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President: Mr. Frederick H. BOLAND (Ireland).

Organization of work

1. The PRESIDENT: The first item on our agenda this afternoon was to have been explanations of vote after the voting on item 85, "The situation in the Republic of the Congo". A number of the representatives who had inscribed their names to speak in explanation of vote after the voting, have suggested to me that, since they are at present engaged in the First Committee which is meeting at the same time as the Assembly, the explanation of their votes after the voting on item 85 should be deferred. At least two representatives, of the three who have asked to speak, are concerned, and in order to meet their convenience I suggest, with the agreement of the Assembly, that we should defer hearing these explanations of vote until another time when the First Committee is not meeting at the same time as the Assembly. In the absence of objection, I shall take that as being agreeable to the Assembly.

It was so decided.

2. The PRESIDENT: The same consideration applies to the next item on our agenda this afternoon, item 16, "Election of six members of the Economic and Social Council". After consultation with a number of delegations, including some of the delegations most closely concerned, it has been represented to me that it would be more appropriate if this election should be held at a time when the First Committee is not sitting at the same time as the Assembly. With the agreement of the Assembly, therefore, I propose to defer this election until some other time. In the absence of any objection, I shall take that as being agreeable.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 20

**Admission of new Members to the United Nations
(continued*)**

3. The PRESIDENT: We now come to the next item on our agenda this afternoon, which is item 20 on the agenda of the Assembly, "Admission of new Members to the United Nations". The Assembly has before it in this connexion, the special report of the Security Council [A/4656]. The Assembly will remember that consideration of this item was deferred at the

* Resumed 954th meeting.

954th plenary meeting on 18 December 1960. Under this item, the Assembly has before it a draft resolution submitted by Cameroun, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Dahomey, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal and Upper Volta [A/L.335]. An amendment [A/L.336] to this draft resolution has been submitted by the Soviet Union.

4. I call on the representative of Morocco on a point of order.

5. Mr. BEN ABOUD (Morocco): I am sorry to behave in a manner in which I have never behaved before in the past on points of order. Since our admission to the United Nations we have not asked for the floor more than two or three times on a point of order.

6. The last time I came to the rostrum I told the General Assembly that the present session was faced with important problems. These problems are divided into groups to be considered by the General Assembly in plenary meeting and to be considered by the First Committee, and in view of the technical difficulties shared by many delegations, including my own, it was considered impossible to be present in both the First Committee and the plenary meeting at the same time. In fact, you can observe two things right now: first, that I have just left the First Committee to check on what is going on in the General Assembly here because I heard that the plenary meeting was convening. I was surprised because it had been agreed that when the plenary meeting and the First Committee were both confronted with important problems, they should not meet concomitantly.

7. It was only unexpectedly that I heard in the corridor that a plenary meeting of the General Assembly was also being held. As we all know, there is a very important problem which is being discussed in the First Committee and I want to be there. This is the first observation to which I wish to draw the attention of the Assembly.

8. The second observation concerns the floor in this Assembly. It is an empty floor, and the Assembly is going to tackle some very vital questions. Let us suppose that my delegation was not here and that in spite of the agreement of last week this item was disposed of right here while my delegation was in the First Committee. That would not have been either fair to my delegation or good behaviour on the part of the General Assembly. I therefore ask the Assembly to understand that the reasons we advanced last week for separate meetings of the General Assembly and the First Committee are still valid now and that when the First Committee is meeting the General Assembly should not be meeting.

9. The PRESIDENT: The Chair has great personal sympathy with the practical difficulties explained by the representative of Morocco, but the meeting for this afternoon was duly scheduled and the Chair does not feel that it is open to it to adjourn the meeting. It is,

of course, open to any Member of the Assembly to propose that course if he desires to do so.

10. I call on the representative of Senegal on a point of order.

11. Mr. DIOP (Senegal) (*translated from French*): I must confess that I was not convinced by the arguments advanced by the speaker who preceded me. As the President himself has pointed out, this afternoon's meeting, on the agenda of which item 20 appears, was duly scheduled. All representatives were notified and all who take sufficient interest in the admission of new Members to the United Nations are present. The question of the admission of Mauritania to the United Nations comes under item 20 of our agenda. It was to have been taken up during the first part of the fifteenth session of the General Assembly and in point of fact work on it was begun, since the competent body has already studied the matter and submitted its report.

