



Eighteenth Session

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Saturday, 14 December 1963, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. HASEGANU

(Romania)

1. Question of the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly [81] (continued)
2. Question of equitable representation on the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council [82] (continued)
3. Report of the Economic and Social Council [Chapter XIII (section VI)] [12] (continued)

AGENDA ITEMS 81, 82, 12

QUESTION OF NEW COMPOSITION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (A/551, A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1, L.106, L.107) [81] (continued)

QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (A/5520; A/SPC/L.104/Rev.1, L.105) [82] (continued)

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL [CHAPTER XIII (SECTION VI)] (A/5503) [12] (continued)

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I hope that we shall conclude this morning the examination of the last three items on our agenda, dealing with the question of the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly, the question of equitable representation on the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and the report of the Economic and Social Council.

I would wish to draw the attention of the Committee to an amendment to the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1, the amendment having been submitted by nineteen Powers and being contained in document A/SPC/L.108, and also to two new draft resolutions submitted by thirty-seven Powers, contained, respectively, in documents A/SPC/L.109 and A/SPC/L.110, and dealing, respectively, with the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. JAYARATNE (Ceylon): My delegation would like to make a brief intervention. I do not propose to take up your time at this stage of the proceedings in repeating various matters which have already been mentioned in the statements previously made before this Committee. It is clear from these statements that there is unanimity on the need for better representation of the new Members from Africa and Asia in the three organs we are considering, and the need, consequentially, for expanding these organs to provide for this. The difference of opinion appears to be in regard to the extent of the enlargement of these bodies and the distribution of the seats in the enlarged organs, as between various groups and areas. These are not fundamental differences, and we therefore believe that, by discussion and negotiation, these differences can and will be ironed out and consensus reached.

(Mr. Jayaratne, Ceylon)

My delegation listened with profound regret and disappointment to the statement made the other day by the representative of the Soviet Union on the subject of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. We do believe that it is not the desire of the Soviet Union to deny the just and long overdue claims of the Afro-Asian countries in this matter. We sincerely hope that, between now and the final date for the ratification of the draft resolutions, once they have been approved by the Assembly, better counsel will prevail all around, and the Government of the Soviet Union will find itself in a position to accord its concurrence.

In regard to the General Committee, certain delegations who spoke earlier contended that it could not be reconstituted without dealing with the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council at the same time -- that this was so because the three bodies were so closely interlinked and intertwined. We totally disagree with this view. There is no justification for this contention in the Charter provisions; on the other hand, these provisions would support the contrary view. Besides, Members are aware that this Committee and the Assembly found no such difficulty whatsoever in this respect when they proceeded to reconstitute and enlarge the General Committee in 1957 by resolution 1192 (XII), in isolation, without a simultaneous treatment of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

Before I conclude I wish to make a brief comment on the amendment to the draft resolution on the General Committee, introduced by Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

The Ceylon delegation had hoped that it would be possible for this change to be introduced in the original draft resolution itself. However, since that has not been possible, my delegation would like to state here that the amendment contained in document A/SPC/L.106 has the full support of the delegation of Ceylon.

The first point I wish to make is that this amendment would not in any way alter the geographical pattern of seat distribution set out in the main draft resolution. It does not reduce the number of seats assigned to each geographical group. That number remains intact. All the amendment seeks to achieve is to provide for the inclusion of a Commonwealth country in the categories of vice-president and chairman of committees in the election of representatives to these offices, and within the numerical distribution as set out in the main draft resolution.

The concept of the Commonwealth and of providing for it in the organs of the United Nations is nothing that is new. As Members are aware, it has long been recognized and specifically and formally represented.

If one were to look at this subject realistically, considering the large number of Commonwealth countries distributed in the continents of Asia, Africa and the Caribbean areas, there is no question that among the members of the General Committee there is always likely to be a member from the Commonwealth. Hence,

conceding this in the draft resolution that we have before us is only recognition of a fact. At the same time, in view of the importance attached to this mention by a group of nations that have played no small part in the deliberations of the United Nations, it also appears a gracious and generous thing to do.

My delegation, as document A/SPC/L.101 of 6 December 1963 shows, is a co-sponsor of the original draft resolution. For the reasons mentioned in this brief intervention my delegation shall be voting in favour of the amendment proposed by Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Mr. SIDI BABA (Morocco) (interpretation from French): My delegation will confine its present intervention to the draft resolution appearing in document A/SPC/L.101 and the amendments relating to that text, for I believe that this draft resolution deals with a problem quite different from those dealt with in other texts that we shall certainly be asked to examine later.

As a co-sponsor of that text, my delegation would like to state that the spirit animating the co-sponsors of the draft is that of a desire to bring about an equitable distribution of seats in this important body, the General Committee of the United Nations General Assembly.

We feel that this distribution cannot be satisfactory to all unless we proceed to a considerable enlargement of the General Committee, taking into account the present situation in the United Nations; and this is certainly the view not only of the co-sponsors of this draft resolution but also of others who are not.

(Mr. Sidi Baba, Morocco)

Accordingly my delegation hopes that this draft resolution will give rise to no difficulties in this Committee. My delegation is also gratified to note that the idea that this draft resolution deals with a problem different from that covered by other items on today's agenda has been able to make considerable headway with those who, even a few days ago, still thought that this question should not be divorced from the other questions which relate to the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

With regard to the amendments that have been submitted, my delegation would like to say the following. With regard to the amendment (A/SPC/L.106) introduced by Australia, Canada and New Zealand, we feel that it introduces a concept which does not precisely reflect the thoughts of the co-sponsors, that is to say, that we wanted to ensure the distribution of the posts of Vice-presidents and Chairmen of the Committees in accordance with the criteria of geography. The amendment submitted by Australia, Canada and New Zealand interjects a concept which does not take into account geographical considerations but perhaps might be described as taking into account a political or constitutional concept which might not necessarily be valid in the eyes of all United Nations Members. That is why my delegation wishes to say that it is not in a position to vote in favour of that amendment.

With regard to the amendment (A/SPC/L.107) submitted by Czechoslovakia and Poland, my delegation wishes to say that this is the first time that we have been confronted with a text that introduces into United Nations documents the idea of rotation, that is, that the presidency of the General Assembly should be rotated on a fixed schedule. Even if one concedes that such a principle is valid and satisfies the desire for equitable representation of all the regions of the world, it may well be that circumstances would lead the Assembly from time to time to disregard this idea, for we should not forget that the presidency of the General Assembly is awarded with regard for the international political fluctuations and for the relations and ties existing among States. If we adopt this text -- and my delegation is one of those that is prepared to vote in favour of it -- we must still be aware that it does not provide a complete solution and we run the risk that one day we shall find ourselves confronted with a situation in which the

(Mr. Sidi Baba, Morocco)

texts of the United Nations run counter to certain political requirements when it is a case of the election of the President of the General Assembly. With due account of these reservations, my delegation wishes to say that it is prepared to vote in favour of this amendment.

With regard to the amendment (A/SPC/L.108) submitted by the delegations of Latin American States, my delegation reserves the right to state its views later on this text, when we have been in touch with the co-sponsors of the draft resolution (A/SPC/L.101) so that we may work out a common position on this amendment, for we believe that the amendment is the result of a certain number of conversations that have taken place, and my delegation is still not in a position to give its final view on one particular point, namely, the paragraph concerning the distribution of the vice-presidencies.

In the light of the information I have just given, I hope that the Special Political Committee will have no difficulty in voting in favour of our draft resolution.

Before I conclude this statement, I should like to make it clear that, with regard to the amendments on which I have already given my delegation's views, the view which I have stated concerning the amendment submitted by Australia, Canada and New Zealand was worked out after consultations and exchanges of view with a great number of delegations, and it is after these consultations, as I have said, that we came to our decision. With regard to the amendment submitted by Czechoslovakia and Poland, we have during private consultations had the opportunity of examining the text, and it has been left to each delegation to indicate its position on this text in the Committee. With regard to the amendment submitted by the Latin American delegations, we have during private consultations been unable to make our views known on the amendment, and I hope we shall have an opportunity to do so. Before we come to a final decision on it, my delegation hopes that the co-sponsors will have an opportunity to look at it in the light of the conversations that have already taken place on a private basis among the various groups concerned.

Mr. VILEYRA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The Special Political Committee is called upon to deal with the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly and the enlargement of the membership of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council as the last item on its agenda for this session.

The increase in membership of both Councils is a matter which has been under discussion for some time and the item has been placed on the agenda of previous sessions without any solution being arrived at; and this, for reasons which, in our view, are alien to the very essence of the matter itself.

On one of the occasions when this problem was discussed, the countries which opposed enlargement of the Councils provided arguments that had a solid technical or legal foundation. Fundamentally, the arguments were political in nature and were, of course, well worth consideration in view of the very nature of the Organization itself. However, we think that this line of reasoning fails to take into account one fact which is also political, and that is the urgent need to provide adequate representation in the two Councils for the fifty-six States of Africa and Asia.

At the second session of the General Assembly the Argentine delegation introduced a draft resolution which proposed to increase the membership of ECOSOC to twenty-four and further provided a method by which they would be elected. We then maintained -- and repeated this view at the third session -- that the improvement in the economic and social conditions obtaining in many parts of the world since the end of the Second World War required action by a Council that would represent as authentically as possible the interests of the newly emerged nations. My country drew attention to this fact before we had witnessed the increased pace in membership of the United Nations which has occurred in recent years. We pointed to the fact that the number of seats rotating in the Council was only thirteen since, under a practice not based on any provision of the Charter, the permanent members were continually standing for re-election.

