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Chairman: Mr. Mihail HASEGANU (Romania).

AGENDA ITEMS 81, 82 AND 12

- Question of the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly (A/5519, A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1, A/SPC/L.106) (*continued*)
- Question of equitable representation on the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council (A/5520 and Corr.1) (*continued*)
- Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapter XIII (section VI)) (A/5503) (*continued*)

1. The CHAIRMAN announced that the representatives of Australia, Canada and New Zealand had introduced an amendment (A/SPC/L.106) to draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1.
2. Mr. ELENWA (Nigeria), referring to the Italian representative's appeal (421st meeting) to the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1 not to insist on a separate discussion of the question of the composition of the General Committee, which the Italian delegation regarded as only one facet of the whole question of equitable representation in the organs of the United Nations, said that the Nigerian delegation did not see why the problem of inequitable representation in the three organs should not be solved step by step when such a solution appeared quite possible.
3. Prior to submitting the draft resolution, the sponsors had gathered the impression that there was no controversy regarding the basic fact that representation on the various organs of the United Nations should be made to reflect the existing membership of the Organization; and the underlying agreement should spur the Committee on to take action. Increased representation in the General Committee could be achieved relatively easily by adopting the draft resolution, whereas in the case of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council the process was much more complicated.
4. It should not be thought that the delegations which were urging that a decision be taken on the General Committee first were any less eager to assist the

Special Political Committee in reaching a decision with regard to the other two items on its agenda. The sponsors of the draft resolution wished above all to avoid delay in reaching a decision that could be taken quite independently of the other two items on the agenda. His delegation believed that the composition of the General Committee as proposed in the draft resolution met the need both for justice and for revision of some of the eighteen-year-old rules of procedure in order to give the United Nations the full benefits of the diversity of its membership.

5. Many speakers had already stressed that an increase of three in the number of Vice-Presidents and the re-allocation of the seven Chairmen of the Main Committees was the minimum that could be asked for, if the African and Asian members were to have an equitable and logical share in the work of the General Assembly.

6. He appealed to those delegations which objected to the Committee proceeding at once with the consideration of the draft resolution to reconsider their attitude and urged the Committee to adopt the draft resolution unanimously.

7. Mr. ROWLAND (Australia) said that his delegation believed that certain changes were required in the structure of the United Nations to take account of the greatly increased membership, particularly that of the African and Asian States. The Security Council and the Economic and Social Council should be enlarged, but not to the point of making either Council unwieldy in relation to its purposes. It was important that in the process of expansion certain countries or groups should not be deprived of their present opportunities of access to the Councils, and in particular, the principle of Commonwealth representation must be preserved. The same applied to the General Committee. The eighteenth session of the General Assembly provided the occasion for a major effort to enlarge the three bodies, and a mere re-allocation of existing seats was no solution.

8. His delegation paid a tribute to the unremitting efforts made to achieve wide agreement on the extent to which the three United Nations organs should be enlarged, and while, in his delegation's view, that aim had not yet been achieved, it was desirable that consultations should continue, taking into account the interests of all sections of the membership of the United Nations.

9. The Security Council, though it should be properly representative, did not require much enlargement. It had never been intended as a large body, and its functions were such that a large membership was not appropriate. Not only must it avoid the danger of unwieldiness if it was to be capable of swift action, but also its membership had to comply with the requirements of Article 23 of the Charter, which stated that in the election of the Council's non-permanent mem-

bers due regard should be paid in the first instance to Members' contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization and also to equitable geographical distribution. There was no doubt that the Security Council should be enlarged and in particular should provide, with due regard to the criteria laid down in Article 23, for the adequate representation of the countries of Asia and Africa in addition to the groups and the interests traditionally represented in the non-permanent seats of the Council.

