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ASSEMBLY**

EIGHTEENTH SESSION

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**THIRD COMMITTEE, 1212th
MEETING**

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at 3.5 p.m.

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Chairman: Mr. Humberto DIAZ CASANUEVA
(Chile).

Statement by the Chairman

1. The CHAIRMAN thanked the Third Committee for electing him to the office of Chairman and stated that, having participated in the Committee's work for several years, he was more than ever convinced that the matters it dealt with were of the highest importance for all the people of the world. Man was as much concerned with the recognition of his intrinsic value as a human being as he was with material benefits. The Committee endeavoured to guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms, social well-being and equality of opportunity to all. It tried to discover the means of improving the lot of the millions of people who still suffered from poverty, ignorance and lack of rights.

2. The Committee's agenda for the eighteenth session was both varied and heavy. It required of members not only the ability to cope with questions in diverse fields, but a certain amount of discipline as well. If the agenda was to be successfully completed, the Committee's time must be spent carefully and well, and that called for a maximum of co-operation. He hoped, in that connexion, that delegations would give careful attention to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Improvement of the Methods of Work of the General Assembly (A/5423).

3. After briefly reviewing the main issues with which the Committee was to deal at the current session—social development, human rights, racial discrimination, freedom of information—he stressed that the Committee's programme was in fact dedicated to a single aim: the betterment of man and of the society in which he lived. He was fully confident that the Committee, as in past years, would work enthusiastically, effectively and harmoniously towards that end.

Election of the Vice-Chairman

4. Mr. HACENE (Algeria) nominated Mr. Ashraf Ghorbal (United Arab Republic) as Vice-Chairman and remarked that Mr. Ghorbal's training, ability and experience fully qualified him to fill that office.

5. Mr. ZULOAGA (Venezuela) seconded the nomination.

6. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should suspend the application of rule 105 of the rules of procedure, requiring election by secret ballot, and elect its Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Mr. Ghorbal (United Arab Republic) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

7. Mr. YAPOU (Israel) asked that his delegation should be considered to have abstained.

Election of the Rapporteur

8. Mrs. VILLGRATTNER (Austria) nominated Mrs. Refslund Thomsen (Denmark) as Rapporteur. Mrs. Refslund Thomsen had exceptionally wide experience of the matters with which the Committee dealt.

9. Mrs. MANTZOULINOS (Greece) seconded the nomination.

Mrs. Refslund Thomsen (Denmark) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

Organization of work (A/C.3/596 and Corr.1,
A/C.3/L.1061)

10. The CHAIRMAN, referring to his note regarding the Committee's agenda (A/C.3/L.1061), said that in the absence of objection he would take it that the Committee agreed to complete its agenda by 13 December 1963, as suggested in paragraph 1, and to deal with those sections of the Economic and Social Council's report (A/5503) which formed independent items of the agenda in connexion with those items, as suggested in paragraph 3.

It was so decided.

11. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to paragraphs 5 to 10 of his note and invited comments on the order in which the Committee should discuss the items on its agenda and the number of meetings it should allot to each item. It was estimated that the Committee would be able to hold seventy-nine meetings during the eighteenth session. He would suggest that, in referring to the items on the Committee's agenda, members should for convenience use the numbers given in the letter dated 20 September 1963 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Third Committee (A/C.3/596 and Corr.1).

12. Mr. SOLODOVNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) believed that the order of discussion of items should be based on two factors: the importance and urgency of the different questions and the decisions taken at the seventeenth session of the General Assembly assigning priority to certain items (see A/C.3/L.1061, paras. 5 to 8). In the light of those two considerations, he suggested that the Committee should first discuss item 1 of the Committee's agenda, as set out in the letter of the President of the General Assembly (item 12 of the agenda of the General

Assembly), inasmuch as it related to the general social situation in the world and was furthermore the traditional starting point for the Committee's deliberations. Next should come item 6 (item 43 of the agenda of the General Assembly); racial discrimination required urgent attention and the draft declaration on that question was ready for the Committee's consideration. The next three items should be those to which priority had been assigned at the seventeenth session and which were listed as items 10, 11 and 9 (items 47, 48 and 46, respectively, of the agenda of the General Assembly). The order of the remaining items might be decided at a later stage.

