

UNITED NATIONS



# SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS

UN LIBRARY

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR

SEP 5 - 1979

**2177<sup>th</sup>** MEETING: 3 DECEMBER 1979  
NEW YORK

---

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2177) .....	1
Adoption of the agenda .....	1
Letter dated 25 November 1979 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/13646) .....	1

#### NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/...) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements of the Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

## 2177th MEETING

Held in New York on Monday, 3 December 1979, at 4 p.m.

*President:* Mr. CHEN Chu (China).

*Present:* The representatives of the following States: Bangladesh, Bolivia, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Gabon, Jamaica, Kuwait, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zambia.

### Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2177)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Letter dated 25 November 1979 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/13646)

*The meeting was called to order at 5.30 p.m.*

### Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

Letter dated 25 November 1979 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/13646)

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Chinese*): In accordance with decisions taken at previous meetings [2172nd, 2175th and 2176th meetings], I invite the representatives of Australia, Canada, Egypt, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Malawi, the Netherlands, Panama, Spain, Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia and Zaire to take the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Anderson (Australia), Mr. Barton (Canada), Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. von Wechmar (Federal Republic of Germany), Mr. La Rocca (Italy), Mr. Nisibori (Japan), Mr. Tubman (Liberia), Mr. Muwamba (Malawi), Mr. Scheltema (Netherlands), Mr. Illueca (Panama), Mr. de Piniés (Spain), Mr. Fernando (Sri Lanka), Mr. Komatina (Yugoslavia) and Mr. Kamanda wa Kamanda (Zaire) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.*

2. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Chinese*): I should like to inform the members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Austria, Belgium, Mauritius and Swaziland, in which they ask to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to

vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bauer (Austria), Mr. Elliott (Belgium), Mr. Ramphul (Mauritius), and Mr. Malinga (Swaziland) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.*

3. Mr. PALACIOS de VIZZIO (Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): At a meeting held today, the Latin American Group of States, of which my country is a member, approved a special declaration with regard to the item before the Council at the present time. On behalf of that Group, I should like to read out this document:

*[The speaker read out the annex to document S/13675.]*

4. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Chinese*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Swaziland. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

5. Mr. MALINGA (Swaziland): On behalf of the Swaziland delegation, I should like to express to you, Mr. President, our sincere congratulations on your assumption of your high office. You have conducted the Council's deliberations in a most able manner. We also extend our congratulations to your predecessor, the representative of Bolivia, who, like yourself, has wholeheartedly devoted his energy and diplomatic skill to the search for an amicable solution to this grave problem.

6. I must also add that without the full co-operation and wise guidance of all the members of the Council, your task would have been made more difficult. The unanimous appeal by the Council for the immediate release of the hostages is indeed indicative of their collective wisdom.

7. As a Member of the United Nations, Swaziland joins the rest of humanity in expressing its support for the initiative of the Secretary-General. His decision to call a meeting of the Security Council was in the interest of maintaining international peace and security. The delegation of Swaziland fully supports him. We also share the view that the events in Iran pose a threat to international peace and security. The Secretary-General's historic decision under Article 99 of the Charter to propose an urgent meeting to deal with this explosive matter demonstrated his high qualities of political judgement, tact and integrity.

8. Swaziland believes in the peaceful settlement of disputes. Recourse to violence as a means of settling dif-

ferences between States is, in our opinion, counter-productive because, in the final analysis, it is always the innocent who in the end suffer the most. It is our strict adherence to the principles of the Charter that prompted us to join the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Security Council and the Secretary-General in their humanitarian gesture of seeking an immediate release of the American hostages held at Teheran. We too appeal to the authorities in that country to heed the voice of humanity expressed in this forum and from this capital of nations.

9. Like those representatives who have spoken previously, the delegation of Swaziland is of the opinion that the seizure of the American Embassy at Teheran and the detention of its diplomatic personnel is indeed a violation of international law and the principles of the Charter. We are also disturbed by the fact that this illegal act has received official endorsement from the Government of Iran. Such a precedent is dangerous. Its future implications are too dreadful to imagine.

10. This act tampers with a highly delicate peace equilibrium, which was largely brought about by the universal observance of the rule of law. Though imperfect, many a time international law has over the years proved effective in balancing inter-State relations. Diplomatic personnel, under the protection of international law and recognized norms, are agents which bring about this peace equilibrium. To expose them to illegal seizure is to tamper with the very fabric of peace. Customary international law has always recognized their inviolability.

11. Iran is a small country, a non-aligned country. Its survival depends upon the observance of international law by all nations. As a group, we small non-aligned countries depend on mobilizing the mobile body of international public opinion. We strive to focus it on our social-economic plight. From the statements that I have heard so far, it would seem that this mobile body of international public opinion would be in Iran's favour were it to release the hostages. The world watches with dismay the development of venomous relations between these two Member States. The level of tension between them is fast approaching a lethal point. Unless a solution is found urgently, an explosion is inevitable. Its disastrous consequences will no doubt engulf not only that region but the entire world.