We were also in favour of increasing the number of members of the Security Council, although that situation is not as clear when we consider the precise number of seats that should be added. Although the problem offers certain difficulties, it should not be considered incapable of solution -- provided we remain for the Security Council the executive functions of that body which are consonant with the tasks laid upon it under the Charter.

(Mr. Vieyra, Argentina)

With respect to the questions which we have touched upon, it has been insisted that since a revision of the Charter was not profitable, the only appropriate solution would be redistribution of the non-permanent seats in the two Councils. I should like to recall that my delegation has always opposed this facile method, as indeed have all the Latin American delegations. We believe that Mr. Wachuku of Nigeria, in his speech at the last session of the Assembly, very wisely criticized the weakness of the thesis favouring redistribution. Speaking on behalf of his country, as well as on behalf of other African delegations, the representative of Nigeria said at that time:

"We do not wish to have any conflict with Latin America because that continent, like Africa, is an under-developed area or, as has been said, it is in the process of developing and, therefore, we encounter difficulties that are similar in nature. In the circumstances, why should we take a seat from Latin America when this is an area that includes twenty countries and has enjoyed two seats for a long time now?"

At this time we do not wish to dwell at length on an examination of the idea of redistribution, an idea that has been contested, because it is a procedure that will not permit us to fulfil the aspirations of countries not adequately represented on the two Councils in a just manner.

At San Francisco the various regions represented at the First Conference were granted on an equal basis participation in both Councils, but this agreement, of course, has been left behind by the course of events. And it is not necessary to say that, in order to grant to the countries of Africa and Asia the seats to which they are entitled, the representation of Latin American countries must be limited and thus a new injustice created. It is our view that Africa, Asia and Latin America -- which latter continent has also increased in membership through the admission of Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago -- should not enter into a sterile conflict over seats in the Councils, since this would result in a change in the position of one area to a detriment of the other.

(Mr. Vieyra, Argentina)

We believe that the existing injustice would not be remedied on the basis of the limited number of seats available under the present structure of the two Councils. The Charter, which is a rigid form of constitution, has laid down rules in Article 108 and 109 for amendments to the Charter, and we agree -- **and** this is the general view -- that this is not the time to invoke the procedure laid down in Article 109. But we do think that the provisions in Article 108 offer a possibility for such reforms and could thus improve the situation regarding representation in the two Councils.

The procedure outlined in Article 108 -- a normal and regular procedure for revision of the Charter -- provides that such revision should take place in two stages, a method approved by all treaty experts who have studied the question.

My delegation, like all Latin American delegations, considers that we can make concrete progress with regard to the first stage at the **current** session. If the General Assembly adopts, by the necessary two-thirds majority, the joint draft resolution in documents A/SPC/L.104/Rev.1 and A/SPC/L.105, we shall have taken an important step forward which could be consolidated **definitively** with the ratification by every State of the revision which had been submitted.

Obviously, the second stage is the one which presents major difficulties owing to the fact that Article 108 requires the vote of two-thirds of the Members **wh**o ratification is necessary for the amendments to ^{be} come into force, including all the permanent members of the Security Council. That is the time when one of those five permanent members, if ^{it} wished, could bloc a decision supported by an overwhelming majority of the Members of the United Nations.

On this point my delegation would like to state, as indeed we have done on previous occasions, that we do not understand the objections advanced by the Soviet Union which makes the revision of the Charter conditional on the admission of the People's Republic of China and which thus indefinitely postpones any solution of the problem which we are discussing, although the Soviet Union has recognized the necessity of providing the Afro-Asian countries with more equitable representation in the Councils.

(Mr. Vieyra, Argentina)

I do not wish to speak at length in view of the little time still available to us and I shall not make any detailed analysis of these questions but shall proceed to refer briefly to another problem facing the Special Political Committee, and that is the question relating to the composition of the General Committee.

For the reasons already given with respect to an increase in the membership of both Councils, my delegation is in favour of the idea that the General Committee should be made up on the basis of a more balanced distribution than is the case at present. Therefore, my country, together with twenty other Latin American countries, has co-sponsored the amendment in A/SPC/L.108. This amendment to the draft resolution submitted by Afro-Asian countries in A/SPC/L.101 is designed to increase to seventeen the number of Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, believing that in this way we offer a partial correction for the decrease in the number of seats for Latin America if the draft were adopted as it stands.

Dealing with the item concerning the composition of the General Committee, we find that the amendment submitted by the delegations of Czechoslovakia and Poland in A/SPC/L.107 concerning rotation of the Presidency of the General Assembly according to the geographical areas, although worthy of consideration, presents an idea which is set forth in unduly rigid terms. This could create difficulties when we were required to work out decisions taking into account the particular conditions obtaining in respect of certain candidates, and something mechanical would, in our judgement, come into operation. In any event, my delegation reserves the right to present its final view on this amendment at a later stage in the debate.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): We have before us a draft resolution A/SPC/L.101, sponsored by fifty-three African and Asian States, and several amendments to that draft resolution. The first, A/SPC/L.106, was submitted by the delegations of Australia, Canada and New Zealand. A second, A/SPC/L.107, was submitted by the delegations of Czechoslovakia and Poland. The fifty-three-Power draft resolution and the first proposed amendment concern the important matter of electing the leading officers of our Assembly. The second amendment concerns election to the highest office of the Assembly, the Presidency itself, which my Government views as an entirely different matter.

We regard the fifty-three-Power draft resolution in the spirit in which it was so ably presented by the representative of the United Arab Republic, as a sensible effort to bring the composition of the General Committee into line with the current realities of General Assembly membership.

As regards the amendment in document A/SPC/L.106, my delegation feels that the principle of Commonwealth representation on the General Committee, even though it would not appear in any practical sense to be jeopardized by the annex to the fifty-three-Power draft, should be specifically reiterated, as it was in General Assembly resolution 1192, which was the predecessor of the fifty-three-Power draft. The Commonwealth, as has been correctly pointed out by the representatives of Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia, has made important contributions to this international community of nations, in particular to its peace-keeping operations. It is a unique association transcending, but not replacing, regional affiliations, and we believe this should be recognized by ensuring its representation in any bodies in which the principle of geographical representation is applied, particularly since several of the largest Commonwealth countries are not easily identified with the major recognized regional groupings.

As for the amendment concerning the election of the President of the Assembly, I believe we should keep in mind that this office is in a category by itself. The Charter leaves the Members of the Assembly entirely free to choose the person to preside over them, and in this connexion makes no reference to equitable geographical distribution. The Assembly decided at its first session after considerable debate that the election of the President should be by secret ballot, without nominations, on the basis of qualifications and experience.

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

This decision has resulted in the election of a series of competent and distinguished presiding officers. It is certainly desirable in electing the President of the General Assembly to have regard for geographical considerations, and the geographic distribution of the office has in fact been widespread. The Organization should not, however, tie its own hands by specifying a rigid course of action. It should, on the contrary, preserve that flexibility which, in a constantly changing world, would enable it at all times to make a judicious choice in the light of the circumstances then prevailing. Surely we should not put ourselves in a strait jacket so that we would find ourselves rigidly forced in a given year to choose a President of the General Assembly from an area which would clearly be inappropriate because of the particular problems confronting the Assembly in that year.

The President of the General Assembly is an international figure, a symbol of and spokesman for all the United Nations. He has never been and never should be a national or regional figure.

Therefore, in examining the question of the best method of electing the President of the General Assembly, my delegation very strongly feels that the primary consideration should be given to maintaining the tradition of high quality which has marked the history of the Presidency of the United Nations General Assembly, and indeed the history of the Assembly of the League of Nations as well.

We do not believe that apportioning the Presidency to the chosen candidate of a specified region each year would maintain that high tradition nearly as well as our present practice. The existing practice governing the election of Presidents of the General Assembly has worked well, as evidenced by the outstanding choices that have been made each year by the Assembly as a whole from varying parts of the world. Our present practice is based primarily on the general acceptance of the view that the personal qualifications of the candidate himself should be the overriding consideration.

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

The office of President of the General Assembly is unique in character and status. It has been occupied so far by eminent persons who have been elected not as faithful representatives of their country or the group or the area to which their country belonged, but for their personal contribution to the life and work of the United Nations. In practice, account has been taken of the need for balanced geographical representation, and we believe that such account should always be taken.

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

Also we think that no candidate from any geographical region should be omitted from consideration if that candidate has those qualities of impartiality, integrity and disinterestedness which are essential in a President of the General Assembly. As I have said, account has been taken of geographical considerations, but there has been no fixed pattern of rotation and the establishment of a rigid regime based on sharply defined geographical groups would inevitably diminish the prestige of the office. Under such circumstances, the General Assembly could not be sure that the President chosen was the best man available or that he had been put forward with due regard to his acceptability to the General Assembly as a whole. In effect, he would have been elected by his group and not by the Assembly as a whole.

During his term of office, the President is detached from his delegation and he must therefore command the confidence of the General Assembly as an individual and be chosen as an individual. If the regional origin of the candidate for the presidency of the Assembly were to be the governing factor, the candidate put forward would be likely to be the man who had most identified himself with the region rather than a man whose commitment to the advancement of the interests of the entire United Nations would appeal to all regions. In addition, it would seem likely that once the principle of rigid, automatic regional rotation were established, we would not only find the Assembly faced with the selected candidate of one particular region with no alternative, but that as time went on there would be a sort of rotation within each region assigning the region's candidate first to one and then to another country. In this way, the principle of high qualifications, the principle of the best man in the whole Assembly for the job would be further vitiated.

