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**CONTENTS**

	Page
<i>Agenda item 23:</i>	
<i>Question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council (continued) . . . . .</i>	77

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, A/SPC/L.52) (continued)

1. Mr. ARTHAYUKTI (Thailand) recalled that the item under discussion had appeared on the General Assembly's agenda ever since its eleventh session. It was an important question, not only because there was a continual increase in the membership of the Organization, but because its responsibilities in all domains were constantly being extended. Articles 23 and 61 of the Charter, which had been intended for a United Nations of fifty-one Members, were today out of date. The African and Asian States, which were greatly dependent on the United Nations for their political stability as well as for their economic and social progress, had asked for a much stronger representation in the principal organs. It was generally agreed that the claim was valid; it was founded on a sound interpretation of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, which was the very foundation of the Organization. It was therefore to be regretted that political considerations had hitherto prevented a satisfactory solution of the problem from being achieved. Steps could, however, be taken immediately to enable gradual progress to be made in the right direction. The right procedure would seem to be that provided for in Article 108 of the Charter.

2. His delegation hoped that when the time came for ratifying the proposed amendments, the States in whose hands the fate of the amendments lay would allow themselves to be influenced by world opinion and would weigh their decision more carefully, bearing in mind their moral responsibility towards the Organization. His delegation would therefore support the two draft resolutions (A/SPC/L.51 and A/SPC/L.52).

3. Mr. Krishna MENON (India) pointed out that the item under discussion, far from being a side issue in the evolution of the United Nations and of world politics, was actually the reflection of a situation to be found in many areas of the world. The Committee should endeavour to find a solution for it without exaggerating the differences in political alignment of the Powers. With that end in view it should bear in mind the resolutions<sup>1/</sup>

<sup>1/</sup> General Assembly resolutions 918 (X), 1300 (XIII), and 1404 (XIV).

adopted, as well as the Charter and present-day necessities. He agreed with the representative of Thailand that no Member of the General Assembly was unaware of the importance of the problem or of the need for a change. Commission I of the San Francisco Conference,<sup>2/</sup> realizing the imperfections of the Charter, had recommended for inclusion in its provisions for a special conference on its revision. Thus the authors of the Charter had not regarded it as sacrosanct. For several years, the Special Political Committee had been endeavouring to settle the issue under discussion. It could not be resolved merely by majority resolutions. India itself was a party to a dispute for the settlement of which it had all the votes it needed except one, that of the Union of South Africa; but that was the one vote really indispensable, since because of present world conditions, the way in which the United Nations worked, and the intent of the Charter, nothing could be done—whatever majority obtained—without the consent of the parties concerned.

4. When it was founded, the United Nations had had less than fifty Members, the countries of the two Americas and of Europe being the most numerous. With regard to Western Europe, it should not be forgotten that the United Kingdom and France were permanent members of all the United Nations organs and that the United Kingdom, though separated from the European continent, was a part of Western Europe. Hence the question of representation did not arise as far as Europe was concerned. For the American continent, there had been no change in the situation since 1945; on the other hand, the number of Member countries had risen from four to twenty-six for Africa and from nine to twenty-two for Asia. Western Europe now had nineteen Member countries instead of ten, and eastern Europe ten countries instead of six. Except for the American continent, the number of States had therefore increased but the representation had remained the same. Yet if it wished to survive, the United Nations had to aim at being an Organization representing universal ideas and not those of different groups or blocs. Unfortunately, some of its Members spoke of universality at the same time as they were endeavouring to dominate others.

5. Unlike the representative of Thailand, he believed that political considerations were not extraneous to the question. The Committee was surely a political body. He agreed on the whole with the opinion of the representatives of Ceylon, Ghana, and Nigeria regarding the urgency of the problem and the decisions which should be adopted. On the other hand, he considered that the two draft resolutions before the Committee (A/SPC/L.51 and A/SPC/L.52) could only intensify the cold war element in the debate. It was a mistake to think that a vote could alter the decision of the great Powers. Many resolutions adopted by an overwhelming majority had

<sup>2/</sup> United Nations Conference on International Organization, San Francisco, 1945, vol. VII, Commission I, 1/2/73.

remained without effect, and such would no doubt be the case in the present instance. Yet the problem was urgent, and democratic Governments would find it difficult to explain to their Parliaments that the United Nations had some Members with representation and others without, as if a form of "apartheid" had grown up in the United Nations.