12. It is basically because of this apprehension that my delegation found it necessary to associate itself with those who are interceding for peace. We appeal to all the parties concerned to exercise maximum restraint. This delegation does not believe that the people of Iran seek international instability as the price of redressing the injustice and abuse of human rights they are alleged to have suffered under the Shah. As I have already said, we in Swaziland believe that disputes between States should be settled in accordance with the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. A confrontation situation often leads to disaster, and, as always, the innocent suffer. This show-down approach to conflict has no victors.

13. We cannot over-emphasize the need for both parties to create a conducive atmosphere, and such an atmosphere can be brought about only through the immediate release of

the hostages. We have learned that the people of Iran adhere with zeal to the Islamic faith. Hence, they should demonstrate to the world that Allah is merciful by being exemplary. The quality of mercy, as we are told, is inherent in that religion.

14. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Austria. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

15. Mr. BAUER (Austria): Mr. President, may I express to you and to the other members of the Security Council the gratitude of my Government for being permitted to address the Council on the most serious matter that is before it. I should also like to join previous speakers in thanking the Secretary-General for his timely initiative in requesting this meeting of the Council under the prerogatives of Article 99 of the Charter.

16. The issue at stake touches upon the most fundamental premises of the conduct of international relations and the maintenance of peace and security.

17. All throughout the history of sovereign nations, the inviolability of diplomats and diplomatic premises and their immunity from legal prosecution in the host country and the duty of Governments adequately to protect diplomatic personnel and property have constituted the cornerstone of diplomatic intercourse that is essential for a peaceful interaction between States. This basic tenet of international law has been reaffirmed in the Vienna Conventions on diplomatic consular relations, which have been ratified by the great majority of Member States, among them the United States and Iran. The holding of hostages in the Embassy of the United States in Iran, as well as in the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thus constitutes a most serious and unprecedented violation of fundamental norms of international law. It also infringes upon basic and elementary humanitarian considerations and the dignity of the human person, the safeguarding of which is one of the most basic elements of Austrian policy. Apart from these legal and political considerations, I offer an expression of the deep-felt sympathy of the Austrian people with the plight of the hostages as well as with their families.

18. For these reasons, the Austrian Government joins in the appeals made by the President of the Security Council and the President of the General Assembly, as well as by all previous speakers in this debate. We call upon the Iranian authorities to heed these appeals, to release the hostages without any pre-conditions and guarantee their safe conduct.

19. We fully recognize the seriousness of the tensions that have arisen between the Governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States. We are confident that after the release of the hostages these tensions can be solved by means of negotiations and other appropriate instruments that are at the disposal of the two Governments. We urge them to respect the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes and to exercise the utmost restraint in their actions.

20. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

21. Mr. ELLIOTT (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, first of all I should like to convey to you the sincere congratulations of my delegation on your assumption of the important post of President of the Security Council for this month. I should also like to express our gratitude to your predecessor, the representative of Bolivia, for the way in which he conducted the proceedings of the Council during November.

22. For the fourth time only in the long history of the United Nations, the Secretary-General has felt impelled to make use of the prerogatives conferred upon him by the Charter.

23. The Secretary-General has explained his views on the subject of the gravity of the facts which prompted him to take the decision to call for an urgent meeting of the Security Council. In his letter of 25 November, he stressed that the international community was becoming increasingly concerned that the dangerous level of tension between the two countries, the United States and Iran, threatened peace and stability in the region and could have disastrous consequences for the entire world.

24. The facts justifying this alarming appeal are very well known. First of all, there was the taking of diplomats as hostages in the very premises of their embassy. This in itself and without any doubt constitutes a flagrant violation of the international conventions which govern diplomatic relations among countries. Many speakers have stressed this fact and also the responsibility of the host country in this respect. The preamble of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations<sup>1</sup> of 1961 states explicitly that respect for the rules of diplomatic immunity is closely linked to the safeguarding of international peace and security and is indispensable for the promotion of friendly relations among nations.

25. Apart from these basically legal considerations, we wish to convey the emotions of the people of Belgium at the sight of the hostages and their plight, whose captivity has gone on now for a month. The Belgian authorities have expressed their solidarity with the people who are being held captive and have expressed their sympathy to their families and to the American people. In this spirit, Belgium associated itself with the declaration made by the Heads of State or Government of the nine Member States of the European Community, which met in the European Council at Dublin on 30 November [S/13668].

26. No one has sought to challenge the right of the Iranian people to determine their own national and cultural identity. The events of the Iranian revolution have demonstrated how profound was the will of that people to assert itself and to mould its own future in total freedom. That process of national self-assertion should be allowed to go on without any outside interference. It is understandable that this process should have been marked by demonstrations in reaction to the abuses and injustices of the régime to which the revolution put an end. But the prestige of Iran, its revolution, its ancient culture and its religion are all ill-served by acts which violate the fundamental rules of relations among States.

