

United Nations GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

Official Records



FIRST COMMITTEE, 1472nd
MEETING

Friday, 2 December 1966,
at 8.30 p.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Organization of work (continued)</i>	
<i>Question raised by the representative of Guinea concerning a draft resolution submitted under agenda items 93 and 31 (continued)</i>	281

Chairman: Mr. Leopoldo BENITES (Ecuador).

Organization of work (continued)

QUESTION RAISED BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF GUINEA CONCERNING A DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED UNDER AGENDA ITEMS 93 AND 31 (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that he would call first on the Israel representative, who had asked to explain his vote at the preceding meeting, and then on representatives who had been unable to exercise their right of reply at the preceding meeting.

2. Mr. RAFAEL (Israel) said that he had abstained in the vote on the motion for adjournment which had ended the 1471st meeting because he had felt that at that stage of the Committee's work such a motion had not been receivable. The Committee had been operating under rule 129 of the rules of procedure, since the Chairman had announced, at the 1470th meeting, the beginning of the voting on the applicability of rule 124 to the vote taken on the Guinean proposal. The same argument had been raised by the Guinean representative at the 1470th meeting against the motion by the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for adjournment of the meeting at a time when the Committee was preparing to vote on the applicability of rule 124. Yet it had been the Guinean representative himself who had later called—successfully—for adjournment of the meeting under article 119 at a time when the Committee had not yet taken a vote. No doubt the decision had been the best under the circumstances, but his delegation seriously wondered whether the procedure adopted at the 1470th meeting and repeated at the 1471st meeting was in keeping with the rules of procedure. The Committee had been in a similar situation earlier in the 1470th meeting, when it had been engaged in a procedural debate before voting on the Guinean representative's proposal that the Committee should take up draft resolution A/C.1/L.383 and Add.1-3, and at that time the Chairman had courteously but firmly refused to receive the motion for adjournment made by the Ugandan representative and supported by the Israel representative. The two representatives had readily accepted the Chairman's decision, being aware, as

they had themselves indicated, that a motion under rule 119 could be introduced only after proceedings under rule 129 had been discontinued.

3. So far as his delegation knew, the Chairman had not, at any time during the 1470th and 1471st meetings of the Committee, withdrawn his announcement under rule 129 that the voting had begun. For that reason, his delegation was convinced that under the circumstances a motion for adjournment had been neither permissible nor receivable.

4. Mr. SALIM (United Republic of Tanzania) wished to add some comments to the statement the Guinean representative had made at the 1471st meeting in exercising the right of reply on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/L.383/Rev.1. The United States representative, throughout his statement at the 1471st meeting, had referred to the proposal before the Committee as a Soviet proposal. However, that draft resolution, which had given rise to the present interminable procedural debate, had been sponsored by a number of non-aligned delegations, including his own, and the Guinean representative's proposal at the 1470th meeting had been supported by the Tanzanian delegation, among others. In supporting that proposal, his delegation had not intended to obstruct the Committee's work or to serve the interests of anyone but had simply tried honestly and sincerely to find a solution to the problem of Korea. His delegation strongly objected to any attempt to misinterpret its motives. As a sovereign nation, the United Republic of Tanzania had the right to its own opinion, which was not necessarily that of others, but it would be regrettable if its attitude were interpreted as serving the interests of any particular Power. It had never allowed and would never allow itself to be used by any Power, even though it was aware of the sacrifices and dangers involved in such a policy of non-alignment. He emphasized that both his delegation and the other sponsors of the draft resolution considered their proposal a simple procedural motion and deplored the unnecessary debate it had caused. He hoped that the Committee would see the light and respect the vote taken at the 1470th meeting by which it had pronounced itself, at least by a simple majority, in favour of considering the draft resolution.

5. Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Washington diplomats had obviously had a definite purpose in embarking on the procedural wrangle which had now been going on for more than one meeting. In reply to the United States representative's remarks at the 1471st meeting concerning the Soviet Union, he said that it was not the Soviet Union which had proposed taking up the question of inviting the representatives of the Democratic People's

Republic of Korea and of South Korea. That proposal had been made by the Guinean representative and supported by the representatives of Saudi Arabia, Cambodia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Hungary, among others. The Soviet Union was not even a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/L.383/Rev.1, although it fully supported its substance.

6. At the present meeting the Guinean and Tanzanian representatives had expressed justifiable indignation at the United States representative's attacks. It should be recalled that the Guinean representative, when raising the question, had said that he was submitting his proposal without prejudging the question of priority, and the Tanzanian representative had stated that the question was a purely procedural one which did not affect the substance of the problem. It was only after the New Zealand representative's hostile words that an element of animosity had been introduced into the debate and that attacks had been made against independent sovereign States. The essence of the question, however, was very clear: no one intended to change the order in which the agenda items would be considered and no one wished to challenge the Committee's decisions. The purpose was merely to settle a procedural aspect of a question which would be considered later, to create favourable conditions for that consideration and to right a past injustice.

7. At its 1470th meeting the First Committee had adopted by majority vote a completely correct decision on a question which had nothing to do with modifying earlier decisions. The Committee had already made some procedural changes in the consideration of various items of its agenda and had interrupted the discussion of some questions and returned to them later. It was regrettable that in the present case the Committee had to waste valuable time in discussing a procedural point and listening to long digressions by the United States representative. The latter had taken it upon himself to defend the rules of procedure, order and objectivity. Actually, the United States position was by no means dictated by objectivity or a spirit of justice, but was motivated by the political attitude of Washington, which was endeavouring to impose a point of view that would prevent the representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from being invited to the Committee. In spite of the United States representative's statements, everyone realized that Washington still held to its policy of discrimination against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, since the United States was again endeavouring to delay the matter of inviting that country's representatives. The Government of an independent, sovereign country must not be presented with an ultimatum stating that it must appear within a few hours at United Nations Headquarters to take part in a debate. Was it not reasonable to decide the question of an invitation early enough to allow the party concerned to arrange its trip and study the situation and the question to be discussed?

8. It should be noted, on the other hand, that his delegation had not deviated from its agreed position and had not failed to fulfil its obligations. It had indeed said that the question of Korea should be considered after agenda item 96. That position, however, had concerned the substance of the question

while the present discussion concerned the procedure for inviting the parties involved. There was therefore no contradiction in the Soviet Union's position.

9. The United States delegation's statement that it would ask priority for its own draft resolution was completely contrary to the rules of procedure. The draft had not even been submitted and no one knew what it dealt with. How could the United States representative now talk of priority for it? The United States action amounted to an attempt at intimidation. However, the members of the Committee were representatives of sovereign States, and the United States could not dictate to them. It was precisely the will of those sovereign States that had produced the only just and equitable decision, which the United States diplomats and those serving them were now trying to reverse.

10. The Soviet Union asked the members of the First Committee to support the African and Asian countries' proposal and confirm the decision adopted at the 1470th meeting.

11. Mr. CHURCH (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation had in no way intended to imply any connexion between the purposes of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/L.383/Rev.1 and the position taken by any other Power, whether it were the Soviet Union or the United States. The question was clear: it was whether or not rule 124 governed the vote the Committee had taken at the 1470th meeting. Before the actual ballot, the Ivory Coast representative had already raised the question of the majority which would be required, and the Committee had decided to consider the applicability of rule 124 once the vote had been taken.

12. At the 1470th meeting, the Soviet representative had said that the records of the United Nations showed such a thing to be unprecedented. He had therefore consulted the records and at the 1471st meeting he had related what they disclosed. He had tried to indicate that precedents made it quite obvious that, through the years, rule 124 had been considered applicable in comparable situations. That had not been an attempt on the part of the United States to dictate to the Committee. The United States was more than willing to abide by any decision the Committee took, but thought it pertinent to place before the Committee the numerous facts and precedents indicating the applicability of rule 124 in situations of the kind in question.

