

GENERAL ASSEMBLY



FIRST COMMITTEE

1st meeting

held on

Tuesday, 16 September 1986

at 11.55 a.m.

Forty-first session
Official Records*

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Temporary Chairman: Mr. CHOUDHURY (President of the General Assembly)

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ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 11.55 a.m.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Rule 103 of the rules of procedure provides that each Main Committee shall elect a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. These officers shall be elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, experience and personal competence.

The elections shall be held by secret ballot unless the Committee decides otherwise in an election where only one candidate is standing. The nomination of each candidate shall be limited to one speaker, after which the Committee shall immediately proceed to the election.

Furthermore, rule 110 of the rules of procedure provides that 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.

This meeting has been convened for the election of the Chairman of the First Committee. Are there any nominations?

Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia): Before addressing myself to the pleasant task of nominating the next Chairman of the First Committee, may I first extend to you, Sir, my sincere congratulations on your election to the high office of President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly. The Head of the Indonesian delegation will in due time convey to you formal felicitations on behalf of the Government and people of Indonesia. But I cannot let this occasion pass without expressing my delegation's great satisfaction at seeing such an eminent representative of the Asian region and of the fraternal country of Bangladesh preside over our deliberations.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

May I also pay a warm, personal tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Jaime de Piniés, under whose inspiring and instructive leadership I had the privilege of serving in the Bureau of the General Assembly at its fortieth session.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

This year the First Committee again convenes against the backdrop of a world caught up in continuing political turbulence and economic upheaval. The excessive accumulation and refinement of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, on land and on sea have proceeded unabated and now threaten to extend to outer space as well. Increasing resort to the use or threat of force, aggression and racist oppression, intervention and economic coercion continue to despoil the fabric of international relations. As a result, there has been no slackening of international tensions, nor any diminution of the sense of insecurity and common vulnerability afflicting all nations, large and small.

In these circumstances, the First Committee, which is entrusted with dealing with disarmament and international security problems, is indeed faced with a most difficult task. It also goes without saying that in this the Chairman has to play an important role in guiding and facilitating the deliberations of the Committee on the broad spectrum of issues on its agenda.

I am therefore pleased and privileged to inform this meeting that the Government of the German Democratic Republic has decided to present the candidature of one of its most experienced and able diplomats, Ambassador Siegfried Zachmann, for the post of Chairman of the First Committee during this forty-first session.

There is hardly any need for me to introduce Ambassador Zachmann for he is well known to his colleagues here in the United Nations and in other international forums, where he is held in high esteem. He has served his country with distinction in various diplomatic capacities and has participated in many international conferences, including conferences relating to disarmament. In many instances he has been Chairman or Vice-Chairman of various committees and conferences.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

Ambassador Zachmann presided over the 1977 Pledging Conference for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). He was elected Vice-Chairman of the Second Committee of the thirty-third session of the General Assembly. Subsequently, he served as Vice-Chairman during 1977-1979 and later, in 1982, as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization. He has been the Permanent Representative of the German Democratic Republic to the United Nations and the specialized agencies in Geneva, Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York and deputy head of his country's delegation to the Security Council. As a member of the German Democratic Republic's delegation since the twenty-eighth session, he has participated in the debate on questions concerning disarmament in both the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and the First Committee. Currently, Ambassador Zachmann is serving as head of the Department of United Nations Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic.

His vast experience in multilateral diplomacy eminently qualifies him for the post to which he is now being nominated. Equally, his thorough knowledge of international problems, especially those on the agenda of the First Committee, will be an invaluable asset in dealing with the onerous tasks that await him in the coming weeks.

The professional and personal qualifications that Ambassador Zachmann brings to this position give us confidence that he will guide the proceedings of the Committee in a most effective manner. I have the greatest pleasure, therefore, in nominating Ambassador Zachmann for the position of Chairman of the First Committee.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: His Excellency Mr. Siegfried Zachmann of the German Democratic Republic has been nominated by the representative of Indonesia. Since only one candidate has been nominated, I propose that, under Rule 103, the Committee decide not to hold a secret ballot.

It was so decided.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I therefore declare His Excellency Mr. Siegfried Zachmann of the German Democratic Republic elected Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.