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SIXTH COMMITTEE
19th meeting
held on
Monday, 17 October 1977
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GAVIRIA (Colombia)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 115: RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARMED CONFLICTS: REPORT OF THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 116: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED
NATIONS AND ON THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE ORGANIZATION

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 115: RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARMED CONFLICTS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/32/144 and Add.1)

1. Mr. JACOVIDES (Cyprus), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, denied that he had engaged in polemics, as the representative of Turkey had alleged at the previous meeting. He had confined himself to stating objectively the facts with regard to the Cyprus situation since the 1974 invasion by the Turkish army, in the context of the item under discussion, namely human rights in armed conflicts; that situation was a current and grave instance of gross violation of those rights. That was not an in-depth discussion of the Cyprus question, which would require much more time. Far from being "unfounded allegations", as the representative of Turkey had said, the numerous violations of human rights in Cyprus had been substantiated by the Commission of Human Rights of the Council of Europe. Following a complaint by the Government of Cyprus, that Commission had carried out a thorough investigation in situ and the resulting findings, published in the 23 January 1977 issue of the Sunday Times of London had constituted, in the view of that newspaper, "a horrendous indictment against Turkey".
2. He could not endorse the view that because the Sixth Committee was a technical committee no such issues should be raised before it. That view unduly restricted the mandate of one of the Main Committees of the General Assembly, which was a political body par excellence. Although the Sixth Committee dealt primarily with legal subjects its members could refer, in the context of the items on the agenda, to aspects of other topics related to such items so as to illustrate the points they were making.
3. He welcomed the reference by the representative of Turkey to the need to create a climate of goodwill so as to reach a peaceful solution to the Cyprus problem, but would prefer Turkey to give tangible proof of goodwill by implementing the United Nations resolutions. Only within the framework of those resolutions, of which the basic one was General Assembly resolution 3212 (XXIX), for which Turkey itself had voted, could a just and lasting solution be found for the benefit of the long-suffering people of Cyprus.
4. Mr. BADAWI (Egypt), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his previous statement had remained within the traditional context of the debate in the Sixth Committee, but the representative of Israel had not followed his example. Consequently, he felt it necessary to recall that Israel continued to refuse to accept the Geneva Conventions on the protection of the victims of armed conflicts, and that the General Assembly had set up a Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, which had verified serious violations of the Geneva Conventions. The matter would be considered by the General Assembly. With regard to the alleged violations of those Conventions by Egypt, he inquired where and against whom those violations had been committed, since his country occupied no foreign territory.

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5. Mr. ARMALY (Observer, Palestine Liberation Organization), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said he was concerned about maintaining the serene atmosphere necessary for the debate.
6. Mr. ROSENNE (Israel), speaking on a point of order, asked the Chairman to rule whether an observer delegation for a Nazi-inspired organization could exercise the right of reply.
7. The CHAIRMAN said that before giving the floor to the observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization, he had consulted the Secretariat about the existing precedents in other bodies, and had come to an affirmative conclusion, since that principle had been established in a number of resolutions, including General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX). It was by virtue of that resolution that he had given the floor to the Palestine Liberation Organization.
8. Mr. ARMALY (Observer, Palestine Liberation Organization) said that, in the interest of serenity, he did not wish to play into the hands of delegations which had applied to the organization which he represented terms which were primarily applicable to the Government of the person who had used them. The representative of the Zionist entity had accused him of making an "emotional" statement, but he had merely referred to actual facts. However, the alleged "emotionalism" was explicable when the person referring to the sufferings of the Palestinian people was someone who, like himself, was one of the victims of the terrorism which had begun in 1948.
9. With regard to the term "Nazi", he would confine himself to asking the representative of Israel if Der-Yassin had been a military objective, if it was true that the first person to call Mr. Menahem Begin a terrorist had been Mr. Ben-Gurion, and why the United Kingdom had for a number of years refused to let Mr. Menahem Begin enter its territory.

AGENDA ITEM 116: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ON THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE ORGANIZATION (A/32/33, A/32/58 and Add.1 and 2, A/32/133 and A/32/235)

10. Mr. BROMS (Finland), speaking as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, introduced the report of the Committee (A/32/33) and expressed gratitude for the collaboration of the Secretariat and the assistance received from the other members of the Bureau, especially the Rapporteur. After describing the work of the Special Committee and its Working Group, he said that the views, suggestions and proposals presented had been reproduced in detail in the report, following the usual custom of omitting the names of delegations and Governments. Special attention had been given to the problems concerning the composition and structure of the Security Council, the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly and the respective powers of those organs. Less attention had been paid to the problems concerning the Economic and Social Council and the economic and social activities of the United Nations, because the existence of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System had made it necessary to avoid duplication of effort. The two

(Mr. Broms, Finland)

Committees should assist each other within their respective fields of technical competence.

11. The debate in the Special Committee had been extremely informative and had given rise to legal and political arguments in the best tradition of the Sixth Committee. The debate was summarized in the report of the Working Group, and the proposals submitted by delegations were set forth in concise form in the working papers, reproduced in annex II to the report (A/AC.182/L.3-7, 9, 12/Rev.1, 13 and 15). The inclusion of one of those papers (A/AC.182/L.12/Rev.1) had caused a difference of opinion and the Special Committee had had to take a vote for the first time. That had occurred at the end of a hectic session, during which attitudes had been moderate and the views of delegations closer to each other than ever before with regard to proposals aimed at strengthening the role of the United Nations. Consequently, the voting had been somewhat unexpected. However, the mandate of the Special Committee was so important that it would be necessary to stop to reflect before drawing any drastic conclusions as to the future. Although views might differ, as was natural in view of the political aspects involved, it was to be hoped that in accordance with the tradition of the Sixth Committee a neutral and objective study would be made of the issues involved.

12. The members of the Special Committee needed expert advice from other Members of the United Nations, with regard to both the substance of the matter and the way in which the Special Committee should fulfil its mandate during its next session, if the General Assembly should wish it to continue its work. He trusted that all delegations would co-operate in the effort to make the United Nations work more effectively.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.