



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SOBHY (Egypt)

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ORGANIZATION OF WORK (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (continued) (A/C.3/34/L.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the suggestion in document A/C.3/34/L.1, paragraph 10, that the Committee should complete its work by 7 December 1979. It was also recommended, in accordance with the proposal of the General Committee, that a deadline should be set for the submission of draft resolutions to the Fifth Committee. He therefore suggested that the Committee should decide to conclude its work on 7 December and should set Friday, 30 November, as the deadline for the consideration of draft resolutions having financial implications.

It was so decided.

2. Mr. VOICU (Romania) endorsed the observations made at the preceding meeting by the representative of Algeria concerning compliance with the decisions of the General Assembly on the order of priority of agenda items. Any attempt at rationalization must be based on a solid foundation, and that foundation was the resolutions of the General Assembly.

3. He supported the suggestions made at the preceding meeting by Costa Rica, Cuba, Benin and the Byelorussian SSR, regarding the order of consideration of items. He formally proposed that, after considering items 73, 86 and 82, the Committee should take up items 76, 77, 72 and 81. Item 72 had been included in the agenda in accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/7, which had granted it "the highest priority".

4. In connexion with item 12 (Report of the Economic and Social Council), he noted that the Economic and Social Council would be holding its resumed second session of 1979 during the General Assembly session. Since the questions which the Council was to consider were directly related to the Committee's work, he proposed that item 12 should be considered after the resumed session. With regard to item 84 (International Covenants on Human Rights), the Human Rights Committee was to hold a further session beginning on 14 October. He therefore proposed that the Third Committee should await the conclusions of the Human Rights Committee before taking up that item.

5. With respect to documentation, he thanked the Secretariat for the efforts it was making to issue documents as soon as possible. However, he would like to know when the documents which had not yet been issued could be expected.

6. The CHAIRMAN said he felt that there should be more discussion before any formal proposals were made concerning the order of consideration of the items referred to the Committee, and requested the representative of Romania not to maintain his formal proposals. He also believed, after consulting the Secretary of the Committee, that it would be practically impossible for the Committee to take note of the work of the session of the Human Rights Committee during the current session.

7. Mrs. SIBAL (India) said she would like to know when item 76 (world social situation) would be considered. The last time the question had been discussed, the preparation of a draft resolution had proved very arduous and the Group of 77 had not had time to negotiate on the draft resolution with the other groups. She therefore hoped that there would be enough time between the beginning of the debate and the completion of work for the various groups to be able to make proposals and negotiate on them.
8. The CHAIRMAN said that, according to the proposed order of consideration, and as far as he could anticipate the length of the debates, items 76 and 77 could be considered at the end of October and the beginning of November. He recalled that the Committee had already set the date for completion of its work and the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions.
9. Mr. RIOS (Panama) said he was surprised that the resolutions of the thirty-third session of the General Assembly had not yet been published as part of the official records of the General Assembly, and that only the press release of the Department of Public Information was as yet available. Moreover, it had been customary for delegations to be able to obtain documents in the conference room, but apparently that was not the case at the current session. Lastly, it was desirable that summary records should be issued fairly rapidly and that one should not have to wait, as in previous years, for up to two weeks before obtaining them.
10. He supported the suggestion that items 76 and 77 should be considered immediately after the question of racism, firstly, because their subject-matter was very important, and secondly, because they were linked with the question of racial discrimination.
11. Mr. PAPADEMAS (Secretary of the Committee) said that the resolutions of the thirty-third session of the General Assembly had been published in final form in all languages. As to the documents which had not yet been issued, it was not possible to give an exact date of issue, since they had to be circulated simultaneously in all languages.
12. With regard to item 12, preparation of the document on the international convention on the rights of migrant workers had been delayed. The document had now been sent from Geneva by pouch and should be circulated the following week. In reply to a question from the representative of Sweden, he said that he was not yet able to give the symbol of the document, which was assigned by the Documents Control Section. The documents submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 33/174 and 33/175, concerning the situation in Chile, were a note by the Secretary-General and the report of the Special Rapporteur. Since the Special Rapporteur had not yet completed his report, it was not possible to indicate a date of issue.
13. The long report of the Secretary-General on International Youth Year (item 72) was being translated. It would be issued as document A/34/468.

