



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MWANGAGUHUNGA (Uganda)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMEN AND THE RAPPORTEUR

1. Mr. LUTFI (Jordan) welcomed the Solomon Islands to the United Nations and nominated Mr. Jeremy Kinsman (Canada) for the office of Vice-Chairman.
2. The CHAIRMAN said that in the absence of other nominations he would take it, if there was no objection, that in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure the Committee decided to dispense with the requirement to hold the election by secret ballot.
3. It was so decided.
4. Mr. Kinsman (Canada) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.
5. Mr. HERRERA VEGAS (Argentina) welcomed the Solomon Islands to the United Nations and nominated Mr. Siegfried Zachmann (German Democratic Republic) for the office of Vice-Chairman.
6. The CHAIRMAN said that in the absence of other nominations he would take it, if there was no objection, that in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure the Committee decided to dispense with the requirement to hold the election by secret ballot.
7. It was so decided.
8. Mr. Zachmann (German Democratic Republic) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.
9. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the election of the Rapporteur should take place at the next meeting.
10. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C.2/33/1; A/C.2/33/L.1)

11. The CHAIRMAN said that document A/C.2/33/L.1 contained a number of suggestions for the reorganization of the work of the Committee prepared in the light of the difficulties encountered at past sessions. The suggestions did not involve any revolutionary changes. They simply reflected the ideas and suggestions made in the past in the Committee and in other bodies and took into account the volume of work which the Committee was required to deal with, the increase in the membership of the Organization and the importance of the Committee's organizing its business in a manner consistent with the objectives that the international community had set itself and with the interdisciplinary approaches to the formulation of

international economic and social policy that the Committee had advocated for a long time.

12. He would like to stress that none of the suggestions in the paper should be seen as involving any restriction on the rights of delegations to express fully their views on any matter within the Committee's purview. What was proposed was really a rearrangement to enable the Committee to achieve a sharper focus in the consideration of the questions on its agenda.

13. The holding of a single general debate at the beginning of the session would provide an opportunity for all delegations to make general statements of concern to them and would enable the executive heads of organizations to present their reports and thus facilitate the work of the delegations themselves in considering proposals falling within the various items on the agenda. In that connexion, he considered it necessary to set deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions and to establish a schedule for their consideration.

14. He invited delegations to express their views on the organization of work and to indicate whether they preferred to do so at an open or a closed meeting.

15. Mr. SAUNDERS (Jamaica) said that his delegation had no comment to make on the procedural point that had been raised but, on the basis of the preliminary discussions which had taken place in the Group of 77, considered it essential to hold a debate on the organization of work.

16. Mr. KOUYATE (Guinea) said he would like the Secretariat to explain the situation with regard to the availability of documents.

17. Mr. MAKEYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the suggestions concerning the organization of work were generally acceptable to his delegation. He particularly welcomed the plan to hold a general debate at the present session, which would enable delegations to express their views on such basic questions as the world economic situation, the restructuring of the economic and social sectors and the new international economic order. His delegation was also pleased to note that every delegation would have an opportunity to express its views on each agenda item or group of items. That was an important point, since items such as those relating to UNIDO and UNCTAD undoubtedly required discussion.

18. He would like to make a few remarks on the practice of informal consultations, which had been extensively used in the past. Such consultations were useful, but they could never take the place of normal meetings of the Committee. The Committee should set itself the goal of reaching agreement at formal meetings, and informal consultations should be resorted to only when absolutely necessary. He hoped that his comments would be taken into account.

