



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NOWORYTA (Poland)

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AGENDA ITEM 78: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 78: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued) (A/43/566)

1. **Mr. BOREHAM** (Australia) observed that the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the peace-keeping forces of the United Nations crowned a year of significant peace-making achievements, marked notably by the establishment of the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) and the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) and the imminent establishment of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia and a peace-keeping operation in Western Sahara.
2. Those achievements and their attendant organizational, financial and human requirements called for a streamlining of the peace-keeping operations. Among the practical suggestions his Government would like to see pursued were the registration of countries willing to participate in specific ways in peace-keeping operations and the drawing up of standard operating procedures. Australia also hoped that the constructive dialogue which had made possible the resumption of the work of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations would prevail, and it was pleased to support a renewal of its mandate and the inclusion of China as a member.
3. Australia contributed significantly to the peace-keeping operations, making a voluntary annual contribution to the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and supplying forces to serve with UNFICYP, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine (UNTSO) and UNIIMOG, with further technical forces committed to UNTAG. It agreed that the burden on troop-contributing countries should be minimized, especially since many were developing countries. Australia believed that States should participate in peace-keeping forces only for a specified period of one term, with a possible extension for a second term only; it would be guided by that principle in its own participation in future peace-keeping forces, including UNTAG.
4. His Government's greatest concern about the United Nations peace-keeping operations was their annual cost, well above that of running the United Nations itself. The greatest possible discipline must be exercised to control costs and use only the resources necessary to carry out the relevant mandates. Savings could be made by having the parties to the conflicts themselves provide more local staff and facilities, by redeploying equipment already used and by increasing voluntary financial and in-kind contributions. Moreover, the current formula for apportioning peace-keeping expenses should be re-examined for any anomalies. Cost-effectiveness should be the criterion in the setting up and continuing of operations.
5. Australia agreed with those who had said that peace-keeping operations should not be used to palliate regional problems or delay their resolution and that, while occasionally necessary, they were no substitute for the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter.

6. Mr. JERKIC (Yugoslavia) said that over the years the work of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had reflected the state of international relations and the very sensitive and often highly intractable questions involved. Various ideas and proposals had been put forward to define and promote the activities of peace-keeping operations. Although no concrete results had been achieved, the importance of such operations was likely to increase in the future. The atmosphere of constructive dialogue and the reaffirmation of the role and importance of the United Nations had given rise to justified optimism concerning the further consideration of peace-keeping operations. The time had come to show maximum political will and make new efforts to bring about a comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations.
7. Yugoslavia had always regarded peace-keeping operations as an exceptionally important part of the efforts of the international community to maintain peace on the basis of the concept of collective security laid down in the Charter. Peace-keeping operations should become an integral part of the overall efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Organization in preventing threats to peace and promoting the peaceful settlement of conflicts.
8. Yugoslavia, which had participated in peace-keeping operations - most recently in UNIIMOG, believed that the United Nations could further strengthen its role in dealing with many situations which endangered world peace. The Special Committee should step up its work on the issues relating to peace-keeping operations referred to in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/43/1) and which had arisen in its own discussions. It would also do well to consider the new ideas and proposals put forward concerning the ways to promote the role of peace-keeping and the concept and modalities of preventive activities in that area.
9. The question of the use of peace-keeping operations in Namibia and Western Sahara would inevitably arise. The very difficult financial situation of the Organization and the fact that many countries were in arrears in their contributions to ongoing peace-keeping operations underscored the need to give that aspect of the question serious and urgent consideration. The international community should ensure that the exceptional role and importance of peace-keeping operations in maintaining international peace and security were not jeopardized. In that connection, it was necessary to continue the exchange of views on the possibility of establishing a special fund for peace-keeping operations. In that connection it should be borne in mind that the developing countries, which participated actively in peace-keeping operations and without whose support such activities would hardly be possible, were faced with enormous financial difficulties.
10. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces had underscored the all-important role of peace-keeping operations in the contemporary world. That recognition should encourage Member States to find speedy solutions to the important problems involved. Lastly, his delegation wholeheartedly welcomed China's application for membership in the Special Committee.

11. Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand) expressed satisfaction at the award of the 1988 Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces, which reflected the international recognition of the United Nations valuable contribution to maintaining international peace and security. Nevertheless, the peace-keeping forces alone could not be expected to end conflicts between States. Peace-keeping operations were designed to serve as a catalyst for peace not as a peace-making exercise. Genuine peace was possible only through sincere efforts by the parties concerned to settle their differences by peaceful means.
12. His delegation expressed its support for China's application for membership in the Special Committee. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China could certainly make a valuable contribution. Thailand welcomed the resumption of the work of the Special Committee and fully supported the renewal of its mandate.
13. Mr. LAPITSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that recent important international developments such as the signing of the Geneva Agreements of 14 April 1988 and the negotiations between Iran and Iraq had undoubtedly resulted from the improved international political climate and the new political thinking in the world. That clearly demonstrated the ability of the United Nations to carry out the important functions laid down in its Charter. The role played by the Organization, particularly the Security Council and the Secretary-General, in finding ways to bring about a political settlement of regional conflicts underscored the importance of United Nations peace-keeping efforts and the need to further increase those efforts.
14. In view of the realities of the nuclear and outer-space age, the confrontational approach to solving international disputes had given way to a desire to achieve political settlements. The Organization had a leading role to play in that connection. Its peace-keeping operations were essential to promoting good-neighbourly relations and strengthening the peace-making activities of the United Nations, which were an important contribution to establishing a comprehensive system of peace and security.
15. United Nations peace-keeping forces were carrying out their duties in a number of conflict-ridden areas. The recent award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces was an expression of the recognition of the growing role and authority of the Organization in the maintenance of peace. The potential of peace-keeping operations could be fully realized by giving such operations a more important role and strengthening their political, legal and financial basis. The Soviet Union had submitted a number of proposals on that question and the overall problem of ensuring comprehensive security. His delegation supported the proposals contained in the aide-mémoire entitled "Towards comprehensive security through the enhancement of the role of the United Nations" (A/43/629) and stressed in particular that United Nations peace-keeping operations should be expanded in order to prevent the imminent outbreak of conflict and thus contribute to the transition from crisis diplomacy to preventive diplomacy. Such efforts would help Member States to find mutually acceptable solutions on the basis of a balance of interests of all parties concerned, with strict respect for the right of all peoples to make their own social and political choices.

(Mr. Lapitsky, Ukrainian SSR)

16. United Nations personnel could be used in setting up, through the Security Council, observation posts in explosive regions of the world to protect countries from foreign interference. The possibility that the General Assembly, with the agreement of the Security Council, might send observer and fact-finding missions should also be explored. Military observer missions could be dispatched on the initiative of the Secretary-General with the approval of the Security Council and the agreement of the country to be visited in order to prevent possible conflict. The question of whether the Security Council could use special missions composed not only of official personnel but also of public spokesmen should also be considered.

17. Experience had confirmed the need to use United Nations peace-keeping operations to ensure the security of maritime navigation. In that connection, he supported the proposal to establish United Nations naval forces and elaborate the legal basis and possible objectives for their operations. In order to broaden the use of United Nations peace-keeping forces and military observers, work should be stepped up on harmonizing the positions of States on those questions. The Special Committee should conduct its work on a regular basis in a business-like, constructive spirit in order to achieve concrete agreements and should speedily reach agreement on the procedure for conducting peace-keeping operations on the basis of established practice and experience. It could also consider the questions of organizing, through the Secretariat, the training of national military contingents, drawing general conclusions from the results of activities conducted by United Nations peace-keeping forces and standardizing agreements on their status. It was hoped that the membership of China in the Special Committee which his delegation supported, would help the Special Committee carry out the tasks before it.

18. United Nations peace-keeping operations required material and financial support in order to be successful. It was also necessary to ensure savings and utilize unused reserves. In that connection, he stressed that the Ukrainian SSR regularly contributed to United Nations peace-keeping operations. In spite of the improved international situation, however, there were no grounds for complacency. There were still many regional conflicts in the world involving dozens of States and millions of people. Further joint efforts by the international community were necessary in order to resolve conflicts and establish comprehensive security in the world.

19. Mr. RAKOTONDRAMBOA (Madagascar) said that the Special Committee's report was encouraging. The Charter did not refer to peace-keeping per se. Peace-keeping consisted in separating belligerent parties in order to pave the way for negotiations leading to a lasting peace. It was an extension of the principle of non-violence in the military sphere.

20. The Government and people of Madagascar paid tribute to those members of the peace-keeping forces who had sacrificed their lives for international peace and security. Madagascar also wished to express its heartfelt appreciation to the troop-contributing countries. Those countries, particularly the developing ones, were shouldering a considerable burden, owing to shortcomings in the way that the operations were financed.

