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Chairman: Mr. Carlet R. AUGUSTE (Haiti).

AGENDA ITEM 23

Question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council (A/SPC/L.51 and Add.1-5, A/SPC/L.52 and Add.1-3, A/SPC/L.53/Rev.1, A/SPC/L.54 and Add.1 and A/SPC/L.55 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. ITURRALDE CHINEL (Bolivia) said that he had hoped that, having completed the general debate, the Special Political Committee would be in a position to take a vote on the two original draft resolutions (A/SPC/L.51 and Add.1-5 and A/SPC/L.52 and Add.1-3) which appeared to command a majority. Those proposals had been submitted not only by most of the Latin American countries and by several European and other countries, but by the great majority of African States and many States of Asia. He had therefore been surprised that Cameroun, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Lebanon, Liberia, Nepal, Nigeria, Somalia, Togo and Tunisia should have introduced the two draft amendments (A/SPC/L.54 and A/SPC/L.55). It was surely contrary to the rules of procedure for a country to submit amendments to a draft resolution which it had co-sponsored. Moreover, the effect of those draft amendments could well be to intensify the cold war rather than to promote harmony in the United Nations. The immediate redistribution of existing seats on the two Councils would unfairly deprive the Latin American countries, in particular, of the seats to which they had been legitimately entitled since the inception of the United Nations. As signatories of the United Nations Charter at the San Francisco Conference, they were determined never to yield on that issue. Moreover, it would be ironical if after having strongly supported the independence of so many nations of Africa and their admission to the United Nations, the Latin American countries should now find their legitimate interests seriously jeopardized in consequence. Bolivia was a member of the Trusteeship Council and had consistently upheld the cause of the new States of Asia and Africa in that body. But it had never yet been elected to the Security Council or the Economic and Social Council. It was prepared to await its turn with patience and confidence, and it advised the States recently admitted to the United Nations to demonstrate the same forbearance.

2. Moreover, the draft amendments were based on the erroneous idea that the permanent members of the Security Council represented specific geographical areas or continents. In point of fact, they had been assigned permanent seats because they were great political, economic and military Powers and because they bore primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace. Those seats should therefore not enter into consideration for the purposes of the redistribution.

3. No redistribution of seats could, in all fairness, be made until the membership of the two Councils was increased. The enlargement of these two organs was necessary because the membership of the United Nations had almost doubled since 1945. In order to effect that enlargement the Charter had to be amended in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 108. Those amendments had to be adopted by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the General Assembly, and then ratified by two-thirds of the Members of the United Nations, including all the permanent members of the Security Council. Accordingly, the original draft resolutions (A/SPC/L.51 and Add.1-5 and A/SPC/L.52 and Add.1-3) had provided that the amendments would be inoperative unless, within three years from the date of their adoption by the General Assembly, they were ratified as required by the Charter. But the first step, the adoption of the amendments by the General Assembly, ought to be taken immediately in the interests of the new Member States themselves. The proposal to redistribute the existing seats in the two Councils might doom that initiative to failure because it created antagonisms between different groups of countries.

4. The Bolivian delegation would accordingly vote against the draft amendments (A/SPC/L.54 and Add.1 and A/SPC/L.55 and Add.1).

5. Mr. BEELEY (United Kingdom) said that, in the statement he had made at the previous meeting, the representative of Nigeria had not faced up to all the difficulties inherent in his proposals. Like the Nigerian representative, he would deal primarily with the Security Council. The representative of the Netherlands had rightly pointed out (214th meeting) that a preliminary distinction must be drawn between the permanent members and the non-permanent members, and it was the position of the latter that the Committee was considering. The representative of Nigeria had observed that the African-Asian States were not at present represented among the non-permanent members since Ceylon held the seat assigned to the Commonwealth and so did not directly represent the African-Asian group. That argument was perfectly valid, but it also applied to France and the United Kingdom which, as permanent members, were not any more directly representative of Europe. In the current year, Western Europe and Eastern Europe each had one seat. According to the Nigerian representative, one of those seats should be handed over to an African or an Asian State. However, Western Europe would not agree to be

represented by a country of Eastern Europe and vice versa. Increasing the representation of the African-Asian group would mean denying representation to an important group of Member States.

