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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 14 September 1951, at 5 p.m.

CONTENTS:

Reports of the Ad hoc Committee on the Organization and Operation of the Council and its Commissions (item 36 of the Council agenda) (E/1995 and Corr.1, E/1995/Add.1, 3 and 4, E/AC.24/L.54, E/AC.24/L.56, E/AC.24/L.57, E/AC.24/L.58, E/AC.24/L.59, E/AC.24/L.60, E/AC.24/L.61, E/AC.24/L.62) (continued):

Organization and Operation of the Council (continued)

Present:

Chairman: Mr. KOTSCHNIG

Members:

Belgium	Mr. van der SCHUEREN
Canada	Miss MEAGHER
Chile	Mrs. FIGUEROA
China	Mr. TSAO
Czechoslovakia	Mr. NOSEK
France	Mr. HESSEL
India	Mr. DESAI
Iran	Mr. JAZAERI
Mexico	Mr. GONZALEZ SOSA
Pakistan	Mr. Atwar HUSSAIN
Philippines	Mr. REYES
Poland	Miss KALINOWSKA
Sweden	Mr. MICHANEK
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	Mr. MOROSOV
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. OVERTON
United States of America	Miss BELL
Uruguay	Mr. ALVA EZ OLLONIEGO

Observers from Member States:

Brazil	Mr. MACHADO
Netherlands	Mr. van ASCH van WIJCK

Representatives of specialized agencies:

International Labour Organisation	Mr. FLORES
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Mr. TERENCE

Representatives of non-governmental organizations:

Category B

International Federation of
University Women

Miss MILLS

Secretariat:

Mr. Steinig

Acting Assistant Secretary-General
in charge of the Department of
Social Affairs

Mr. Feller

Legal Adviser

Mr. Lukac

Director, Division of Transport
and Communications

Mr. Powers

Department of Administrative and
Financial Services

Mr. Hogan

Secretary to the Committee

REPORTS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS COMMISSIONS (item 36 of the Council agenda) (E/1995 and Corr.1, E/1995/Add.1, 3 and 4, E/AC.24/L.54, E/AC.24/L.56, E/AC.24/L.57, E/AC.24/L.58, E/AC.24/L.59, E/AC.24/L.60, E/AC.24/L.61, E/AC.24/L.62) (continued):

Organization and Operation of the Council (continued)

The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to continue its general discussion on the various draft resolutions submitted on the reorganization and operation of the Council.

Mr. MOROSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) protested against the delay in opening the meeting, and wished his protest to be placed on record.

Mr. TSAO (China) asked if there was any information about the compromise joint working paper which, he believed, had been evolved by an informal working group during the afternoon.

Mr. OVERTON (United Kingdom), speaking for the six delegations which had taken part in the informal consultations held earlier that afternoon, explained that they had arrived at a compromise text, which, in parts, was already before the meeting. The documents on which that compromise was based were the joint working paper submitted by the Canadian, Philippine, Swedish and United Kingdom delegations (E/AC.24/L.58); the working paper (E/AC.24/L.54) submitted jointly by the Belgian, French and United States delegations; and the amendments (E/AC.24/L.60) to that earlier working paper introduced at the preceding meeting by the Belgian representative.

Paragraphs 1 to 12 of the joint working paper (E/AC.24/L.58) had been retained in the new text, subject to the following minor amendments: the addition of the words "and the Secretariat" after the word "delegations" at the end of paragraph 3; the insertion of the words "during or" between the words "reconvened" and "after" in the second sentence of paragraph 9; and the substitution of the words "such main" for the words "as many major" in the first line of paragraph 10.

Paragraphs 13 and 14 of document E/AC.24/L.58 had been dropped. A new

paragraph 13, corresponding to the last Belgian amendment in document E/AC.24/L.60, would read:

"Major questions shall normally be dealt with by the plenary Council, on the understanding that it may refer any item or any particular aspect of an item, to one of its committees for study, drafting or report".

A new paragraph 14 had also been based on that same Belgian amendment, and would read:

"In order to avoid, as far as possible unnecessary duplication of discussion, items directly referred to a committee and decided there shall not be further discussed by the plenary Council, but shall merely give rise to a final vote and to members' explanations of their votes, unless the Council, acting upon a procedural motion by one of its members, decides to open a fresh debate".