I think it is clear that if this amendment were to be adopted we would be not only taking something away from the office itself and from the United Nations as an institution, we would also be reducing the prestige and the power of the General Assembly itself. We would be depriving the General Assembly of the right to judge who is the best man as an individual available to preside over it. It would reduce the office itself to the province of inter-group and intra-group politics seriously affecting its prestige and independence. I do not think on this matter of independence that it should require any demonstration that a man who owes his election solely to the backing of his region of origin is, by the very nature

of his election, less inclined to be totally independent and impartial than is the man who owes his election to the entire Assembly.

I have purposely placed my main emphasis on the nature of the office of the President of the General Assembly and on the competence of the man who fills it. That does not mean that my Government feels that the regional origin of the candidate should be ignored. Naturally, in the event of a choice between several highly qualified candidates it would be normal to give the preference to the one whose region was less recently represented in the presidency.

Another factor, that of the international climate in any given area or of the locus of the most difficult problems on the Assembly's agenda, should also receive due weight in the choice of the President, and that would not be possible if the Assembly were restricted by some rule only to a candidate from a given region. But the main consideration is, and I am convinced that it should remain, the qualities of the man, the tradition of his high office, and the power and the freedom of each Assembly to make its own choice free from geographical restriction.

Accordingly, my delegation will vote against the amendment contained in document A/SPC/L.107 and it hopes that, in the interest of future General Assemblies and their Presidents, that amendment will be decisively defeated.

I now pass to the question of the enlargement of the Councils. Since this question first arose in 1946, the United States has consistently favoured a reasonable enlargement of the Security Council and a reasonable enlargement of the Economic and Social Council. The membership of the United Nations has grown from 51 to 111 in the eighteen years of its existence, and we hope that it will grow in the next few days to 113, and the Councils at their present original size clearly do not provide adequate opportunities of representation for the new membership. This is particularly true for the new Members from Africa and Asia, since there were relatively few Members from those two areas among the original membership of the United Nations.

The geographic pattern for the distribution of seats on the two Councils as they developed in the early years of the Organization, therefore, constitutes inadequate provision for the current membership from Africa and Asia. This inadequacy can only be rectified satisfactorily in one way, enlargement of the Councils.

Some Members have spoken of reallocation of the present seats as a possibility, but this would not be a solution. Reallocation would involve trying to distribute fairly too few seats among too many Members at the expense of those Members who now enjoy adequate representation. Thus reallocation would not solve the problem; it would leave all areas dissatisfied and it would arouse serious resentments.

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

The question of enlarging the Councils has been under consideration by this Assembly for six years. Enlargement of the Councils, as we know, requires amendment of the United Nations Charter, and action by the Assembly to amend has thus far been discouraged by the attitude of one of the permanent members of the Security Council, whose ratification along with those of the other four permanent members is required for any amendment of the Charter to become effective. This year we had hoped that that particular permanent member of the Security Council might at last be prepared to acquiesce in the strong desire of the great majority of Members -- indeed, I believe, of all the Members other than the bloc which that permanent member heads -- to see the Councils enlarged. Unhappily, the statement last Tuesday by the representative of that permanent member of the Security Council has not justified our hope. Nevertheless, we believe that the General Assembly should not be discouraged by the Soviet attitude. If amendments are adopted by an overwhelming majority of this Assembly, as we believe they should be, we think it is entirely possible that the Soviet Union can be persuaded to reconsider its position.

While the United States supports enlargement of the Councils, it is also concerned that they do not become unwieldy in size and that their composition is such as to make them useful instrumentalities in their respective areas of responsibility. The United States believes that the Security Council should not only provide equitable geographical distribution, as the Charter says, but must -- as the Charter also provides -- reflect "the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security". We also believe that in the interest of the Security Council's most effective functioning it should be as small as possible consistent with these principles.

A Security Council of thirteen not only would permit the African and Asian Members of the United Nations to hold four of the elective seats -- a fair share, since they constitute roughly half of the total United Nations membership -- but would also provide a Council whose overall composition would continue to take into account the ability of members to contribute to the attainment of the purposes of the Organization.

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

In the case of the Economic and Social Council, the United States believes that it should be sufficiently representative to carry weight with the whole United Nations membership. At the same time, the United States believes that if the Council's recommendations are to be meaningful a balance must be maintained among its members between the developed and the developing States.

A final word about our position on the draft resolutions now before the Committee on the enlargement of the Councils.

The United States delegation is authorized to vote in favour of amendments to the Charter providing for a thirteen-seat Security Council and a twenty-four-seat Economic and Social Council. We have no authority to support any other proposals for amendments to the Charter, and if any other proposal is put to a vote at this time, we shall have to vote against it.

I would remind the Committee that Article 108 of the Charter provides that, to be effective, an amendment to the Charter must receive the vote of two thirds of the members of the General Assembly -- not just those present and voting, but two thirds of the members. That means that no amendment can be effectively adopted by the General Assembly unless it receives seventy-four votes in favour. Now, in our view, the principal result of pushing ahead at this time on proposed amendments which cannot receive the seventy-four votes required by Article 108 of the Charter would be that these amendments would not even be recommended for ratification by the Assembly and would further complicate and perpetuate the present division of opinion as to exactly what increases should be put into effect. We feel that this would be extremely unfortunate. All members of the Assembly except the Soviet bloc are ready to go ahead with increases now, but in spite of strenuous efforts during the past few days -- and only a few days have been available to us -- there is not agreement among us as to exactly what those increases should be. Voting now on any of these proposals would therefore do no more than record our present known differences.

The United States delegation does not see that that would be an advantageous situation. In our view, it might very well be better for all concerned -- in fact, it would be better -- if the issue were held over for intensive discussion and consultation and negotiation among groups and interested States, which could be carried forward during the winter and, we would hope and believe, could result in agreement well before the opening of the nineteenth session on formulas that would be just and equitable to all States and groups. Certainly,

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

my delegation pledges itself, if that course is taken, to use its utmost efforts to arrive at the just and equitable solutions for which we are all hoping.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I call on the representative of Ghana to present the two thirty-seven-Power draft resolutions.

Mr. QUAISSON-SACKEY (Ghana): On behalf of the delegations of Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ceylon, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Leopoldville), Cyprus, Dahomey, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, India, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanganyika, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Republic and Upper Volta, I formally introduce to the Special Political Committee the draft resolutions contained in documents A/SPC/L.109 and A/SPC/L.110. May I, Mr. Chairman, with your permission, take up the two draft resolutions, each in turn.

The first draft resolution, contained in document A/SPC/L.109, deals with the question of equitable representation on the Security Council. As is well known by this Committee, the General Assembly has been seized with the question of enlargement of the Security Council, and, of course, the Economic and Social Council, for the past six years. Within this period of six years, the United Nations has seen an accretion of a large number of States to its membership from Africa and Asia. Today, out of a membership of 111, African and Asian members alone command a membership of 56. Next week, out of a number of 113, Africa and Asia will command a membership of 58. By the end of next year, it is not unlikely that out of a number of 115, Africa and Asia will command a membership of 60. That is to say, that the time has come when Africa and Asia should not only be regarded as having been admitted to our Organization, but also accepted. Admission and acceptance are two vital issues. And today, with all solemnity, on behalf of these 37 delegations, I am calling on the Special Political Committee to formally accept Afro-Asia.

It is said that he who is down must fear no fall. We are the delegations wearing the shoes of injustice. We are the delegations which know where the shoe is pinching. That is why, after hard thinking and after due consideration, for all the various views in our Organization, we have come to the conclusion that we should ask for the things that we are asking in the two draft resolutions that I have just introduced before the Committee. Before I go into the details of the draft resolutions, may I say that if justice is denied to us, we may be forced to ask for a redistribution of seats in the two Councils. But for now we are hammering on the question of representation.

(Mr. Quaison-Sackey, Ghana)

The preambular paragraphs of draft resolution A/SPC/L.109 sum up the feeling of the Afro-Asian States, as I have just evinced. We feel that the present composition of the Security Council is inequitable and unbalanced. We feel that the time has come to make a definite decision. Therefore, in the operative paragraphs we are asking the General Assembly to decide as follows:

"To adopt in accordance with Article 108 the following amendments to the Charter and submit them for ratification by the Members of the United Nations:

"(a) In Article 23 (1) of the Charter, the word 'eleven' in the first sentence shall be replaced by the word 'fifteen' and the word 'six' in the third sentence by the word 'ten'.

"(b) In Article 23, paragraph 2, the second sentence shall be reworded as follows: 'In the first election of the non-permanent members after the increase of the membership of the Security Council from eleven to fifteen, two of the four additional members shall be chosen for a term of one year'."

I must explain why fifteen instead of thirteen is the number which the co-sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/L.109 are asking. In our opinion, fifteen out of a possible number of 120 membership of our Organization represents not only the minimum but also the maximum. We feel that at a time like this, when efforts are being made once and for all to redress the unbalance of our Council, we should aim at the optimum instead of the minimum.

We have heard all the arguments in favour of the number thirteen. In fact, if I may be permitted to say so, by delegations other than African, we are being told that out of thirteen seats in the Security Council, Africa will have two. We feel that this would be a gross injustice. Therefore, if the seats are increased to fifteen, we then hope that Afro-Asia will have five, with the understanding that three will go to Africa and two to Asia. Therefore, we feel that thirteen would not be of any benefit to the Afro-Asian group as it is now constituted. Therefore, we are asking for fifteen because we are envisaging that the membership of our Organization is bound to increase as the years go by and therefore there should be no more room for another readjustment of a number in the future, knowing full well the difficulties that are always put in our way in the matter of amendment. So that, if there is now a chance of having

an amendment agreed upon by all Member States of our Organization, then we think we should ask for the optimum -- and the optimum, in our opinion, is fifteen for the Security Council.