6. The United Kingdom delegation agreed that the African-Asian countries should be fully represented, but wished to point out that it would be exceedingly difficult, indeed virtually impossible, to achieve equitable representation so long as the Security Council had only six non-permanent members. It was therefore imperative to increase that number. Nigeria had appealed to the permanent members for a change of heart. For its part, the United Kingdom delegation wanted the Councils to be enlarged; it had consistently expressed that view and it supported the original draft resolutions (A/SPC/L.51 and Add.1-5, and A/SPC/L.52 and Add.1-3) which would amend the Charter to produce that result. Nigeria's appeal should therefore be addressed elsewhere.

7. There was only one element in the amendments (A/SPC/L.54 and Add.1 and A/SPC/L.55 and Add.1) to those draft resolutions which the United Kingdom delegation could accept, namely, the provision which would reduce the period within which the amendments to the Charter would have to be ratified from three to two years. The reasons for the original provision had been misunderstood, and it had been inferred that the sponsors of the two draft resolutions apparently believed that ratification would be impossible in a shorter period than three years. The intention of the sponsors was certainly not to delay ratification; rather, they had wished to provide as long a period as possible in case the USSR should have a change of mind. While the United Kingdom understood their concern, it would not oppose a reduction of the period to two years.

8. He had one final observation to make on a procedural problem. Under Article 108, amendments to the Charter had to be adopted by two-thirds of the Members of the United Nations. On the other hand, under Article 18, amendments A/SPC/L.54 and Add.1 and A/SPC/L.55 and Add.1 would only have to be supported by two-thirds of the Members present and voting. Consequently, the General Assembly, in plenary meeting, might have to decide on a resolution consisting of two parts requiring different majorities.

9. Mr. SUBASINGHE (Ceylon) said that three main lines of thought seemed to have emerged during the general debate. Whereas some States favoured amending the Charter, others proposed that, since that was not immediately possible, the existing seats should be redistributed. A third group, which included Ceylon, recommended that a committee should be appointed to consider the whole question and report to the Special Political Committee at the following session. There was no disagreement on the essential point among the members of the Committee; all were convinced that the membership of the Councils must be enlarged, but they did not agree on how to reach that objective.

10. His delegation felt that the important thing was not to adopt a draft resolution for form's sake, but to bring about a genuine improvement in the representation of the African-Asian group and, consequently, wider application of the principle of universality. It would serve no purpose to submit draft resolutions A/SPC/L.51 and Add.1-5 and A/SPC/L.52 and Add.1-3 to the Assembly, for even if they were adopted they would remain a dead letter until the Soviet Union changed its

policy of categorically refusing to accept the amendments. That was a very important question. It had been argued that everything would be simple if only the Soviet Union would accept the amendments. The fact was, however, that the Soviet Union had announced its intention of rejecting them. Furthermore, it must be admitted that, in a world in which political problems were closely interconnected, the Soviet argument had a great deal of substance. His Government would, of course, be very happy if the Soviet Union made concessions and accepted the amendments. However, it felt that all things were related in politics and that the Soviet Union should not be saddled with all the blame, for it was also a very simple matter to decide who should represent China.

11. It had been pointed out that adoption of the draft resolutions by the Assembly would represent only the first step. However, the two steps were part of the same process. Since one of them was not feasible, the draft resolutions which had been submitted seemed to serve no practical purpose. Even if they were adopted, the African-Asian group would remain outside the Councils. With regard to the amendments, a redistribution of seats was certainly not the most satisfactory solution in view of the limited number of seats and the possibility that dissatisfaction and injustice might result. However, the African countries insisted that those countries which had had an opportunity to take part in the work of the Councils should consider sharing their seats with the new Members, if only as a temporary measure. If agreement could be reached on that point, it would give some satisfaction to the African countries. However, the amendments had one weakness: they linked the idea of redistributing seats with that of amending the Charter. Hence, if the draft resolutions were adopted with those amendments, they would in all probability still remain a dead letter. The effort made by the African countries surely deserved the commendation of the Committee, but their proposals would not dispose of the difficulties.