27. As a country whose existence depends pre-eminently on the safeguarding of these essential rules, Belgium issues an urgent appeal to Iran to free the diplomats taken hostage. Like so many previous speakers, my delegation exhorts Iran to understand that any grievances it may have will be better understood if the wrong done to the hostages is first redressed. In taking that step, Iran would above all be doing a service to its own honour, and would thus be helping to allay the international anxiety which has been aroused by this crisis and the threat it has posed to international peace and security.

28. Mr. President, I should like to thank you personally for having given the opportunity to my delegation to express the deep concern of the Belgian authorities and the Belgian people. We should like to express our appreciation to your predecessor for having been the faithful interpreter of the Security Council's deep concern. We pledge our total confidence and full support to the Secretary-General, who is sparing no effort to resolve this distressing crisis.

29. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Mauritius. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

30. Mr. RAMPHUL (Mauritius): Mr. President, I thank you and, through you, the members of the Security Council for giving me an opportunity to participate in the debate of a most important issue confronting Iran and the United States. I am particularly happy to do so under your presidency, Sir, since your great and proud country, the People's Republic of China, was chronologically the first State to recognize the independence and sovereignty of my small island country, Mauritius.

31. The present crisis between Iran and the United States is extremely delicate, difficult and dangerous. It is imperative that we move fast to defuse it. My delegation is therefore grateful to the Secretary-General for having courageously and rightly taken the initiative to secure the convening of a meeting of the Council. We applaud and fully support Mr. Kurt Waldheim's efforts.

32. There can be no doubt that the people of Iran have very serious and genuine grievances, nor can there be any doubt that the methods which they are using to redress the wrong done to them are absolutely unacceptable to the international community. Innocent persons must not be made to atone for the sins of others. Flagrant violations of international laws, conventions and treaties, and diplomatic practice dating from time immemorial, cannot, must not, will not be tolerated by the international community. It has become obvious that emotion alone cannot achieve justice and that reason must prevail. Nor will the language of military threats resolve anything.

33. My delegation therefore fully supports previous statements made in the Council requesting Iran to vacate the United States Embassy at Teheran and to release forthwith all the accredited United States diplomats so that they may return safe and sound to their respective homes and families, taking into consideration that we are fast approaching festivities sacred to their religious beliefs.

<sup>1</sup>United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 500, p. 95.

34. In this connexion, I wish to inform the Council that my Government sent messages on 17 and 24 November to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and to the head of the Revolutionary Council of Iran, respectively. I pray and hope that, in his wisdom, Ayatollah Khomeini, the Imam, will dispense compassion and mercy, as taught in the Holy Koran.

35. My delegation holds the view that, once the hostages have been released, modalities can be found to deal with the charges made separately. In the meantime, we hope that the Secretary-General will continue his laudable efforts towards achieving a solution which will bring Iran and the United States around a table for negotiations which will help to resolve the thorny problem with which we are faced and which may yet bring about a renewed friendship and

better understanding between these two great countries and their peoples.

36. May I conclude by saying that the Iranian Government and people have succeeded in making their case clear to the world. They must now stop, and refrain from pursuing a path which will lead them to isolation in the international community. Indeed, utmost restraint on the part of both Iran and the United States is called for.

37. Perhaps, to avoid such threats to international peace and security in the future, the United Nations should start looking into the possibility of creating a special machinery to monitor situations where leaders submit their people to oppression.

*The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.*



---

### كيفية الحصول على منشورات الأمم المتحدة

يمكن الحصول على منشورات الأمم المتحدة من المكتبات ودور التوزيع في جميع أنحاء العالم - استعلم منها من المكتبة التي تتعامل معها أو اكتب إلى : الأمم المتحدة ، قسم البيع ، في نيويورك أو في جنيف .

#### 如何购取联合国出版物

联合国出版物在全世界各地的书店和经售处均有发售。请向书店询问或写信到纽约或日内瓦的联合国销售组。

#### HOW TO OBTAIN UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS

United Nations publications may be obtained from bookstores and distributors throughout the world. Consult your bookstore or write to: United Nations, Sales Section, New York or Geneva.

#### COMMENT SE PROCURER LES PUBLICATIONS DES NATIONS UNIES

Les publications des Nations Unies sont en vente dans les librairies et les agences dépositaires du monde entier. Informez-vous auprès de votre libraire ou adressez-vous à : Nations Unies, Section des ventes, New York ou Genève.

#### КАК ПОЛУЧИТЬ ИЗДАНИЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ

Издания Организации Объединенных Наций можно купить в книжных магазинах и агентствах во всех районах мира. Наводите справки об изданиях в вашем книжном магазине или пишите по адресу: Организация Объединенных Наций, Секция по продаже изданий, Нью-Йорк или Женева.

#### COMO CONSEGUIR PUBLICACIONES DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS

Las publicaciones de las Naciones Unidas están en venta en librerías y casas distribuidoras en todas partes del mundo. Consulte a su librero o diríjase a: Naciones Unidas, Sección de Ventas, Nueva York o Ginebra.

---