In operative paragraph 2, the Committee:

"Calls upon all Members of the United Nations to ratify the above amendments in accordance with their respective constitutional processes by 1 September 1965 as required by Article 108 of the Charter."

and the Committee should decide:

"...that the ten non-permanent members of the Security Council shall be elected according to the following pattern:

"(a) 5 from African and Asian States;

"(b) 1 from Eastern European States;

"(c) 2 from Latin American and Caribbean States;

"(d) 2 from Western European and other States."

With respect to this draft resolution the co-sponsors have asked me to ask for a priority over the Latin American draft resolution dealing with the same subject, contained in document A/SPC/L.104.

To turn to the Economic and Social Council, the same considerations which I have already outlined for the Security Council relate to this matter also. Here we are asking the Committee to decide upon the number 27 instead of the number 24 as was originally proposed. The same considerations, as I said, are imperative in the question of the enlargement of the Economic and Social Council. When the membership of 27 is agreed upon, we hope that it will be possible for an equitable arrangement to be made so that the various regions will have their proper proportion.

Therefore, with regard to this draft resolution (A/SPC/L.110), we are asking that the Committee should adopt, in accordance with Article 108, the following amendments to the Charter and submit them for ratification by the Members of the United Nations:

"Article 61 shall read:

"1. The Economic and Social Council shall consist of twenty-seven Members of the United Nations elected by the General Assembly.

"2. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 3, nine members of the Economic and Social Council shall be elected each year for a term of three years. A retiring member shall be eligible for immediate re-election.

"3. At the first election following the increase in membership of the Economic and Social Council from eighteen to twenty-seven members, fifteen members of the Council shall be chosen. The term of office of three members so chosen shall expire at the end of one year, and of three other members at the end of two years, in accordance with arrangements made by the General Assembly.

"4. Each member of the Economic and Social Council shall have one representative."

Operative paragraph 2 would read:

"2. Calls upon all Members of the United Nations to ratify the above amendments in accordance with their respective constitutional processes by 1 September 1965, as required by Article 108 of the Charter.

"3. Decides that eight of the nine additional members of the Economic and Social Council shall be elected from among the African and Asian Members. The ninth member shall be elected from each of the geographical regions by rotation."

Now to review what I said, it is imperative that justice should now be done. In these two draft resolutions we are not asking for a whittling down of any rights of any region. What we are asking is an assertion of the rights of the Afro-Asian Members of our Organization. In these two draft resolutions we have made sure that our Latin American friends do retain whatever seats they have enjoyed since the inception of our Organization.

What we are asking now is to assert the position of the Afro-Asian States, and therefore here too we would like to ask priority for our draft resolution (A/SPC/L.110) over the Latin American drafts proposing changes in the Economic and Social Council. We are aware that the two draft resolutions have a bearing on the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/L.101 which deals with the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly. There are a number of amendments to that resolution in document A/SPC/L.108, especially one amendment from the Latin Americans asking for an increase in the Vice-Presidents by one, to go to Latin America.

I have to state that the talks which are going on in regard to an agreement on the Latin American amendment has a bearing on the voting of our draft resolutions which have now been introduced. Therefore, I would ask this Committee not to proceed to a vote on the draft resolution dealing with the question of the composition of the General Committee this morning, to allow these negotiations to be carried on.

Since I have the floor, may I say a word or two on the amendments which have been proposed to the fifty-three Power draft resolution (A/SPC/L.101) dealing with the General Committee of the General Assembly. I will first take up the amendments contained in document A/SPC/L.108 submitted by the Latin Americans. As I have said, I will not pronounce myself on this matter since there are talks to be held behind the scenes in regard to the two draft resolutions which have been tabled.

With regard to the amendments by Australia, Canada and New Zealand (A/SPC/L.106), may I say that we, the co-sponsors, are aware of the special position of these three delegations. We agree that it is difficult for us to examine them as others, in the matter of geographical distribution, and the motives which therefore inspired them to put forward the amendments have our sympathy. But we feel that since we are dealing with the question of geographical distribution, other considerations, either of sentiment or special privileges, should not be brought up at this time. I am told by the co-sponsors that a large number are ready to vote against these amendments as contained in document A/SPC/L.106, whilst we understand that a number of members are also prepared to vote for it.

But may I in my own name, as the representative of Ghana and in the name of Ghana, appeal to my very good friends, the Ambassadors of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, not to press this amendment to a vote. This gesture, if they show it by withdrawing the amendment, will help immensely the sentiment and feeling which the Committee has, and it will in fact reinforce the respect which all of us have, for the delegations of Australia, Canada and New Zealand. We know the contributions they are making, especially in regard to peace-keeping operations, and in fact on all questions before our Organization, and we feel that the withdrawal of the amendment will in no way detract from the special role which they have played for years in our Organization.

If I may again, I would appeal to the delegations of Australia, Canada and New Zealand not to press their amendment to the vote.

As regards the amendment submitted by Czechoslovakia and Poland (A/SPC/L.107), I have this to say. We all have sympathy for the motives which inspired the delegations of Czechoslovakia and Poland to put forward this amendment. What in fact they have in mind is that Eastern Europe should be reckoned with as a factor when it comes to the election of Presidents of the General Assembly. I am sure that on this score no one in this Committee would have any quarrel; I am sure that no one will quarrel with the delegations of the Eastern European countries that their region, as a geographical region which has been accepted by our Organization, should be a factor when it came to the election of Presidents. But the way in which they have put forward the amendment brings up a few difficulties. For example, in paragraph 2 (1) of the amendment it states:

"The Presidency of the General Assembly shall rotate every year among the following regions:".

The words "every year" are contained in this sentence. I appeal to them that if they omit the words "every year", the idea which they want to bring up will be accepted, that Eastern Europe should be accepted as a region in the matter of the election of Presidents. Therefore, I would exhort them, appeal to them to remove from their amendment the words "every year" because in any case the President of the General Assembly is elected every year.

We should also like an omission of the Middle East region as we do not think it serves any useful purpose. The Middle East is in Asia, and in the same way that we cannot talk about the Near East, the Far East, West Africa, Central Africa, Central Asia, so we should not like the Middle East to be there; therefore, the regions which this Committee should have in mind always in regard to the Presidency of the General Assembly will be Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Western Europe and other States.

These amendments, if carried out, would, I am sure, accord with the expression which was made this morning by the representative of the United States on the question of the Presidency. In fact, my delegation would like to see a verbatim statement of this made to the Committee because the Ambassador has made what, to my delegation, seems to be a very important statement as regards the position of the President. But I am sure that the representative of the United States would not oppose the idea of the inclusion of Eastern Europe as a region, which in fact has been accepted by our Organization.

(Mr. Quaison-Sackey, Ghana)

These are the points which I had to make in regard to the amendments to the draft resolution in regard to the General Committee of the General Assembly.

To round up what I have said, the Special Political Committee has before it one of the most crucial issues before our Organization, the issue of justice, the issue of accepting once and for all the large continents of Asia and Africa within our Organization. I am sure that no one would say that wisdom or contributions to peace are the preserves of any region or of any delegation. I am sure that anyone who has been here for the past ten years has seen the sterling qualities which have been exhibited by representatives from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and America. No region can say it has a preserve on these qualities which are only seen in man, and so long as man is man we would allow for his proper stature in an organization such as this; this can be done, if the proper accord, if the proper respect can be paid to all regions in the world without exception, Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, other States or Latin America.

Mr. MENCIA-LISTER (Dominican Republic) (interpretation from Spanish):

Aware as I am of the need to enlarge the Councils as a means of resolving the imbalance in the equitable distribution of posts and due to the increase in the number of Member States in the Organization, the Dominican Republic has given its support to the draft resolutions contained in documents A/SPC/L.104/Rev.1 and A/SPC/L.105.

We consider that these texts are in conformity with the spirit of the provisions of Article 23 of the Charter. Both draft resolutions take up the indications given at the present General Assembly by the preparatory Committee on Arrangements for a Conference for the Purpose of Reviewing the Charter, and these indications are contained in the conclusions and recommendations to which the working group came at its fifth session held in July and August of this year.

(Mr. Mencia-Lister,
Dominican Republic)

The second draft also takes into account the recommendations made at the present session of the General Assembly by the Economic and Social Council in its parts C and D of resolution 974 of the thirty-sixth session of the Economic and Social Council. This resolution asks that the necessary measures be taken to increase the number of members on the Council with a view to ensuring that they properly reflect the structure provided for in Chapters IX and X of the Charter.

The fact is very evident that the present composition of the Security Council does not provide equitable geographical balance, a balance which had been established among the non-permanent members at the time of the creation of the Council; this entirely justifies the increase proposed in the title of the draft resolution, and we think that it is unnecessary to make any reference at all to the purposes that have moved the co-sponsors in submitting this draft resolution -- and we are one of those co-sponsors -- to the Committee.

With respect to the Economic and Social Council, the nature of its functions makes it necessary that in that body, more than indeed in any other United Nations body, strict application should be made of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, understood not only in the narrow sense of continental representation but rather as a regional concept, so that the members may act in the light of the common needs affecting certain geographical areas which they represent; therefore, they would be acting in a more realistic way with a better understanding of the aspirations for betterment entertained by the under-developed countries in their struggle to uproot mental and physical backwardness. It is necessary to give the Economic and Social Council a more precise view of the problems afflicting vast regions of the world, and the most effective tool for attaining this purpose is by including representatives of regions where similar situations obtain.