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14. The documents relating to items 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79 and 81 had all been published. As to item 80 (United Nations Decade for Women), the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs had already reported on the status of the documentation.
15. The documents for the item on self-determination (item 82) had all been issued, except replies from Governments, which had been received too late and would be issued the following week as addenda to document A/34/367.
16. The report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees would be issued on 4 October. The addendum to the report would not be issued until after the session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, to be held at Geneva from 8 to 16 October. The two reports of the Secretary-General on the Geneva Conference and the follow-up to that Conference had gone to the editors on the previous day.
17. With regard to item 84 (International Covenants on Human Rights), the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Covenants had been issued. The report of the Human Rights Committee would be issued between 10 and 15 October. In that connexion, he recalled that the Economic and Social Council had decided that the Human Rights Committee could submit its report directly to the General Assembly.
18. The documents for items 85 and 87 had all been issued. With regard to item 86 (Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination), all the documents had been issued in all languages except for the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which had been issued the day before in English and would be issued in the other languages within the next few days.
19. With regard to item 88 (Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment), the replies to the questionnaire would be issued on 5 October. The report of the Secretary-General on unilateral declarations by Member States had been issued as document A/34/145. The document on the draft body of principles was to be issued on 12 October. All the other documents had been issued.
20. Mr. ARBOLEYA (Cuba) said that in view of the importance of the questions dealt with by the Third Committee, he considered it essential that the organization of work should be discussed at length; such discussion had generally resulted in changes satisfactory to all delegations.
21. A considerable number of delegations had expressed a desire to change the order of consideration of items, and in particular to take up items 76 and 77 and items 12 and 81 earlier. Since a decision had already been taken on which items should be considered first, it would be desirable, unless the Chairman had some other suggestion, that the Bureau should draw up a new schedule for the

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other items, which would be submitted at a later date. If that were done, the Committee could begin its consideration of the items which it had decided to take up first.

22. Mr. SVIRIDOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the suggestion of the representative of Cuba. It was logical to begin with items 73 and 86, as arranged, followed by item 82, and then to consider as suggested by the representatives of Panama, Romania, Benin and Costa Rica, the question of social development (item 77) and, lastly, questions relating to youth (items 72 and 81).

23. Mr. CABRERA (Spain) said that the organization of work depended on a number of factors. Firstly, account must be taken of the status of the documentation, which in contrast to previous years was satisfactory. Secondly, the Committee made it a practice to consider the items referred to it in a certain order; it was therefore natural that it should begin with the items on racial discrimination and self-determination. Thirdly, it must be borne in mind that the word "Priority" was open to various interpretations, the first of which was determined by decisions taken by the General Assembly at previous sessions. For example, as the representative of Romania had pointed out, resolution 33/7 gave the 'highest priority' to the item on International Youth Year. Priorities were also determined by the number of meetings allocated to each item, and it would therefore be very helpful if members knew about that as soon as possible. Lastly, the concept of priority was very subjective; his delegation would have preferred the question of International Youth Year to be taken up earlier but, in a spirit of co-operation, it had decided to accept the programme of work as submitted, since it was the result of numerous consultations and a great deal of conciliatory effort.

24. The CHAIRMAN said that he was now in a position to announce the number of meetings which he suggested should be allocated to each agenda item: items 73 and 86: six meetings; item 82: four meetings; items 87 and 85: five meetings; item 88 (a) and (b): three meetings; item 84: three meetings; item 74: two meetings; item 12: twelve meetings; item 80 (e): three meetings; items 76 and 77: eight meetings; items 72 and 81: five meetings; item 83: four meetings; item 79: three meetings; item 78: three meetings; item 80 (a), (b), (c), (d): five meetings; item 88 (c): one meeting; item 75: two meetings.

25. A total of 69 meetings were scheduled, in view of the fact that the Committee had decided to conclude its work as soon as possible and to submit draft resolutions having financial implications by 30 November 1979. The Committee would hold approximately seven meetings a week, plus meetings of the working groups. That had been taken into account in deciding how many meetings to allocate to each item. The reason why he suggested allocating only one meeting to item 88 (c) and two meetings to item 75 was that working groups had been set up and the Committee would only have to take a decision on their reports. The number of meetings scheduled for consideration of the report of the Economic and

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Social Council was commensurate to the very large number of questions dealt with in the report and the importance which the Committee had always attached to them.