19. The CHAIRMAN replied that, if the arrangement was for the Vice-Chairmen and the Chairman himself to hold consultations, decisions would unquestionably be taken at a meeting. Consultations were merely intended to help the Committee to expedite its work.
20. Mr. JÖDAHL (Sweden) welcomed the Solomon Islands to the United Nations. In his view, document A/C.2/33/L.1, which introduced some innovations but no fundamental changes, should in general provide a very good basis for the Committee's work. He particularly welcomed the interdisciplinary approaches advocated in the paper.
21. Mr. TARLAN (Turkey) agreed that the suggestions made in document A/C.2/33/L.1 concerning the general debate were very useful, since they would enable the Committee to focus on concrete proposals. It would be desirable for the executive heads to introduce their respective reports during the first week of the debate, which should be conducted with sufficient flexibility to allow delegations to express their views whenever they saw fit.
22. Count YORK (Federal Republic of Germany) said that he had found in document A/C.2/33/L.1 some very useful ideas as a follow-up to the discussions at the summer session of the Economic and Social Council. The nine members of the European Communities generally agreed with those ideas and would support any suggestion designed to save time, but would be prepared for detailed discussion of whatever proposals were put forward.
23. Mr. XIFRA (Spain) said he hoped that the Committee would accept the sound suggestions in document A/C.2/33/L.1 and begin its work on that basis; later, if necessary, it could depart pragmatically from that approach. Actually, all delegations knew how the debate should be conducted; the real difficulties were not a matter of methods of work but were political in nature.
24. Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic) said that, during the general debate, there should be no restriction on the rights of delegations to express their views on the questions within the purview of the Committee; that was in fact spelt out in document A/C.2/33/L.1, paragraph 6. It would also be better if substantive questions were discussed in the Committee, and not simply in the course of consultations.
25. Mr. STIBRAVY (United States of America) said that his delegation had expressed its views on the questions dealt with in document A/C.2/33/L.1 at the last session of the Economic and Social Council. The procedural suggestions in the paper seemed to be aimed in the right direction. His delegation had listened with interest to the representative of Jamaica, who would perhaps wish to expand on his statement.
26. Mr. SAUNDERS (Jamaica) said that the proposals in document A/C.2/33/L.1 were consistent with the relevant recommendations of the General Assembly at the previous

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session with regard to the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system; his delegation had taken an active part in the preparation of those recommendations. Account also had to be taken, however, of two factors that were creating a slightly abnormal situation. First, item 58 (a) was to be considered in plenary meetings of the General Assembly: some thought therefore had to be given to the framework within which matters covered by that agenda item should be discussed during the general debate in the Committee. Secondly, some important documents were not yet available on certain items on the Committee's agenda. In those circumstances, it might be best to wait until the matters covered by item 58 (a) had been considered at plenary meetings and to deal in the meantime with items on which the reports were available, namely, those concerning UNITAR, the Special Fund, the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and UNEP, the report of whose Governing Council was to be available the following week.

27. Moreover, the executive heads should, ideally, be in a position to introduce the reports of their respective agencies at the beginning of the general debate.

28. The CHAIRMAN said that the decision to consider item 58 (a) at plenary meetings had been taken at the time when he was preparing document A/C.2/33/L.1; however, that decision should not significantly alter the proposed method of work. The general debate should cover as many questions as possible, while remaining flexible; in particular, it should be possible for the Committee to revert towards the end to matters that had not been completely disposed of. Comments had been made concerning the documentation that was not yet available: the Secretariat would provide details on that subject. He had also taken note of the wishes expressed concerning the introduction of reports by the executive heads.

29. Count YORK (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the general debate should deal with all questions on the Committee's agenda; to that end the Committee needed to have all the necessary documentation available. The representative of Jamaica had made useful comments on that subject. The Assembly was to take up item 58 (a) at plenary meetings after the general debate, but that did not mean that questions covered by that item could not be dealt with in the Second Committee: on the contrary, they should be discussed, and in detail. The sensible course was to find out on what date the item was to be considered by the plenary and to defer the Committee's debate on the subject accordingly.

30. The CHAIRMAN assured the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany that the officers of the Committee would consult the plenary on the matter.

31. Mr. KINSMAN (Canada) said that document A/C.2/33/L.1 contained valuable proposals, but that he agreed with the representative of Jamaica that there were certain abnormal circumstances. Consideration of item 58 (a) in plenary and any agreement that might emerge from that consideration concerning the mandate of the Committee established under General Assembly resolution 32/174 would be determining factors in organizing the Committee's discussions. The Committee would therefore have to await the results of that debate in plenary, as the representative of

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Jamaica had suggested, and begin by considering the non-controversial questions that he had mentioned. The Committee had already made progress in considering the organization of its work and delegations could consider that matter carefully in order to make a satisfactory decision on 2 October.

32. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that it was for the Committee to make a decision to invite the executive heads of agencies to speak earlier than had been planned; arrangements to that end would obviously take time, however. The documentation was expected to be ready by the following Monday.

33. Mr. DONNELLY (United Kingdom) commended the Chairman's proposals concerning the organization of work, which were characterized by great flexibility and ensured that delegations could express their views on any item. He agreed that, since the situation was abnormal in that item 58 (a) was to be taken up after it had been discussed at plenary meetings, it would be best not to make a hasty decision. It might well be, however, that the plenary itself was relying on the Second Committee to simplify its work for it, which would invalidate the suggestion made by the representative of Jamaica. Moreover, the situation could also be said to be only too normal, in view of the fact that the volume of work assigned to the Committee was larger than ever; the Committee should therefore avoid wasting time by supporting the new proposals and should stick to those put forward by the Chairman.