(Mr. Mencia-Lister, Dominican Republic)

Any formula designed to extend the geographical region represented by each member of the Council will of necessity tend to distort its functions, for it would deprive it of the opportunity of knowing more objectively the problems which are facing the world today in the field of activities which are those fittingly dealt with by the Council, and therefore would impede it from properly discharging the purposes for which it was set up.

If the seats on both Councils were increased and if we thus attained a method for ensuring a geographical representation on both Councils which would be more in accord with the realities of the world today, it would be well to lay down a rule about geographical regions with a view precisely to defining the area comprised within each zone, so that, in so far as possible, seats could be occupied in strict turn by the countries making up these various regional nuclei. This system would put an end to the present distribution of posts in the Councils and the method of assigning them, which involves an unnecessary loss of time and creates conditions conducive to friction among the Members of this Organization.

These are the reasons why the Dominican Republic has supported the two draft resolutions now before this Committee, and we hope that in this same spirit the delegations of other countries will accept these texts.

Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In view of the contemplated voting on the draft resolutions submitted to the Special Political Committee, the Soviet delegation deems it necessary to make the following statement.

The Soviet delegation, in its statement in this Committee on 10 December, indicated that the question of the membership of the General Committee can, and in our opinion should, be solved at the present session of the General Assembly, thereby ensuring equitable representation of the countries of Africa and Asia on that Committee. That is why the Soviet delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution of the fifty-four Afro-Asian countries contained in document A/SPC/L.101.

(Mr. Fedorenko, USSR)

The Soviet delegation likewise supports the amendment to that draft resolution which has been submitted by the delegations of Czechoslovakia and Poland in document A/SPC/L.107.

The principle of equitable representation of countries, which is the basis of the draft resolution on the membership of the General Committee, would only stand to gain if it were truly universal, that is, if it were also extended to the post of President of the General Assembly, who, incidentally, is also the officer presiding over the General Committee.

As for the draft resolutions dealing with changes in the number of members of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, we would wish once again to restate our position so that members of the Committee may be left with no misunderstandings on this score.

The Soviet Union -- and we have pointed this out on previous occasions -- has every sympathy for the wishes of the countries of Africa and Asia to be duly represented in the main organs of the United Nations. This position of ours is based upon the firm conviction of the Soviet Union that the United Nations and all its organs should reflect the real situation in the world, so that the Organization may be in a position effectively to carry out the great tasks standing before it.

As everyone will readily understand, the Soviet Union really has no need to defend the unfair relationship of forces now existing in the principal organs of the United Nations. If the young and independent countries do not now have the necessary number of votes in these organs, that, as everyone well knows, is not because the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have any governing position in those organs. Indeed, precisely the opposite is true. On the question of equitable representation in the organs of the United Nations, the basic interests of the socialist countries and the neutralist countries are not only not in conflict out, on the contrary, fully coincide.

However, in the matter of an increase in the number of members of the main organs, namely, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, there are,

(Mr. Fedorenko, USSR)

as distinct from the question of an increase in the membership of the General Committee, certain factors which one cannot fail to take into account if one wishes to be guided by the spirit and the letter of the Charter of our Organization.

Bearing in mind the aspirations of the countries of Africa and Asia and their desire as of now to achieve a solution of the question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, the Soviet Government, as my delegation made known in this Committee on 10 December, entered into conversations with the Government of the Chinese People's Republic with a view to determining what that Government's position was on the present subject. The Soviet Government received a reply from the Government of the Chinese People's Republic, which is the only lawful representative of China, a permanent member of the Security Council.

(Mr. Fedorenko, USSR)

May I recall that in its reply the Government of the Chinese People's Republic once again reaffirmed that in the circumstances where China is still prevented from participating in the work of the United Nations, it intends not to assume any obligations stemming from any amendments made to the Charter dealing with the over-all number of seats in the main organs of the United Nations. The Chinese People's Republic, as was officially stated to the Ambassador of the Soviet Union in Peking, does not approve of a solution of the question of the adequate representation of African and Asian peoples through an increase in the number of seats in United Nations organs at the present time, but favours, rather, a solution of this problem through a redistribution of the existing seats in those bodies.

In this connexion we have already provided documentary data in our statement of 10 December in this Committee. We should add to this that, with regard to the substance of the matter, the Chinese People's Republic had earlier made very definite statements on the subject and provided assurances. May I, in this connexion, recall that in the editorial entitled "We Firmly Resist Further Encroachments by the United States", printed in the official organ of the Chinese People's Republic, Jenmin Jih Pao, as long ago as 22 September 1961, it was indicated that "without the participation of the Chinese People's Republic, which is one of the permanent member of the Security Council, any amendment of the Charter of the United Nations is illegal". I wish to emphasize this: "any amendment of the Charter of the United Nations is illegal".

The Soviet Government -- may I again point this out -- has every sympathy for the position of the Government of the Chinese People's Republic on the question of increasing the membership of the main organs of the United Nations and has steadfastly supported the demand of the Chinese People's Republic that its legitimate rights in the United Nations be restored. It is therefore clear to us that any solution of the question through amendment of the United Nations Charter for the purpose of increasing the membership of the principal organs of the United Nations at the present time lacks the necessary objective conditions, for it is not possible to permit any infringement of the rights of the Chinese People's Republic, which is a permanent member of the Security Council.

(Mr. Fedorenko, USSR)

It is known that the Foreign Minister of the Chinese People's Republic, on 12 December of this year, also made a special statement which, if one regards it substance rather than the actual words used, once again states that the Chinese People's Republic does not, at the present time when that country is not taking an active part in the work of the United Nations, approve of any amendment of the Charter, but wishes rather a redistribution of the existing seats in the main organs of the United Nations within the present limits of the number of such seats. But the statement of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China that the Government of the People's Republic of China "does not assume any obligations in connexion with the amendment of any Articles of the Charter of the United Nations", and at the same time the thesis that the restoration of the lawful rights of the Chinese People's Republic in the United Nations and the question of the representation of African and Asian countries in the main organs of the United Nations are, in essence, totally unrelated questions, fails to deal with the substance of the matter. In the present circumstances, any amendment of the Charter would imply a violation of the Charter for the reason that any amendment of the Charter requires ratification of that amendment by all permanent members of the Security Council. The Chinese People's Republic, however, is at the present time deprived of the possibility of doing this, and to act in this matter without the agreement of the Chinese People's Republic not only would involve a violation of the Charter but would also, in fact, play into the hands of those seeking to bring about the creation of the notorious "two Chinas" situation.

The Soviet delegation is therefore authorized to state here that if the relevant draft resolutions calling for amendments to the Charter are brought to the vote, we shall be obliged to vote against them. Any attempt to force upon the General Assembly any spurious solution of the present question not only would fail to assist in the genuine solution of it but would, on the contrary, lead to an artificial and unnecessary heightening of tensions and to a complication of the ways leading to genuine solution of the problem of equitable representation in the main organs of the United Nations.

(Mr. Fedorenko, USSR)

Therefore the Soviet delegation appeals to the sponsors of these draft resolutions not to press them to the vote. The solution of the question of equitable representation in the main organs of the United Nations is to be found only on the basis of strict observance of the United Nations Charter.

The Soviet Union has always been and continues to be in favour of action in strict compliance with the United Nations Charter and in favour of the defence of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China as a permanent member of the Security Council.

In the present circumstances there is a genuine way of ensuring proper representation of the African and Asian countries in the principal organs of the United Nations: namely, the redistribution of existing seats in the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. In this connexion we deem it necessary to point out that the considerations advanced by the Government of the Chinese People's Republic to the effect that the African and Asian countries should be given no less than half the seats of the non-permanent members of the Security Council and a corresponding number of seats in the Economic and Social Council are fully in line with the proposals in this regard which were advanced by the Soviet Government.

Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq): We have co-sponsored the draft resolution in document A/SPC/L.101 with fifty-two other African and Asian States, in order to alter the present composition of the General Committee.

The representative of the United Arab Republic has explained fully to the Committee the reasons for this nearly unanimous desire of the African and Asian States to alter the composition of the General Committee with a view to a more equitable geographical distribution of seats among all the regions of the world. The main reason, which was stated by the representative of the United Arab Republic, is of course the great increase in the membership of the Organization since 1957, when the last resolution relating to the composition of the General Committee was adopted, and the fact that this increase, which came mainly from Asia and Africa, should now be reflected in the composition of the Committee.

(Mr. Pachachi, Iraq)

As you know, the countries of Asia and Africa make up more than half of this Organization, and their number is likely to increase in the next few years -- in fact, in the next few days. In spite of the fact that they make up more than half of the membership of the Organization, they ask only for seven Vice-Presidencies out of sixteen and only for three Chairmanships out of seven, which is clearly less than what they are entitled to under the present numerical composition of their group.

A feature that has been maintained in the draft of the Asian and African States is the necessity of the representation of the five permanent members of the Security Council on the General Committee. This is a practice that has been established from the very beginning and has been confirmed year after year and formalized in 1957. The sponsors of this draft resolution saw no reason why this practice, which has its obvious merits, should not be continued in the composition of the General Committee in the future. Therefore the five permanent members of the Security Council are assured of seats on the General Committee.

May I now turn to the various amendments to the draft resolution that have been presented.