12. The question of amending the Charter was a complex one which required careful consideration. There must be general agreement; greater thought must be given to the extent of the increase in the number of seats; and the Committee must be informed of the basis for the decision to increase the membership of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council from eleven to thirteen and from eighteen to twenty-four respectively. In the view of his delegation, the most realistic course was therefore to refer the matter to a committee which could undertake the necessary consultations. In the meantime, there might be an improvement in the prevailing attitudes and in the political situation. While he might appear unduly pessimistic, he did not believe that the problem could be solved until that of China was settled.

13. The Soviet representative had said at the previous meeting that he supported the idea of appointing a committee but that such a body should also consider other questions, particularly that of the post of Secretary-General. If such problems were to be raised, the proper body to solve them would be the General Assembly rather than the Special Political Committee. His delegation hoped that agreement could be reached on the appointment of a committee and that the necessary changes could be worked out in detail, so that, at the most appropriate time, the question could be settled to the satisfaction of all.

14. Mr. PALAR (Indonesia) said that he regarded as perfectly proper the efforts of the sponsors of the amendments (A/SPC/L.54 and Add.1 and A/SPC/L.55 and Add.1) of whom he was one, to obtain an immediate redistribution of the existing seats. The only purpose of the draft resolutions which had been submitted was to ensure a distribution of seats, which was regarded by all the representatives as just and necessary. It was illogical to contend that such a distribution could not be achieved until the membership of the Councils had been enlarged.

15. One aspect of the matter should be emphasized. The geographical distribution of the Security Council was based solely on the London gentleman's agreement, and that of the Economic and Social Council on a simple tacit understanding. However, the African-Asian countries did not consider themselves bound by agreements to which they were not parties. They wanted to see the organs of the United Nations operate smoothly and to participate in their work as fully-fledged Members. They were therefore calling upon the other countries for a new agreement to which all Member States, old and new, would be parties. That was the purpose of the amendments.

16. His delegation reserved the right to speak on draft resolution A/SPC/L.52 and Add.1-3 in due course, for it felt that it was still too early to take a decision fixing the membership of the Security Council at thirteen. It would express its views on the five-Power draft resolution (A/SPC/L.53/Rev.1) after the other resolutions, as well as the amendments, had been put to the vote.

17. Mr. NORIEGA (Colombia) said that the representatives who at the 214th meeting had requested a postponement of the vote had not sought to reopen the debate but had merely wished to clarify their position. He associated himself with the Afghan representative in expressing the hope that the Committee would take its decision in a spirit of understanding, accord and harmony. In that same spirit he would like to make a number of observations.

18. First of all, the Latin American countries recognized that the African countries had the sovereign right to take their place in the organs of the United Nations and to help the Organization to attain its lofty ideals. That was a sacred right of which the Latin American countries had been aware since 1956, when the principle of universality had begun to be applied in the United Nations. Hence, their position could not be construed as one of opposition to the legitimate claims of the African-Asian countries, with which they were linked by many ties and would be even more closely linked in the future.

19. Secondly, he urgently appealed to the representatives of the African-Asian countries to show understanding, calm and patience. Amendment of the Charter was the procedure which would enable them to become members of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. That procedure entailed several stages and was of necessity slow. After the first stage, which would consist in taking a decision on the changes to be made in the Charter, the necessary ratifications would have to be obtained. As the United Kingdom representative had said, that could be accomplished in three years at the most. The ratifications might possibly be obtained within two years, a period which some delegations wished to fix as a time-limit, or even sooner if the present situation should improve. On the other hand,

for the sake of good relations between Member States, particularly between the countries of Latin America and those of Africa and Asia, the Committee should not contemplate a redistribution of seats. Every country must realize that, in order to strengthen international co-operation, it might have to give up part of what it felt to be its due.