6. The Charter did not provide for any representation by areas in the Economic and Social Council; its composition was determined according to the candidates which had obtained a two-thirds majority. Consequently, the peoples and the Parliaments of Africa and Asia had the means at their disposal to put pressure on their delegations to vote just as they liked. As to any gentleman's agreements, they would have to be interpreted in a gentlemanly way; moreover, such agreements had been concluded by States which benefited under them, and the States which were today claiming representation had never been parties to them.

7. The item under discussion had come before the Committee in implementation of General Assembly resolution 1404 (XIV), which stipulated in operative paragraph 2 that if progress was not made during the fifteenth session towards the achievement of an increase in the membership of the two Councils, the General Assembly should set up a special committee. Consequently, unless of course the two draft resolutions now submitted were adopted unanimously, or at least with the consent of those who had the power to oppose the ratification of the amendments, the paragraph in question should automatically come into effect. The provision it embodied was the result of many exchanges of views; it expressed the considered opinion of representatives, and the Committee should treat it with the respect it deserved.

8. The representatives of the United Kingdom and Thailand had suggested that the General Assembly should adopt the amendments by a two-thirds majority and then submit them for ratification by Governments, which would thus have to face their responsibilities. Far from being an attempt at conciliation, that procedure, in his delegation's view, would lead to a worsening of the cold war atmosphere: the Assembly would be challenging the very basis of the Security Council. Besides that, it would be no satisfaction to the peoples of Africa and Asia to tell them that the amendments had been adopted by a two-thirds majority but that ratification had proved impossible because of the veto of the East or the West. The only effect would be to make those peoples react against the West or the East according to their predilections.

9. His delegation was against all abuse of power, however constitutional, because it believed that all power involved an obligation to make proper use of it; yet all those who had a veto had made use of it or had said that they would do so. In actual fact, though the veto might be a plague, it was also the sheet-anchor of the United Nations, as it symbolized great-Power unanimity. If the principle of unanimity was to be maintained, persuasion must be exercised. To judge by his own experience, the great Powers all used the same language at the negotiation table: they first laid stress on their own strength and power.

10. In his delegation's opinion, the Committee should take resolution 1404 (XIV) into account, unless it was rescinded by a two-thirds majority. India yielded to none in its desire to see the structure of the two

Councils correspond better to geographical and political realities in the world. As his Prime Minister and he himself had said in plenary meetings, India was opposed to the hardening of the two great blocs of States in the United Nations, because a large proportion of the evils of the world were attributable to the juxtaposition of those two blocs.

11. There had been a desire on the part of some to establish a subtle distinction between "major" and "minor" amendments. There was no justification for that, since the procedure followed was the same in both cases. With regard to Article 109, paragraph 3, of the Charter, his delegation would not take a stand on its interpretation. In any case it was only a procedural question. If amendments were necessary, they would have to obtain the requisite majority in the General Assembly and then be submitted to the members of the Security Council. His delegation did not intend, for the moment, to submit a draft resolution. If through the generosity of some members a place could be found for the new States, that would be a good thing. However, there was no provision in the Charter which prevented an African Member State from being elected to a vacant seat, and if the situation continued, that might well be done. He did not wish to challenge the present position, but he was afraid that, if the elections to the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council gave seats to countries which outraged national feelings, those countries would meet with opposition. On the other hand, if all the parties to the gentleman's agreements did not honour them, those agreements might go by the board; moreover, if they imposed stricter conditions than those of the Charter or of the rules of procedure and were themselves infringed, it was probably because they needed to be revised. His delegation would be glad to know the views of other delegations on that subject.

12. He did not think that a solution could be reached at the fifteenth session, although, if international tension were eased, the question before the Committee could be more easily settled. For that reason, operative paragraph 2 of resolution 1404 (XIV) should be implemented. The committee provided for in that paragraph which might take any of several forms. Good offices committees had often been set up by the Special Political Committee, but it did not seem likely that, in the present case, such a committee could achieve any great success. His delegation would be interested to see what would be the reaction to a suggestion to invite the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and France, with or without the collaboration of two or three other States chosen on a geographical or political basis, to propose a solution until the next session of the General Assembly. The Charter itself provided for an organ of that kind in Article 106, which referred to a situation in which joint action would be necessary by the countries which held the key to the problem. To limit the membership of such a committee to the permanent members of the Security Council would not be realistic in present circumstances. But without the permanent members, nothing could be done, and those four countries, by agreement among themselves, should decide who were to be the other members of the committee. In that matter, due consideration should be given both to the countries of Latin America, whose representation was such that no arrangement should be made which would be unacceptable to them, and to the African and Asian countries. If the countries of Western Europe still thought themselves insufficiently represented, they

might also be considered, although the United Kingdom and France could speak on their behalf.

