



Chairman: Mr. Adam MALIK (Indonesia).

Adoption of the agenda: memorandum by the Secretary-General (*continued*) (A/BUR/177 and Corr.1, sect. III)

ITEMS 102 AND 103

The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that items 102 and 103 should be included in the agenda.

ITEM 104

1. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure, the representative of Cuba had asked permission to take part in the discussion of the item.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Alarcón (Cuba) took a place at the Committee table.

2. Mr. ALARCON (Cuba) said that it was a fitting coincidence that the General Committee should consider his delegation's request (A/8441 and Add.1) for the inclusion of an item entitled "The colonial case of Puerto Rico" precisely on 23 September. One hundred and three years ago, on that date, the people of Puerto Rico had declared themselves an independent republic. In the century which had elapsed since that time, they had carried on an unceasing struggle for complete emancipation, a struggle which had always had the moral support of the Cuban people. Cuba and Puerto Rico had fought together against Spanish domination, and the bonds of brotherhood between the two peoples remained strong. He felt that it was only proper, on the anniversary of the Declaration of Lares, to pay homage to the Puerto Rican patriots who had laid down their lives for their country. Despite their sacrifice, however, the independent republic of 1868 had had an ephemeral existence; the people of Puerto Rico continued to live under the colonial yoke, deprived of their right to self-determination and sovereignty.

3. As he had stated in the explanatory memorandum accompanying his request, Puerto Rico had been and always would be a Latin American nation. It had preserved its own national values despite all the efforts made by the imperialists to destroy and assimilate them. All Latin American nations were in duty bound to support its struggle for emancipation; the idea of freeing Puerto Rico had been one of Simón Bolívar's fondest dreams, and José Martí had stated that one of the fundamental purposes of his struggle was to attain independence for Cuba and Puerto Rico.

4. A careful analysis of the conditions under which the Territory of Puerto Rico was governed left no doubt about the fact that it was a colonial territory. As he had pointed out in paragraph 14 of the explanatory memorandum, Puerto Rico was under the legislative, judicial and executive control of the United States. In paragraph 15 he had pointed out that the United States exercised absolute control over the economy of Puerto Rico, and in paragraph 19 he had drawn attention to one of the most brutal aspects of United States colonial rule in Puerto Rico, namely, the military aspect. Thirteen per cent of the best arable land on the island was occupied by a vast network of military bases, including bases with nuclear weapons. Notwithstanding paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, the Puerto Rican people had never had the opportunity freely to exercise their right of self-determination.

5. Not even the United States authorities or the colonial government on the island had ever contended that Puerto Rico was independent. As he had pointed out in paragraph 25 of the explanatory memorandum, the United States Supreme Court had ruled that Puerto Rico had not become a part of the United States, as distinguished from merely belonging to it. It would be difficult to find a better definition of a colonial situation than the one thus provided by the Supreme Court, which could clearly be interpreted as meaning that citizens of the Territory did not have the same rights as citizens of the metropolitan country and that the Territory was considered a possession of the metropolitan country. However, despite the evidence the United Nations had thus far evaded its responsibility to the people of Puerto Rico.

6. He wished to remind the Committee that, as indicated in paragraph 28 of the explanatory memorandum, the Cuban Revolutionary Government in 1965 had requested the inclusion of the question of Puerto Rico in the agenda of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. In its request, his Government had referred to the final communiqué of the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo in 1964, which had drawn the attention of the United Nations to the case of Puerto Rico and had called upon the Special Committee to consider the situation in the light of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). However, since the Cuban request had not been acted upon, his Government had decided to bring the matter directly to the General Assembly.

7. The people of Puerto Rico would gain their independence regardless of any pressures that might be exerted by powerful delegations to prevent the United Nations from

considering the matter. However, if the Organization failed to apply its principles universally and consistently, the peoples of the freedom-loving countries of the world would be led to believe that it was unable to resist the pressures of the imperialist Powers. If the General Assembly did not consider the item on Puerto Rico, it would be violating its own resolution 1514 (XV). Although the eventual independence of Puerto Rico was inevitable, the prestige of the United Nations hinged upon the decision it was about to take regarding the Cuban request for inclusion in the agenda of the item on the colonial case of Puerto Rico.