12. We think it improper to resort to subterfuge and delaying tactics in order to delay still further the admission of Mauritania to the United Nations. I would accordingly request the President to invite the Assembly to proceed forthwith to consider the draft resolution [A/L.335] requesting the admission of Mauritania.

13. The PRESIDENT: I really must ask Members of the Assembly, when they ask for the floor on a point of order, to make their point of order and not to use the occasion to make interventions or speeches. The Assembly will now proceed with its consideration of item 20.

14. Mr. ZOLLNER (Dahomey) (*translated from French*): On behalf of the delegation of Dahomey and of several other African delegations, I request that the question of Mauritania should be taken up here and now.

15. I would point out that this item has already been considered during the first part of this session of the General Assembly and that the problem as a whole has already been dealt with. All that is required of the Assembly at present is to take a decision on the terms of the draft resolution now before it [A/L.335].

16. In support of this draft resolution, I shall simply say that Mauritania has for half a century shared the common destiny of a number of countries which are now duly represented in the United Nations. Throughout the entire colonial period, this country was never the subject of any claims or demands whatsoever and when, last year, independence finally came for most of the countries forming part of this group of States, it was accorded and sanctioned by this very Assembly on the basis of the territorial limits of those countries at the time, that is, in 1960. It seems paradoxical, therefore, that it was only at that moment that some countries suddenly realized that there were certain questions and claims to be raised. That is why, on behalf of my delegation, I ask the Members of the Assembly to vote in favour of the draft resolution before them, the object of which is to bring the question of Mauritania once again before the Security Council.

17. Mr. DANDOBY (Niger) (*translated from French*): The delegation of the Niger is happy to speak in this debate to support the application for admission of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania [A/4604] as the hundredth Member of the United Nations. Mauritania was for more than half a century—from 1904 to 1956—a member of the former Federation of French West Africa. With the other Territories in that Federa-

tion it participated on an equal footing in the federal institutions, both under the system of direct administration and under the system of self-government. It followed with them the same process of political development which brought it to independence. The introduction of direct universal suffrage in 1946 made it possible for the Mauritanian citizens, regardless of race or sex, to take part in the public life of their country through the election of a representative assembly known successively as the General Council, the Territorial Assembly, and the Legislative Assembly, until it finally became a sovereign National Assembly.

18. At the executive level, Mauritania, initially a colony, was endowed under the Act of 23 June 1956 with a *loi-cadre* and with a government presided over first by a representative of the central authority and later by a prime minister who together with his cabinet is politically responsible to the National Assembly.

19. After voting an overwhelming "yes" in the referendum of 28 September 1958, Mauritania, together with all the other States except Guinea, became a member of the French Community. A new constitution was adopted and new elections were held. The Government resulting from these elections was to have the honour of leading the country to independence and national sovereignty. Mauritania thus completed the final stage in its evolution towards statehood and independence. It is this independence, recognized today by some sixty nations, that Mauritania asks you to ratify by admitting it to the United Nations.

20. Today we find ourselves faced with the opposition of Morocco to the admission of Mauritania to membership of the United Nations, that country affirming that Mauritania is an integral part of its territory. We for our part consider that there is no historical, juridical or geographical justification for this claim, any more than there would be for any such claim which, in similar circumstances, Nigeria might make upon the Niger or Dahomey, Ghana upon Togo or the Ivory Coast, Mali upon Senegal, or Guinea upon Mauritania. What were the frontiers, only half a century ago, of all these States whose representatives sit among us today? Into what confusion should we be thrown if all the countries of the world were to pursue, in this twentieth century, their dreams of supremacy based on ethnic or religious affinities or on geographical proximity. What would become of the political map of the world if this were to happen? Indeed, Mauritania, like all the States represented here, is a peace-loving State which is able and willing to carry out the obligations contained in the United Nations Charter.