The final paragraph of the new text would be identical with that of the final paragraph of the Belgian, French and United States joint working paper (E/AC.24/L.54), which read:

"Requests the Secretary-General to prepare and present to the fourteenth session of the Council such draft revised rules of procedure as appear to be required to make the rules of procedure of the Council and of the functional Commissions conform to the provisions of this resolution".

Mr. HESSEL (France) said that the informal conversations held earlier that afternoon had yielded very satisfactory results: instead of a number of texts, which had been very difficult to examine owing to differences in form, the Committee at present had before it a single text, which contained no fresh material. The authors of the Belgian, French and United States joint working paper (E/AC.24/L.54) therefore withdrew their text; there was thus left only one document (E/AC.24/L.58), in which certain amendments, all previously submitted to the Committee, had been incorporated.

As a result of those modifications, the new text met the wishes of the authors of the two joint working papers previously before the Committee (E/AC.24/L.54 and E/AC.24/L.58). The authors of those texts had previously only disagreed about the methods to be adopted; agreement had now been reached on that point. All the

suggestions submitted to the Committee at recent meetings had, as far as possible, been taken into account. Account had also been taken, so far as the plan of the working paper allowed, of the difficulties experienced by certain delegations on account of the restricted number of members at their disposal, or of their attaching particular importance to the consideration of certain matters.

Mr. REYES (Philippines) wished to explain the position of the Philippine delegation on the various working papers before the Committee. He had agreed to be a co-sponsor of document E/AC.24/L.58 in order to speed up discussion in the Committee, and on the understanding that it did not constitute a final text, and because in its main points, and especially in paragraphs 7, 10, 11 and 12, it reflected the position taken by his delegation.

The Philippine delegation was in favour of holding two Council sessions a year, and of the establishment of a committee of the whole to draw up the annual agenda. It was anxious that there should be no artificial segregation of social from economic questions, that groups of related subjects should be taken up at the same session, and that there should be no implicit suggestion that one session of the Council would be more important than the other. That consideration applied especially to the questions relating to technical assistance mentioned in the concluding phrase of paragraph 11 of document E/AC.24/L.58. In that case, however, the insertion of the qualifying word "current" met his delegation's point. He took it to mean that the consideration at the first session of technical assistance items ripe for discussion was not precluded.

He had made a reservation, however, on the subject of paragraph 14 of document E/AC.24/L.58, and maintained that reservation in respect of the revised text, for he was convinced that the right of representatives to reopen discussion of an item already dealt with in committee should not be limited. In that connexion, he thought it should be possible for the Council, under the authority of the Charter, to adopt a rule of procedure similar to rule 67 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, by which a report of a committee might be reconsidered in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly if one-third of the Members present and voting at the plenary meeting so requested. That rule had been drawn up under the

authority of Article 21 of the Charter, by which the General Assembly was empowered to adopt its own rules of procedure, and similar authority had been provided for the Economic and Social Council in Article 72 of the Charter. He thought that the adoption of such a rule by the Council might enable the difficulties experienced by his own and other delegations on the subject of double discussion to be resolved. The Council was master of its own procedure, as rule 83 made clear; and it could adopt a new rule along the lines he had suggested, on the basis of rule 59 of its current rules of procedure.

The CHAIRMAN invited the Legal Adviser to the Secretariat to comment on the legal point raised by the Philippine representative.

Mr. FELLER (Legal Adviser) said that it was certain that on no account could the Economic and Social Council run counter to or amend the provisions of the Charter, paragraph 2 of Article 67 of which prescribed that the Council should take its decisions by simple majority, in the following terms:

"Decisions of the Economic and Social Council shall be made by a majority of the members present and voting".

However, that related to decisions taken by formal vote. In the case of rule 67 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no such formal vote was involved; the requirement for "one-third of the Members present and voting" referred to a request, which was simply put to the meeting by the President and, if more than one-third of the Members present raised their hands, acceded to. That rule had been introduced simply to ensure that one member, or a small group of members, would never be in a position to obstruct the General Assembly's work by calling for the discussion to be reopened on every report submitted by the main committees of the General Assembly. Since, like that body, the Council was master of its own procedure except where formal votes were concerned, he thought there was no legal impediment to its adopting a similar rule if it so desired.

Mr. REYES (Philippines) thanked the Legal Adviser for his explanation, and said that the adoption of such a rule might afford a way out of its difficulties for his delegation and for the Committee.