8. Mr. BUSH (United States of America) said that his delegation vigorously opposed the inclusion of the item proposed by Cuba in the agenda for the twenty-sixth or any future session of the General Assembly. Although his delegation had traditionally refrained from objecting to the inclusion of items, in the present case it could not in good conscience follow that tradition. The item was frivolous and prejudicial, and the so-called explanatory memorandum was tendentious and did not provide any valid basis for the Cuban request, which constituted an act of interference in the internal affairs of the United States and Puerto Rico.

9. The people of Puerto Rico had fully exercised their right to self-determination in 1952, in a freely held plebiscite, when they had by an overwhelming majority approved the maintenance of the existing relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States. They had freely entered into a compact with the United States and freely adopted their own constitution. He would not go into the history of elections, which were alien to the current system of government in Cuba. He wished merely to draw attention to General Assembly resolution 748 (VIII) of 27 November 1953, which recognized that when choosing their constitutional and international status the people of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico had effectively exercised their right to self-determination. It would be entirely inappropriate for any organ of the United Nations to accept any attempt to re-interpret that resolution.

10. In accordance with rule 40 of the rules of procedure, he moved that the Committee should decide to reject the Cuban request.

11. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had listened with great attention to the excellent and well-documented statement by the Cuban representative. It had also carefully studied the memorandum submitted by the Cuban Government in support of its request. Although he would not discuss the matter at length, he did feel that it would be more useful if the United States delegation remained faithful to its tradition and refrained from opposing the Cuban request, which his delegation supported.

12. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation supported the Cuban request for inclusion of the item on Puerto Rico. The argument put forward by the United States delegation, based on a previous General Assembly resolution, was not convincing. It must be remembered that in 1953, when resolution 748 (VIII) had been adopted, the Organization had not yet begun its efforts to bring about decolonization. Many newly independent countries were

now Members of the Organization, and many positions had changed since 1953. It would be interesting to consider the question anew and see what the outcome would be under the conditions prevailing in 1971. The people of Puerto Rico had nothing to lose and much to gain from a clarification of their situation.

13. Mr. MOLINA (Costa Rica) said that his delegation was opposed to the inclusion of the item on Puerto Rico inasmuch as General Assembly resolution 748 (VIII) clearly stated that the people of Puerto Rico had exercised their right to self-determination.

14. Mr. SZARKA (Hungary) said that the statement by the representative of Cuba and the explanatory memorandum which he had submitted had provided ample evidence of the need for the General Assembly to consider the colonial case of Puerto Rico. The status of Puerto Rico in the light of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) had been discussed on several occasions in the Organization, but no satisfactory solution had been found. His delegation could not accept the arguments put forward by the United States; the case of Puerto Rico was clearly a colonial issue. Bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and the provisions of resolution 1514 (XV), his delegation supported the Cuban request.

15. Mr. ALARCON (Cuba) said that he strongly objected to the United States representative's assertion that the Cuban request was frivolous. It would be too generous to describe the United States colonialism as frivolous. The colonial Powers felt that they had a special right to rule over the destinies of other peoples, and they felt offended when their positions were questioned. The history of the Puerto Rican people was marked by blood and sacrifice, and his delegation could not disregard the frivolity and imperialistic arrogance of the United States representative. If it was true, as the United States representative had said, that the people of Puerto Rico had freely exercised their right to self-determination, why had the United States delegation broken its long-standing tradition of not opposing the inclusion of agenda items? If the allegations made by the United States were true, it should not be worried at the prospect of having the matter discussed in the General Assembly.

16. The contention that consideration by the General Assembly of item 104 would constitute intervention in the internal affairs of the United States was in fact an acknowledgement of the colonial nature of the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. The same excuse was consistently advanced by Portugal and South Africa in connexion with consideration by the General Assembly of questions relating to the Territories under Portuguese administration and Namibia.

17. It was untrue that the people of Puerto Rico had exercised their right to self-determination in the 1952 plebiscite. The plebiscite had been carried out under military occupation by the United States, and Puerto Rican patriots had been subject to cruel repression. The people had not been given the option of complete independence; they had simply been asked whether to approve or reject constitutional changes relating to municipal and local administration. Moreover, the United States did not con-

sider itself bound to respect the people's wishes, since Congress still had the final say concerning any change in the status of Puerto Rico. Association of a dependent Territory with an independent State must be based on self-determination and equality of rights, conditions which obviously had been lacking in the case of the Puerto Rican plebiscite.

