



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KITTANI (President of the General Assembly)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS:

(a) REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM SUBMITTED BY THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS (A/36/241)

1. Mr. TROYANOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that a letter dated 22 September 1981 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union addressed to the Secretary-General (A/36/241) set forth the principles which had guided the Soviet Union in submitting a proposal for the inclusion in the agenda of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly of an important and urgent item entitled: "Prevention of nuclear catastrophe: declaration of the General Assembly"; a proposed draft declaration accompanied the letter. In suggesting that the item be considered during the thirty-sixth session, the Soviet Union wished to draw attention to the fact that current distressing developments in the world had brought about a dangerous increase in tension and necessitated the taking of urgent measures in order to prevent a nuclear war which would have catastrophic consequences for mankind. As a result of the policies of those States which emphasized force as a main instrument of policy and which were further developing and increasing their arsenals, consisting primarily of weapons of mass destruction, the arms race was increasingly getting beyond control. At the same time, talks on the control and limitation of arms had been frozen. Rapid and far-reaching changes in the development of military technology were producing new kinds of weapons of mass destruction, the nature of which was such that the control and agreed limitation of such weapons might well become impossible. A new escalation of the arms race could undermine international stability irreparably and heighten the risk of thermonuclear conflict, the more so as current developments were accompanied by the whipping up of an atmosphere of war hysteria and hostility in which the possibility and even acceptability of nuclear war within the concept of a first strike were being propagated. The purpose of such a doctrine was clearly to accustom people to the criminal idea that a limited nuclear war and victory in it were not only possible but acceptable. In the view of the Soviet Union, the United Nations must act as a restraining influence in such a dangerous situation by firmly and unambiguously opposing the use of nuclear weapons on a first strike basis and by declaring that such an act would represent heinous crime against humanity. Those who were working on such dangerous plans for unleashing nuclear war must be warned that leaders who first used nuclear weapons could never be justified or forgiven. Any action which pushed the world closer to such a catastrophe should be condemned as contrary to all morality and to the ideals of the United Nations. The leaders of the nuclear Powers must recognize that the threat of nuclear conflict had to be eliminated.

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2. The adoption of the proposed declaration would represent a significant act of goodwill which would strengthen the political and legal basis of international security and, at the same time, be a milestone on the path to the complete elimination of the threat of thermonuclear war. Its adoption would undoubtedly make a noteworthy contribution towards establishing trust between States and would give important new impetus to the efforts of the world community to eliminate the nuclear threat.

3. Mr. SHERMAN (United States of America) said that the United States was dedicated to fair, balanced and verifiable arms control agreements. Arms control involving nuclear weapons encompassed a critically important and obviously complex set of issues to which the simplistic Soviet initiative entitled "Prevention of nuclear catastrophe: declaration of the General Assembly" did not do justice. For the past 30 years, the Soviet Union had ritualistically introduced the same proposal which had ritualistically been met with the same response. The United States delegation saw no reason for prospect of a different outcome on the present occasion. It nevertheless felt disappointed that the Soviet Union should have returned to the same old time-worn proposals, no matter how disguised as new, instead of making more serious and practical proposals for effective and verifiable arms control.

4. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include the additional item in the agenda.

5. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item should be allocated to the First Committee.

(b) REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL SUBITEM IN AGENDA ITEM 18: NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/36/242)

6. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the request for the inclusion of an additional subitem in agenda item 18 to fill a vacancy arising from the resignation of one alternate member of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee (A/36/242).

7. If there were no objections, he would take it that it was the wish of the General Committee to recommend the inclusion in agenda item 18 of an additional subitem (k) entitled "Appointment of an alternate member of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee" and its allocation to the Fifth Committee.

8. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include the additional subitem in the agenda.

9. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the subitem should be allocated to the Fifth Committee.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK: LETTERS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES (A/36/537 and Add.1)

10. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee's attention to paragraph 34 of General Assembly decision 34/401, that no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly should be permitted to meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly, unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly. In letters dated 21 September and 2 October 1981 (A/36/537 and Add.1), the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences had requested that exceptions to that rule be granted to the following bodies: Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, Advisory Committee on the Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa, Advisory Committee on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law, Committee of Trustees of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Special Committee against Apartheid, United Nations Council for Namibia, and Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

11. The Committee decided to approve the request of the Committee on Conferences and to recommend it to the General Assembly.

12. The CHAIRMAN then read out the list of items which were to be considered directly in plenary meetings, together with a tentative time-table for their consideration. The tentative schedule would be announced in the plenary and would therefore be published in the verbatim record of the relevant plenary meeting.<sup>1/</sup>

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.

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<sup>1/</sup> See A/36/PV.29.