

PROPOSAL FOR THE ADOPTION OF SPANISH AS ONE OF THE WORKING
LANGUAGES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Modification of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly
Report of the Sixth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. J. SPIROPOULOS (Greece)

1. On 8 December 1948 the President of the General Assembly addressed the following letter to the Chairman of the Sixth Committee:

"The General Assembly, at its 174th plenary meeting, adopted the following resolution:

'THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RESOLVES that Spanish should be included as a working language of the General Assembly and that rule 44 should be modified accordingly.

I would appreciate it if you would bring this resolution to the attention of the Sixth Committee and report to the General Assembly on the matter, having regard to rule 152 which requires a committee report to be made prior to any decision of the General Assembly amending rules of procedure."

2. The Sixth Committee considered this matter at its 140th meeting held on 10 December 1948.

3. The Committee had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General proposing a modification of rule 44 and certain consequential changes rules 45 to 48 (A/C.6/321). The Committee also had before it the text of a letter from the chief of the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the President of the General Assembly, dated 9 December 1948 (A/C.6/324). Amendments to the rules of procedure were submitted by the representative of Argentina (A/C.6/322), by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (A/C.6/323) and by the representative of China (A/C.6/325).

4. After discussion the Committee decided, by 27 votes to 9, with 7 abstentions, that its terms of reference did not include the consideration of the amendments submitted by the representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and China.

/The representative

The representative of Argentina withdrew his amendment to rule 46. The Committee thereafter adopted, by the following votes, the modifications to rules 44 to 48 contained in the Memorandum of the Secretary-General (A/O.6/321):

- Modification of rule 44: 35 votes to none, with 6 abstentions
- Modification of rule 45: 33 votes to none, with 4 abstentions
- Modification of rule 46: 33 votes to none, with one abstention
- Modification of rule 47: 31 votes to none, with 2 abstentions
- Modification of rule 48: 31 votes to none, with one abstention

The representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia did not participate in the voting for reasons indicated in the summary records.

5. The Sixth Committee therefore recommends the following resolution for adoption by the General Assembly:

"THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RESOLVES to amend rules 44 to 48 of its rules of procedure to read as follows:*

Rule 44

Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the official languages of the General Assembly, its committees and sub-committees. English, French and Spanish shall be the working languages.

Rule 45

Speeches made in any of the working languages shall be interpreted into the other two working languages.

Rule 46

Speeches made in either of the other two official languages shall be interpreted into the three working languages.

Rule 47

Any representative may make a speech in a language other than the official languages. In this case, he shall himself provide for interpretation into one of the working languages. Interpretation into the other working languages by the interpreters of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first working language.

Rule 48

Verbatim records shall be drawn up in the working languages. A translation of the whole or part of any verbatim record into either of the other two official languages shall be furnished if requested by any delegation.

* The modifications are underlined.
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