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Chairman: Mr. Francisco URRUTIA (Colombia).

AGENDA ITEM 19

Methods which might be used to maintain and strengthen international peace and security in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the Charter: report of the Collective Measures Committee (A/2713, A/C.1/L.104)

1. Mr. PEREZ PEREZ (Venezuela) said that, in order to achieve co-ordinated action, the Collective Measures Committee had had not only to try to reconcile divergent points of view regarding the structure of the system and the manner in which it should function, but also to take into account considerations of a domestic nature which were characteristic of every country that wished to participate in the common effort. However, he could say with satisfaction that the two-fold task had been carried out; the result was the third report of the Collective Measures Committee (A/2713) now under discussion.

2. Mr. Pérez Pérez recalled that the Collective Measures Committee had been established under General Assembly resolution 377 (V), that it had presented reports to two previous sessions, and that, under resolution 703 (VII) of 17 March 1953, the Assembly had directed the Committee to continue its efforts and "to report to the Security Council and to the General Assembly not later than the ninth session of the Assembly".

3. The Venezuelan delegation had collaborated in the drafting of the report now before the First Committee, as it wished to take part in reaffirming the principles contained therein.

4. The Collective Measures Committee had been called upon to study ways and means of strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to maintain international peace. During the current year, it had formulated a series of general principles governing collective action. The Committee had been very careful in drafting them because, although it was true that collective action required the greatest possible co-operation, it was clear that the degree of co-operation could not be the same in all cases and for all States, and the Committee had had to take into account, therefore, the possibilities of each State, as well as its constitutional processes.

5. Another very important aspect of the report was the reference to the action of regional organizations. Those organizations were governed by agreements which must, of course, be compatible with the Charter, but which nevertheless had their own particular regional characteristics. That was true, for instance, of the Organization of American States.

6. In preparing and drafting the current report, the members of the Collective Measures Committee had shown a true and encouraging spirit of co-operation, and the representative of Venezuela felt that the work of the Committee should be continued for another term.

7. Mr. JOHNSON (Canada) said that without wanting to belittle the importance of the present item, he thought that it could reasonably be disposed of quickly and without controversy. The fact was that nothing was being proposed at the current session which had not been amply discussed and approved by the great majority at previous sessions. Indeed, a number of the points which had given rise to debate at past sessions had not been included either in the twelve-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.104) or in the report of the Collective Measures Committee on which the draft resolution was based.

8. In comparing the third report of the Collective Measures Committee with the first (A/1891) and second (A/2215), it would be obvious that it was nothing more than a convenient summary of the least controversial highlights of previous Committee reports and General Assembly resolutions on the subject. Those previous reports and resolutions constituted a substantial compilation of material, consisting of numerous technical suggestions as well as of many recommendations concerning collective measures of a political, economic, financial and military nature. Since the last report in 1952, there had been a danger that the earlier and thorough work of the Committee might be forgotten. It was therefore necessary to extract from the mass of existing material on the subject the essential features of collective action. That was what the Collective Measures Committee had done in its report, and the purpose of the joint draft resolution was to seek Assembly approval for that convenient summary of United Nations doctrine on collective measures.

9. As the report stated, it was intended merely to serve as a guide to the United Nations in undertaking collective measures. Every Member was left free to choose the way in which it applied those principles. No one would contend that it was possible in the present state of the world to undertake, on a universal basis, extensive commitments which would be binding in the event of hypothetical contingencies. On a regional basis, some states had gone a good deal further, but always in accordance with the principles of the Charter. As was recognized in the report, one of the most important questions to be faced was the inter-relationship between regional agreements and arrangements and

the universal objectives of the United Nations collective security system.

10. The Canadian delegation believed that in order to keep alive the principles of United Nations collective security and to pursue such further studies as the First Committee might deem appropriate, in accordance with past directives of the Assembly, the Collective Measures Committee should be continued.

11. Mr. SERRANO (Philippines) observed that the third report of the Collective Measures Committee did not contain any new principles and merely restated recognized principles. Although in some respects those principles did not go as far as his delegation would have wished, nevertheless it endorsed them wholeheartedly as representing the consensus of the views of the Members of the United Nations expressed at previous sessions of the General Assembly.

12. It was the considered opinion of the Philippine Government that the Collective Measures Committee should continue in being. It should be enabled, in the first place, to further its studies, perfect the machinery it had so far devised and, in that connexion, examine the important role that regional arrangements had to play as an integral part of the United Nations collective security system. In the second place, the Committee should be made available at all times for consultation and assistance in the implementation of the principles of collective security, should the occasion arise.

13. Mr. SOHLMAN (Sweden) observed that in the report now before the Committee certain recommendations were made on the assumption of a decision by the Security Council or a recommendation by the General Assembly. As no distinction was made, however, between the two cases, his delegation wished to reaffirm the view which the Swedish Government had advanced at previous sessions, namely, that the legal position of a Member State was quite different in the case of a decision by the Security Council to apply sanctions, on the one hand, and of a recommendation by the General Assembly on the other. Only if the Security Council, acting under Articles 41 or 42 of the Charter, took a formal decision to such effect, was there an obligation for Member States to comply with that decision. In case a recommendation to the same effect was adopted by a two-thirds majority of the Assembly, it was for the individual Member State to decide whether or not to follow the recommendation.