I begin with the amendment submitted by Australia, Canada and New Zealand in document A/SPC/L.106. Although we understand fully the desire of those three States that some mention of the Commonwealth should appear in the draft resolution, it is our considered opinion that such mention is unnecessary, for practical reasons, as, invariably the Commonwealth would be represented on the General Committee either through one of its members in Asia or Africa or through Australia, Canada or New Zealand. Therefore the mentioning of a special group seems to be unnecessary. Indeed, there are other groups that are perhaps more homogeneous than the Commonwealth group and that are bound by closer ties, whether legal, emotional or political ties, and yet they have not felt it necessary that they should be given special mention in the draft resolution. Of course, I have in mind, for example, the group of Arab States, which make up thirteen Members of this Organization and whose number is likely perhaps to increase in the not far distant future. We have not found it in

(Mr. Pachachi, Iraq)

any way necessary that our group, which, as I say, is certainly more homogeneous than that of the Commonwealth, and is bound by legal and cultural ties which I think are stronger than those which bind the heterogeneous countries of the Commonwealth, should have special mention. However, if the majority of the Assembly should find it acceptable to give special mention to the Commonwealth, then of course we shall have to reserve our right to do likewise. But I would associate myself with the appeal addressed by the representative of Ghana to the representatives of Australia, Canada and New Zealand not to press their amendment to the vote. As I have said, from the standpoint of practice, there will always be a Commonwealth member of the General Committee, and I think it would set a precedent which other groups would have to take into account in the future.

With regard to the amendment submitted by Czechoslovakia and Poland in document A/SPC/L.107, we are quite aware of the logical and, I think, justifiable demand of the Socialist countries to have a Presidency of the General Assembly. They have been Members of this Organization from the beginning and as yet they have not yet had a President. We think it is only fair that all the groups of the Organization should at one time or another be given the chance of having one of their members elected President of the General Assembly.

While we agree that the element of personal competence is of course of very great importance and perhaps is a paramount consideration, the practice that has evolved over the years in the United Nations is that, having regard to the personal competence of the candidate, considerations of geography then would have to be taken into account, and in fact we have rotated the Presidency of the General Assembly among the various regions of the world. There is an unwritten custom, an unwritten law, that members of the same group do not succeed each other in the Presidency of the General Assembly.

Nevertheless, I think that the representative of the United States had a point when he said that we should not be too rigid in advocating the necessity of taking into account the geographical element in the selection of the President. Therefore, possibly a different wording in this Czechoslovak-Polish amendment might be helpful. As the representative of Ghana suggested, we could eliminate the words "every year" and say merely that it would be desirable that the Presidency of the General Assembly should rotate among the groups mentioned in paragraph 1 (a), (b), (c) and (d) -- which are in fact the groups in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, Latin America and other States. I hope that such a formula would be acceptable to all concerned. We could say something to the effect that it would be desirable, or even that if it is decided, that the Presidency of the General Assembly should be rotated among the groups or among the States mentioned in paragraph 1 (a), (b), (c) and (d) of the Annex. Of course, we must exclude sub-paragraph (e) which speaks of the permanent members of the Security Council.

With regard to the Latin American amendment to our draft resolution (A/SPC/L.108), we have not had time to consider this amendment with the other co-sponsors of our draft resolution and, as the representative of Ghana said a little while ago, we need some time to study it and to see what can be done about it in relation to some other matters before the Committee.

Now I come to the draft resolutions concerning amendments to the Charter for the enlargement of the two Councils. Although my delegation is not a co-sponsor of draft resolutions A/SPC/L.109 and A/SPC/L.110, let me say at once that we are quite in favour of these two draft resolutions and we fully understand and sympathize with the desire that the Councils should be enlarged in order to give adequate representation to the countries of Asia and Africa. In fact, as an Asian country, we feel that we have been under-represented all these years. But it has become quite clear in the last few days, and indeed even clearer this morning, that, from the practical point of view, there does not seem to be any great hope that such amendments would be adopted by the required majority during this session of the Assembly.

It is for this reason, and because we believe that further consideration of the matter might be useful, that we hesitated to become a co-sponsor of these two draft resolutions, although we shall vote in favour of them if they are pressed to a vote. Nevertheless, the fact remains that perhaps this is not the most propitious time to press the matter to a vote at this session; it might be wiser and more useful to wait until next year to see whether or not there might be some possibility of agreement being reached before the opening of the session next September. I must, however, point out clearly that if these two drafts are pressed to a vote, we shall vote in favour of them.

Now I should like to take up these two draft resolutions, especially the question of the distribution of non-permanent seats on the Security Council as envisaged in the draft resolution in A/SPC/L.109. We fully agree that there should be five members from Africa and Asia, which means that there would be half of the non-permanent members of the Security Council reflecting their number in the United Nations as a whole. But I am authorized by the delegations of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Yemen, as well as my own delegation, to state on their behalf that we feel that, among the five members from Africa and Asia, the Arab States in both continents are entitled to one seat on the Security Council. We believe that their number, which is nearly one quarter of the entire membership of the Afro-Asian group, entitles them to a permanent seat on the Security Council from among those seats allocated to the two continents of Asia and Africa. Also, as a group, they are bound by legal, political and cultural ties which are very strong indeed, perhaps as strong as any which bind other groups in this Organization. Therefore, we feel that this group of countries, which has played its role in the United Nations since the beginning of the Organization, is entitled to adequate representation among the five seats allocated to Africa and Asia according to draft resolution A/SPC/L.109. I am authorized to put this matter on record because we feel that it is a point which must be clarified in order to remove any doubt or ambiguity as to our position on this question.

(Mr. Pachachi, Iraq)

Regarding the increase in membership of the Economic and Social Council, the representative of Ghana has made it quite clear why it is felt that the number of twenty-seven would more adequately reflect the necessity of the representation of the countries of Asia and Africa in that Council. The countries of Asia and Africa, most of which are under-developed, have a very important stake in the work of ECOSOC and, therefore, their adequate representation in that Council is a matter of the highest importance. I think that the representative of Ghana made it quite clear that an increase of nine members, and not less than nine, would be adequate to reflect the interest, and indeed the number, of the countries of Asia and Africa.

This is all I have to say at this time. As I said, we shall have to study the Latin American amendment regarding the composition of the General Committee and we hope to present our views on this particular question at a later stage.

Mr. EL-ZAYYAT (United Arab Republic): We have heard many important statements this morning, and I would like to propose formally that all the statements made in this Committee by the permanent members of the Security Council be reproduced in extenso as part of the documents of this Committee.

While I have the floor, I would like to say, in the name of the delegation of the United Arab Republic, that we quite agree with the statement just made by the representative of Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): The representative of the United Arab Republic has requested that the statements of the permanent members of the Security Council which were made or which will be made in the Committee should be reproduced in their entirety in the records of our meetings.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the proposal is approved. It is so decided.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I call on the representative of Nigeria, who wishes to present a draft amendment.

Mr. ADEBO (Nigeria): As one of the co-sponsors of the two draft resolutions moved by the representative of Ghana, I wish to state that I support everything that he has said to this Committee.

With regard to the amendment submitted by Czechoslovakia and Poland (A/SPC/L.107), a number of us have been in consultation since the representative of the United States made his statement. We were glad to hear from that statement that his objection to the amendment of Czechoslovakia and Poland was not based upon the principle of rotation. It could not have been so based since in fact the office of President has been rotating. His objection was based on the ground that inflexibility for the purpose of this appointment would be a bad thing for our world Organization. That being so, we have a proposal to make which we hope will commend itself not only to the United States but also to those who sponsored the amendment in document A/SPC/L.107.

(Mr. Adebo, Nigeria)

We suggest that in place of the clause proposed by the amendment of Czechoslovakia and Poland, the following should be substituted: "In the election of the President of the General Assembly, regard shall be had to equitable geographical rotation of this office among the different regions mentioned in paragraph 3." The reference to paragraph 3 is to the present numbering of the annex attached to document A/SPC/L.101. In that annex, the regions mentioned are: Africa and Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Western Europe and other States.

There is also a clause in that annex which says: "The seventh chairmanship shall rotate every alternate year among representatives of States mentioned in (c) and (d)", but that does not affect the number of States.

As representatives will appreciate, this is exactly along the lines suggested by the representative of Ghana in the statement with which he introduced the draft resolutions to the Committee.

While I have the floor, I would like to say just one more word. I wish to join in the appeal that was made by the representative of Ghana to the sponsors of the amendment in document A/SPC/L.106, that they should be good enough to withdraw that amendment. We know very well that the sponsors of that amendment were thinking not only of themselves but of those associated with them in what is known as the Commonwealth of Nations. We are aware, however, that the pressing of this amendment upon the Committee would be unfortunate for the Committee because it would create what we regard as needless misunderstanding.

The Commonwealth of Nations represents a very useful, I hope, and important group of nations in this world Organization. I say "I hope" because my country happens to belong to it, and therefore I am not a good judge of the merits of that organization. But there are other groups which, being non-geographical, we felt unable to include in the text of our present draft

(Mr. Adebo, Nigeria)

resolution. Therefore, we feel that to single out this particular group for mention could only create misunderstanding.

We do appreciate that the purpose of this amendment is aimed at preserving what is already with us. Nevertheless, we want to beg them to withdraw the amendment, because the basis upon which we propose to frame the allocation of seats in the future is purely geographical. I would therefore like to join the representative of Ghana in appealing to them to be good enough to withdraw their amendment.

(Mr. Adebo, Nigeria)

The Commonwealth of Nations contains a good number of countries which are represented in this Assembly. They belong to the continents of Asia, Africa, Europe and America, and it would be very difficult in fact to contemplate a situation in which not one of them from any source whatever became a member of the General Committee. Therefore, I would say that on the whole it would not do anybody harm but it would do all of us good if the delegations of Canada, New Zealand and Australia would be good enough to withdraw their amendment.