34. Mr. HAIDAR (India) said that the representative of Jamaica had explained the views of the Group of 77 on how the Committee might usefully employ its time until the situation concerning item 58 (a) became clear. Moreover, the work of the plenary meetings and of the Committee should be harmonized in order to avoid any duplication. In any event, since the documentation was already available for a number of items (food problems, UNEP, UNITAR, Special Fund), time could be saved by starting with those items on the following Monday. The Jamaican proposal was reasonable and was the only solution possible. The Chairman's suggestion was nevertheless very useful, and delegations that wished to do so should be encouraged to state their views on items for which the necessary documentation was available to the Committee and to do so for so long as there was a danger that the Committee's general debate might duplicate that occurring in the plenary.

35. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that if the Committee began its work by considering specific proposals, it could not then move on to general debate but would have to continue considering the specific items assigned to it.

36. Mr. PFANZELTER (Austria) pointed out in connexion with item 58 (a), that the consideration in plenary meetings of the report of the Committee in question would not take place until the general debate in plenary had ended, i.e., after 12 October. It would therefore be necessary to suggest that to the executive heads of agencies that they should introduce their reports while the results of the consideration of item 58 (a) in plenary were being awaited.

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37. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the General Assembly was master of its own procedure and that he had no definite information on how it intended to proceed with regard to item 58 (a).

38. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters) explained, on the subject of the resumed session of the Economic and Social Council, that only one of the items on the agenda for that session came within the competence of the Second Committee, namely, the report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, and that all other items were within the competence of the Third Committee. However, since the delegations participating in the work of the Second Committee were also called upon to participate in the work of the Economic and Social Council at its resumed session, he wanted to draw attention to the fact that two items on the agenda for the resumed session of the Council - the medium-term plan and co-ordination - had been referred to the Fifth Committee. In view of the fact that the Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council were served by the same Secretariat unit, the Committee might have to suspend its meetings in order to enable the Council to examine those items. Moreover, the President of the Economic and Social Council had announced that in view of the complexity of the report of CPC, it could not be discussed at the resumed session.

39. On the subject of documentation, he said that most of the important reports (TCDC, Economic and Social Council, specialized agencies, UNIDO) would be available by the following Monday. Undoubtedly, if those reports could be introduced early in the session, the work of the Committee would be greatly facilitated, but it would not be easy to get the executive heads of the agencies together during any single week and three or four weeks would probably be required.

40. It was his understanding that item 58 (a) would not be taken up before 14 or 15 October, but the General Assembly itself was master of its own procedure.

41. Mr. UL-HAQUE (Pakistan) said that he would refer to only a few points, since the representative of Jamaica had already outlined the views of the Group of 77. Since the general debate planned for the current session differed from the usual general debates, it would apparently be difficult to take part in it without having complete documentation available; for that reason it would be wise to postpone it and to proceed to the introduction of all the reports during the first two weeks. His delegation, for one, would not be in a position to participate in the general debate without such a postponement. Moreover, it should be understood that if speakers made only a single substantive statement during the general debate, that statement would necessarily be very long and boring. The second problem was how to avoid overlapping with the debate in the plenary and, consequently, how to prevent some delegations that had made a statement in plenary from proceeding to make another in the Committee. The logical course therefore seemed to be to defer the general debate until the situation became clearer.

42. Mr. SAUNDERS (Jamaica) recalled Mr. Cordovez's statement that a number of documents would be available by Monday but that he had reliable information indicating that other very important documents would not be. The fact that many

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documents did not yet have a symbol gave some idea of the magnitude of the problem. The problem of documentation was not a new one; it arose constantly, and the General Assembly must take vigorous action to deal with it. That was yet another reason for not adopting the programme of work proposed by the Chairman, despite the latter's recognized competence, and for postponing the general debate for one or two weeks. However, it was not a question of waiting until the General Assembly completed its consideration of item 58 (a) but of gaining a clearer idea of the problem. As some delegations had suggested, the executive heads of organizations could begin to present their reports the following week, but it was uncertain whether all of them would be able to do so. The Committee could also take up certain specific questions; however, even if most delegations wished to proceed in that way after the general debate, the latter would have to be postponed for a week while a solution was found.