13. In the last two or three years, while no major problem had been solved, many less important questions had been settled in that way. The most notable example was the composition of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which fortunately had not required amendment of the Charter. Without advocating an identical solution, he thought that a procedure which would bring about a direct meeting between the countries principally concerned, with the assistance of others, would help towards a settlement of the question. The most important thing was that majority decisions should not be taken which would be unacceptable to some Members. Countries which were not Members of the United Nations had been admitted to various United Nations organs and to some of the specialized agencies even though their admission was not welcomed by some States; that was an unfortunate precedent. Hence his delegation could not support the two draft resolutions now before the Committee, which did not make for a settlement but would, in effect, force through a unilateral solution, although that might not be the motive of the sponsors.

14. Mr. MALILE (Albania) thought that the debates since the eleventh session on the question under consideration showed that the necessary conditions for a revision of the Charter did not yet exist. On the contrary, the international situation was now more tense, and any attempt to amend the Charter without taking account of the present situation would be fruitless. Furthermore, under Article 108 of the Charter, an amendment could come into force only after ratification by all the permanent members of the Security Council. But the seat belonging to China, a permanent Member of the Security Council, was at present illegally occupied by unrepresentative persons, who had long since been expelled by the Chinese people. Consequently, until the legitimate rights of the People's Republic of China had been recognized it would be impossible to amend the Charter. Unfortunately, under pressure from the United States, the General Assembly had once more, at its present session (895th plenary meeting), refused to examine the question of China's representation. If grave international problems, including amendment of the Charter, were still outstanding, the responsibility lay with those countries which refused to abandon their hostile policy towards China. Those States which really had at heart the proper working of the United Nations and the maintenance of peace must strive to find a just solution to that pressing problem.

15. Several delegations had expressed the opinion that, in view of the large number of States which had been admitted to the United Nations during recent years, the membership of its main organs should be enlarged. The Albanian delegation, which had always welcomed the admission of new Members, thought that their legitimate demands for better representation in those organs should be met, and that could be done if the principle of equitable geographical distribution were strictly observed. Unfortunately, the Western Powers had hitherto violated that principle, to the disadvantage of the countries of Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia. For several years in succession, for example, the seat in the Security Council which under the "gentleman's agreement" of 1946 should go to the countries of Eastern Europe had been occupied by such States as the Philippines and Japan which were not

representative of that region. At the fourteenth session of the General Assembly, the Western Powers had done their utmost to prevent the East European candidate, Poland, from being elected to the Security Council, although after more than fifty ballots, Poland had obtained a majority of votes in the General Assembly. As the result of a so-called compromise, Poland had been able to become a member of the Security Council, but only for 1960; from 1961 the countries of Eastern Europe would once more be deprived of the right to be represented in that important body, and the group of socialist countries, comprising about 1,000 million inhabitants, would be represented in the Security Council by only one Member. Similarly, the countries of Africa and Asia would have only one representative each, and Ceylon in any case occupied the seat allotted to the Commonwealth. On the other hand, the group of Western countries linked in military alliances would have eight representatives out of eleven in the Security Council. A similar situation obtained in the other organs of the United Nations. Yet all that would be needed to ensure equitable representation for the countries of Africa and Asia in the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council was for the Western countries to give up some of their seats in favour of the new Member States. What was required was not an increase in the membership of the two Councils, but application of the respect due to the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

16. That principle could only be properly applied in the light of political and economic developments, which in fact constituted the life force of the United Nations. Neither the political situation nor the map of the various continents was the same today as it had been in 1946. Throughout the world, the socialist system had since the Second World War acquired a political and economic strength which was growing at an unprecedented rate. In Asia, a number of countries had won their independence. Some of them, India and Indonesia for example, which were densely populated and potentially rich in economic resources, could properly be considered as great Powers. The victories of socialism and the liberation of many countries in Asia had also had repercussions in Africa; there were actually twenty-six independent countries in that continent, against only three when the United Nations was established. The imperialist Powers must acknowledge the realities of the present day: how could the United Kingdom and France now be considered great Powers while India was refused the same status; and in that case, why should not India be a permanent member of the Security Council?