18. General Assembly resolution 748 (VIII), which provided that the United States no longer had to transmit information on Puerto Rico under Article 73 e of the Charter, had been adopted by a very narrow majority and had in fact represented a defeat for the United States. The resolution had been adopted before the General Assembly had defined, in resolution 1514 (XV), the commitment of the United Nations to decolonization in clearer and more categorical terms. The membership of the Organization at that time had been less than half its present membership. Many States which had since won their independence would not have permitted the destiny of the Puerto Rican people to be decided without a thorough study of the situation. In ignoring reality, the United States was itself adopting a frivolous approach.

19. Mr. ISMAIL (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen) said that it was vital that the situation in Puerto Rico—which was clearly of a colonial nature—should be thoroughly explored in the General Assembly; he saw no procedural obstacle to the inclusion of item 104 in the agenda.

20. Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) said that the matter did not fall within the competence of the United Nations and that her delegation would therefore vote against its inclusion in the agenda.

21. Mr. JOHNSON (Jamaica) said that as Chairman of the Fourth Committee—to which the item would be entrusted if it was ultimately included in the agenda—he would have to abstain in the vote.

22. Mr. CREMIN (Ireland) said that his delegation had consistently taken the view that the General Assembly should be permitted freely to discuss any question related to the purposes and principles of the Charter. His delegation did not consider that the inclusion of the item under consideration would constitute a violation of Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. However, the General Committee could take into account relevant decisions taken in the past by the Assembly itself and by any other competent subordinate bodies. Moreover, the manner in which the item was formulated was also pertinent, and in the present case it could be considered tendentious. He would therefore abstain in the vote.

The Committee decided by 10 votes to 5, with 8 abstentions, to recommend to the General Assembly that item 104 should not be included in the agenda.

23. Mr. MUSTAFA (Sudan) said that, as he had been absent during the vote, he wished to place on record his delegation's support for the proposal to include the item in the agenda. The comprehensive arguments advanced by the Cuban representative were valid.

24. Mr. MWAANGA (Zambia) said that Zambia was reviewing its policy on the question of Puerto Rico and that he had not received instructions from his Government regarding the proposed agenda item. He had therefore abstained in the vote. That abstention would in no way prejudice his delegation's final position regarding the situation in Puerto Rico. Zambia's sympathy for the cause of colonial peoples was well known.

25. Mr. REYES (Philippines) said that his delegation's vote against the inclusion of the item in the agenda should not be interpreted as a denial of the right of peoples to self-determination. The Philippines, itself once a colony, had always strongly supported that right, and, after the Philippine people had voted overwhelmingly in favour of immediate and complete independence, they had worked peacefully to attain it. The people of Puerto Rico had exercised their right in free elections in 1952, and until they decided to reverse their decision it would be premature for the General Assembly to consider the matter. If the people decided to reverse themselves, the Philippines would offer them its full support in keeping with its long-standing commitment to the principle of self-determination.

26. Mr. AGUILAR (Venezuela) observed that his delegation had always upheld the competence of the General Assembly to consider such questions. His delegation's abstention in the present instance had been motivated, on the one hand, by the fact that it had abstained in the vote on General Assembly resolution 748 (VIII) and, on the other, by its belief that the title of the proposed item prejudged the substance of the issue.

27. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus) said that his delegation generally favoured the inclusion of any item in the agenda. It did not consider that the item just rejected related to a matter solely within the internal jurisdiction of the United States. It had abstained in the vote because the title of the item prejudged the issue; it would vote in favour of the inclusion of a similar item if there was evidence that the status of Puerto Rico did not reflect the wishes of the inhabitants.

28. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) said that his delegation had voted against the inclusion of the item because it believed that the United States was effectively guiding the development of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

29. Mr. PRATT (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the item's inclusion because it felt that a decision taken nearly 20 years earlier did not necessarily reflect the wishes of the people at present. Any attempt to bind the Commonwealth to that decision, even though the latter had been freely arrived at, would make a sham of the principle of decolonization. Moreover, although his delegation agreed that economic and social progress had been achieved in Puerto Rico it believed that elements of the population—even if in the minority—which were concerned at the political situation should be given an opportunity to be heard in the General Assembly.

