



Tuesday, 17 March 1953, at 3 p.m.

Headquarters, New York

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President: Mr. Lester B. PEARSON (Canada).

Consideration of the items on the agenda of the meeting

Pursuant to rule 67, it was decided not to discuss items 70 and 18 of the agenda of the General Assembly.

1. The PRESIDENT: Following the usual practice of the General Assembly, representatives who wish to do so may explain their votes on the draft resolutions proposed by the First Committee, which are included in the reports. I should like to suggest that such explanations should be limited to seven minutes, and since there is no objection to my proposal, I take it that it is so decided.

Complaint of non-compliance of States still detaining members of the Greek armed forces with the provisions of resolution 382 A (V), adopted by the General Assembly on 1 December 1950, recommending "repatriation of all those among them who express the wish to be repatriated": report of the First Committee (A/2369)

Mr. Thor Thors (Iceland), Rapporteur of the First Committee, presented the report of that Committee (A/2369) and then spoke as follows:

2. Mr. THORS (Iceland), Rapporteur of the First Committee: I have the honour to present to the General Assembly the report of the First Committee on the question, "Complaint of non-compliance of States still detaining members of the Greek armed forces with the provisions of resolution 382 A (V), adopted by the General Assembly on 1 December 1950, recommending 'the repatriation of all those among them who express the wish to be repatriated'".

3. This matter was introduced in the First Committee by the representative of Greece, Mr. Kyrou, and the Committee considered the question at three meetings, held between 9 and 12 March. In an explanatory memorandum the representative of Greece stated that, with the exception of Yugoslavia, the other States detaining members of the Greek armed forces had ignored the recommendations of the above-mentioned resolution and that over 3,000 Greek military personnel were still forcibly detained in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the USSR.

4. At the first meeting Denmark, New Zealand and Peru submitted a joint draft resolution, to which Lebanon introduced an amendment. This amendment was accepted by the sponsors of the joint draft resolution and the joint draft resolution, so amended, was adopted by 54 votes to 5, with 1 abstention.

5. The First Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution included at the end of the report. In paragraph 1 of the operative part an earnest appeal is addressed to the governments concerned to conform their attitude in this question with General Assembly resolution 382 A (V). In paragraph 2 the President of the General Assembly is requested to consult to this end with the governments in question and to report back to the General Assembly before the close of its current session.

6. Mr. KYROU (Greece): My delegation will, of course, vote in favour of the recommendation of the First Committee regarding the members of the Greek armed forces detained outside their homeland.

7. It gladly takes this opportunity to express its deep appreciation of the interest evinced in this matter by the delegations of Denmark, New Zealand and

Peru in introducing a draft resolution and by the delegation of Lebanon in constructively amending it. The Greek delegation further wishes to convey its gratitude to the First Committee for the noble view it took of this humanitarian question and to the delegations which participated in the almost unanimous vote in support of the recommendation.

8. Both the spirit and the content of this recommendation are in keeping with the reasons that prompted my Government's request for the inclusion of the present item in the agenda, and with the level on which we have handled this question. Our original intention to have it discussed in the dispassionate atmosphere of the Third Committee and the tone which we subsequently strove to impart—to the extent, of course, that this was within our control—to the debates of the First Committee clearly show how idle were the imputations of alleged attempts to capitalize politically on the fate of unfortunate victims of national duty.

9. For many months now the word "truce" has been on the lips of millions of human beings who have their anxious thoughts turned to Korea. Speaking as a simple human being, I wonder if it might not be possible to begin to implement this magic word in a more limited and less ambitious field. Indeed, how could the interests of any Power be adversely affected by a truce which does not imply any change in the political picture of our world of today or any disturbance of the present balance of forces? This is the meaning of the question that is now confronting the governments which are forcibly detaining Greek military personnel. This is the essence of the "earnest appeal" which the General Assembly addresses to them.

10. Differences may exist as to the exact number of those detained and I, for one, while supplying the First Committee with concrete figures, stressed that it was up to the national Red Cross societies of the interested governments to correct any error that might have crept into computations based on unilateral data. As those differences, however, do not involve any political or military stake, their settlement is, I believe, a simple matter of good will.