20. Mr. MILLET (France) reiterated the view he had expressed before (189th meeting) that, because of the substantial increase in the number of Members of the United Nations, the Charter should be amended and the membership of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council reasonably expanded with a view to giving each of the regional groups, and, in particular, the African-Asian group, its proper place in the principal organs of the United Nations.

21. The French delegation believed that, although the General Assembly, under resolution 1404 (XIV), was to establish, at its current session, a committee to study the possibilities of arriving at an agreement which would facilitate the amendment of the Charter, a vote on the five-Power draft resolution (A/SPC/L.53/Rev.1) would be premature, as it would prejudice the Assembly's final decision.

22. The question of a redistribution of seats was not on the Assembly's agenda; it was being pressed only because, at the opening of the debate, the Soviet Government had announced that it was opposed to the almost unanimous wishes of the Members for reasons totally unrelated to the problem. Regardless of the validity of the arguments advanced by the African and Asian countries, the General Assembly should not consider the question of a redistribution of seats—which was just in itself—until a later session. It was not possible to remedy effectively what certain countries regarded as an injustice by hastily creating a further injustice, especially as there existed the easy remedy of simply increasing the number of seats. In that connexion, he pointed out that since the inception of the United Nations, the number of European Members had increased by thirteen.

23. It could not be over-emphasized that the obvious reason why the legitimate desire of the African-Asian countries for more equitable representation in the principal organs of the United Nations was not being fulfilled at the current session was the opposition of the USSR. In introducing its proposals for reforming the United Nations, the Soviet delegation consistently spoke of the "bloc" of Western Powers. The French delegation took exception to that expression. France was loyal to its partners in the defence of democracy and peace, but it did not regard itself as a member of a "bloc"; that term might better be applied to the group in the grip of the Soviet Union, particularly in connexion with the matter under discussion which it was attempting to "block".

24. As a permanent member of the Security Council and therefore a country whose own interests were not at stake, France was in a position to take part in the debate with an open mind and complete objectivity. It did not lose sight of the particular interests of the various Member States, including, of course, the new African States, and the more general interests of the United Nations. The French delegation would be guided in the voting by what it regarded as common sense, which in the present case, too, was also common justice. It would accordingly vote in favour of the original

draft resolutions (A/SPC/L.51 and Add.1-5 and A/SPC/L.52 and Add.1-3) but would be unable to support the draft amendments (A/SPC/L.54 and Add.1 and A/SPC/L.55 and Add.1). It would abstain in the vote on the five-Power draft resolution (A/SPC/L.53/Rev.1).

25. Mr. PLAJA (Italy) disagreed with the view that some delegations had expressed, according to which the question under discussion amounted to a dispute, or a difference of opinion, between the African-Asian and Latin American countries. Actually the dispute was between almost the entire membership of the Committee on one side and a small group of countries which continually opposed the enlargement of the Councils on the other. Furthermore, as far as the specific aspect of redistribution of seats was concerned, the Latin American countries were not alone in opposing it, as the vote would have unfailingly shown. He had raised this point because he believed that animosity and friction between geographical groups should be avoided, since this—as well as an excessive group policy in general—might hamper the work of the United Nations.