10. The Economic and Social Council presented a somewhat different problem from that of the Security Council: the nature of its work was different, and the Charter did not lay down specific qualifications for membership. In determining what the desirable membership of the Economic and Social Council should be, not only the increase in the United Nations membership but also the nature of the Council's present work had to be considered. For example, in the economic field, there had been a marked change of emphasis from the problems of full employment, with which the Council had been preoccupied in its early years, to the problems of development and economic growth, particularly of the developing countries. That change was not adequately reflected in the present composition of the Economic and Social Council, which should be more representative of the developing countries, and should also provide representation for countries such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand which were at an intermediate stage of development and had a particular contribution to make to the Council's economic work because of their special experience of the problems of both the highly developed and the developing countries. Australia, for example, had been a leading advocate of international commodity agreements designed to rationalize and introduce some order into the vital problem of world food supplies. It had taken the initiative in proposing the United Nations Conference on the Application of Science and Technology for the Benefit of the Less Developed Areas. It had played a leading role in drafting the economic and social provisions of the Charter and in developing the technical assistance activities of the United Nations.

11. The Committee should keep several other factors in mind in determining the criteria on which membership of an expanded Council should be based. Those included the need to give adequate representation to areas containing larger countries, which though perhaps few in number, had special problems of population growth and food supply the significance of which went far beyond the immediate region in which those countries were situated; the need to represent countries of different economic and social systems; the special experience and knowledge of technical assistance programmes possessed by certain countries; and the claims of countries which, though not falling clearly within the usually accepted regional areas, had already played a valuable part in the United Nations and its Councils.

12. For the above reasons his delegation was convinced that the wide variety of countries possessing different economic interests and points of view on economic and social questions should be adequately represented in the Economic and Social Council, and it was therefore necessary to consider other factors besides equitable geographical distribution. Important as regional groupings were, it would be a great pity if the United Nations crystallized into an exclusively

regional pattern—whether in the Security Council, in the Economic and Social Council or in other organs. Explicit recognition of factors other than mere geography was already an established practice in many United Nations bodies. The Special Fund, for example, divided its members into "donors" and "recipients", the principle of representation taking precedence over that of geography. Similar practices were found in the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

13. It was widely agreed that eighteen was too small a membership for the Economic and Social Council if it was to accommodate the various interests of the Member States. His delegation was not convinced that enlargement to twenty-four was sufficient for the purpose. The original membership of the United Nations had been fifty-one and that of the Economic and Social Council eighteen. A Council of thirty would give a slightly lower proportion of seats to Members, while providing sufficient room for the equitable representation of all groups and interests. He might wish to return to that subject at a later stage.

14. His delegation believed that the traditional regional groupings alone did not offer a satisfactory basis for the distribution of seats in United Nations bodies. While regional groupings were of great importance, they did not represent, as was sometimes suggested, an immutable principle based on geography alone. Although in appearance geographical, they had in fact a large political content. Why else, for example, was Europe traditionally divided into western Europe and eastern Europe for purposes of representation? Furthermore, regional groups did not equitably cover the case of certain countries, and there was a risk of doing them an injustice if that fact was not taken into account.

15. The Commonwealth, as a world-wide multiracial association, representative of many interests and peoples and transcending regionalism, had been represented and recognized in the United Nations from the beginning, and had made an important contribution to United Nations activities. The Commonwealth was not based on mere geography; its essence lay in a variety of links, intangible but none the less real, of language, culture, history, education, law, administrative practices and governmental and non-governmental institutions. The Commonwealth was indeed a model for the United Nations, a model of the harmonious co-operation of different groups and differing interests within a common family. Moreover, Commonwealth membership was increasing; it would soon number eighteen and more in the near future. Commonwealth countries had contributed to the United Nations in a wide variety of ways: for example, in offering constructive ideas and suggestions, and in the field of peace-keeping operations. Commonwealth countries also had a better record than most other groups in the payment of their budget contributions and their share of the cost of essential operations.

16. For all those reasons the practice of maintaining Commonwealth representation in the principal organs of the United Nations had amply justified its value and an adequate place for it would surely be found in any decision taken on that matter by the General Assembly.