13. Miss ADDISON (Ghana) suggested that, in view of the strong feelings of many delegations on the question of racial discrimination, item 6 should be taken up first. Items 7 (item 44 of the agenda of the General Assembly), 9 and 10 should then be dealt with, in order to allow delegations sufficient time to study the report of the Economic and Social Council—item 1—which should come next. Thereafter, the Committee might take up items 4 and 12 (items 41 and 79 of the agenda of the General Assembly); with regard to the latter, the question of designating 1968 as International Year for Human Rights was very important, but there would be ample time to consider it at the next session if it should prove impossible to complete the discussion at the current one. Items 2 and 8 (items 38 and 45 of the agenda of the General Assembly) should, of course, be dealt with when the High Commissioner for Refugees was in New York.

14. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) felt that, where the number of meetings allotted to each item was concerned, top priority should be given to item 11, since the draft International Covenants on Human Rights encompassed the whole range of individual and collective rights. The order in which the items were discussed was not important, provided that the decision concerning the number of meetings to be devoted to each item was adhered to.

15. Item 3 (item 40 of the agenda of the General Assembly) was of no great urgency. Item 4 could be disposed of cursorily during the debate on item 1, or if any delegation had positive ideas on the subject, that delegation could submit a draft resolution. Item 5 (item 42 of the agenda of the General Assembly) merited discussion, but it was in effect superseded by item 6, which should be given high priority. With regard to item 7, although all members of the Committee decried any intolerance, religious or otherwise, the fact was that religious intolerance had become only sporadic in recent years, and serious discussion of the question might be deferred until a later date. Item 8 related to a question which had always been of concern to France and the countries of Latin America, and it merited some, but not the highest, priority. Item 9 (b)—draft Declaration on Freedom of Information—could be dispensed with, since it had been decided some years ago to draft a convention on the subject and a part of the text had already been approved. Item 10 should have a certain degree of priority, for its sponsor had been very patient in agreeing to repeated postponements.

16. The Committee traditionally began its debate by considering the report of the Economic and Social Council (item 1), and he saw no reason to depart from that precedent, provided that undue time was not spent on any subject which formed an independent item of the agenda. He suggested that ten meetings

should be allotted to item 1, and that the Committee should next take up item 6 (five meetings), item 11 (at least twenty-five meetings), item 10 (three meetings) and item 9 (ten meetings). He agreed with the USSR representative that the order of consideration of the remaining items could be decided after those he had mentioned had been dealt with; four or five meetings might be allotted to item 2, four to item 3, three each to items 4 and 5, two to item 7, four to item 8, and two to item 12.

17. He wished to take the opportunity to protest most strongly against the Economic and Social Council's decision, at its thirty-sixth session,^{1/} that the Commission on Human Rights should not meet in 1964 because of purely physical difficulties. The work of the Third Committee would be seriously impeded if the Commission suspended its activities, for the Committee would undoubtedly refer a number of items to the Commission at the end of the eighteenth session. The drafting of international legislation would be delayed, and he emphasized in that connexion that conventions and declarations which were in course of preparation were used by many of the emerging countries as a basis for national legislation, even though the international instruments in question had not yet been finalized. He hoped that the officers of the Committee would exert their influence, as a matter of urgency, to obtain a reversal of the decision.

18. Mr. SHERVANI (India) recalled that, at the seventeenth session, his delegation had requested that priority should be given to the consideration of the draft International Covenants on Human Rights, and the General Assembly had so decided in its resolution 1843 C (XVII). First priority should therefore be given to item 11; subject to that amendment, and to a proviso that time must be found for the discussion of item 7, he endorsed the suggested programme of work outlined by the representative of Saudi Arabia.