(Mr. Rakotondramboa, Madagascar)

21. The success of peace-keeping operations depended not only on the parties' consent but also on the continuing support of the Security Council, the formulation of a well-defined and applicable mandate, the willingness of Member States to provide troops and the adoption of suitable financing arrangements. He welcomed the fact that the five permanent members of the Security Council had expressed their determination to continue to work together in order to prevent international conflicts and to settle existing ones.

22. The General Assembly had certainly been aware very early on of the difficulties of financing the operations. The financing question required an urgent solution, and Madagascar appealed to all Member States fully to assume their financial responsibilities for peace-keeping operations.

23. In considering the crucial question before it, the Special Committee should endeavour to remain open to any suggestions and proposals put forward by Member States, while drawing lessons from the experience acquired in the various operations and missions. The United Nations peace-keeping operations were essential for enhancing the efficiency of the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security.

24. Mr. SAVUA (Fiji) said that in no area had the United Nations found problems so intractable and solutions so elusive as in the fulfilment of its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Unfortunately, since the establishment of the organization, its mediation and peace-keeping efforts had been hampered by the clash of interests between the super-Powers. Their rivalry, hegemony and ideological confrontations had often aggravated conflicts and prevented speedy solutions. Nevertheless, despite the opposition of some Member States, the United Nations peace-keeping operations had helped to resolve several conflicts and to prevent the escalation of hostilities. Moreover, the peace-keeping prospects appeared to be much brighter, as the super-Powers were currently showing greater willingness to co-operate in resolving conflicts. The improved relations between the two super-Powers and their disarmament initiatives heralded a new era for global peace.

25. He was pleased to note that the working relationship between the Security Council and the Secretary-General had rarely if ever been closer. Fiji hoped that that situation would continue, and that the Security Council would give greater support to the Secretary-General in his important role of promoting peace and security.

26. The Special Committee must urgently undertake a comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects, especially as many new initiatives were being taken in conflict situations. The question of financing had plagued the operations from the start and needed priority treatment.

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

27. Fiji supported the proposal that the views and suggestions of Member States should be submitted to the Special Committee in time for it to submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. He strongly hoped that that exercise would not be used as a pretext for delaying progress in the pressing work of the Special Committee. Concurrently, the Special Committee should act speedily to discharge its mandate.

28. It was incumbent on all the parties in areas where United Nations peace-keeping forces had been deployed to give their fullest co-operation to those forces. The operations of peace-keeping missions had been unnecessarily prolonged, because the conflicting parties had not done so.

29. United Nations peace-keeping operations were characterized by the following unique features: they were not military operations per se, but soldiers were called upon to perform the tasks required; operations were mobilized almost instantly, and time was always of the essence in moving troops into the mission area; all mandates were limited to a maximum of six months; all existing operations, although originally mandated for six months, had had their term extended; and all troop-contributing countries had had to contend with a reimbursement much lower than that agreed upon. Those peculiarities required the soldiers involved in peace-keeping to adapt their training and skills to suit their new role. The initial rush to move troops into mission areas was often not accompanied by adequate administrative arrangements, which could take years to make. Apart from the costs involved, short and continuously extended mandates made forward planning difficult. The low rate of reimbursement had often made it hard for troop-contributing countries to justify their involvement to their own population.

30. The financing of peace-keeping operations had long been unsatisfactory. All Member States must promptly honour in full their financial commitment to the Organization. The withholding of payments in respect of peace-keeping operations placed an unfair burden on troop-contributing countries, particularly on the less developed ones. With the United Nations currently engaged in two additional operations and with the prospect of several others in the near future, the payment of assessed dues for peace-keeping would become the most important immediate issue confronting the Organization.

31. The proposal that countries should maintain standing ground and naval forces at the ready for use in peace-keeping operations, and that an international force for United Nations peace-keeping operations should be established deserved consideration. However, such arrangements, while helping to avoid the rush experienced when establishing those operations and giving the military the time necessary to reorient soldiers to peace-keeping, would require considerable financing. According to some estimates, were all the current peace-making efforts to succeed, United Nations peace-keeping costs could amount to between \$1.1 and \$1.6 billion, i.e., around double the United Nations regular budget. In view of the unsatisfactory record of payments of assessed contributions to the regular budget and to peace-keeping operations, a radical change was needed in order to give the proper momentum to peace efforts.