17. The General Committee did not reflect the changes in the over-all composition of the United Nations. His delegation welcomed in principle any resolution aimed

at correcting the imbalance but considered that the proposal before the Committee required careful examination. The Australian delegation would wish to take into account the views of other delegations. There was also the question whether the composition of the General Committee could be suitably determined except in relation to that of the other United Nations organs. His delegation was disturbed by the omission from draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1 of paragraph 3 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 1192 (XII) providing for Commonwealth representation, and hoped that the sponsors would agree to restore the missing provision as proposed in the amendment (A/SPC/L.106) submitted by Australia, Canada and New Zealand. To do so would in no way prejudice the actual allocation of seats in the General Committee or deprive any country or group of its chance to serve on the Committee, for the very size of the Commonwealth group and the importance of the countries comprising it meant that one could scarcely imagine a General Committee elected which did not include at least one member of the Commonwealth. Rule 31 as amended by resolution 1192 (XII) specified that the General Committee would include at least one Commonwealth member without altering the geographical distribution of seats. It would be unjust to deny the Commonwealth group, the recognition it had long received, and deserved to receive, in the United Nations.

18. Mr. HASAN (Pakistan) observed that although the General Committee was not mentioned in the Charter the need for such a body had become apparent early in the history of the United Nations and its establishment had been provided for in rule 38 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. Its membership could be expanded as the expansion of the Organization's membership required through a simple amendment to that rule. If the United Nations was to be a living organism it must be able to adapt itself to changing conditions. The very fact that the General Committee had subsequently been established, even though not originally provided for, was proof of the dynamic character of the United Nations and its recognition of the need for change. Now that the membership of the Organization had doubled there was obviously need for further change. The same argument applied to the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, whose membership could be enlarged only by an amendment to the Charter. The existence of Article 108 of the Charter was evidence that its authors, for all their rigidity, had recognized that it might eventually have to be changed. At that time there had been only twelve African and Asian States in a total membership of fifty and they had joined with certain of the other smaller States in seeking a liberalization of the Charter as envisaged prior to the United Nations Conference on International Organization, held at San Francisco with the result that the Economic and Social Council had been raised to the status of a principal organ of the United Nations. They had been less successful, however, in their efforts with respect to the composition of the Security Council and the manner in which it was to function. The great Powers had insisted on the Security Council arrangement envisaged by them, and it was that arrangement which the African and Asian States were seeking to modify. It would be noted that the change which they desired related only to a matter of form, namely the composition of the Council, and not to the substantive aspect represented by the position of the permanent members and their veto power. Although his country had always been

opposed to the concept of permanent members of the Security Council and the veto power, it was concerned in the present instance only with the enlargement of the non-permanent membership of that body. A pro rata increase would bring the non-permanent membership to seventeen, since the membership of the Organization had more than doubled since the Charter had been devised. The fact that no one was proposing such an increase showed that the aims of the African and Asian Members were indeed modest.

19. The Economic and Social Council was of primary importance to the developing nations, and unless they were adequately represented in it they could not influence the course of its activities or derive from it the benefits which were their due. His delegation had for many years been an active participant in the work of the Economic and Social Council and gratefully acknowledged the opportunities thus afforded it to contribute to the planning of a better world, as contemplated in Article 62 of the Charter. It would like to see those opportunities extended to other nations which had achieved their independence in recent years.

20. The principle of equitable geographical distribution was laid down in Article 23 of the Charter and in the annex to resolution 1192 (XII), which also recognized the position of the Commonwealth group in the United Nations, thus indicating that in the view of the General Assembly Commonwealth recognition was not inconsistent with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The Commonwealth was now, if anything, a better organization that it had been at the time of the adoption of resolution 1192 (XII), for the number of its Asian and African members had greatly increased in the meantime and its members saw great value in its multiracial character. His delegation therefore supported the Canadian representative's plea for an amendment to draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1 which would take into account the existence of the Commonwealth, without prejudice to the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

21. Mr. VERAS (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the delegations of twenty-one Latin American and Caribbean States, read out the text of two draft resolutions under agenda item 82, the first relating to the composition of the Security Council (A/SPC/L.104) and the second to the composition of the Economic and Social Council (A/SPC/L.105).

22. Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) said that there was no need to impress upon the Committee the importance of the item to which the draft resolutions just submitted to the Committee related. Through great efforts, the United Nations had come closer over the years to the ideal of universality upheld at San Francisco, and its membership would shortly be 113. The Charter had not been amended, but had been interpreted dynamically, particularly by the Latin American countries. There should be no further delay in introducing the necessary reforms to ensure that the principle of universality was operative. From an impartial standpoint, it was difficult to see why, when the membership had more than doubled, the United Nations was so slow to adapt its main organs to that change. It had been foreseen in the relevant Articles of the Charter that the progress of the United Nations would call for amendments affecting those organs. The United Nations was failing to fulfil both a legal obligation and a commitment of honour. If the new African and Asian States were welcomed to the Organization, they should be given fair representation on an equal footing. He did not accept

the idea that there was an underlying interest at work to prevent the sharing of power and responsibility with the new States. It would be wrong to allow a delay in order to seek a better solution. Nor must amendment of the Charter be held up by the veto. At the San Francisco Conference, his delegation had interpreted the veto right as an obligation on the part of the great Powers to seek unanimity, and not as a right to take up an *a priori* position impervious to negotiation. That interpretation had subsequently been endorsed by many representatives. The majority of States must make it clear to the great Powers that universality should be made effective through the equitable representation of all the new Members in the main organs; those Powers would then surely discharge their duties and enable the Charter to be altered.

23. He was glad to see that it was the Latin American group, to which the United Nations owed so much, that was asking now for unanimous support for the proposed reforms. The arguments had already been repeated *ad nauseam*; what was needed was action now. The Latin American group, with its deep sense of justice and its links to both the older and the younger countries, was playing its traditional role of conciliation in putting forward its moderate but radical proposals. While more additional seats might be even better, the representatives of the small countries in the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council would not only be representing their own countries, but would have an international mandate as well, and their presence would give the two bodies as much authority as if they were larger. There should be no further delay in dealing with the issue; the younger nations must surely be equitably represented in the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council by the time the United Nations celebrated its twentieth anniversary in 1965.

24. Mr. JACKLING (United Kingdom) said that the Committee had agreed earlier in its debate that the three items now before it should be considered together. While the functions of the bodies concerned were quite different, he agreed with the representatives of France and Italy who had said at the 421st meeting that the question of representation on them should be discussed as a whole. There was wide agreement on the general issue of expanding the bodies. However, it would be unwise to make arrangements as to their size and pattern which would penalize one group. It would be preferable to wait until draft resolutions had been submitted to the Committee on all the items, so that they could be considered together in order to reach a fair and acceptable solution.

25. There had been some misunderstanding at the 421st meeting of the position of those who were opposed to a *seriatim* procedure. The fact that the eventual action would be different did not affect the Committee, which would in any case have to vote in a similar way on all the draft resolutions. Accordingly, draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1 should be considered in the context of the draft resolutions just introduced by the representative of Brazil.

26. He regretted that the original provision in paragraph 3 of the annex to resolution 1192 (XII) for representation of the Commonwealth on the General Committee had not been reproduced in draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1. The Commonwealth had always been recognized as an entity in the General Assembly, and it would be gratuitous to drop the earlier provision. His delegation therefore strongly supported the amendment contained in document A/SPC/L.106.