19. Mr. Antonio BELAUNDE (Peru) agreed with the representative of Ghana that item 6 should be discussed first, although he did not believe that consideration of the item could be completed at the current session.

20. The CHAIRMAN thought that there was general agreement on the importance of items 1, 6, 11, 9 and 10, some delegations urging first priority for item 1, others for item 6. There was much to be said for the Saudi Arabian representative's proposals regarding the number of meetings to be allocated to each item but, on the basis of his experience, he suggested that not less than seven meetings would be required to deal with item 6.

21. Mr. SOLODOVNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the Chairman's remarks. His delegation on the whole approved of the Saudi Arabian representative's suggestion concerning the time to be allocated to each item. To meet the wishes of delegations which had expressed strong feelings on the subject, he was prepared to agree that item 6 should be taken first.

22. Mr. DOE (Liberia) thought that the report of the Economic and Social Council should be discussed first, because it covered various items which were to be discussed separately afterwards. With regard to item 6, the Committee had a clear mandate from

^{1/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-sixth Session, 1297th meeting.

the General Assembly and the Council. Since the Commission on Human Rights might not meet in 1964, it was particularly important that the Committee should take action on that item during the current session. Item 7 had been the subject of heated debate in the Commission on Human Rights and should be given priority if the suggestions in the Commission's report were to be followed. The order in which the remaining items were taken up did not greatly matter, provided that the Committee adhered to a time schedule laying down the number of meetings to be allocated to each item.

23. Mrs. DICK (United States of America) said that her delegation was in general agreement with the Chairman's remarks. She would like to see early consideration of items 1 and 6. She hoped that consideration of the draft Convention on Freedom of Information would be completed early enough to leave time for a study of the draft Declaration. She also hoped there would be time for item 3, although she claimed no priority for that item. Inasmuch as UNESCO was already dealing with measures to promote the ideals of peace among youth, there was no need to give priority to item 10.

24. Miss GROZA (Romania) agreed with those speakers who had stressed the importance of item 10, which would require five or six meetings for proper discussion.

25. Mrs. ARIBOT (Guinea) suggested that first priority should be given to item 6, which should be followed by items 11, 10, 9, 1 and 3.

26. Mr. YAPOU (Israel) thought that time might be saved in the general debate if speakers were to concentrate on groups of related problems. The discussion might be focused on three main points: (a) the report of the Economic and Social Council, (b) human rights and (c) prejudice, intolerance and discrimination.

27. Mr. PINHEIRO (Brazil) believed that the Committee should deal with item 6 first, in order to express the concern felt by all nations at the continuance of racial discrimination. For the rest, he supported the order of priority as set out by the Chairman for the first five items.

28. Miss JAMES (Jamaica) said that item 12 should not be relegated to a less important place merely because 1968 was still far off. It was a target year, for which preparations had to be made. The item should be taken up in good time; it would probably not require more than one or two meetings.

29. Mr. BARODY (Saudi Arabia) stated that, to accommodate his colleagues, he was prepared to agree that item 6 should be taken first.

30. Mr. DELGADO (Senegal) remarked that the Committee should give first priority to item 6, in order to show its determination to advance the struggle against racial discrimination. He approved of the order of work for the next few items, as set out by the Chairman.

31. Mr. RAZGALLAH (Tunisia) thought that first priority should be given to item 1, the report of the Economic and Social Council. That item was the more important as the gap between the developed and underdeveloped countries showed no sign of decreasing. He agreed that second place should be given to item 6, particularly in view of the situation in South Africa.

32. Mr. SARMIENTO (Bolivia) strongly supported the proposal that first priority should be given to item 6.

33. The CHAIRMAN proposed an order of work listing the various agenda items and suggesting the number of meetings to be allocated to each item.^{2/}

The proposal was adopted.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

^{2/} Subsequently circulated as document A/C.3/L.1063.