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President: Mr. Alex QUAISON-SACKY (Ghana).

Statement by the Secretary-General

1. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I should like to recall the statement that I made at the 1286th meeting on 1 December 1964. I mentioned then that there was "an understanding to the effect that issues other than those that can be disposed of without objection will not be raised while the general debate proceeds" [A/PV.1286, para. 7]. Now that the general debate is over, the Assembly has to decide on the procedure to be followed from now on.

2. During the last several weeks I, like you, Mr. President, have been in consultation with many delegations on this very question. At the 1315th meeting, I made a statement on the serious financial situation which the Organization faces. The financial problem has been so much on my mind that in the course of 1964 I took every available opportunity to bring home the seriousness of this problem in my discussions with various delegations and with Heads of State and Heads of Government, and also in my public statements. I crave your indulgence to reiterate what I said in the course of my address to the African Summit Conference^{1/} in Cairo on 17 July 1964:

"I cannot help referring on this occasion to a problem which has been a matter of serious concern to me ever since I assumed my present responsibilities: I refer to the grave financial position of the United Nations. The Organization finds itself in such straits at the present time mainly because, four years ago, it was called upon to undertake a major peace-keeping operation in the very heart of Africa. After four long years that operation was concluded just a few days ago with the fulfilment of the major objectives laid down by the Security Council and the General Assembly. The serious financial difficulty which has ensued in consequence threatens to impair, not only our ability to undertake future large-scale peace-keeping operations, but our very effectiveness as a world body. This is a problem to which I would like to draw your urgent attention as I believe that all Member States would wish to co-operate in finding ways and means

by which the Organization could be enabled to tide over the crisis which looms ahead, and in due course to solve the entire problem on a mutually satisfactory basis."

3. The Conference, in its final communiqué, endorsed my appeal in the following words:

"The Assembly of Heads of State and Government meeting in its First Ordinary Session in Cairo, U.A.R., from 17 to 21 July 1964,

"Noting with concern that the United Nations is faced with a serious financial situation arising mainly from its peace-keeping operations, which, if not resolved may affect the very survival of the Organization,

"Deeply conscious of its desire to support and strengthen the United Nations to enable it to fulfil its noble objectives among which is to maintain international peace and security,

"Recalling the resolution adopted at the Conference of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa in May 1963, which, among others, expressed acceptance of all obligations contained in the Charter of the United Nations, including financial obligations,

"1. Earnestly appeals to Member States of the United Nations to meet their obligations and to render assistance necessary for the Organization to fulfil its role in maintaining international peace and security;

"..."

4. Mr. President, I, like you, have tried my best to obtain agreement on a course of action for the future. I believe that, in spite of our best efforts, we have to recognize that up to now, while there has been some movement, a meeting of minds has not yet been achieved; and there are many specific issues of procedure and timing in regard to which a serious difference of opinion still persists.

5. While this is true, I have been encouraged by the fact that, to my knowledge, a consensus exists among the entire membership of the Organization regarding certain general principles. First, I believe that all Members are agreed that they should, without prejudice to the position they have hitherto taken on the question of the financing of the peace-keeping operations, put aside their differences in the interests of the Organization, in order to help relieve it of the present situation.

6. Secondly, I think that all Members of the Organization are agreed that, in the best interests of this Organization, a confrontation on the applicability of Article 19 should be avoided at the present session of the General Assembly.

^{1/} First session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held at Cairo, 17-21 July 1964.

7. Thirdly, it is my impression that Members agree that the financial situation of the Organization should be brought to solvency by voluntary contributions by the entire membership of the Organization—on the understanding that this arrangement shall not be construed as representing any change in the basic position of any individual Member—and should be accepted as a co-operative effort by all Member States aimed at the strengthening of the United Nations, with a view to creating a climate in which the future may be harmoniously planned.

8. Fourthly, there appears to be agreement that contributions should be made as early as possible and that Members, particularly the highly developed countries, should make such substantial contributions as would result in the solution of the financial situation of this Organization.

9. Finally, there seems to be a consensus that a comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations, including the authorization of operations, the composition of forces and their control, and the financing of such operations, should be taken in hand as soon as possible.

10. In regard to the last question, namely the comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects, I believe it would be necessary, either to set up a new body for this purpose, or to enlarge the mandate of the Working Group of 21,^{2/} set up under General Assembly resolution 1854 B (XVII) of 19 December 1962. This body could be requested to report to the General Assembly as soon as it has been able to reach a substantial measure of agreement on the points at issue.

11. I need hardly add that my good offices, and the assistance of the entire Secretariat, will be wholly at the disposal of this body in the discharge of its responsibilities.

12. In this connexion, I should also like to draw the attention of the Assembly to some of the important items which are included in the provisional agenda of the nineteenth session, and in regard to which the Assembly needs to take an early decision in the interest of the proper functioning of this Organization. I have in mind such questions as the election of six members of the Economic and Social Council, the supplementary estimates for 1964 and the budget estimates for 1965, the vacancies on subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly, the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) at least up to 31 December 1965, and the United Nations International School.

13. Of course there are also many important questions before the Assembly which I know delegations are anxious to discuss.

^{2/} Working Group on the Examination of the Administrative and Budgetary Procedures of the United Nations.

14. I hope that all delegations will give very careful thought to these questions and also to the procedures to be followed.

Statement by the President

15. The PRESIDENT: I am sure all delegations have listened with great interest to the statement just made by the Secretary-General. As I announced at the 1325th meeting, it was my intention to proceed today with elections of chairmen of committees and vice-presidents, and I had urged the various delegations to resolve their difficulties in regard to the constitution of the General Committee so that the Assembly might be able to set it up today. I have been informed, however, that the Chairmanship of the First Committee is still contested and that there will be a confrontation if the Assembly proceeds to elect the Chairman.

16. I know that there are many delegations that feel that we have to get on with the normal business of the Assembly without further loss of time. As the Assembly is aware, this is a view to which both the Secretary-General and I attach considerable weight. However, in the light of the important statement made by the Secretary-General, and especially his feeling that, while there has been some improvement, a meeting of minds has not yet been achieved and differences of opinion continue in regard to specific issues of procedure and timing, I believe that the Assembly would wish to allow a little more time in the hope that during this period a meeting of minds may indeed be achieved. I also believe that all delegations would wish to study carefully the other important points raised in the Secretary-General's statement. In these circumstances, it seems to me that a few more days will be required for consultation.

17. It has become increasingly clear that no delegation wants a confrontation. If there is to be no confrontation, then we should mobilize all the constructive efforts of the Assembly to avoid this eventuality. I appeal once again, in the interests of the Organization, to all delegations to redouble their efforts to produce positive proposals which will help solve the present difficulties.

18. I do not know whether there is any member who wishes to speak with regard to procedures and methods. There does not seem to be any member who wishes to speak.

19. That being so, if the Assembly agrees with me, I would propose that we should adjourn until Monday, 8 February, at 3 p.m., and that we should utilize this period to formulate concrete proposals which will determine the future course of this session.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.