Mr. Alarcón (Cuba) withdrew.

ITEMS 106 TO 108

30. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure, the representatives of Mongolia, Guinea, the People's Republic of the Congo and Romania had asked permission to take part in the discussion of the items.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Dugersuren (Mongolia), Mr. Touré (Guinea), Mr. Mondjo (People's Republic of the Congo) and Mr. Diaconescu (Romania) took places at the Committee table.

31. Mr. DUGERSUREN (Mongolia) said that the reasons which had prompted his delegation to propose the inclusion in the agenda of item 106 (Withdrawal of United States and all other foreign forces occupying South Korea under the flag of the United Nations) were set forth in detail in the request for the inclusion (A/8443 and Add.1). It was imperative that the item should be considered and a decision taken to withdraw all foreign forces from South Korea because the continued military occupation of that country in defiance of the will of the Korean people was the major reason for the division of Korea, constituted a threat to peace and security in Korea and the Far East as a whole, and was a growing source of international tension. The Korean people must be permitted to solve their internal problems without foreign interference. The withdrawal of foreign troops would create a climate conducive to unification through peaceful and democratic means.

32. He welcomed the recent contacts between the Red Cross Societies and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and South Korea, for they would no doubt contribute to the search for a solution to the problem. The United Nations must do all in its power to enable links to be established between North and South. The withdrawal of foreign forces would serve not only the national interests of the Korean people but also the interests of the United States itself, since, by using the United Nations flag as a cover for aggression against Korea, the United States was causing irreparable harm to the prestige of the Organization. His delegation was convinced that the United Nations had the urgent duty to give proper consideration to item 106, with the participation of both the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and South Korea, and to take a positive decision on the matter.

33. For similar reasons his delegation had joined with many others in also proposing (A/8444 and Add.1 and 2) the inclusion of item 107 (Dissolution of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea).

34. Mr. TOURE (Guinea) agreed that the question of Korea was linked with the maintenance of international peace and security; the people of Korea were arbitrarily divided, and that division was maintained under the cover of the United Nations. His delegation was very pleased to learn of the discussions that had begun between the two Red Cross Societies in Korea. The General Committee should recommend the inclusion of both item 106 and item 108 (Question of Korea: report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea) in the agenda of the twenty-sixth session so that the

Korean people, with the peaceful assistance of the United Nations, would be able to unify their country.

35. Mr. MONDJO (People's Republic of the Congo) said that his delegation supported the statements made by the representatives of Mongolia and Guinea. As a co-sponsor of the proposals for the inclusion in the agenda of items 106 and 107, his delegation would welcome consideration of the question of Korea at the twenty-sixth session; the General Assembly would then have an opportunity to invite the parties concerned to present their points of view on the peaceful unification of their country.

36. Sir Colin CROWE (United Kingdom) moved that the General Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the inclusion of the three items on Korea in the provisional agenda of the twenty-seventh session. He was proposing that consideration of the items should be deferred in view of a very important new development, namely, the talks which had recently begun between the two Red Cross Societies in Korea. That event was without precedent in the history of the Korean question. It was hoped that the talks would be fruitful and that they would mark the first step towards a solution of the problem. In those circumstances, his delegation believed that the General Assembly would wish to await further developments before resuming consideration of the items so as not to hinder the progress of the talks.

37. Mr. NAKAGAWA (Japan) supported the United Kingdom proposal to defer consideration of the items. That would be a prudent course of action in view of the recent developments in Korea. His delegation believed that the preliminary talks that had begun on the problem of divided families augured well for further relaxation of tension in the Korean peninsula. Although it was too early to anticipate the outcome of the talks, his delegation earnestly hoped that they would meet with success, and felt that further acrimonious debates on the question of Korea would in no way contribute to that success. If progress was made in dealing with the humanitarian aspect of the problem before the twenty-seventh session, the atmosphere would be greatly improved for discussion of the question of Korea at that time.