13. He had already demonstrated the willingness of the Soviet Union to choose its position on the issue in question to suit its political objectives of the moment. So far as precedents were concerned, there had already been a discussion in the General Assembly during which the Soviet representative had urged the application of rule 124. At the tenth session the United States had urged that balloting for the Security Council should be interrupted and that the Assembly should proceed with the elections to the Economic and Social Council and to the Trusteeship Council. Mr. Kuznetsov, the Soviet representative, had agreed to the postponement of the Security Council elections but opposed the proposal to bring forward the elections to the two other organs. He had drawn attention, in connexion with the proposed departure

from the previously established order for the consideration of the items, to the applicability of rule 83 of the General Assembly's rules of procedure, which was, of course, identical with rule 124, which applied to the Main Committees.^{1/}

14. The question before the Committee concerned the applicability of rule 124, and the precedents therefore showed that the position the Soviet Union had taken with regard to such matters on other occasions was not consistent with its present attitude.

15. His delegation was prepared to consider all the items on the agenda, including the Korean item, but wished to follow precedent and to respect a procedure which enabled the Committee to work in an orderly fashion. He hoped that, mindful of the precedents, the Committee would apply rule 124 in the present case and then consider the remaining items in the appropriate order.

16. Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that analogies and precedents were a very dangerous way of defending a position. The occasion to which the United States representative had referred did nothing to prove his point, since the situation, the matters discussed and the reasons had been different. The analogies and precedents the United States representative had quoted were not applicable to the present situation, in which the Committee was considering a completely different matter in an entirely different context. Whereas, in the United States representative's example, there had been some element of substantive discussion, the present case was purely procedural. One thing was clear: United States representatives did not suit their actions to their words; while appealing to the Committee to give serious consideration to the matters before it, they themselves attempted to side-track it into a maze of procedural questions.

17. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico), speaking on a point of order, formally moved the suspension of the meeting until 3 p.m. on Monday, 5 December. He did so after consulting with both sides and was therefore sure that his proposal would prejudice the interests of neither.

18. However, since the Guinean representative, who was the spokesman for the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/L.383/Rev.1, was on the list of speakers for the current meeting, the Committee should naturally hear him before the motion to suspend the meeting became effective.

19. Mr. BARODY (Saudi Arabia), speaking on a point of order, said that exceptions should not be made to rules. There were, he understood, four names on the list of speakers, and it would be not only discriminatory but irregular and unprecedented to allow one representative to speak while denying others the right to do so.

20. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that, at the beginning of the meeting, he had announced his intention of calling on representatives who had expressed a desire to exercise their right of reply. That was why the Committee had heard the representatives of the United Republic of Tanzania, the Soviet Union

and the United States. The Mexican representative had then moved the application of rule 119, without apparently wishing to prejudice the interests of representatives who had asked to speak in exercise of their right of reply.

21. Mr. BARODY (Saudi Arabia) said that in that case he would like to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

22. Mr. ACHKAR (Guinea), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, assured the Israel representative that, at the 1470th meeting, his delegation had appealed to the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo not to press his motion, not because it opposed the adjournment, but because it thought that the Legal Counsel would have been in a difficult position if invited to give his views on a highly political question with respect to which the Committee was attempting to interpret the rules of procedure in its own way.

23. He did not intend to oppose the Mexican motion but felt that he should briefly acquaint the Committee with the views of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/L.383/Rev.1.

24. The legal interpretations the United States representative had given appeared to disregard the courtesy and co-operation prevailing among delegations. The order in which matters were considered was drawn up somewhat informally. When members agreed on a working programme, they allowed for the possibility that important events might occur which would entail a change of plan, and when such events did occur, they usually agreed to deal with urgent topics and revert subsequently to whatever was being considered or on the point of being considered. As the Saudi Arabian representative had said, the way in which the Committee dealt with the question of extending an invitation to the two Koreas would make it apparent whether or not it regarded such an invitation seriously. If the invitation were postponed until the end of the following week, for example, the representatives of the two Koreas would have only three days left in which to address the Committee. Irrespective of any rules or legal niceties, common sense demanded that the Committee should invite the Korean representatives without further delay if it intended to hear them at all. By putting off a matter of such great urgency, the Committee would enable the opponents of his proposal to gain the time they wanted.