26. Nevertheless, whatever decisions were taken, they would always be applied with a certain amount of flexibility. The only decisions which would allow of no flexibility were those relating to the date for the completion of work and the deadline for submitting draft resolutions with financial implications.

27. Mr. EDIS (United Kingdom) said that he was quite prepared to accept the recommendations of the Chairman, who had tried to reconcile the priorities of delegations and of the regional groups. The proposed programme of work also took into account a number of practical questions, such as the presence in New York of members of the Secretariat based in Geneva or Vienna and the distribution of documents. The programme should allow thorough consideration of all questions of concern to delegations. For that reason, he urged delegations to agree to the Chairman's suggestions.

28. Mr. ABDUL AZIZ (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that he was prepared to accept the proposed order of priorities, which he felt was logical. Instead of prolonging the debate on the organization of work, the Committee could begin its consideration of substantive questions. Each country had its own priorities; all that mattered was that the debates should follow a logical order.

29. Ms. RICHTER (Argentina) felt that the number of meetings which it was suggested should be allocated to item 79 (International Year for Disabled Persons) was not sufficient, especially in comparison with item 78 (Question of the elderly and the aged).

30. She was concerned at the fact that the Committee had to organize its work according to what documents were available. The Committee did not have to take into account the priorities of each delegation, but it must adhere to the order of priorities established by the General Assembly. Since the General Assembly had given the highest priority to the question of International Youth Year, the Secretariat should have complied with that decision by preparing the necessary documentation.

31. With regard to the report of the Human Rights Committee, she said that a committee of experts could not change the rules on its own initiative. In the first place, reports of intergovernmental bodies were limited to 32 pages; yet the Secretary of the Committee had mentioned a very lengthy report. Secondly, by decision of the Economic and Social Council, subsidiary bodies met once every two years; yet the expert committee in question met three times a year. Lastly, the Human Rights Committee had not taken account of the fact that the General Assembly expected to receive reports six weeks before the opening of the session.

32. Her delegation felt that Governments had the right to evaluate how the Secretariat complied with the instructions given to it in resolutions. A working group should therefore be established to draw up recommendations for a review procedure.

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33. Miss BIKIE (Gabon) and Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Upper Volta) said that they favored the adoption of the programme of work as submitted, since they considered it practical, sensible and justified.
34. Mr. FAURIS (France) supported document A/C.3/34/L.1 submitted by the Chairman which was the result of long negotiations and numerous concessions on the part of all concerned.
35. His delegation wished to make three comments. First of all, it thanked the Secretariat for the reassuring indications that had been given regarding the issuance of the Committee's documents in all languages. Such indications were needed in drawing up a time-table, which should be strictly adhered to. It must be borne in mind that some members of the Secretariat had to come from Geneva and Vienna to take part in the Committee's discussions; it was therefore important that those discussions should be conducted in a well organized fashion, that the various agenda items should be examined rationally and that precise time-limits should be set for the discussion of each item. Secondly, his delegation noted with satisfaction the grouping together of certain agenda items (items 73 and 86, 72 and 81, 85 and 87, and 76 and 77), which was essential if the Committee's work was to proceed smoothly. Thirdly, it wished to emphasize the need to discuss rationalization of the Committee's work. Priority must be given to consultations on draft resolutions; more comprehensive negotiating procedures must be established, and the working groups must show that they were willing to negotiate; and, lastly, the two Vice-Chairmen should play a more important part in co-ordinating such negotiations.
36. His delegation supported the sequence for consideration of the agenda items as presented by the Chairman: it took into account the situation with regard to documentation and the problems arising from the participation of certain colleagues who had come from abroad and who had to be present at the discussions of several Committees at once. For example, questions relating to human rights were discussed in plenary meeting in the Second and Fourth Committees and in the Special Political Committee.
37. His delegation was pleased that all the important items would be considered during the Committee's discussions and that the question of social progress and development, which was of particular importance, would be considered at the most appropriate time, towards the end of October.
38. Mrs. SIPILÄ (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs), replying to the representative of Argentina, outlined the difficulties involved in preparing the Secretary-General's report on the International Youth Year. The Secretariat was aware of the fact that the General Assembly had given the highest priority to that matter, and it had adhered to the time-limits envisaged; however, since Governments had to give their opinion on a number of programmes relating to youth, it was difficult to produce the report before a large number of replies had been received. Furthermore, the question of the International Youth Year was of concern to the United Nations system as a whole, and the various bodies involved had to be consulted.
39. Item 72 (International Youth Year) had been grouped with item 81 (Policies and programmes relating to youth). Those two items could not be considered before the meeting of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, which would take

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place on 22 October. The fact that those two items would not be discussed at the initial stage of the Committee's work did not mean that they had not been given high priority; what was important was that a sufficient number of meetings should be devoted to them.