11. It should further be borne in mind that none of the Eastern European countries named in the explanatory memorandum attached to my original request (A/2204) for the inclusion of the present item in the agenda has so far publicly denied the existence of Greek military personnel under its authority or the right of every human being to live in his homeland amidst his dear ones, according to his freely expressed will. I am therefore confident that I am interpreting the feeling of the General Assembly in raising my voice in favour of a "truce of God" for the repatriation of all those members of the Greek armed forces detained outside Greece who freely express the wish to be repatriated.

12. May I couple this appeal with a request addressed to the representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Poland and Czechoslovakia to have the spirit in which our labours were conducted and the ends pursued by our recommendation interpreted to their Governments with as much fidelity as is humanly possible. By contributing to the clearing of the atmosphere on a limited issue, they may be instrumental in improving the situation in wider political spheres.

13. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly will now vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/2369.

The draft resolution was adopted by 54 votes to 5.

Methods which might be used to maintain and strengthen international peace and security in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the Charter: report of the Collective Measures Committee: report of the First Committee (A/2370)

[Agenda item 18]

Mr. Thor Thors (Iceland), Rapporteur of the First Committee, presented the report of that Committee (A/2370) and then spoke as follows:

14. Mr. THORS (Iceland), Rapporteur of the First Committee: I have the honour to present to the General Assembly the report of the First Committee on the question, "Methods which might be used to maintain and strengthen international peace and security in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the Charter: report of the Collective Measures Committee".

15. The First Committee considered the question at four meetings held between 12 and 16 March 1953. At the meeting of 12 March, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, the Philippines, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Venezuela and Yugoslavia submitted a joint draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee on 16 March by 52 votes to 5, with 2 abstentions.

16. The First Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution included at the end of the report. In paragraph 2 of the operative part of the draft resolution the Collective Measures Committee is requested to continue its work until the ninth regular session of the General Assembly, for the maintenance and strengthening of the United Nations collective security system.

17. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly will now vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/2370.

The draft resolution was adopted by 50 votes to 5, with 3 abstentions.

18. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): In connexion with the vote on the draft resolution on the report of the Collective Measures Committee, the Soviet Union delegation considers it necessary to make the following statement.

19. The Soviet Union delegation voted against the draft resolution originally submitted by the representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom and France and other members of the Committee, because the draft resolution reflects that trend in the Committee's work to which the Soviet Union delegation drew attention at the sixth session of the General Assembly—a trend obstructive to the strengthening of peace and international security.

20. When the Collective Measures Committee was established, the USSR delegation stated that the Committee, operating on the basis of the resolution falsely entitled "Uniting for peace", was attempting to super-

sede the Security Council, the organ in which the United Nations Charter vested primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and international security.

21. The Committee's second report, which has been considered at this session of the General Assembly, confirms the fact that the Committee has dealt with questions which, under the Charter, are within the jurisdiction of the Security Council and its subsidiary organ, the Military Staff Committee.

22. The representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom, France and other countries have tried to justify these activities on the part of the Collective Measures Committee, activities which are incompatible with the provisions of the Charter, by affirming that the Security Council lacks the means to discharge its duties with regard to collective measures, that under the United Nations Charter the General Assembly as well as the Security Council is responsible for the maintenance of peace and security, and that the General Assembly has authority to set up bodies for that purpose, if the Security Council is unable for any reason to carry out its direct responsibilities. Members of the Collective Measures Committee have also alleged that the rule of unanimity

in the Security Council has so far prevented that body from functioning normally.

23. In the opinion of the USSR delegation, all these arguments are clearly unfounded. It is not the unanimity rule that prevents the Security Council from functioning normally, but rather the constant attempts of the United States and the countries supporting it to circumvent the Security Council, to carry out their military plans under the United Nations flag and to set up machinery which would, in fact, supersede the Security Council.

24. The Soviet Union delegation considers that collective security can be strengthened only by consolidating unity of action within the Security Council, not outside that body; that is to say, in conformity with the United Nations Charter, not in violation of it.

25. Since the draft resolution originally submitted by the eleven States represented in the Collective Measures Committee runs counter to that requirement, the USSR delegation was unable to accept the draft resolution and voted against it.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.