Mr. DIALLO Telli (Guinea) (interpretation from French): The delegation of Guinea is one of the two sponsors of the three draft resolutions which have been submitted for the consideration of our Committee. We have listened with attention to the various statements that have been made here this morning, and we would like to hear as rapidly as possible the statements of the other permanent members of the Security Council, and we hope that they will be as substantive as those we have just heard and that they will also be contained within the official documents of our Committee. We wish to reserve our own substantive statement until we have heard the ones to which I have just referred.

In view of the lateness of the hour, we would merely state at this stage that we are quite apprehensive, and this is due to the fact that there have been numerous debates in the corridors and at today's meeting. For five years now we have said that it seems, and we do not know whether this is deliberate or calculated, that everything is being done in order that the Africans and Asians here might not receive a just solution to the question of representation for which they have been unanimously clamouring. Each time we have addressed ourselves to our friends, and we have only friends here, some of them have told us that we cannot obtain anything from redistribution, and that the only benefit we could get would be from an amendment of the Charter. Other friends tell us, with the same conviction, that we will not obtain anything from an amendment of the Charter, and that the only way we can get anything is by means of a redistribution.

The serious fact, about which we cannot keep silent, is that these two attitudes on the part of our two sets of friends result in the paradoxical position that we have absolutely nothing. But there does not seem to be any point at this stage in the debate in developing this idea, and for this reason

(Mr. Diallo Telli, Guinea)

I would like at this stage simply to add my views to those which have already been given by the representatives of the Ivory Coast, Ghana and Nigeria on the draft amendments to our various draft resolutions, and on the Latin American amendment and the Polish and Czechoslovak amendment. The position of the Republic of Ghana is that which was so clearly stated by the representative of Ghana as Chairman of the African Group.

With regard to the amendment introduced by Australia, Canada and New Zealand, we wish to state that outside the official meeting rooms we have exerted our efforts to have this amendment withdrawn and not to be put to the vote, and we have done this because we are perfectly aware of the reasons and feelings which motivated these delegations.

Although our position in this regard can leave no room for doubt at all, out of deference for our brothers from Asia and Africa who are members of the Commonwealth, we have voluntarily abstained from saying anything at all in public, and that is why we are happy that the most urgent appeals have been made precisely by the African members of the Commonwealth.

We are acting here pursuant only to a specific mandate when we speak as representatives of the great Afro-Asian family. We speak only on the basis of the historic Bandung Conference. As Africans, we speak only on the basis of the equally historic Conference of Addis Ababa. If I were to list the reasons why it is imperative for this amendment not to be put to the vote, this might take me very far afield. I hope that the goodwill and understanding of our friends from Australia, Canada and New Zealand will enable me to avoid presenting these reasons publicly. Also, in associating myself with the other delegations, I would like to tell them that we understand their special situation, but we would wish them to understand also the special situation and the sentiments and reasons of other delegations, because, together with the Commonwealth, there are here among the African and Asian countries certain countries which have institutional relations with other non-African and non-Asian countries. They should understand that to press such an amendment to a vote would only strengthen the various elements which, whether consciously or not, would tend to dislocate the fundamental basis for our solidarity within other

Asian and African groups. It is in the hope that the delegation of Guinea will not be forced to explain the fundamental reasons, both political and moral, underlying this that we wish to urge upon the delegations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand that they accept the appeal which has been made to them, both in the corridors and in this room, that they not press their amendment to a vote. If this appeal is not heeded, in spite of our reticence and in spite of our respect and profound friendship which ties us to our African and Asian friends from the Commonwealth, we will have to explain the substantive reasons we have against this amendment.

But we hope that this can be avoided. That depends upon the three delegations of Australia, Canada and New Zealand, and I wish to thank them for at least having listened to the appeal I have made.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I call upon the representative of Canada on a point of order.

Mr. CHAPDELAIN (Canada) (interpretation from French): If you will allow me, Mr. Chairman, I shall speak in English because my statement is addressed primarily to my friends of the Commonwealth, who, with me, speak English.

(continued in English)

On 9 December my delegation introduced, with the co-sponsorship of Australia and New Zealand, an amendment to the 53-Power draft resolution on the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly, A/SPC/L.101. This amendment provided that at least one of the members of the General Committee would be from a Commonwealth country without altering the pattern of the geographical distribution of seats in the General Committee as defined in the draft resolution. As a result of consultations which have taken place outside the Committee, I should like to inform the members of the Committee that the sponsors of this amendment, A/SPC/L.106, in response to requests which have been made to them by several of the Commonwealth countries to withdraw the amendment, have decided not to insist that it be put to a vote.

(Mr. Chapdelaine, Canada)

We have taken this decision in the interest of arriving at a harmonious solution to the question of enlarging the General Committee. In reaching this decision, the co-sponsors of the amendment and, I am sure, the other members of the Commonwealth as well as most, if not all, members of the Committee have taken note of the fact that even without the amendment there will in practice always be at least one member of the Commonwealth, and probably more than one, on the General Committee.

As we pointed out in our statement to the Committee in introducing our amendment some days ago, the provision for Commonwealth representation was a matter of form rather than substance. As we said then, it will in no way affect the pattern of geographical representation, and therefore the allocation of seats in the General Committee. We would therefore expect that the adoption of the draft resolution before us would not jeopardize the position of the three co-sponsors of this amendment in the years to come. In view of the special and honourable role that we -- the three co-sponsors -- play and are proud to play in the United Nations as Commonwealth members, we trust that our position will not be jeopardized with regard to our access to membership of the General Committee.

We have found it easier to take this decision as a result of assurances that we have received from so many quarters, not only within but beyond the bounds of the Commonwealth, of the high regard in which the Commonwealth is held and of the recognition which it enjoys among the Members of the United Nations. We remain convinced that the Commonwealth, because it embraces nations of great influence in their respective regions, because of the process of consultation which it enjoys and because of the close link between its members, is and will remain a powerful force in world affairs and at the United Nations.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I propose that the Committee should hear the statements of the representatives of the United Kingdom and France, which are permanent members of the Security Council, and that the meeting should then be adjourned.

It was so decided.

Mr. JACKLING (United Kingdom): It seems almost superfluous for me to repeat that my delegation wholeheartedly supports the principle of expansion of the main bodies of the United Nations. We have made this clear frequently in the past, and our views were last put on record before the Ad Hoc Committee on Charter Review, which met just before the present session of the General Assembly began.

As we all know, the composition of the United Nations has changed radically since it was founded in 1945. There seems to us to be no logical argument against the contention that the membership of the main organs of the United Nations should be adjusted to reflect adequately this change. In fact, there is, I believe, near unanimity on this point. Members of all groups in the United Nations have expressed themselves as being in favour of equitable representation and in favour of meeting the legitimate requests of the African and Asian Members of our Organization.

We have before us two sets of draft resolutions, the one presented by the group of Latin American States, and the other by the group of African and Asian States. Both of them have common ground in that they both recognize this principle which I have just described about the pressing need for enlarging these two important bodies of the United Nations.

Now, it has become perfectly clear as the result of the various consultations of the past few days that there is at present no general agreement on any resolution for expansion of the Councils, much less any agreement on the appropriate distribution of additional seats between the regions. And because of this absence of agreement, all of us, I believe, are aware that none of these draft resolutions before us is likely to command the necessary majority in accordance with Article 108 to enable it to be adopted at this session of the General Assembly.

It is also obvious, having regard to the statement made by the representative of the Soviet Union, that there is no prospect of any amendment to the Charter being ratified before the next session of the General Assembly.

In these circumstances, it seems to my delegation wiser not to take a vote on any of these draft resolutions relating to the two Councils at the present stage. Surely it would be far better to allow time for the consultations between the various groups to continue and to allow our respective Governments to give proper and full consideration to the various proposals which are now before us regarding the two Councils. Whatever we do now about these two draft resolutions cannot, we all know, make any difference to the composition of the Councils in 1964. We therefore have a certain amount of time in hand, and my delegation would therefore be in favour of taking a decision here and now that all of us should continue to work hard during the next few months on aligning our points of view on these questions so that we might have reached an agreed conclusion by the outset of the nineteenth session.

I hope very much that the sponsors of both sets of draft resolutions will, on consideration, be prepared to agree that this is the best way to proceed.

I would, even so, wish to make a few comments on the draft resolutions which are before us -- though, given our earnest hope that the informal discussions which we have been having in these past few weeks will be continued between now and next September, I shall limit such comments to rather more general considerations, instead of going into the actual details of the four drafts.

First, I should like to refer to the two draft resolutions which have been submitted by the group of Latin American States. The one regarding the Security Council proposes an increase of two seats, and the one regarding the Economic and Social Council an increase of six. My delegation is of the view that, provided satisfactory arrangements could have been made about the distribution of seats in both of these Councils, the scale of increase proposed here is a sound one.

But neither of these draft resolutions defines how the seats should in fact be distributed, and this in itself places my delegation in difficulty. It seems to my delegation to be unreasonable to expect Governments to ratify an enlargement

of these two Councils unless it is quite clear beforehand what their composition is going to be. As is well known, the seats in the Security Council at present are determined by the gentleman's agreement drawn up in 1946, and those of the Economic and Social Council by accepted practice and tradition. Both these arrangements provide for seats on the two Councils for the Commonwealth, either as a whole or in relation to those members of the Commonwealth which are not covered by any of the existing groups. We attach particular importance to retaining these seats for the Commonwealth in any enlarged Councils. In particular, we attach importance to the Commonwealth seat being retained in the Security Council, since we believe that the basic concepts underlying the Commonwealth are similar to the ideals of the United Nations itself, and that this multiracial grouping deserves on its own merits to have separate representation in the Security Council.