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

32. International peace and security were vital to world progress and prosperity. The Secretary-General's success in the resolution of conflicts had brought stability to regions in turmoil, and should be welcomed by all Member States, especially those which spent lavishly on defence and security.

33. Fiji had demonstrated its commitment to peace-keeping and peace-making by providing troops to, inter alia, UNIFIL and UNGOMAP. It remained ready to provide troops and other personnel in any peace mission that might arise.

34. Mr. AYUB (Pakistan) said that the peaceful resolution of the situation in Afghanistan and of the conflict between Iran and Iraq indicated that Member States regarded the United Nations as the foremost forum for peace. Pakistan strongly hoped that the conflicts in Western Sahara, Namibia and Kampuchea would also be settled under the auspices of the United Nations. It stood ready to assist the Organization in its noble objective of ensuring peace and security.

35. Pakistan had been directly involved with three United Nations peace-keeping operations. It wished to convey its appreciation to all the troop-contributing countries which had worked to ensure peace in the region. He reiterated Pakistan's firm support of and commitment to the ongoing United Nations peace-keeping operations, UNMOGIP and UNGOMAP, and its desire to respect the mandate of those operations.

36. The experience of the past 40 years had shown that United Nations peace-keeping operations had contributed to the cessation of hostilities and the creation of a climate conducive to the peaceful settlement of disputes. However, for the past 23 years, the Special Committee had been unable to reach agreement on the theoretical aspects of peace-keeping operations. It should bridge the gap between the successful, practical aspects and the deadlocked, theoretical aspects of peace-keeping operations.

37. The 18 peace-keeping operations conducted since 1948 had made it possible to develop a practical methodology for dealing with such operations. It would seem that the best way for the Special Committee to carry out its work was to set aside the positions taken on theoretical principles, and to recognize the practical realities of peace-keeping operations. The objective was to emphasize preparedness for such operations. Therefore, at its next meeting, the Special Committee should endeavour anew to institutionalize the practical experiences of peace-keeping operations with a view to providing an agreed framework for future operations. Pakistan hoped that States would be willing to compromise on firmly-held positions in the interests of mutual co-operation.

38. He noted that undue emphasis was being given to the concept of the consent of the host countries. Pakistan preferred to emphasize the primary role of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security and suggested that the mandate, character and duration of the peace-keeping operations authorized by the Security Council should not be changed, unless the Council so decided. The basic issue was to strike a balance between the concept of the sovereignty of States and their obligations under the Charter.

(Mr. Ayub, Pakistan)

39. The question of finances should also be considered. While peace had its price, it was negligible compared to annual world-wide expenditure for armaments and defence. Moreover, troop-contributing countries should not be saddled with an additional financial burden, especially in view of the sacrifices which they were already making for world peace. Member States should make special efforts to ensure that the solution of future regional conflicts and United Nations peace-keeping operations were not thwarted by financing difficulties. Expenses should be covered by voluntary contributions, specially assessed contributions for the permanent members of the Security Council and weighted contributions, based on the ability to pay.

40. Pakistan strongly supported China's membership in the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations. The absence of China from the Special Committee was an anomaly. Its membership would make for the effective participation in the Special Committee of all the permanent members of the Security Council, which was a prerequisite for action on all substantive questions of international peace and security. He urged the members of the Special Committee to recommend that the General Assembly should approve the application of China.

41. Mr. ALPTUNA (Turkey) said that his Government attached particular importance to the establishment of UNIIMOG in the highly sensitive Gulf region. The new constructive mood prevailing in international relations encouraged a growing role for the United Nations in the peaceful settlement of regional problems.

42. The shortcomings of the United Nations peace-keeping operations were all too familiar, and the problems would not disappear without realistic remedies that took into account the experiences of all the directly involved parties to conflicts. It was axiomatic that their consent and co-operation was a vital element in the success of peace-keeping operations. Moreover, the peace-keeping forces themselves should be given realistic mandates that should subsequently be adapted to changing circumstances. Another prerequisite for effective operations was impartiality by the peace-keeping forces and non-intervention in favour of either side by the troop-contributing countries. The flexible and voluntary nature of peace-keeping operations should also be underscored.

43. A similar flexibility must characterize the Special Committee's work. Some of the proposals that had been made for a more rigid system would, in his delegation's view, be counterproductive. In any case the resumption of the Special Committee's work was of capital importance.