40. The report of the Economic and Social Council would not be considered before the end of October, so that members of the Secretariat who had come from Geneva and Vienna would have time to study it thoroughly. Consideration of the report, which related largely to human rights and social development, was an essential item of the Committee's agenda, and it was logical that it should not be discussed at the beginning of the session. Lastly, the delay with regard to documentation on item 80 (United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace) was due to the great amount of information required and to the difficulties involved in co-ordination between New York and Vienna services. In the light of those particular problems, it was proposed that item 80 should be considered towards the end of the session.

41. The CHAIRMAN agreed with the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs that consideration of the Economic and Social Council's report was an essential item in the agenda of the Committee.

42. Mr. VOLLERS (Federal Republic of Germany) supported the Chairman's suggestion regarding the sequence in which the items before the Committee should be discussed, since it was the outcome of protracted consultations with delegations and regional groups. It represented the best solution possible at the present time, in view of the situation with regard to documentation and the problems arising from the fact that some members of the Secretariat were coming from Geneva and Vienna. It was not essential that the question of the International Youth Year, to which the General Assembly had given very high priority, should be considered first; what was of primary concern was that it should be given detailed consideration.

43. Mrs. SEMICHI (Algeria) said she approved of the total number of meetings which had been allocated to the Third Committee and to the two working groups but felt that there was some imbalance in the allocation of those meetings to the various items on the agenda. Certain matters of high priority were accorded fewer meetings than others which might appear to be of lesser importance. For example, consideration of items 80 (United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace) and 75 (Draft Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women) would take up a total of 10 meetings, while only 12 meetings were to be devoted to considering the report of the Economic and Social Council, which was a crucial agenda item. Furthermore, the work of the Working Group on the Draft Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials (item 88 (c)) would be considered at only one meeting, while the activities of the Working Group on the Draft Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (item 75) would be discussed at two meetings. Thus, one working group seemed to be given greater priority than the other. Her delegation had no specific proposals to make, but it hoped that the allocation of meetings to the agenda items would be altered.

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44. The CHAIRMAN said that the consideration of item 80 (United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace) would take eight meetings rather than ten and that it had not been grouped with the consideration of item 75 (Draft Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women), to which two meetings would be devoted. The number of meetings allocated to item 75 was due to the fact that the Working Group had already been engaged for two years in drawing up the draft Convention and that its work deserved detailed consideration. In any case, the questions involved were of a practical nature; the allocation of meetings to the various agenda items could be altered if it was found in the course of the discussions that too few or too many meetings had been allocated to particular items.

45. Mr. O'DONOVAN (Ireland) supported the Chairman's suggestion regarding the sequence for discussion of the matters referred to the Committee and urged the Committee to take a decision at the current meeting, since the various capitals would have to be informed of the arrangements to be made in consequence. It was obvious that delegations wished to give different degrees of priority to the agenda items. His delegation, for example, could present a different list in which item 74 (Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance) would have the highest priority. It was also difficult to reconcile the order of priority given to the various questions by the General Assembly with the views expressed by the different delegations participating in the Committee's work. It was not the sequence in which the agenda items were considered that was important but the time devoted to them.

46. The CHAIRMAN agreed that some items on the agenda were of particular importance to certain delegations. However, he again drew the Committee's attention to the fact that the sequence in which the Committee would consider the matters referred to it had been established after extensive consultations with delegations and regional groups, took account of numerous factors and was the result of concessions on all sides.

47. In view of the limited time allocated for the Committee's work, he repeated the appeal he had made to delegations at the preceding meeting to adopt the proposed sequence of agenda items, with the understanding that it could be amended during the session if necessary.

48. He felt that the time had now come to call on the Committee to take a decision regarding the sequence in which the various questions would be considered. If there was no consensus, he would then invite statements by the remaining delegations on the list of speakers.

49. Mr. NSAHLAI (United Republic of Cameroon) supported the Chairman's suggestion, particularly since, in his opinion, the Committee had already spent too much time discussing procedural matters and ample explanations had been given by both the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and the Chairman. Moreover, it was his understanding that the sequence for the consideration of matters referred to the Committee had already been agreed upon in view of the concessions that had been made.

