



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 3RD MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BOATEN (Ghana)

CONTENTS

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C.1/32/1 and Add.1)

The CHAIRMAN: This afternoon the Committee will consider the organization of its work.

May I draw the Committee's attention to documents A/C.1/32/1 and Add.1 containing letters dated 23 and 30 September 1977 respectively, addressed to me by the President of the General Assembly and informing me that the Assembly at its 5th and 15th plenary meetings decided to allocate certain items to the First Committee for consideration and report.

In establishing a time-table for the discussion of the items on our agenda the following limitations imposed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the General Committee should be taken into account.

As members know, the First Committee does not start its work until the general debate in the plenary Assembly is over. In accordance with the programme prepared for the General Assembly the general debate will in principle end on 13 October, and according to established practice the First Committee will start its substantive work only after the end of the general debate in the plenary Assembly. On the other hand, our concluding date is implied in the wish expressed by the President of the General Assembly that so far as possible we should not go beyond 9 December in considering all the items allocated to the First Committee. Accordingly, taking into account the limitations on services and the distribution of services among various Committees of the General Assembly, the First Committee in principle will have available to it 80 meetings in which to consider all the items before it.

It is foreseen in the work programme that our deliberations will demand the full utilization of the time available. In this connexion, I should like at this stage to call upon members of the Committee to submit draft resolutions pertaining to the different items as far in advance as is feasible so as to provide sufficient time for the necessary consultations.

(The Chairman)

As we are all aware of the tremendous pressures on the resources of the Secretariat during the current session of the General Assembly, I venture to suggest to the Committee that in order to allow sufficient time for the processing of a document, as a general rule we might set mid-day - that is, twelve o'clock - as the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions to the Secretariat, if they are required for distribution by the morning of the next day.

I should also like to urge the delegations to inscribe their names on the list of speakers for the various items as early as possible, so as to facilitate the task of the Secretariat and the Chairman. In order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, I would request members of the Committee kindly to ensure that draft resolutions, amendments, co-sponsorships and applications for accommodations for group meetings be given in writing to the Secretariat.

I do not want to take the time of the members by analysing the items allocated to this Committee, especially since our agenda for the current session contains all the items which were considered by the Committee last year, except agenda item 127.

I should like to put before the Committee a realistic work programme, subject of course to the approval of all members of the Committee. This work programme has been arrived at following extensive consultations.

As a result of these extensive consultations a consensus was reached which required us to begin our deliberations with item 127, "Deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war". The view was expressed that an opportunity should be given for this item to be prepared. Later, the item could be taken along with other items of a similar nature. At the beginning, therefore, the item is allocated three meetings. After this we shall consider disarmament. Members will recall that last year our consideration of disarmament questions took 33 meetings. In order to maintain some flexibility, we shall consider disarmament issues over some 42 to 50 meetings that will be from 18 October to 15 November, and possibly up until 21 November

(The Chairman)

Immediately after concluding the consideration of the items on disarmament, the Committee will take up the two items relating to outer space, namely, item 35, "International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space" and item 36, "Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting". I believe that 10 meetings should be ample for a thorough consideration of those items. As we have preserved some degree of flexibility with regard to disarmament, we must necessarily preserve the same degree of flexibility with regard to dates for this item. Those items will be considered over a period of 10 meetings, following the conclusion of the items on disarmament. In the course of our work, I hope to be able to tell you the beginning and concluding dates.

Next the Committee could take up item 127, "Deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war", item 37, "Conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations", and item 50, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security". We shall devote 17 meetings to those items. Here again, we must preserve some flexibility as regards dates.

Those are the proposals which have emerged from my consultations. I hope the Committee will adopt them without dissent.

May I take it that the Committee agrees with the suggested programme of work and time-table?

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: Now I should like to make some additional comments. As I said at the beginning, Committee members are veterans who are only too well acquainted with the procedures of the First Committee. Nevertheless, I should like to clarify some of our rules of procedure.

In the first place, I should like to draw the attention of representatives to document A/INF/136/Rev.1, which summarizes the provisions regarding documentation. May I appeal particularly to members to take these provisions into account. If I were to summarize my thinking, I should make

(The Chairman)

an appeal at the outset to all members strictly to limit any request for additional documents. That is necessary, as the Committee is aware, because of the tremendous pressures on the Secretariat during the General Assembly in the preparation, typing, translation and distribution of documents. If we limit ourselves to what is strictly essential, I am sure that, with its characteristic goodwill, the Secretariat will be able to fulfil such requests.

Secondly, I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to rule 110 of the rules of procedure, which states:

"Congratulations to the officers of a Main Committee shall not be expressed except by the Chairman of the previous session - or, in his absence, by a member of his delegation - after all the officers of the Committee have been elected".

(The Chairman)

Thirdly, I also wish to appeal for your co-operation. I believe that we can finish our work in good time if delegations inscribe their names sufficiently in advance. This will enable us to decide how many will be able to speak at each meeting. If the number of speakers does not warrant a meeting, we can then cancel the meeting and add the speakers to the list of speakers on another day. Along this line of thinking, I should like to appeal to you again most particularly to be punctual. As you know, the working hours are from 10.30 a.m. until 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. I assure you that I shall do my best to be here punctually every single time, but if I fail to be punctual the Vice-Chairman will be here on time. As I have already said, I intend to start the meetings of the Committee punctually when we have a minimum quorum. I shall appreciate in this regard the kind co-operation of the members of the Committee.

For the time being these are the considerations I wish to put before you in connexion with the organization of our work.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In response to the Chairman's appeal the Soviet delegation has circulated two documents: document A/C.1/32/L.1, which contains a draft declaration on the deepening and consolidation of international détente, and document A/C.1/32/L.2, which contains a draft resolution on the prevention of the danger of nuclear war. In connexion with the decision just taken by the Committee to begin its work on 17 October with the discussion of ~~agenda item 127~~, the Soviet delegation wishes to express the hope that these documents will be given appropriate attention by the members of the First Committee.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.