44. Peace-keeping operations could lead to settlements if they were effectively complemented by appropriate peace-making; hence the link between peace-keeping and the Secretary-General's mediation in disputes. Such a dual approach would also serve to limit the duration of the peace-keeping operations, some of which should now be reviewed in the light of the status of the disputes involved and of the United Nations financial difficulties.

45. Mr. DIMITROV (Bulgaria) welcomed the recent developments in international relations that had brought actual nuclear disarmament a step closer and the general growing awareness that peace and security could no longer be achieved by taking up arms but rather by working together. Those developments had created an opportunity for making the United Nations peace-keeping operations more effective. Such operations should only be undertaken under Chapter VII of the Charter, and the Security Council was the sole body authorized to decide on measures to restore peace.

46. In practical terms, there must be a search for new approaches and unorthodox solutions that drew on the valuable and unique experience gained while conducting operations in which, for the first time, armed forces had been used on behalf of the entire world community. The Special Committee should deal with the fresh and relevant proposals put forward by the Soviet Union in document A/43/629, and should approach its work constructively and realistically. His delegation believed further that the Special Committee should be given a broader mandate to consider all aspects of peace-keeping operations.

47. Mr. DAZA (Chile) said that the recent award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces constituted an endorsement of the Organization's fundamental goal, to maintain international peace and security. Chile paid tribute to the peace-keeping forces and especially to the 550 officers and soldiers who had given their lives in the cause of peace.

48. Since 1958, 178 Chilean army, navy and air force officers had taken part in various peace-keeping operations throughout the world, and a number were currently serving in UNMOGIP and UNTSO.

49. His delegation was very pleased that the Special Committee had begun meeting again, especially in view of the upsurge in peace-making activities and the likelihood that in the near future new peace-keeping operations would be set up in areas such as Western Sahara, Kampuchea and Namibia. It was therefore imperative to renew the Special Committee's mandate so that it could begin to take up the problems affecting the peace-keeping operations, especially the financial question.

50. The peace-keeping forces were currently operating with a deficit of \$369 million, the burden of which was unjustly being carried by the troop-contributing countries. Chile appealed to all States to delay no longer in paying their share.

51. The Special Committee must develop standard operating procedures for the peace-keeping operations. Although the primary responsibility for peace-keeping lay with the Security Council, there should be an express recognition of the Secretary-General's role in settling international conflicts, so that peace-keeping was not always subject to the will of the members of the Security Council, especially those with veto power. The General Assembly as well had been acknowledged to have an important supplementary role in preserving world peace.

52. Chile agreed completely with the Secretary-General's assessment of the conditions for the success of peace-keeping operations in his report on the work of the organization (A/43/1).

53. Mr. SHARMA (India) said that, ever since its independence, India had played an active role in United Nations peace-keeping operations. The Indian contingent in the United Nations operations in the Congo had been the largest and had made maximum sacrifices in the cause of peace-keeping. Its participation in UNIIMOG was further testimony to India's continued commitment.

54. The resumption in 1987 of the work of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had been a welcome development. The momentum generated must be increased to achieve early completion of its activities. His delegation believed that China's participation would be useful to the functioning of the Special Committee.

55. Despite the lack of progress in the Special Committee towards the completion of guidelines to govern peace-keeping operations or the reaching of an agreement concerning specific questions relating to their practical implementation, his delegation was confident that, through co-operation and flexibility, differences could be resolved and practical solutions found.

56. In 1988, two new important peace-keeping operations had been initiated, namely, UNGOMAP and UNIIMOG, and there were also other areas in which such operations might have to be started in the near future. The need for the United Nations to be better prepared for launching peace-keeping operations, sometimes at short notice, thus lent a certain urgency to the Special Committee's work. Increased United Nations involvement in peace efforts meant heightened expenditure on peace-keeping operations, but the price to be paid would be insignificant compared to the enormous spending on armaments. It was imperative to ensure full funding of the United Nations peace-keeping operations on the basis of the current financial arrangements, which appropriately reflected the special responsibilities of the permanent members of the Security Council and took into account the relatively limited capacity of the developing and least developed countries to contribute. At the same time, peace-keeping operations must be conducted in a cost-effective manner, whether it was a question of procurement of equipment, supplies and services, personnel requirements or advanced planning.

57. All too often, the mandates of the various United Nations peace-keeping operations were extended automatically without considering whether they still served a purpose.

58. Peace-keeping required the consent of the country concerned and must be carried out with due respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.