14. As to the technical results accomplished by the Committee, the Swedish Government wished to reserve its definite attitude until the details of the measures recommended had been more fully studied.

15. The guiding idea set out in the report, namely, that the greatest possible number of States should make effective and prompt contributions to the collective effort, seemed to be of fundamental importance, the whole concept of any general security organization being of necessity based on such ground. In the present situation, when most nations were seeking the solution of their security problems in alliances more strictly organized than ever before in peace time, the Swedish delegation was pleased to note that the Collective Measures Committee had continued its work on the basis of the principle of general collective security as laid down in the Charter, and that it had thus also taken into account the special position and interest of each Member State.

16. Mr. Sohlman felt that a fuller understanding of the practical importance of the work done by the Committee in drawing up plans for the application of some of the main principles of the United Nations would greatly facilitate the fruitful pursuit of its activities. New possibilities would thereby be opened for co-operation among all Member States in the implementation of a general security system, as foreseen by the authors of the Charter.

17. Mr. VON BALLUSECK (Netherlands) gave a brief survey of the history of establishment of the Collective Measures Committee. The third report of the Committee, he said, was merely a set of principles for collective action which should guide the Members of the United Nations whenever collective action to maintain or restore international peace and security was decided upon by the appropriate organs of the United Nations. After enumerating those principles, Mr. von Balluseck said that it was impossible to lay down beforehand hard and fast rules which would be binding on every State with regard to an unknown possibility in an unknown future. The practical application of the principle of collective action against aggression and the choice of the most appropriate means of resistance had to be decided on an *ad hoc* basis, and it was clear that each individual State would want to determine for itself what and how it could contribute.

18. The Netherlands delegation considered it useful that systematic thought should continue to be given to the organization of collective action so that, when the necessity arose, a realistic choice could be made between the various possibilities enumerated in previous reports or which might emerge from further study. For those reasons, it thought that it would be wise to continue the Collective Measures Committee in being, in one form or another, with flexible terms of reference, so that it might give the United Nations, on a stand-by basis, the benefit of further examination of the problems involved. The Netherlands delegation would therefore vote in favour of the twelve-Power draft resolution.

19. Sir Percy SPENDER (Australia) stated that the current debate on collective security was in a way complementary to the earlier debate in the First Committee on the disarmament question. Its purpose was to consider the work which had been done so far, and to plan how the United Nations could employ the resources at its disposal should it again have to intervene against aggression. The consideration of those necessary precautions was not a contradiction of the work which the United Nations was doing on disarmament.

20. Sir Percy then recalled the debates at the fifth session of the General Assembly, in 1950, when resolution 377 (V), on "Uniting for peace", was adopted, one of its parts establishing the Collective Measures Committee. The main work of the Committee was contained in its two previous reports. At the time of the discussion of those reports, the Australian delegation had stated the attitude of its Government in detail; it was not necessary to do so again. There were, however, two points that he wished to stress once more.

21. The Australian Government considered that the reports of the Collective Measures Committee should be looked upon not only as handbooks containing principles which in general terms should be supported by all Members of the United Nations, but also as consisting of explanations of the various techniques which

were available to the United Nations in ensuring that collective security was maintained and the principles of the Charter upheld. Thus they did not represent a body of any new United Nations doctrine, nor did their acceptance by the General Assembly and the Security Council imply any commitment by those bodies or by Member States to make use of any particular measures in particular circumstances. The reports of the Collective Measures Committee were studies, no more and no less, of the various things which the United Nations could do to maintain collective security. They represented an attempt to outline all the forms of sanctions to which any aggressor might be subjected, and all forms of assistance which any country which had been the victim of aggression might need. It was at the very least a wise precaution that those analyses of practical measures should be ready to hand for use in a time of emergency.

22. Secondly, the measures outlined in the studies of the Collective Measures Committee were United Nations measures in the fullest sense of the term. They were not designed for use against any particular State or group of States, and no particular set of circumstances calling for their application had been envisaged when the reports were being drawn up.

23. Referring to the joint working paper submitted to the Collective Measures Committee on 19 August 1954 by the delegations of the Philippines and the United States (A/AC.43/L.5/Rev.1), Sir Percy said that his delegation agreed entirely with the emphasis laid in that paper on the importance of helping to provide logistic support to States which desired to

contribute forces to United Nations collective measures, but which were unable to provide adequately for the equipment, training or supplying of such forces from their own resources. The burden of United Nations collective measures should be spread as equitably and widely as possible, and should not rest almost exclusively on one State or a very small number of States. The burden of providing United Nations assistance for victims of aggression should also be shared in accordance with the same ideal.

24. With regard to the joint draft resolution (A/C.1/L.104) of which the Australian delegation was a co-sponsor, and with regard, in particular, to operative paragraph 2, which directed the Collective Measures Committee to remain in a position to pursue such further studies as it might deem desirable, Sir Percy pointed out that it was possible that circumstances might arise in which further studies might urgently be needed. Even if no such circumstances should arise, any Member of the United Nations which felt that some aspects of the problem of collective security needed further study might bring the matter to the attention of the Collective Measures Committee, which would in that case be able to give the particular problem its attention. Those two factors emphasized the importance of preserving for future use the experience which the present members of the Collective Measures Committee had gained. The Australian delegation had therefore suggested the continuation of the Collective Measures Committee with the same membership as before.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.