38. Mr. SZARKA (Hungary) said that the United Kingdom motion to postpone consideration of items 106 to 108 until the twenty-seventh session was no cause for surprise. It was motivated not by considerations of economy of time or by a desire to avoid political recriminations but solely by certain well-defined political considerations, the goal being to eliminate whatever slight control the General Assembly had over the intolerable foreign intervention taking place in Korea in the name of the United Nations. It was proposed that the General Assembly should henceforth not even discuss actions taken in the name of the Organization.

39. The debates in the General Assembly had for some years proved to be increasingly damaging to the United States. They had demonstrated clearly that the so-called United Nations force had absolutely no connexion with the United Nations and was in fact a United States force—under United States command and financed by the United States Government. The so-called United Nations force was very reticent about informing the General Assembly concerning

its activities and reported to the Secretary-General only when it wished to stress that its continued presence in Korea was essential—essential, that is to say, to the United States. The United Nations was not informed of any matter of substance: for example, who the commanders of the force were, how the troops were composed and how they were financed. To be sure, some information could be gathered from the United States press, but nothing could be learnt from United Nations documents. Was it therefore surprising that the United States wanted to end the debates?

40. The General Committee had noted that the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea showed remarkable modesty in not asking that its report should be discussed by the General Assembly unless delegations initiated a discussion of the question of Korea (see A/8445); the General Committee was thus being asked to refer in its report to a document which its members had not even read. The Commission wished to continue to operate in the dark—to remain a United Nations organ while at the same time providing the United Nations with as little information as possible about its activities. The reason was clear: the United States wished to continue its military and diplomatic intervention in the affairs of the Korean people.

41. In co-sponsoring the proposals for the inclusion of items 106 and 107, his delegation hoped for a discussion which would eliminate the need for any further consideration of the matter in the United Nations.

42. The first contact between the two Red Cross Societies of Korea, initiated by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, was a promising event. That Government had for years advocated contacts at different levels between North and South. Under pressure from international and domestic public opinion, South Korea had been obliged to modify its intransigent position.

43. His delegation strongly opposed deferment of the items.

44. Mr. LONGERSTAEY (Belgium) said that he supported the United Kingdom proposal, not only for the reasons given by the United Kingdom representative but also because of the inclusion in the agenda of a number of new and important items, such as item 100 on the preparation of an international treaty concerning the Moon and item 109 on a world disarmament conference.

45. The CHAIRMAN announced that the representative of Saudi Arabia had requested permission to address the Committee on the items relating to Korea. While rule 43 of the rules of procedure was not applicable in the present instance, he would assume that in the absence of any

objection the representative of Saudi Arabia was permitted to speak.

It was so decided.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Baroody (Saudi Arabia) took a place at the Committee table.

46. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) said that the United Nations was still divided on the perennial question of Korea. Year after year, the big Powers and their clients tackled that issue. The debates in the First Committee over the past 18 years or so had become an exercise in futility. Both the small nations and the big Powers were paying the price of a dire mistake—the partition of Korea on the basis of ideology. The big Powers acted on the premise that ideology transcended ethnology. They had divided Germany, Palestine and later Viet-Nam, learning nothing from the blunders committed at the Paris Peace Conference of 1918-1919.

47. He recalled that in 1966 he had called the bluff of the big Powers which, in their own national self-interest, opposed unification of Korea. He had been requested by Mr. Benites, Chairman of the First Committee at that time, to withdraw his draft resolution. The big Powers, it had seemed, were not ready for unification.

48. Was there anything to be gained from listening to the diatribes launched by one Power against another at a time when even the future status of the People's Republic of China was uncertain? In the circumstances, he supported the proposal of the United Kingdom representative, which merited serious consideration by the General Committee. The countries concerned should be given time to work out something constructive for consideration at the twenty-seventh session.

49. Mr. BENITES (Ecuador), exercising his right of reply, said that the representative of Saudi Arabia should not attribute to him words that he had not uttered. He rejected the implication that he had tried to influence anyone to change his views.

50. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) said that he wished to apologize for not having been more explicit. Mr. Benites had made his request in order to expedite the work of the First Committee, not because he was partial to one point of view. He had accordingly complied with that request. Certain other members had at that time expressed to him their view that the big Powers were not prepared to see Korea reunited, and Mr. Benites had said that that was also his impression; however, that did not mean that Mr. Benites himself shared the views of the big Powers on the question of Korea.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.