25. Even if it decided to deal with draft resolution A/C.1/L.383/Rev.1 at its meeting on Monday, 5 December, it would be able to reach a decision only after a long discussion, since the United States representative was proposing to submit another draft resolution. It would be Tuesday or Wednesday at the earliest before the Committee invited the North Koreans, who were almost at the other end of the world. That would be a most deplorable situation, which would make the decision taken at the Committee's 1470th meeting meaningless.

26. He therefore appealed to the Committee to put an end at its next meeting to a procedural discussion which might otherwise go on until the end of the session. It must be made clear whether or not the Committee really wanted to hear the two parties directly

^{1/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Tenth Session, Plenary Meetings, 535th meeting, paras. 25 and 26.

concerned. If it did, the invitation should be issued as quickly as possible, and unconditionally. If, however, the Committee still did not manage to reach a decision at its next meeting, he hoped that the Chairman might be able to suggest other acceptable methods which would enable the Committee to put an end to the procedural discussion.

27. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia), exercising the right of reply, said that some representatives had referred to his statements, at the previous session and at the current session, on the question of inviting the representatives of North and South Korea. He wished to clarify certain points and thereby help the Committee to find a solution that would enable it to put an end to the procedural debate. Judging from the statements that had been made, the differences that were beginning to emerge between the United States and the USSR were not due to any misinterpretation of the rules of procedure. They derived from motives which the two countries chose not to reveal. The smaller countries were reluctant to take sides for fear that they might be drawn into one bloc or another and labelled as satellites. So far, the delegations of the smaller countries had had the opportunity of hearing the representatives of South Korea. They should now have an opportunity to listen to the other side, North Korea.

28. At the beginning of the session, the Saudi Arabian delegation had drawn the Committee's attention (1428th meeting) to the advisability of arranging for the question of Korea to be discussed at an earlier date than that subsequently set by the Chairman in agreement with the representatives of the United States and the USSR. What was the Committee to do now? Would it resume the procedural wrangle at its next meeting and postpone consideration of the whole question until two days before the session ended? If it did, it would be the laughing-stock of world public opinion. It would therefore do better to follow the example of other Committees. For example, the Fourth Committee, when faced with a deadlock during the current session,

had laid aside the question of Aden and started to discuss Territories under Portuguese administration. Once that question had been dealt with, it had returned to the question of Aden. Encountering another deadlock, it had taken up the question of Fiji. After concluding the discussion on that item, it had returned to the question of Aden. No delegation had objected to that procedure.

29. He therefore proposed that the First Committee should alternate the discussions, devoting two meetings in turn to the item on non-intervention (agenda item 96) and to the question of Korea. The sponsors of the procedural draft resolution would no doubt be willing to drop the question of Korea for the item on non-intervention as soon as the Committee had voted on their text. The representatives of the two Koreas would thus have time to prepare for participation in the Committee's discussion which directly concerned them.

30. If that solution proved unacceptable, the Saudi Arabian delegation would propose another solution by submitting a draft resolution at the next meeting. It would be a detached draft resolution, since Saudi Arabia had no special interest in either North or South Korea.

31. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico), speaking on a point of order, moved the adjournment rather than the suspension of the meeting. Otherwise the Secretariat might find it difficult to circulate the verbatim record of the discussions that had just taken place.

32. The CHAIRMAN said that, under rule 119 of the rules of procedure, motions for adjournment should be put to the vote immediately, without debate.

33. If there was no objection, he would take it that the motion for adjournment of the meeting was adopted.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.55 p.m.