17. Thus it seemed essential to reform the United Nations by adapting its structure to the present division of world forces into three groups, as the representative of the Soviet Union had proposed (186th meeting). The Albanian delegation also supported the Soviet delegation's proposal to replace the post of Secretary-General by a joint body in which those three forces would be equally represented. Unless that was done, the Secretary-General would continue to champion the interests of one group, as he had done in the course of recent events in the Congo.

18. The recruitment of Secretariat staff had also been subject to the policies of the United States and its allies, which were trying to maintain their privileged position both in the United Nations and in the various missions dispatched to various parts of the world.

Under those circumstances, the work of the Secretariat had inevitably lacked impartiality, and its activities had often followed the policy pattern set by the State Department of the United States.

19. An end must be made to such flagrant acts of injustice if the United Nations was to become an effective organization enjoying the proper authority in the eyes of the whole world. Some delegations had appealed to the representative of the Soviet Union to show a spirit of understanding. In the opinion of the Albanian delegation, that appeal should be addressed to those who were violating the principles of the Charter, riding roughshod over the principle of equitable geographical representation, and daring to speak of the universal character of the United Nations while at the same time denying a quarter of the world's population its legitimate right to be represented there.

20. Mr. HASSAN (Iraq) noted that although the number of United Nations Members had nearly doubled since 1946, the membership of the two main organs had remained unchanged, and their composition was outdated. The main obstacle to revision of the Charter was a political one: it was the continued denial of the right of the Chinese people to be represented in the United Nations. However, under the provisions of Article 108 of the Charter, it was difficult to see how an amendment could come into force without ratification by the five permanent members of the Security Council. However, until such time as those conditions were met, the existing number of seats in both Councils should be more equitably distributed, taking into account the fact that most of the new Members came from Africa and Asia. No one could deny that those two great continents were under-represented in the Security Council and in the Economic and Social Council, while other geographical groups were proportionately over-represented.

21. Mr. TRHLIK (Czechoslovakia) said that the question under discussion was of particular importance in the current year because of the admission of many Member States from regions insufficiently represented in the main organs of the United Nations. His delegation fully understood the great interest of the Asian and African countries in the matter. However, the question of enlarging the membership of those organs could not be separated from broader problems awaiting solution. The United Nations could effectively safeguard world peace only if all groups of countries were represented in it on an equal footing, and if its structure truly reflected the fundamental political, economic and social changes which had taken place in the world since 1945. It was clear to everyone that that was not the case at the present time. The existing composition of the United Nations organs made it possible for a minority group, consisting of the United States and the countries supporting it, to use the United Nations for its own purposes. In view of the fact that the structure of the Organization no longer corresponded to the actual relationship of forces, the Soviet Union had at the current session raised the question of changes in the structure of the Secretariat.

22. When the United Nations had been founded, the capitalist system had been predominant in the world, the imperialist States had ruled over vast colonial territories and only two socialist countries had been in existence. At the present time, more than one-third of mankind was under socialist rule and the share of those countries in the world economy was constantly increasing. In addition, the imperialist colonial system

had undergone tremendous changes. The struggle of the dependent countries for liberation had brought about the disintegration of the colonial empires and the time was ripe for the abolition of colonialism. A new era had opened in the history of mankind, an era in which the new nations of Africa and Asia which refused to align themselves in military blocs and stood for peaceful coexistence were beginning to play an important part. No decision on questions of world interest could be taken without their participation. The Soviet Union had rightly asked why the biggest of those countries, for instance, India and Indonesia, should not become permanent members of the Security Council. At the present time, the world was made up of three groups of States, and if the United Nations wished to contribute effectively to the preservation of peace, the structure of all its organs should reflect that new relationship of forces. Those three groups should have equal rights in the taking of decisions on all important questions. It was dangerous for one group of countries to try to impose its will on the others, for that might provoke a conflict, the consequences of which could not be foreseen. Mr. Novotny, the President of the Czechoslovak Republic, had stressed that point in his statement during the general debate in the General Assembly (871st plenary meeting).