26. Some delegations appeared to place the question of the redistribution of seats at least on the same plane with the enlargement of the Councils, and to give consideration solely to the issue of the representation in the Councils of the newly admitted African countries. Now, apart from the fact that, technically, it was the question of the enlargement of the Councils that appeared on the Committee's agenda, these points of view did not take into due account the precedents of the item under discussion; such an item in fact had first been included in the Assembly's agenda at the eleventh session in 1956 after the admission of a large group of countries, the majority of which were European. Anyway, the fundamental consideration was that to ask for a redistribution of seats was like trying to cure a serious illness by a temporary remedy. For instance, as the representative of Ireland had pointed out (194th meeting) if the redistribution of the seats in the Security Council would result in giving to an African or an Asian country the only non-permanent seat occupied by a Western European country, that would amount to depriving the Western European countries of any possibility of participating in the work of the Council. That would be a real injustice, since the goal to attain was not to deprive some countries of such a possibility but to give all Member countries the same opportunities in that respect. In the Security Council, the problem was complicated by the presence of the permanent members. The United Kingdom and France could not be regarded both as permanent members and as representatives of Western Europe. Representation should be the result of a choice and of an election which, in the case of the permanent members, were obviously lacking. Another difficulty arose from the fact that certain countries were deemed to represent now one geographical area, now another. Nothing showed better than the present debate the clear impossibility of satisfying with an immediate redistribution all the interests of the different geographical groups, whilst all those interests could be satisfied with the increase in the membership of the Councils.

27. In the general interest, therefore, the first requirement was to do everything possible to bring about an enlargement of the two Councils. The Italian delegation fully sympathized with the position of the African-Asian countries; it was especially able to understand them because in 1956 Italy, then a new Member State,

had encountered the same difficulties which now beset them with regard to admission to the Councils. Italy's position on the draft resolutions and amendments before the Committee was prompted by the desire to treat the malady at its roots, while taking into account the interests of all Members.

28. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus), as a co-sponsor of two draft resolutions (A/SPC/L.51 and Add.1-5 and of A/SPC/L.52 and Add.1-3) considered that the expansion of the two Councils was essential and would bring about the geographical redistribution required by the increase in the membership of the United Nations. In the meantime, the delegation of Cyprus favoured any interim measure. It therefore supported the draft amendments (A/SPC/L.54 and Add.1 and A/SPC/L.55 and Add.1) but thought that they would be more generally acceptable if, in the fifth amendment (part B) of both texts, the words "to be effective at this session" were replaced by "to be effective at the sixteenth session", the rest of the text remaining unchanged. He emphasized that the proposed measures would only be temporary and would lapse as soon as the membership of the two Councils had been enlarged.

29. Mr. O'BRIEN (Ireland), speaking on a point of order, said that, judging by the course of the debate, if the texts under discussion were now to be put to the vote, the Committee would find itself sharply divided, and that would not be helpful to its future work. Yet, in the view of the Irish delegation, there was a considerable area of common ground on which a large majority of delegations could meet. The remarks of the representative of Cyprus, for example, gave reason to hope that further discussions might perhaps lead to agreement on a text acceptable to many more delegations. Accordingly, he suggested adjournment of the debate until Friday, 2 December 1960, at 3 p.m.

30. Mr. PALAR (Indonesia) said that he appreciated the efforts of the Irish representative, but pointed out that the amendments (A/SPC/L.54 and Add.1 and A/SPC/L.55 and Add.1) were the result of very lengthy negotiations and that a rather large group of countries had already endorsed them. It would therefore be difficult to change them.

31. Mr. ABOUBACRINE (Mali) and Mr. CALERO RODRIGUEZ (Brazil) associated themselves with the Indonesian representative's remarks.

32. Mr. O'BRIEN (Ireland) moved the adjournment of the meeting under rule 119 of the rules of procedure.

33. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the motion of the Irish representative.

The motion for adjournment was adopted by 45 votes to 3, with 30 abstentions.

34. Mr. JHA (India) commended the representative of Ireland for his efforts to arrive at a *modus vivendi*. He recalled that it was in that spirit that the Indian delegation had moved the adjournment of the debate on the item at the 198th meeting several weeks previously. Unfortunately, the members were very far from agreement, and the representatives of the Latin American and European countries had not indicated that they were prepared to consider a more equitable distribution of the existing seats. He therefore shared the view expressed by the representative of Indonesia. The Indian delegation had abstained in the vote because it was reluctant to vote against such procedural motions.

35. The CHAIRMAN expressed the hope that the appeal of certain representatives for a conciliatory attitude would be heeded and that the adjournment of the meeting would enable delegations to work out a text which could be adopted unanimously.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.