21. Mr. DIOP (Senegal) (*translated from French*): We propose to examine the dispute between our Moroccan and Mauritanian brothers with complete objectivity. We shall therefore first review the arguments which are favourable to Morocco and then the arguments which are favourable to Mauritania, after which we shall draw the conclusions which force themselves upon us.

22. To begin with, I shall go into the arguments which favour Morocco. One of the most frequently invoked arguments is that there has never been an agreement between Morocco and France delimiting the southern borders of the Sherifian Empire and that it is therefore possible to assert that Mauritania might belong to the Sherifian Empire. The second argument, also frequently invoked, is that in the past some emirs of

Mauritania paid a certain spiritual allegiance to the Sultan of Morocco. For instance, in the eighteenth century...

23. The PRESIDENT: A point of order has been raised from the floor. I would ask the speaker at the rostrum kindly to stand aside for just one moment while I deal with the point of order which has been raised.

24. I give the floor to the representative of Morocco on a point of order.

25. Mr. BEN ABOUD (Morocco) (*translated from French*): I apologize to the President and to my colleague, the representative of Senegal.

26. I requested a little earlier, for the same reasons as those which we advanced last week [984th meeting] and which are still valid this week, in view of the importance of the questions now being debated in the First Committee and in the General Assembly, that we should postpone this meeting of the Assembly until tomorrow or until some later date. I returned to my seat a short while ago to find out whether the President was going to act on my request.

27. I have just learned that a similar request has been made in the First Committee, where for the same reasons it has been asked that the First Committee and the General Assembly should not meet concurrently. So we see that there is some unanimity on this point. A number of delegations present here have also just informed me—as they can speak on their own behalf I shall not say which delegations—that they are not prepared to take part in a debate on this item of the General Assembly's agenda. I therefore formally move that we should adjourn while the First Committee is meeting.

28. The PRESIDENT: I understand that the representative of Morocco desires to move the adjournment of the meeting under rule 78 of the rules of procedure. I am sure that he would agree with me that it would be more appropriate and courteous to allow the representative of Senegal to conclude his statement. When he has done so, I shall immediately put to the Assembly, in accordance with the terms of rule 78, the proposal just made by the representative of Morocco. I would ask the representative of Senegal to resume his statement, after which I shall put to the Assembly the proposal made by the representative of Morocco.

29. Mr. DIOP (Senegal) (*translated from French*): I was saying that we propose to examine the dispute between our Moroccan and Mauritanian brothers with complete objectivity. We shall first consider the arguments favouring the Moroccan thesis, then those favouring Mauritania, and finally we shall draw the necessary conclusions.

30. One of the arguments most commonly adduced in support of the Moroccan thesis revolves round the non-delimitation of the frontiers of Southern Morocco. It is contended that there has never been an agreement between France and Morocco defining the southern limits of the Sherifian Empire. Reference is also made to a certain spiritual allegiance which the emirs of Mauritania paid in the past to the Sultan of Morocco.

31. For example, in the eighteenth century Emir Ali of Trarza went to Meknès in order to ask the Sultan of Morocco to grant him official recognition. Later, in the nineteenth century, the Emir of Adrar took the same course of action in order to be, as it were,

similarly enthroned. There were also Moroccan military incursions in the south of the Sahara.

32. The first of these incursions was the unsuccessful expedition of El Monsour. The most important was that of Djouder, a Moslem of Spanish origin. Djouder and his soldiers crossed the Sahara and took Timbuktu and Gao, in the Sudanese country. They sacked and pillaged Timbuktu, which at the time was a famous city in which many brilliant African scholars of Arab culture resided. Timbuktu, a city of mystery, was also a city of fabulous riches.

33. The fall of Gao brought with it the fall of the Songhai Empire of the Askias. But these transitory conquerors did not return to Morocco. They remained in the country, which they never succeeded in dominating. Moreover, the road followed by Djouder and his soldiers, that is, the Tindouf-Tegazza-Taoudeni line, lay in a region which is not part of what is today known as the Mauritanian complex.