23. The existing composition of the United Nations and its organs favoured the United States and its allies in military blocs. The unsatisfactory situation could not be remedied by a simple increase in the membership of the main organs of the United Nations. Changes had to be made in the structure of the United Nations as a whole. For instance, the composition of the Security Council, which bore the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, corresponded to the relationship of forces in 1945. The People's Republic of China still had no seat in the Council and the representation of the African and Asian countries was wholly unsatisfactory. The Security Council was faced with new important tasks, notably with regard to general and complete disarmament, which would make it possible to maintain peace and would provide for an understanding by States to make a number of contingents of police available to the Security Council. It was inconceivable that such vital decisions could be taken by a body the composition of which favoured a group of States pursuing a policy directed against other States. It was likewise necessary to replace the Secretary-General by three persons representing the three groups of States existing in the world and to reshape the whole Secretariat accordingly.

24. Previous speakers, representing Western Powers, among them the United Kingdom, had claimed that such changes in structure would be contrary to the principle of equality of Member States. Such an argument was surprising, coming from countries which, though in the minority, had a predominating representation in United Nations organs. In the Economic Commission for Africa for example, eighteen out of the thirty-four staff members of the Secretariat were citizens of the United States and of NATO countries. That body included only sixteen representatives of neutralist countries, not even all of which were African countries, and the socialist countries were not represented in it at all. Of the seventy-eight staff members of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, forty-five came from capitalist countries, whereas there were only twenty-nine from neutralist countries and four from socialist countries.



25. His delegation believed that the structure of the United Nations had to be changed so that it might better fulfil its main task, which was the preservation of peace and security. How could that be done so long as the representatives of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, the sole legitimate representatives of China, were denied the exercise of their rights? The absence of the People's Republic of China as a consequence of United States pressure, had far-reaching consequences. One of those consequences was the blocking of the mechanism for amending the Charter, as provided for under Article 108. Any talk of amending the Charter was therefore meaningless. As the representative of Ghana (189th meeting) had pointed out, the United States, by its negative attitude on the question of restoring the legitimate rights of China, was preventing any amendment of the Charter. However, the vote which had recently been taken on the question of the representation of China in the General Assembly had shown that the number of those helping the United States to maintain that abnormal situation was constantly decreasing and that the time when China would occupy its seat was not far off. Only then would all the conditions for dealing with the question of changing the structure of the United Nations be met. That fact had been deliberately overlooked by the sponsors of the two draft resolutions, who were obviously trying to intensify the cold war and to preserve the dominant role played in the Security Council and in the Economic and Social Council by a minority of countries, members of military blocs. Moreover, those draft resolutions completely passed over the legitimate desire of the uncommitted countries to be among the permanent members of the Security Council. His delegation considered those draft resolutions to be harmful and would vote against their adoption.

26. Mr. URQUIA (El Salvador) said that the sponsors of the draft resolutions certainly had no intention of intensifying the cold war. So far as El Salvador was concerned, no delegation had the right to interpret his Government's position in that way. Moreover, he did

not believe that consideration of those texts would take very long, for they were drafted in very simple terms. It was fundamentally a question of increasing the membership of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council to thirteen and to twenty-four respectively and of taking the necessary action to make that possible.

27. He recalled that operative paragraph 2 of resolution 1404 (XIV) had been submitted by the delegations of Japan and El Salvador at the fourteenth session at the last minute in plenary session (843rd meeting), after consideration of the question in committee. Since that paragraph simply provided for the establishment of a committee if no progress was made, he saw no reason why the draft resolutions could not be discussed and voted on. If the draft resolutions were adopted, the first stage provided for in Article 108 of the Charter would have been reached. The transition to the second stage, namely ratification, could then be made. In that case, there would no longer be any question of establishing a committee. In the opposite event, it would be necessary to come back to resolution 1404 (XIV). There were thus no grounds for taking that draft resolution as the basis for arguing that no other texts could be discussed or voted upon.

28. The representative of India had noted the resistance of some delegations, which refused to accept any amendment so long as the People's Republic of China was not represented. But that attitude was not necessarily unalterable. For a long time the admission of new Members had encountered apparently unshakable opposition, yet that opposition had finally disappeared. There could be another such change of attitude. His delegation remained optimistic and hoped that if, in the current year, the General Assembly adopted the amendments by a sufficient majority, positions which appeared to be unalterable might change in the light of political circumstances which could not be foreseen at the present time.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.