43. Mr. XIFRA (Spain) said it was his understanding that most delegations wished to postpone the general debate, citing two reasons for their position, firstly the lack of documentation and secondly (from what he had been able to gather from the veiled allusions of the representative of Canada) a mysterious event which was to take place and which seemed to be more or less related to the consideration of item 58 (a). As could be seen from the document on the organization of work, a number of General Assembly agenda items had been allocated to the Second Committee for its consideration and it could therefore be assumed that the Committee's general debate would have to deal with those items. It was true that there were practical difficulties that might warrant putting off the general debate until a later date, for those members of the Committee who might wish to attend the discussion of item 58 (a) in the General Assembly would for that reason be unable to attend the meetings of the Committee. It was also true that such a postponement would give him more time to prepare his statement, but it seemed difficult to reconcile such a decision with the General Assembly's specific instructions to move ahead with the work as expeditiously as possible and, as the Chairman proposed, to complete it by 8 December.

44. The CHAIRMAN observed that he had drafted his note on the organization of work after receiving a letter from the President of the General Assembly allocating to the Second Committee a number of items, which did not include item 58 (a), and that he had prepared the list of available documents on the basis of the information supplied to him.

45. Mr. HACHANI (Tunisia) said that the representative of Jamaica had already set forth the position of the Group of 77 and that he himself merely wished to add a few words. A distinction must be made between the two aspects of the question. The Committee must first decide whether it would merely discuss the proposals or would engage in substantive debate on political orientations in connexion with each agenda item. The proposals contained in the Chairman's note deserved thorough study, and his delegation was not yet able to take a decision on the matter. As to the question of the traditional general debate, the Group of 77 had made a proposal which would enable the Committee to make profitable use of its time pending a solution to the problem of item 58 (a). It was not a question of awaiting the General Assembly's decision on that item but of gaining a clearer

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idea of the type of discussion the General Assembly and the Second Committee wished to hold on the item, which would only be possible within the context of informal consultations. However, the Committee must set to work without delay, and it would therefore be advisable, as the representative of Jamaica had suggested, to begin consideration of those questions for which the Committee had all the necessary documentation.

46. The CHAIRMAN observed that the Committee could not hold consultations on an agenda item which was not within its competence.

47. Mr. RIEMER (United States of America) said that he endorsed the proposals contained in the Chairman's note on the organization of work and would like to see them applied. However, the representative of Jamaica and other speakers had noted that it would be difficult for some delegations to take part in the general debate before the question of item 58 (a) was resolved. A possible solution to that problem would be to adopt the idea put forward by the representative of Austria and begin the general debate with the presentation of the reports of the executive heads, although it would have to be determined whether they would all be able to appear the same week. Since documentation was already available for some other agenda items, such as item 64 on food problems, they could certainly be taken up, although the Committee should take care to place them in the context of the new international economic order.

48. The CHAIRMAN said that it would be necessary to ask Mr. Cordovez which executive heads of organizations could be present in the near future. He also wished to say that, as far as he was concerned, all the agenda items allocated to the Second Committee bore a relation to the new international economic order.

49. Mr. JODAHL (Sweden) said he felt that the Committee should follow the over-all approach proposed in document A/C.2/33/L.1. On 2 October it would have more specific information and would be able to take a decision on some of the proposals that had just been made. The Secretariat would then have to indicate which documents were ready, so that the Committee would know which questions it could begin to consider.

50. Mr. GREET (Australia) said he did not think it would be convenient to postpone the beginning of the general debate until after the consideration of item 58 (a) by the Assembly; the debate should begin shortly, with the participation of the executive heads and of those delegations which were ready to make their statements. It would also be desirable for the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to take part. The items relating to the Special Fund, UNITAR, the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, etc. could be taken up concurrently, as the representative of Jamaica had suggested.

51. The CHAIRMAN noted that it was suggested in paragraph 6 of document A/C.2/33/L.1 that the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation should open the general debate at the outset of the session.

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52. Mr. LAZAREVIC (Yugoslavia), noting that some useful ideas had been put forward, particularly by the representative of Jamaica, said that he nevertheless felt that a logical, constructive organization of the Committee's work would best be served by putting off an immediate decision and holding consultations with a view to settling the matter on 2 October.

53. Mr. SAUNDERS (Jamaica) said he agreed that the general debate could be opened by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation without awaiting consideration of item 58 (a) by the Assembly. Furthermore, the Committee would have to know by 2 October the dates on which the executive heads would be available.

54. Mr. DONNELLY (United Kingdom) said he also thought that the executive heads should make their statements at the beginning of the general debate; some of them could perhaps be asked to move up the dates which they had scheduled.

55. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee was indeed nearing a decision on the best way of organizing its work so as to ensure complete success. He urged members to hold consultations in the light of the proposals that had just been made so as to be able to take a decision on 2 October.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.