34. I now come to the arguments favouring Mauritania.

35. The first is that there certainly was a convention, dated 27 June 1900 and signed by France and the other colonial Powers, delimiting the northern and north-western frontiers of Mauritania. This means that the southern frontiers of the Sherifian Empire were *ipso facto* defined, at least in their geographical relation to Mauritania, and this is precisely the point at issue here.

36. Next, there were also Mauritanian military incursions northwards, that is, towards Morocco. The most famous of these was the expedition of the Almoravides, the warrior monks who set out from an island in the Senegal River and from Mauritania and marched northwards, conquering the Taflelt, the Sous and the Atlas, and who in 1062 founded the city of Marrakech, the present southern capital of the Sherifian Empire. The Almoravides, continuing their victorious march, extended their conquest to Algeria in about 1082. They even reached Andalusia and seized part of Spain in about 1106. It was not until about 1212 that they were driven out of those countries by the Crusaders.

37. If, therefore, the Mauritaniens were less wise than they are, they might today lay claim to Marrakech, which they founded in 1062. But if they did so they would be guilty of the same historical aberration as are the Moroccans today, and perhaps as the Spanish might be tomorrow should they decide that the former territory of the Empire of Charles V should be returned to them.

38. We think that in this matter we should adopt the sort of wisdom and jurisprudence that has been developed in the Latin American countries. When these countries, which had been colonized, recovered their national independence, they recognized in all cases the earlier frontiers traced out by the colonizers.

39. But there are also other arguments in favour of Mauritania.

40. Mauritania became an integral part of the French Republic after the adoption of the French Constitution of 1946, and at the time the Sherifian Empire raised no objection to that development.

41. Then, in 1960, Mauritania attained national independence through the same constitutional and juridical processes as did Mali, Dahomey, the Central African Republic and Senegal.

42. Moreover, in 1959 the head of the Moroccan opposition said that the possible attachment of Mauritania to the Sherifian Empire should ultimately depend on the Mauritanian peoples themselves. Now we all know the position of the Mauritanian peoples. The great majority of them together with their duly constituted parliament and government, vehemently reject annexion to the Sherifian Empire. They want to preserve their national independence in its present form.

43. Let us proceed to a further argument. From the standpoint of international law, Mauritania came within French national sovereignty from the time of its occupation by France in 1898, and never did the Sherifian Empire raise any objection to this state of affairs. In November 1960 France transferred sovereignty to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, just as was done, I repeat, in the case of Senegal, Dahomey, the Ivory Coast, the Central African Republic and the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville).

44. It is on this basis, furthermore, that since our last meeting—since the end of the first part of the fifteenth session of the General Assembly—qualified international agencies have given *de facto* recognition to the Republic of Mauritania by admitting it to membership. I do not speak of the *de jure* recognition which has been extended by the majority of States Members of the United Nations. Thus Mauritania is at this very moment a member of the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization. It also belongs to the Commission for Technical Co-operation in Africa South of the Sahara. It is also a member of the Economic Com-

mission for Africa, and this merits our particular attention because the Economic Commission for Africa is an organ of the Economic and Social Council, which in turn is a principal organ of the United Nations. In fact, Mauritania is actually already seated in the United Nations.

45. We thus find ourselves confronted with a legal paradox, a sort of aberration of international law, and I am certain that the General Assembly will not allow this anomaly to persist.

46. These, then, are briefly the arguments militating in favour of the total independence of Mauritania, a country which is not a part of the Sherifian Empire. We only regret, in concluding, that the attempt of one African nation to annex another should be supported here by our brothers from Morocco, for—we must render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's—our Moroccan brothers are among the most glorious champions of the anti-colonialist struggle in Africa. They are also among the most glorious leaders in the struggle for national independence in Africa.

47. The PRESIDENT: The representative of Morocco has moved, under rule 78, that this meeting of the Assembly should be adjourned. Under the provisions of this rule, the motion is not open to discussion but must be put to the vote. I now put this motion to the vote.

The motion was adopted by 54 votes in favour and 32 against, with 18 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.