27. Mr. USHER (Ivory Coast) said the fact that the objections to draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1 were of a procedural rather than a substantive character showed that there was general recognition of the need to ensure equitable representation for all continents. The present distribution, decided upon at a time when the membership of the United Nations had been approximately fifty, had presumably been equitable at the time, but since then the membership had more than doubled and a new continent had emerged into independence. Any further delay in adapting the organs of the United Nations to the existing reality would make the present arrangement not only unjust but quite unlawful in the light of the Charter's provisions. Some delegations had given the impression that unless the three problems at issue could be settled jointly they would be unwilling to take any action at all. Others seemed to be ready to accept draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1 with an amendment taking into account a group based on considerations other than the geographical situation of the countries concerned. The fact that the question of the expansion of the General Committee on the one hand and of the Councils on the other had been included in the agenda under different item numbers showed that the General Assembly had regarded the two issues as separate and expected them to be referred back to it as such by the Committee. As a matter of internal procedure and to save time, the Committee had decided to discuss them jointly. Nevertheless, it was obvious that any resolutions adopted in that connexion would differ in form. A resolution concerning the General Committee had been submitted and two resolutions concerning the Councils were now being introduced. The wording of the latter indicated that if adopted they would become applicable only after two years. His delegation might wish to speak further on the two drafts; for the moment it would simply state that it was in agreement with their underlying principle and would not now question the figures given, since that was a matter of detail and subject to further negotiations. The important question which remained was the procedure by which the Charter could be amended, a problem to the solution of which the Great Powers held the key. He hoped that they would realize that they could no longer oppose the current of world public opinion and would face up to their responsibilities in that connexion.

28. His delegation could not subscribe to the idea that draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1 was acceptable only to the extent that it was considered along with the other two drafts. He found it difficult to understand the insistence of some delegations on linking the three texts, unless the aim was to exploit the difficulties anticipated with respect to the amendment of the Charter for the purpose of adjourning consideration of all three questions *sine die*. Considering, however, that the delegations which wished to tie the three questions together were friendly to the African and Asian countries, he could not believe that that was their intention. He accordingly urged that draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1 should be put to the vote and approved unanimously regardless of the action taken on the other two draft resolutions.

29. Turning to the amendment proposed in document A/SPC/L.106, he observed that the arguments in favour of including the Commonwealth among the groups to be taken into account could equally well be applied to other groups based on legal or political rather than geographical considerations, such as the French Community or the League of Arab States, which had come

into existence after the gentleman's agreement concerning the distribution of seats had been reached. His delegation was opposed to the inclusion of such groups, for the Charter referred only to equitable geographical distribution and any other arrangement might well constitute a violation of its provisions. It was true that in the past recognition of the Commonwealth as a group for the purposes of distributing seats had helped to offset the under-representation of the African and Asian States in the Councils and other United Nations bodies, but he was sure that they would rather obtain their seats as Asians and Africans than as members of the Commonwealth.

30. The Canadian amendment omitted any mention of paragraph 1 (b) of the annex to draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1, which dealt with the eastern European States. He found it difficult to understand that omission, for if other groups were to be asked to make a sacrifice from time to time in order to provide a seat for the Commonwealth, there was no reason why the same sacrifice should not be asked of the eastern European States. The words "without altering the pattern of the geographical distribution of seats in the General Assembly as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above" which appeared at the end of the new paragraph pro-

posed in the amendment would seem to indicate that the sponsors of the amendment recognized the fairness of the distribution proposed by the African and Asian States in their draft resolution. Thus the purpose of the amendment seemed to be the maintenance of the privilege enjoyed by members of the Commonwealth of gaining access to a seat on the basis of both geographical location and membership in that group. He was confident that the Commonwealth members, whether African, Asian or European, would be willing to waive that privilege in the interests of justice.

31. Mr. EL-ZAYYAT (United Arab Republic) said that he would like the sponsors of the amendment in document A/SPC/L.106 to make it clear whether they would be prepared to vote in favour of draft resolution A/SPC/L.101 and Add.1 if that amendment was accepted. The sponsors of the draft resolution would have to know the answer to that question before they could consider the appeal made to them by the sponsors of the amendment.

32. Mr. CHAPDELAIN (Canada) replied that he would have to consult the other two sponsors of the amendment before answering the question.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.