(Mr. Jackling, United Kingdom)

I do not need to expand on this. I would only recall what has been said by members of the Commonwealth, both those who were founder-Members of this Organization and those who have since joined it -- and also, if I may, what was said by the representative of the United States.

The same arguments, of course, apply to the proposed distribution of seats in the two draft resolutions presented by the African and Asian States; though, in the case of these, I must add that at present we have doubts about the size of the increase contemplated in those resolutions. They have been circulated within the last twenty-four hours; they have implications for the operation of the Council and of the position of the Permanent Members, which need careful consideration.

I turn now to the draft resolution before us about the General Committee. I have already had occasion to comment regarding the provisions about Commonwealth representation, but in view of the statement just made by the representative of Canada, I think I need say no more about that now in relation to this draft resolution.

The second amendment to the draft resolution is the one proposed by the delegations of Czechoslovakia and Poland (A/SPC/L.107) regarding rotation of the office of the President of the General Assembly.

As may be recalled, the United Kingdom delegation had earlier taken the view that it would be undesirable to establish a system for the rotation of the Presidency of the General Assembly. This was chiefly on the grounds that we believe the person who is to occupy so important an office as the Presidency should be chosen primarily with regard to his personal qualifications for the office and only secondarily with regard to the country or area of the world from which he comes. We still believe that the personal qualifications are of prime importance. We appreciate none the less that since we are now engaged in putting our house in order, as it were, to take account of the large increase in the membership of the United Nations in recent years, this may also be a question which should be considered. But if it is to be taken up -- and the representative of the United States has put forward some powerful considerations why he considers such a proposal inappropriate --

(Mr. Jackling, United Kingdom)

it must be on the basis of a formula for rotation of the Presidency which would be fair and generally acceptable to the United Nations as a whole. It does not seem to us that there is time for the necessary consideration at the present moment to evolve such a formula. We hope very much, therefore, that the delegations putting forward this amendment will accept the proposal made by the representative of Nigeria which, it would seem to my delegation, would meet the requirement very well in the present circumstances.

Finally, there is the amendment which has been proposed by the Latin American States (A/SPC/L.108) and which was circulated this morning. My delegation well understands the reasons for which this amendment has been put forward and we shall be giving it immediate consideration.

In closing, I would just like to recall once more what I said earlier about the desirability in our view, having regard to the lack of general agreement at the present time, on the question of compositions of the Councils, that we should find some means to postpone this issue, to allow consultations to continue to take place after the closing of this Assembly. I believe it would be a grave mistake on the part of this Committee to attempt now, within the few hours left to us, to solve the problem on which we have been working hard during this last week but have not yet managed to achieve that degree of general consensus which is surely essential before so important a move is made as to move to amend the Charter of our Organization.

Mr. TINE (France) (interpretation from French): I hope you will allow me in a few words to support the proposal that was made this morning in particular by the representative of the United States and which has just been taken up by the United Kingdom representative, which is designed to adjourn the General Assembly's decisions on the question of the enlargement of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council.

I should like to be as brief as possible on this point and I shall therefore confine myself to giving the fundamental reasons which my delegation considers should lead us to this reasonable solution; and I am happy to note that this morning this solution has received what was in principle a favourable reception by the representative of Iraq.

(Mr. Tiné, France)

It is hardly necessary for me to recall that my delegation, together with many other delegations, when this debate started, considered that these three problems that we have to resolve should be settled in so far as possible as a whole. Only a global solution, which to some extent would be balanced, seems to us to be the desirable approach. But in the course of the past few days, which have been fruitful in consultations and enabled us to take various positions, no unanimous agreement was in sight which would enable us to change the composition of the two principal bodies of our Organization.

Advantage was not taken on 10 December of the opportunity to adopt a position which would have had the merits of clarity -- and this was confirmed today -- to proceed towards a modification of the Charter by a reasonable proportionate increase in the number of the members of the two Councils, a procedure which it seems to us is the only practical method of making room, as we would like to do, in conditions of harmony and balance for all the larger groupings making up our Organization.

Why, in the circumstances should we want to adopt certain proposals which might attain a majority support but which would be left so to speak in limbo -- no solution to be achieved without almost unanimous agreement; indeed, this was pointed out by our colleague from the United States when he read to us Article 108 of the Charter.

The only method likely to achieve results, and in the circumstances the solutions set forth to us a few minutes ago, would mean that the various groups would pursue their consultations in the interim between sessions, and the problem under debate would be resumed at the very outset of the next session, that is to say, it would be given priority. The relaxation of an attitude that we vainly hope for, and which appears to be emerging would by that time, we think, actually have become a reality, at least, we hope so, and real negotiations in which each of the partners would act openly, and therefore on a basis of equality, would become a possibility.

(Mr. Tiné, France)

If my delegation sees no other means of settling this impasse in which we have found ourselves, we would not, however, refuse to do what is possible to be done now. As many speakers have pointed out, our Assembly need not wait to expand and improve the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly. The French delegation, therefore, is prepared to participate in the efforts to achieve this. Therefore, I should like to explain in as brief terms as possible, having regard to the limited time still available to us, the reason for the vote whereby we will manifest our position on various aspects of the question of the alteration of the General Committee.

First of all, the French delegation will oppose the amendment introduced by the delegations of Poland and Czechoslovakia (A/SPC/L.107) concerning the designation of the President of the Assembly.

(Mr. Tiné, France)

As soon as the General Assembly had things set up and followed the customary practice for appointment of its Vice-Presidents, it had therefore to some extent codified their distribution by increasing the number. And this was done in 1957 in the light of two criteria: geography and others. As I say, it included the consideration of geography, which was not the only one set out in the decision of 1957. Furthermore, as soon as it was proposed that we should extend this codification to the appointment of the chairmen of the main Committees, it might appear tempting to expand the scope of this decision -- the decision proposed to us this morning -- to the supreme post of the Organization, which is what was suggested to us by the representative of the Soviet Union on 10 December, by invoking logic and asking that we should give a universal character to a principle, namely that of equitable representation. The amendment contained in document A/SPC/L.107 gave form to this suggestion by Mr. Fedorenko.

Would you allow the French delegation, which has often been reproached by submitting unduly to logic or making abusive references to "principle" and to their universal character, to consider that in the choice of its President, the General Assembly has certain duties and also certain rights to exercise. It has the duty to respect the principles of justice and balance among the various groupings and trends in our Organization, but it also has the right to choose the person most highly qualified, the person who at a particular time appears as one best situated to guide the debates of the session under consideration. The first of these concerns or duties lead quite naturally to observe a certain rotation and thus to permit all the great groupings of the world, be they political or geographical, to provide the General Assembly with a candidate capable of receiving the support of the great majority, if not the unanimous support of the Assembly. And to a large extent this is what has been done in the past.

(Mr. Tiné, France)

But this is not absolutely clear, because an important region of the world has only recently come to feel the place that it expected. And for that matter the political situation has also put obstacles in the way of other candidacies. So it is clear to all of us that this alterational turn and turn-about system brings a certain amount of balance and regularity. But this principle cannot lead to the setting up of a rigid schedule. And without taking into account the fact that the schedule proposed to us by Poland and Czechoslovakia is founded on a division of the world different from that appearing in the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/L.101, which it pretends to supplement, we should emphasize how many difficulties would be inherent in such a strict and constrictive system, even if there was a general will to apply the system in the General Assembly, to support a person who would be imposed on that body but whose turn had still not come up. We believe that the General Assembly in the past has been able, while respecting justice and balance, to vote for the best possible candidate, and we should be gratified that this has been the case.

If in this question we are to preserve the flexibility which guarantees real understanding, it is to be based on the choice of a person to guide our debates and who specifically, when he assumes his lofty responsibility, will be able to divest himself of all national pre-occupations and cease to represent the geographical or political group from which he emerges.

Concerning the draft resolution itself (A/SPC/L.101) which has been submitted by fifty-three member countries of Africa and Asia, I will merely state that, as amended by the Latin American delegations, and on the condition of course that the substance is not altered by the adoption of the Polish and Czechoslovak amendment as it now stands, it seems to us to represent a successful effort to attain the purposes described in its preamble and which, if I enumerated them one by one, I could only support in turn.

It is all the more easy to reach agreement on the objectives of this text as set forth in the operative part, and we support the idea of equilibrium and enlargement, and we also agree on the means of attaining this. There is no perfect solution possible here, but the one proposed to us in and of itself would call for

(Mr. Tiné, France)

several reservations, as a matter of fact, by my delegation. However, if we waive our right to formulate these reservations and merely express them through our vote, it is because we want to take account of the extreme complexity of the problem and the great efforts that have been made on various sides to reach as broad an agreement as possible.

I reserve the right to speak again in this debate having regard to any new proposals that may be made in the course of the afternoon.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I call on the representative of Mexico on a point of order.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I wish to ask you to be good enough to give me some information which I think will be useful to all the members of the Latin American group as well. I should like to know whether it is the Chairman's intention to have us complete our work today or on Monday. If it is the Chairman's intention to conclude our work today, either in an afternoon meeting or in an afternoon meeting together with a night meeting, in that event I would venture to ask the Chair to put off the start of our meeting this afternoon until 4 p.m. because we have a meeting of our group scheduled for 3 p.m. and we are still holding conversations with other groups. If, on the contrary, it is the intention of the Chair to conclude our work on Monday, then I would make no motion whatsoever.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I wish to remind the members of the Committee that we must finish our work before Monday so that the report of the Committee may be drafted in order that this report be considered by the General Assembly on Monday. For that reason, I would request that we continue our debates today. We shall meet again at 4 p.m.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.