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Thirty-fourth session  
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CREDENTIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE THIRTY-FOURTH  
SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

First report of the Credentials Committee

Chairman: Mr. André ERNEMANN (Belgium)

1. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 18 September 1979, the General Assembly, in accordance with rule 28 of its rules of procedure, appointed for its thirty-fourth session a Credentials Committee consisting of the following Member States: Belgium, China, Congo, Ecuador, Pakistan, Panama, Senegal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and United States of America.
2. The Credentials Committee held its 1st meeting on 19 September 1979.
3. Mr. André Ernemann (Belgium) was unanimously elected Chairman.
4. The Legal Counsel recalled that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 1979, the General Assembly had referred to the Credentials Committee, for its urgent consideration, the examination of the credentials of the delegation of Democratic Kampuchea to the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly.
5. To provide the Committee with the necessary background for its consideration of this question the Legal Counsel informed the Committee that on 3 September 1979 the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Democratic Kampuchea to the United Nations had addressed a letter to the Secretary-General transmitting the credentials of the delegation of Democratic Kampuchea to the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The Legal Counsel added that the Secretary-General had no further comment to add on this communication. Copies of this letter were available for examination by the members of the Committee.
6. In response to a question by a member of the Committee, the Legal Counsel also informed the Committee that on 16 September 1979 the Secretary-General had received

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\* A/34/150.

a cable from Phnom Penh from the President of the People's Revolutionary Council of the People's Republic of Kampuchea informing him that it would send a delegation to the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The text of this message had been circulated in a letter dated 17 September 1979 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and to the Secretary-General and contained in document A/34/472 of 17 September 1979.

7. The representative of the Congo said that the representation of Kampuchea was a delicate matter. The people of that country had freed themselves from a tyrannical régime which had been banished by its people and derived no power from them. This problem had been discussed at length at several international conferences, most recently at the Conference of Non-Aligned States at Havana. In the view of his delegation, the Committee should not grant any privilege to one delegation as opposed to another until the information concerning the question was fully grasped. Therefore no recognition should be granted at the present time to any delegation from Kampuchea.

8. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics said that his Government believed that the People's Revolutionary Council was the sole legitimate representative of the Kampuchean people. This Government exercised full control of the country bringing it back to normal life and was pursuing a policy of peace and non-alignment. The credentials of the delegation of the People's Revolutionary Council should be confirmed. He could not accept any proposal that the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea be endorsed on the basis that it had taken part in the thirty-third session of the General Assembly. No one had challenged the régime's credentials then but that Government had been toppled in January 1979. As there were divergent views about the representation of Kampuchea in the United Nations, however, his delegation was prepared to support the proposal of the representative of the Congo that the Credentials Committee should recommend that the country's seat should be left unoccupied. Such a decision would help to promote the work of the United Nations at this session.

9. The representative of China said that the representative of Viet Nam had made an unreasonable challenge in the General Assembly to the valid credentials of the representative of Democratic Kampuchea. The Committee should not be involved with other irrelevant matters. Democratic Kampuchea was an independent sovereign State and a State Member of the United Nations. The Government of Democratic Kampuchea had sent to the present session of the General Assembly a delegation whose credentials were legal and valid. The Committee must accept them. The puppet régime of the Vietnamese authorities had been repudiated by the Cambodian people and represented no one. China firmly opposed the designs of Viet Nam and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and defended the rights of Democratic Kampuchea in the United Nations. He, therefore, formally proposed that the Committee accept the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea.

10. The representative of Pakistan said that his Government had watched with deep anxiety and concern the events in South-East Asia in the last year and was disturbed by the use of military force to overthrow a lawful government. While not condoning the deplorable acts of the régime, Pakistan continued to extend recognition to the

Government of Democratic Kampuchea. In accordance with the rules of procedure the task of the Credentials Committee was to decide whether the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea were valid or invalid. His Government could not agree with the proposal that the seat be kept vacant, which would be inconsistent with the rules of procedure and contrary to previous practice. The only recommendation the Committee could make was to accept the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea.

11. The representative of Panama said he would vote in favour of the recognition of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and that he could support the proposal of the representative of the Congo.

12. The representative of the United States of America said that his country's abhorrence of the actions of the Government of Democratic Kampuchea towards its own people was a matter of record. However, the issue was not the conduct of a government towards its own nationals, but the validity of the credentials of the representatives of Democratic Kampuchea. In his view, those credentials fulfilled the requirements of rule 27 of the rules of procedure and the General Assembly should continue to set the Government whose credentials had been accepted at the last session of the Assembly.

13. The representative of Senegal said that the Committee's mandate was restricted. It was not up to the Committee to decide whether a government was good or bad. Force had been used to change an established government and those who had used force now asked to be recognized at the United Nations. If the credentials of the Government were in order, the Credentials Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that the status quo be maintained. His Government believed that the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea should be accepted.

14. The representative of Ecuador said that the mandate of the Credentials Committee was confined to ascertaining if credentials were in order. The proper forum for a debate on any other issue was the General Assembly, not the Credentials Committee. His delegation believed that the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea were in good order and should be accepted.

15. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics took issue with the view that the task of the Credentials Committee was purely formal. It was not a question just of form but of political context. The Committee should adopt the recommendation made by the representative of the Congo that the seat of Cambodia be left vacant.

16. The representative of China said he completely disagreed with the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics whose statement was a distortion of the mandate of the Committee and contrary to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. The credentials of Democratic Kampuchea were before the Committee and it should decide to accept them.

17. The Chairman, speaking as the representative of Belgium, said that the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the European Economic Community had considered this delicate problem. He recalled the declaration made at Dublin on 11 September 1979

in the name of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Nine and in particular that any solution should be based on an independent Cambodia, free of foreign military presence. The Committee, however, had a technical problem to solve, though it was also a political problem. That aspect of the problem could be discussed in the General Assembly, while the Committee should confine itself to its technical task. This position should not be construed as indicating an approval of the past policy of the régime of Democratic Kampuchea.

18. Speaking as the Chairman of the Committee he said that the question which was before the Committee was, as the Legal Counsel had said, the examination of the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea. Other issues could be taken up in the General Assembly.

19. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics reiterated that the Committee's task was not merely a formal task and he proposed that the Committee vote on the proposal put forward by the Congo.

20. The representative of the United States of America said that it might not be necessary to engage in a procedural wrangle. The only formal proposal had been made by China. After that proposal was voted upon, the Committee might or might not proceed to another vote.

21. The Chairman said that it was obvious that opinions were not equally balanced in the Committee. He proposed that the Committee adopt a text accepting the credentials of the delegation of Democratic Kampuchea which seemed to be the point of view of a majority of the members of the Committee.

22. The representative of China said that his delegation agreed with the comments made by the Chairman on the procedural question. As he had formally proposed that the Committee should accept the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea and as some delegates held different views, he proposed that the question should be immediately put to a vote.

23. The Chairman then proposed that, taking into account the statements made in the Committee, which would be reflected in the Committee's report, the Committee should adopt the following draft resolution:

"The Credentials Committee,

"Having examined the credentials of the delegation of Democratic Kampuchea to the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly,

"Accepts the credentials of the delegation of Democratic Kampuchea."

The draft resolution was adopted by 6 votes to 3, with no abstentions.

24. The Chairman then proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution (see para. 26 below).

25. In the light of the foregoing, the present report is submitted to the General Assembly.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

26. The Credentials Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Credentials of representatives to the thirty-fourth session  
of the General Assembly

The General Assembly

Approves the first report of the Credentials Committee.

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