a different basis than we must in speaking now.

Yesterday we had the impression that the representative of the United Kingdom, the sponsor of the draft resolution, had noted our comments and would try to take at least some of them into account. The essence of our work and of discussions in all international forums is dialogue and the desire to understand and then to take into account the views of all parties in the given body and, through joint efforts, to arrive at a universally acceptable decision.

Unfortunately the sponsor - and perhaps not only the sponsor - was dominated by stereotypical approaches of the past. Instead of joint efforts aimed at finding a solution, the old draft resolution was put to the vote and was adopted by the majority of the members, without having taken into account the views expressed by the Soviet delegation. There was not even an attempt to engage in an exchange of views.

(Mr. Bykov, USSR)

In our view, the resolution runs counter to the purposes and principles of the Trusteeship Council and to the objectives and goals of the entire trusteeship system, as well as to the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter. The resolution is based on statements contained in the letters from the Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations dated 1 and 3 March 1989, which express a unilateral position on the question of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. That position is contrary to the United Nations Charter and the 1947 Trusteeship Agreement and does not reflect the real situation in the Territory. The linkage established between that unilateral approach towards Micronesia here and the proposal to send a visiting mission to Palau - which is, moreover, only a part of the Trust Territory - strips the proposal of any constructive basis or useful purpose and obviously renders it inappropriate.

Naturally, all of that also holds true with regard to the resolution that has just been adopted by a vote. I should like to recall that the 1947 Trusteeship Agreement approved by the United Nations Security Council considers the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands as an integral whole. There can be no possible difference of opinion with regard to the fact that the commitments undertaken by the Administering Authority under the Agreement and the United Nations Charter continue to have full force and effect.

The Soviet delegation has on numerous occasions drawn attention to the fact that the unilateral actions by the United States to alter the Trust Territory status of Micronesia are taken in violation of the United Nations Charter, the 1947 Trusteeship Agreement and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and that these actions are arbitrary and devoid of any legal force. The United Nations continues to bear responsibility for the whole of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The resolution just adopted totally

(Mr. Bykov, USSR)

ignores these facts, and the Soviet delegation naturally voted against it. We view as totally unacceptable any attempt to make use of the Trusteeship Council to lend legality to unlawful actions designed to fragment the Trust Territory and to further annexationist goals.

The delegation of the Soviet Union would express the hope that at the forthcoming fifty-sixth session of the Trusteeship Council in May the Administering Authority will submit, in a timely manner, a substantive and objective report on the whole of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands for the period 1 October 1987 to 30 September 1988, as provided by the Council's rules of procedure.

Mr. BIRCH (United Kingdom): As the sponsor of the resolution, I think that I must very briefly say one or two words in response to the statement by the representative of the Soviet Union.

It has been suggested that the British delegation should have practised rather more dialogue before presenting the resolution, in the hope that we could have reached a consensus on it. Certainly, in this Council and in all parts of the United Nations, we would like to have the widest possible dialogue with all Members. But our experience has been that, on this particular issue of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, there has not been much evidence - in fact, really no evidence at all - of new thinking, and we hear the same charges, the same accusations, made year after year. Let us hope that after this appeal from the Soviet side for more dialogue we may be able to move more towards a common position.

I think that it is really not fair or reasonable to suggest that simply because the Soviet Union finds itself in a minority in the Council on this matter that that is the result of mechanical voting. It is because the other members of the Council take a different point of view. It has been suggested that there is a

(Mr. Birch, United Kingdom)

unilateral approach to the Trust Territory - in other words, an American approach - and that that is dominating the activities of the Council. I must say that I reject that most strongly. On all these matters the British delegation takes an entirely independent view, and there is no linkage, as has been suggested, between a unilateral approach and the dispatch of this mission.

(Mr. Birch, United Kingdom)

We on the British side are aware that we have a clear responsibility for the Trust Territory. We are concerned that the people of Palau have not yet been able to decide exactly the form that they want their future to take, and we think it entirely appropriate that a mission should be sent by the Council so that we may have a first-hand account of what is happening in Palau and the views of the Palauan people about their future.

It is for that reason that I do not think we could possibly accept the Soviet view that somehow there is a violation of the Charter. How can it possibly be a violation of the Charter that the people of a Trust Territory should be allowed to determine their own future? That is part of the process that is going on in Palau now and that we should like the mission to report on so that when we meet again in May we shall have from our own people, members of the Council, a report on the situation in Palau.

Therefore, I am most grateful that other delegations in the Council have supported our draft resolution and that we shall now be able to dispatch the mission.

Mr. BYKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Since the representative of the United Kingdom refers to new thinking, I would suggest that all delegations act according to the principles of new thinking. After yesterday's meeting we had the impression that the representative of the United Kingdom had noted our considerations and was going to review his draft in order to take our comments into consideration, as is required by new thinking. Indeed, we were hoping that the draft would be revised and that we would be in a position to note with satisfaction that the comments we had made at previous meetings had been taken into account by the sponsor of the draft resolution in a new document.

(Mr. Bykov, USSR)

Unfortunately, the representative of the United Kingdom totally ignored the views that our delegation had expressed and decided, acting in accordance with old stereotypes, to put his draft resolution to the vote, without even trying in any way to improve it so as to take into account at least some of the views and critical comments expressed here.

I venture to hope that the spirit of new political thinking will at last reach the Trusteeship Council and inspire dialogue and the search for universally acceptable decisions, on the basis of the Charter, the Trusteeship Agreement and other relevant documents of the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Members of the Council will have noted that under the resolution we have just adopted the Visiting Mission to Palau will take place during April. I suggest that the Council decide that there be automatic approval of the names of participants proposed by Governments as soon as they are made known to the Secretary-General.

It was so decided.

EXAMINATION OF PETITIONS RELATED TO ITEM 3 OF THE AGENDA

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Since no petitions on this subject have been received, there is nothing to discuss under this item. I suggest that the Council take note of that.

It was so decided.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS RECEIVED BY THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL (Fifty-sixth Session) (T/INF/37)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Petitions of a general nature received between May and November 1988 have been brought to the attention of members of the Council as they have come in and are summarized in document

(The President)

T/INF/37. Those received since November have also been brought to the attention of members and will also be published in summary form before our next regular session.

If there is no objection, I propose that those petitions be considered at the fifty-sixth regular session of the Council.

It was so decided.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL COVERING THE NINETEENTH SPECIAL SESSION

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): We have thus concluded the agenda for the work of this session. I propose that the Council authorize the Secretariat, in consultation with the President and the members of the Council, to prepare a report on the work of the nineteenth special session and to include it in the Council's next annual report.

It was so decided.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Before closing this nineteenth special session of the Council, I wish to thank the members of the Council for the spirit of co-operation they have shown throughout our debates.

I should also like to thank the members of the Secretariat - members of the Department of Conference Services, including the interpreters - whose efficient assistance has enabled the special session to take place in excellent conditions.

Finally, I am pleased that we shall meet again soon at the regular session to begin in May.

I declare closed the nineteenth special session of the Trusteeship Council.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.