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CREDENTIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Report of the Credentials Committee

Chairman: Mr. Kurt WALDHEIM (Austria)

1. At its 1409th plenary meeting, on 20 September 1966, the General Assembly in accordance with rule 28 of its rules of procedure, appointed a Credentials Committee for its twenty-first session consisting of the following Member States: Austria, El Salvador, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Japan, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.
2. The Credentials Committee met on 15 December 1965.
3. Mr. Kurt Waldheim (Austria) was unanimously elected Chairman of the Committee.
4. The Chairman drew the attention of the Committee to the memorandum by the Secretary-General according to which credentials issued by the Head of the State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs had been communicated to the Secretary-General by all Member States for their representatives to the twenty-first session of the General Assembly, as provided in rule 27 of its rules of procedure.
5. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics stated that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, like many other countries, could not regard as valid the credentials submitted by persons who arrogated to themselves the title of representatives of China in the United Nations. These credentials, he said, neither fulfilled the formal requirements of rule 27 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly nor were they in accordance with reality. The position of principle of the USSR on the question was well known, and was based on the fact that only the Government of the People's Republic of China could represent China in the United Nations.

6. For the above-mentioned reasons, the representative of the USSR proposed that the Committee regard the credentials in question as invalid and to this end introduced a draft resolution providing that the Credentials Committee decide "to consider invalid the credentials of the persons calling themselves the representatives of the Government of the Republic of China to the twenty-first session of the General Assembly owing to the incompatibility of these credentials with the requirements of rule 27 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly".
7. The representative of Guinea said that he strongly supported the draft resolution. The 800 million people of China, he stated, could be represented only by the Government of the People's Republic of China and not by the group of refugees of Taiwan, who were usurpers under the protection of foreign troops, and any credentials submitted by that group were completely illegal and invalid.
8. The representative of Nepal also expressed support for the draft resolution concerning the credentials of the representatives of an entity which, he said, was not a State in international law and practice. In order to expedite the Committee's work, he would refrain from reiterating his delegation's often-expressed views on the representation of China in the United Nations.
9. The representative of the United States of America stated that he would vote against the draft resolution proposed by the representative of the USSR, since the credentials of the representative of the Republic of China, like those of the representatives of all other Member States, had been submitted as provided in rule 27 of the rules of procedure and there was therefore no legal basis for challenging their propriety. He further said that the draft resolution proposed by the representative of the USSR was, in effect, an attempt to reopen an issue which had already been decided by the General Assembly at the current session when, on 29 November 1966, it had rejected a draft resolution (A/L.496 and Add.1) proposing that the representatives of the Republic of China be expelled from the United Nations and that it was therefore not in order.
10. The representatives of El Salvador, Ivory Coast, Japan and Nicaragua stated that, in the view of their delegations, the question of the representation of China had already been disposed of by the General Assembly at its current session

and that, therefore, they would vote against the draft resolution proposed by the representative of the USSR. The representative of Japan furthermore recalled that for a number of years past, it had been the practice for the Chairman of the Credentials Committee to rule such a proposal out of order; in the present instance, however, with a view to avoiding a procedural discussion and without prejudice to the position of his delegation regarding the past practice of the Committee, he was prepared to proceed directly to a vote on the draft resolution.

The representative of El Salvador expressed the belief that the task of the Credentials Committee was to examine whether the credentials issued by the Government which the General Assembly recognized were communicated in due form.

11. The representatives of the USSR and Guinea stated that the decision taken by the General Assembly was distinct from the question of the credentials of the representatives of China. In their view, if the General Assembly had already taken a decision on the question, as some of the members of the Credentials Committee asserted, there would be no reason for the Credentials Committee to meet; the fact was, however, that the Assembly was not competent to take a decision on the question until the Committee had submitted its report, and it had never done so in the past.

12. In this regard, the representative of Guinea reaffirmed the position taken by his delegation at the twentieth session of the Assembly, when it had urged that the Credentials Committee should meet as soon as possible after the opening of the session, thus ending the paradoxical situation whereby credentials might be declared invalid after a delegation had been seated for three months.

13. The Chairman put to the vote the draft resolution submitted by the representative of the USSR. The draft resolution was rejected by 5 votes to 3, with 1 abstention.

14. The representative of Guinea, referring to the credentials of the South African delegation, stated that the persons claiming to represent South Africa in the United Nations in fact represented a minority community of oppressors and colonists, whose entire activities were contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter and were a flagrant violation of the human rights recognized by the civilized community of nations. He expressed the strongest

reservations concerning the credentials of the South African delegation and reserved his delegation's rights to raise the issue in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly.

15. The representatives of the USSR and the Ivory Coast stated that they fully supported the views expressed by the representative of Guinea. The well-known position of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, said the representative of the USSR, was based on the fact that the overwhelming majority of the people of South Africa, to whom the country really belonged, were the victims of unprecedented oppression and racial discrimination at the hands of the Pretoria régime and were deprived of their most elementary rights and freedoms through the shameful policy of apartheid, which had repeatedly been condemned by the United Nations. His delegation had the most serious reservations concerning the South African credentials, and it too reserved the right to raise the issue in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the report of the Credentials Committee. The representative of the Ivory Coast stated that his delegation would find it extremely difficult to recognize as valid credentials submitted by the persons claiming to represent South Africa. While he believed that the decision on the question would have to be taken by the General Assembly, he wished at the present stage to express his delegation's strongest reservations concerning these credentials.

16. The representatives of the United States of America and Japan expressed their Government's abhorrence of the South African Government's policy of apartheid. Like most other Governments they condemned that policy. However, in the view of those representatives, this question was quite separate from that of the credentials of representatives of the South African Government. The task of the Credentials Committee was to examine the credentials of all representatives and to ascertain whether they fulfilled the requirements of rule 27 of the rules of procedure. Their delegations accepted the credentials communicated by the South African Government as being in accordance with that rule.

17. The representative of the United States of America further stated that the United States believed that the South African delegation should be present and participate in the work of the various organs of the United Nations, noting, inter alia, that it could thus experience directly the intensity of feelings of other representatives against apartheid.

18. On the other hand, the representatives of the USSR and Guinea took the view that the function of the Committee was not merely to examine whether the credentials were properly signed but to ensure that those who signed them were the rightful representatives of the people and, in the case of the present Government of South Africa, the representatives of that régime could not be recognized as lawful spokesmen of the people of South Africa and should be barred from the organs of the United Nations.

19. The Chairman stated that all reservations expressed in the Committee concerning the representation of China and South Africa would be included in the report and proposed the following draft resolution for the adoption of the Committee:

"The Credentials Committee,

Having examined the credentials of the representatives to the twenty-first session of the General Assembly,

Recalling the different views expressed during the debate,

Accepts the credentials of all representatives to the twenty-first session of the General Assembly and recommends to the General Assembly that it approve the report of the Credentials Committee."

20. The representative of the USSR stated that since the Committee had not adopted the draft resolution submitted by his delegation concerning the credentials of representatives of China nor endorsed the objection raised to the recognition of the credentials of the Pretoria régime, he could not support the recommendation that the Assembly approve the Committee's report and would abstain on the draft resolution proposed by the Chairman.

21. The representatives of the Ivory Coast, Guinea and Nepal stated that they would vote in favour of the draft resolution on the understanding that the reservations expressed by their delegations during the debate would be duly recorded in the Committee's report.

22. The draft resolution proposed by the Chairman was adopted by 8 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

23. The Credentials Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Credentials of representatives to the twenty-first session
of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Approves the report of the Credentials Committee.