59. The Security Council had the primary responsibility for conducting United Nations peace-keeping operations in accordance with the Charter. Depending on the nature of operations, however, the Secretary-General should have a degree of flexibility if he was to implement the decisions of the Security Council quickly and efficiently. His delegation would welcome any specific proposals for improving the efficiency of national contingents serving under the United Nations flag.

60. Mr. MADI (Egypt) said that the comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects had acquired particular importance during 1988 in view of the relaxation of the international situation as a result of the marked improvement in relations between the two super-Powers. The ability of the United Nations to address international problems through negotiation and dialogue had consequently been increased.
61. The Secretary-General, with the support of the Security Council, had played a creative role in halting bloodshed in several parts of the world, and his efforts had helped to bring about the Afghanistan agreements and the cease-fire in the Gulf war. United Nations military observers had been sent to those areas as part of the effort to ensure a comprehensive and peaceful settlement. The fact that the United Nations could play an effective role in resolving crises in other parts of the world, such as Namibia, Western Sahara and Kampuchea, was becoming clearer day by day, as was the possibility of the deployment of United Nations peace-keeping forces in those areas.
62. The United Nations had thus demonstrated its ability to cope with change at the international level, had regained its credibility and had deservedly won the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of the constructive role played by its peace-keeping operations.
63. All of those developments had increased the number of United Nations peace-keeping activities, with a consequent increase in the number and types of forces deployed and in the financial outlay required. Despite much argument about peace-keeping operations in recent times, his delegation could see no real problem, other than that of financing, that might hinder the United Nations in assuming the role assigned to it in that field. The starting point for any improvement in the effectiveness of such operations should therefore be the solution of the financial problems involved. The United Nations organs concerned and the troop-contributing States should examine the question in all its aspects and propose workable solutions. The permanent members of the Security Council should bear the larger part of the burden of financing peace-keeping operations because of their special responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security and because their enormous political, economic and military capabilities enabled them to do so.
64. Despite the extremely modest achievements recorded in its report (A/43/566), the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had at least resumed its work after an eight-year interruption caused by deep ideological differences among its members. That could in itself be considered as progress worthy of support and a beginning to serious consultations and a constructive exchange of views. The Special Committee's work should proceed slowly and deliberately, and no hasty proposals should be made that might provoke new differences. His delegation supported the renewal of the mandate of the Special Committee so that it could complete its consultations in the coming year and could begin to identify subjects of common interest. The political climate was now propitious for a frank and constructive dialogue among all the States members of the Special Committee.

(Mr. Madi, Egypt)

65. His delegation welcomed the fact that China had applied for membership in the Special Committee, and it was fully confident that the Chinese delegation would contribute positively and effectively to the Special Committee's work.

66. Mr. LAGORIO (Argentina) said that the decision by the Special Political Committee on 25 November 1987 to approve without a vote draft resolution A/SPC/42/L.30, giving the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations new impetus, had been vindicated by the events of the past months. The international climate had changed for the better, and in several cases, the United Nations had been the driving force behind those changes. Elsewhere, it had been instrumental in working towards the peaceful settlement of long-simmering conflicts. The United Nations peace-keeping operations had taken on increasing importance in those tasks.

67. Argentina had always supported peace-keeping and had continued, over the years, to contribute military personnel to that effort. His delegation was concerned about the critical financial situation facing numerous peace-keeping operations, the burden of which was being borne by a small number of countries. In view of the imminence of new and costly peace-keeping operations, finding a solution had become a matter of urgency. His delegation paid tribute to those troop-contributing States which, over the years, had taken on an additional burden without retracting their commitment to continue supporting peace-keeping operations.

68. The mandate of a peace-keeping operation should not be renewed automatically, as was currently the case. Some type of machinery must be designed that made renewal contingent upon the evolution of the actual conflict, thereby preventing peace-keeping operations from becoming self-perpetuating even when no progress had been made in resolving the situation that had originally given rise to their use. That would also alleviate the financial situation.

69. His delegation hoped that the Special Political Committee would again adopt, without a vote, a substantive draft resolution enabling the Special Committee to consider concrete issues in 1989.

