

**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION

*Official Records**



SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

6th meeting

held on

Tuesday, 25 October 1977

at 3 p.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NEUGEBAUER (German Democratic Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/SPC/32/1/Add.2)

1. The CHAIRMAN announced that the General Assembly had decided at its morning meeting to allocate to the Special Political Committee an additional item included in its agenda entitled "Safety of international civil aviation" (item 129). The Committee had been requested to accord it due priority. The Chairman had been informed of the matter by letter from the President of the General Assembly circulated as document A/SPC/32/1/Add.2. He requested the members of the Committee to express their views concerning the possibility of according priority to the item in accordance with the Assembly's decision. The tentative time-table for the Committee's work approved at the 2nd meeting would enable it to begin consideration of the item the following afternoon. At that meeting, the Committee would hear statements by Mr. Kotaite, Chairman of the Council of ICAO and Mr. Derry F. Pearce, Chairman of the International Federation of Airline Pilots Associations. The meeting would then be adjourned and the date of the next meeting to be devoted to item 129 would be fixed by the Bureau of the Committee in consultation with the regional groups.
2. Mr. NGUYEN Van Luu (Viet Nam) said that the Chairman had quite rightly suggested that the Committee's programme of work should be adjusted to take account of the letter he had received from the President of the Assembly. The delegation of Viet Nam was not opposed to hearing the civil aviation representatives and unequivocally condemned aerial hijacking, but it was concerned at the suggestion that the item should be given priority. A reading of the world press of the past week indicated that certain countries - even and including countries in the United Nations - were seeking to alarm world opinion unduly in order to justify an intensification of their terrorist practices not only against those who were driven by despair to unlawful acts, but against those engaged in a struggle for a legitimate cause. While it did not question the good faith of the sponsors of the draft resolution requesting inclusion of the additional item in the Assembly's agenda, his delegation wished to caution the Special Political Committee against those sinister manoeuvres and urge it not to lay itself open to them. It therefore proposed that, without changing the order in which it had planned to consider the items on its agenda, the Committee, as it would normally do, should simply add the additional item, which did not appear to be so urgent as to warrant being given precedence over the others since they were equally urgent.
3. He was moved to make those suggestions solely in compliance with the responsibilities incumbent on all Member States of the United Nations, an Organization fighting for peace, justice and co-operation among peoples.
4. The CHAIRMAN recalled that he had merely suggested that the Committee begin consideration of the new item at the following meeting: it was up to the Committee to decide the priority to be accorded it and the procedure for considering it only after consultations. The tentative time-table approved at the 2nd meeting would not be changed and consideration of item 55 would begin as scheduled on 27 October with a statement from the Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

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5. Mr. ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen) was concerned that the decision to hear the statements announced by the Chairman might create a serious precedent because it would encourage any organization in future to request a hearing by the Special Political Committee or other Main Committees of the General Assembly. It might be appropriate to hold further consultations before taking such a decision. While it would of course be interesting to know the positions of the civil aviation representatives, the Committee should not on that account deviate from the procedures established in its rules of procedure.
6. The CHAIRMAN reminded the representative of Democratic Yemen that the representatives of specialized agencies were entitled to speak in the General Assembly or its Committees and that that was an established practice.
7. Mr. ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen) explained that his reference to creating a precedent obviously did not apply to representatives of the organizations of the United Nations system, but to the representatives of associations like the airline pilots association.
8. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee was of course free to decide whether it wished to afford an opportunity to a non-governmental organization to express its views.
9. Mr. ALARCON de QUESADA (Cuba) endorsed the remarks of the representative of Viet Nam. While there was no question that the Committee should consider the item referred to it by the General Assembly, it had been requested to accord "due priority" to its consideration, as stated in the letter from the President of the General Assembly (A/SPC/32/1/Add.2). It was understood that its priority would only be established after consultations among all members of the Committee, which would merely hear the representative of ICAO at its next meeting. It would also hear a representative of the airline pilots associations, whose views had been very widely publicized in the world press.
10. In that connexion, he pointed out that while it was fair, important and useful for the Committee to know the position of the civil aviation representatives, it was just as important for the latter to be kept informed of the views of the Committee members. They did not represent newspapers in the pay of various monopolies, but sovereign States, and what they said reflected a whole sector of world opinion. His delegation would therefore urge the Committee to work out a formula enabling the representatives of ICAO and the airline pilots to be present during the Committee's consideration of the item.
11. Mr. KOUYATE (Guinea) agreed with the representatives of Viet Nam and Cuba that although the problem of air piracy was important and urgent, there were others at least as urgent. Moreover, he feared that the Committee might devote too much time to the civil aviation representatives with detrimental effects on its other work.
12. Mr. AL-ATIYYAH (Iraq) said that it was his understanding that the Committee would first hear the representatives of the two organizations and then enter into consultations to decide what priority should be accorded to the agenda item which had been allocated to it. He was very much surprised to find the Committee following

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(Mr. Al-Atiyyah, Iraq)

a procedure which seemed to him devoid of all logic: would it not be more rational to start by deciding, through consultations, what importance should be given to the item and how to deal with it, and at the same time, to decide what organizations it might be useful and appropriate to hear?

13. Furthermore, he wished to point out that, as the Vietnamese representative had emphasized, there would be no justification for considering the item before - and to the detriment of - other items of equal urgency.

14. Mr. DIEZ URZUA (Chile) said that his delegation regarded the item which the Committee was to consider as one of high priority. He therefore found it very strange that having held only five meetings - that is, far fewer than the other Main Committees - because it did not have a heavy enough agenda, it was suddenly seized with items whose urgency had apparently not been realized during the four weeks since the opening of the General Assembly.

15. Mr. HERNDL (Austria), speaking on behalf of the 42 States which had requested inclusion of the additional item in the agenda of the General Assembly, said that it might be useful for the Committee to bear in mind the view expressed by those States in the explanatory memorandum attached to their request. The memorandum emphasized that it was in the interest of the international community that the item should be considered at the earliest opportunity. Civil air travel was now in a very serious crisis and the United Nations should act without delay.

16. In allocating the item to the Special Political Committee, the Assembly had requested it to accord it "due priority", thus indicating clearly that the Assembly considered that it deserved priority. His delegation therefore felt that the Committee should endorse the suggestion made by the Chairman at the beginning of the meeting and, after hearing the two statements to which he had referred and held consultations, it should immediately open a full debate on the item leading to the adoption of a draft resolution. He repeated that in his opinion, by proceeding in that way, the Committee would be acting most effectively in the interest of the international community.

17. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in accordance with the wishes they had expressed, the members of the Committee should immediately resume consultations so that they would have a clearer idea by the next meeting of how to proceed, it being understood that at the afternoon meeting, the Committee would hear the representatives of ICAO and the International Federation of Airline Pilots Associations.

18. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.