50. Mr. TIBEBU (Ethiopia) said that he would like to have an opportunity to express his views before a decision was taken. He asked the Chairman to be understanding and allow the delegations on the list of speakers to make statements on the subject under discussion.

51. The CHAIRMAN asked the Ethiopian delegation, which was not the first on the list, not to press the matter. If the Committee were to decide to consider the questions referred to it in the proposed sequence, there would obviously be no reason for other delegations to make statements.

52. Mr. SREBREV (Bulgaria) asked whether the Committee was being called upon to take a decision regarding a compromise proposal which might be amended - in which case his delegation wondered whether such a proceeding would be in conformity with the rules of procedure - or to take a formal decision.

53. The CHAIRMAN again pointed out that the proposed sequence for consideration of the items had been established as a result of extensive consultations with delegations; it was therefore high time for the Committee to take a decision.

54. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to consider the items on its agenda in the sequence he had suggested and to allocate thereto the number of meetings he had indicated: items 73 and 86 (a), (b) and (c) /6 meetings/; item 82 /4 meetings/; items 87 and 85 /5 meetings/; item 88 (a) and (b) /3 meetings/; item 84 (a) and (b) /3 meetings/; item 74 /2 meetings/; item 12 /12 meetings/; item 80 (e) /3 meetings/; items 76 and 77 /8 meetings/; items 72 and 81 /5 meetings/; item 83 /4 meetings/; item 79 /3 meetings/; item 78 /3 meetings/; item 80 (a), (b), (c) and (d) /5 meetings/; item 88 (c) /1 meeting/; and item 75 /2 meetings/.

The Chairman's suggestion was adopted.

55. Mr. VOICU (Romania) requested further details. Recalling that the representative of Cuba had asked the Bureau to submit a new version of document A/C.3/34/L.1 to the Committee, he wondered whether that version would reflect the flexibility that the Chairman had promised to show with regard to the sequence for the consideration of the items on the agenda.

56. The CHAIRMAN said that the sequence for consideration of the items would be amended only if that was found necessary during the course of the work.

57. Ms. RICHTER (Argentina) recalled that she had made a proposal regarding the establishment of a working group.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that, since that proposal had just been submitted, consultations would have to be held before any action could be taken on it.

59. In reply to questions from the representative of Algeria and the representative of the Soviet Union, he confirmed that the decision that had just been taken also related to the number of meetings to be allocated to the

consideration of the various items. Nevertheless, the adopted agenda was not a rigid framework, and flexibility would be shown whenever possible; the number of meetings required for the consideration of a particular item could, if necessary, be increased or reduced.

60. Mrs. SEMICHI (Algeria) expressed the fear that that might give rise to some confusion and controversy, since some delegations might claim that, in their opinion, some particular question was less important or that the General Assembly had not seen fit to stress it as a matter of priority. Her delegation was thinking, in particular, of the question of the right of peoples to self-determination.

61. The CHAIRMAN said that he would always be ready to take suggestions into consideration and would naturally remain in contact with the members of the Committee.

62. Mr. SVIRIDOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that when the Chairman had invited the Committee to take a decision, he had failed to note that the Soviet delegation wished to make a statement. His delegation reserved the right to bring up once again the question of the number of meetings allocated to the various items if it became necessary.

63. Ms. RICHTER (Argentina) asked the Secretary to inform the Committee of the date on which chapters III (Regional co-operation), XXIV (International Covenants on Human Rights), XXXVI (Medium-term plan) and XXIX (Organizational matters) of the report of the Economic and Social Council would appear, and also to indicate the symbol and date of the document requested in paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 33/51. She also wanted to know the symbol and date of the document containing information regarding the contacts between the Administrator of UNDP and the Secretariat regarding youth to which an official responsible for programming and co-ordination had referred at a meeting of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination.

64. She hoped to receive a reply concerning her proposal before the Committee finished its consideration of the organization of work.

65. The CHAIRMAN said that the question of the organization of work could be taken up at any time. He intended to consult the Argentine delegation and other delegations regarding the proposal, and the Secretary would reply at the next meeting to Argentina's question regarding the documents.

66. He pointed out that he would not be able to convene any meetings if the number of listed speakers was less than four.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.