70. His delegation wished to express its support for China's application for membership in the Special Committee.

71. Mr. OKUN (United States of America) said that the demand for peace-keeping operations in Afghanistan and along the border between Iran and Iraq, as well as additional proposals for peace-keeping in Africa and, possibly, in Kampuchea, was the surest recognition of the service that peace-keeping forces, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, were performing for the cause of peace. Rising demands for peace-keeping had led to proposals for change. In judging them, it was important to recall the Secretary-General's advice that the success of peace-keeping operations depended not only on the consent of the parties but also on the consistent support of the Security Council, on a clear and practicable mandate, on the readiness of Member States to volunteer troops and on adequate financial arrangements. But as all Member States knew, the success of peace-keeping also depended on the office of the Secretary-General, who should continue to respond flexibly to requirements that varied from operation to operation.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

72. As peace-keeping required the consent of the parties, a request by only one party to a dispute was not a viable basis for a peace-keeping operation and would inject United Nations forces into the middle of a conflict, exposing them to danger and potentially involving the United Nations as a party to the conflict.

73. The Security Council had an essential part to play. It must judge recommendations to renew existing forces and determine whether a mandate for a new peace-keeping force was realistic and would assist the settlement of the conflict. In 1988, the United States had worked closely with other members of the Security Council in support of peace-keeping forces.

74. Concern about the growing cost of peace-keeping was universal. Uncontrolled costs eroded the willingness of Member States to finance those operations or to contribute troops. It was essential to contain costs, explore all means of financing and ensure that the burden of funding was fairly distributed. His delegation would work with others to see to it that costs were contained.

75. The Geneva agreements on the situation in Afghanistan made provision for a United Nations force to monitor compliance. As he should, the Secretary-General had sought authorization from the Security Council, but he had done so with flexibility, recognizing that, in order to launch those operations successfully, he would have to take into account the political sensitivities unique to the situation at hand. The Security Council had provisionally approved UNGOMAP in a letter, and an authorizing resolution was currently being considered. Attention to particular circumstances, rather than rigid adherence to pre-determined rules, had been a key ingredient for the successful launching of that operation.

76. With regard to Iran and Iraq, the Secretary-General and his staff had prepared for the possibility that a peace-keeping operation could consolidate a cease-fire between the parties. His plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), which had then been discussed with the parties, had recommended the basic structure of the force. Then, after Iran and Iraq had agreed in August 1988 on a date for the cease-fire, the Secretary-General had been ready to move immediately, following authorization by the Security Council, to deploy UNIIMOG, dispatched to observe a cease-fire which had ended a long and bitter conflict. The Secretary-General had needed maximum flexibility in selecting troop contributors and force commanders. As was proper, the composition of the force had been determined not by those who had sought participation, but by the Secretary-General, exercising his discretion and judging the situation and the views of the parties. UNIIMOG, like UNGOMAP and previous peace-keeping forces, had been established after the Secretary-General had chosen to make specific recommendations, in accordance with guidelines whose value had been proven by experience.

77. Two other developments over the past year also showed the key role played by the Secretary-General. Following consultations with the parties, the Secretary-General had obtained the Security Council's authorization to appoint a special representative for the negotiations regarding the Western Sahara.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

78. Regarding the situation in Namibia, the Secretary-General, responding to progress in the talks among the parties, had dispatched a technical mission to Namibia to review plans for UNTAG. There again, the Secretary-General must retain the autonomy and flexibility needed to keep preparations in line with developments.

79. His Government welcomed the willingness indicated by several delegations to participate in peace-keeping operations. It was worth recalling that four of the five permanent members of the Security Council had taken part in peace-keeping. Both France and the United Kingdom had large contingents serving with peace-keeping forces in Lebanon and Cyprus. The United States and the Soviet Union had observers assigned to UNTSO. While bearing in mind the record of service by the permanent members, it was important that in each situation, the Secretary-General should be empowered to decide whether participation by a permanent member as a troop contributor was warranted. In most circumstances, his Government believed that it was not.

80. Proposals had been made to allow additional bodies, such as the General Assembly, to influence peace-keeping mandates or to revive other groups, such as the moribund Military Staff Committee, to advise the Secretary-General. The United States firmly opposed deviations from the path that had brought success to United Nations peace-keeping and counselled delegations against creating or reviving institutions that would deprive the Secretary-General of his essential discretion or restrict his ability to respond to unique circumstances.

81. It was wrong to believe that the mere establishment of a peace-keeping operation or the adoption of a resolution indicating a specific solution could end conflicts. Peace was secured by agreements, not by the illusion thereof. Managing peace-keeping operations was a job for the Secretary-General, not for delegations, which must ensure that real agreements were reached on settling the underlying disputes.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.