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MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Corneliu MANESCU (Romania).

Adoption of the agenda of the twenty-second session and allocation of items: memorandum by the Secretary-General (continued) (A/BUR/168 and Corr.1, A/BUR/168/Add.1-3)

REQUESTS FOR THE INCLUSION OF TWO ADDITIONAL ITEMS IN THE AGENDA: ITEMS PROPOSED BY THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS (A/6833 AND CORR.1, A/6834)

1. Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that in order to reduce international tension the General Assembly must give urgent consideration to two important questions: the need to expedite the drafting of a definition of aggression in the light of the present international situation (A/6833 and Corr.1) and the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons (A/6834). In his statement to the General Assembly on 22 September 1967 (1563rd plenary meeting), Mr. Gromyko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, had already drawn attention to the urgent need for a solution to those questions. The most important task of the United Nations was to maintain peace and prevent aggression. Of late, there had been increasing instances of the use of armed force to commit acts of aggression against sovereign States and to threaten the independence of various countries. Those acts were causing grave concern among peoples and increasing the danger of the outbreak of a new world conflict. In conjunction with the vigorous condemnation of aggression, the formulation of a definition of aggression could make an important contribution to the cause of peace. Taking advantage of the absence of a definition of aggression, certain States were resorting to armed force in violation of the United Nations Charter, using various pretexts in an effort to cover up their aggressive actions. For that reason a definition of aggression would contribute greatly to the strengthening of peace. His Government hoped that at the twenty-second session the General Assembly, conscious of its responsibilities for the future of mankind, would give the question very serious consideration.

2. The conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons would contribute substantially towards strengthening the peace and security of peoples and removing the threat of nuclear war. His Government appealed to all States Members of the United Nations to consider that question. It had submitted to the General Assembly, together with the request for the inclusion of the item in the agenda, a draft convention on the question (A/6834) and was convinced that a clear decision in favour of the conclusion of such a convention would serve the cause of peace and the relaxation of international tension.

3. In view of the political importance of those questions, the USSR considered that they should be allocated to the First Committee, which was responsible for dealing with the main current problems relating to peace. His delegation hoped that the other delegations would support that proposal.

4. Mr. BENITES (Ecuador) endorsed the proposal of the USSR representative. The definition of aggression was a very important question which had defied solution for almost seventeen years. It had first appeared as item 72 of the agenda of the General Assembly at its fifth session, but neither the First Committee nor the International Law Commission, to which it had been referred under General Assembly resolution 378 B (V) of 17 November 1950, had been able to solve it. No conclusion had yet been reached in April 1967, and there was unfortunately little hope that anything would be accomplished at the present session. Nevertheless, his delegation had from the outset steadfastly supported the inclusion of the question of the definition of aggression in the agenda, since that definition would provide both a guide for the Security Council and a basic principle for a solution of the general problem of aggression.

5. With regard to the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, no reasons and figures were needed to show the urgent and alarming nature of the question of the use of those weapons. It was essential that full attention should be devoted to that problem.

6. His delegation therefore supported the inclusion in the agenda of the two items proposed by the USSR.

7. Mr. TOMEH (Syria) considered that the two items proposed by the USSR should be included in the agenda. The definition of aggression was of great importance, and since 1950 Syria had associated itself with the efforts made to formulate such a definition. That was not mere coincidence: Syria's present and past history was unfortunately marked by the numerous aggressions which that country had suffered. The definition of aggression, which came under the head-

ing of the definition of human rights, was not a theoretical question but a practical matter which had a bearing on the destiny of countries, and particularly on that of Syria. In that connexion attention should be drawn to the recent statement by the Prime Minister of Israel, to the effect that two occupied Arab areas were to be settled by Israelis. Aggression was not an abstract problem, and the aggressors did not even seek to dissimulate the fact that they were occupying territories taken by armed force. In particular, it was to the advantage of small States not only to define the concept of aggression clearly and without delay but also to identify the victim of aggression and the aggressor in order to eliminate any possible confusion.

8. His delegation also supported inclusion in the agenda of the second item proposed by the USSR (A/6834).

The General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the inclusion in the agenda of the item entitled "Need to expedite the drafting of a definition of aggression in the light of the present international situation" and the item entitled "Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons".

9. Mr. BUFFUM (United States of America) felt that the question of the definition of aggression should be considered by the Sixth Committee and not the First Committee. The Sixth Committee, and more particularly the Special Committee on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, were responsible for detailed consideration of very technical questions and had already performed excellent work by considering certain principles of international law which

were closely related to the definition of aggression. His delegation therefore formally proposed that the question of the definition of aggression should be allocated to the Sixth Committee.

10. Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought it was obvious that the question of the definition of aggression should be considered by the First Committee. A political rather than a legal decision was involved, although that did not mean, of course, that legal experts could not participate in the consideration of certain aspects of the problem. The wording of the proposed item specified that a definition was to be drafted "in the light of the present international situation", and that implied an analysis of current political factors, which was the task of the First Committee. His delegation had no objection to the Sixth Committee participating in the definition of aggression, but that definition should be worked out primarily at the political level. It should be borne in mind that originally the item had been allocated to the First Committee; furthermore, as the Sixth Committee had reached no conclusion, it was logical to seek other ways of solving the problem. With regard to the Special Committee on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, its functions were clearly defined in its terms of reference, which did not include consideration of the definition of aggression.

11. His delegation was opposed, at the present stage, to allocating the question of the definition of aggression to the Sixth Committee and it urged the item should be considered by the First Committee or by the General Assembly in plenary meetings.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.