Mr. ALVAREZ OLLOPREGO (Uruguay) was not altogether satisfied with the new joint working paper introduced by the United Kingdom representative. It was inadmissible to restrict the right of delegations in the Council to define their position or to indicate how that position had changed since a particular question had been considered by a committee.

He realized that provision must be made to enable the difficulties which were preventing the Council from functioning in a satisfactory manner to be surmounted; timely recourse to the provisions of rule 50 of the Council's rules of procedure would, in his opinion, dispose of most of them. If a delegation felt it unnecessary for the Council to re-consider in detail a question which had already been dealt with by one of its Committees, it could introduce a formal procedural motion to that effect based on rule 50. To go further would, he feared, encroach upon what he regarded as an inalienable right: the right to express one's opinion and to initiate a discussion. Clearly, if the Council recognized the need for considering the same question a second time, it would have to allow a second discussion. The Uruguayan delegation therefore wanted the full right to speak to be recognized, within the limitations prescribed in the rules of procedure.

Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) observed that the new joint working paper introduced by the United Kingdom representative contained little that was new. She pointed out that at the preceding meeting she had referred to the fact that consideration of the question of the financing of the economic development of under-developed countries had given rise to a debate in the Council which had lasted a week; that debate had led the Council to make substantive changes to the resolution adopted on the subject by the Economic Committee. The French representative had thereupon stated that the question concerned should not have been dealt with by the Committee, and that it had been a serious mistake to refer it to the Committee; it therefore appeared that that representative attached importance to the question of deciding whether a given item should be examined by the Council itself in plenary meeting, or by one of its committees in the first instance. Thus, she considered that she was right in saying that in her opinion the way to

solve the difficulties impeding the smooth operation of the Council, not to limit its debates but, on the contrary, to allocate questions to be discussed on the agenda of the Council and of its Committees.

With regard to the measures that should be taken to avoid double discussions, she agreed with the Uruguayan representative, and reminded the Committee that the Council's rules of procedure included four rules providing for the limitation of debates, namely: rule 49, which entirely met one of the United Kingdom representative's points, since recourse to the provisions of that rule would make it possible to defer examination of a question which had not been sufficiently well prepared; rule 50; and rules 52 and 53.

The United Kingdom representative had said that the authors of the new working paper had decided to embody in paragraph 9 of document E/AC.24/L.58 the idea which appeared in paragraph (5) of the Belgian amendment (E/AC.24/L.60). So far as she herself was concerned, she did not think that the new version of paragraph 9 was much better. She would prefer to keep to the version suggested by the Belgian representative, but, in addition, to specify that the few Council meetings to be held towards the end of the annual session of the General Assembly or immediately after its close should be held in the same place as the General Assembly itself, for obvious reasons of economy. She proposed, therefore, that in paragraph 9 of document E/AC.24/L.58, the words "at headquarters" should be replaced by the words "preferably at the place where the General Assembly has met". It would be consequentially necessary to delete the end of paragraph 9 (a), beginning with the words "and of other matters....".

With regard to paragraph 9 (b) of document E/AC.24/L.58, she thought it would be desirable to state whether the dates to be fixed in accordance with paragraph 10 would be fixed in respect of one of the Council's sessions only, or in respect of both of them. In the same way, it might be well to specify at what date the examination of the various groups of questions to be placed on the agenda of the Council's second session would begin. Paragraphs (4)(a) and (5)(d) of the joint working paper submitted by the delegations of Belgium, France and the United States of America (E/AC.24/L.54) suggested that the dates for the commencement of the

consideration of major items or groups of related items should be fixed in relation to both sessions. The text of document E/AC.24/L.58 was less clear on that point, and it would be well to elucidate it. She would also propose that a third sub-paragraph (c) should be added to paragraph 9, stating that during the few meetings to be held towards the end of the annual session of the General Assembly or immediately after its close, the Council would examine the "other questions of a mainly procedural character" (E/AC.24/L.54, paragraph (5)(e)).

With regard to paragraph 11, although the Chilean delegation was opposed to any suggestion of specialized sessions, she thought that it might be useful to have related questions grouped together on the agenda. There would be points in common not only between the questions included in one and the same group, but between the various groups themselves; and she felt that equal importance should be attributed to both types of relationship, and that an effort should be made to observe a definite order in the examination of the various groups of topics.

Document E/AC.24/L.58 no longer referred to the Council Agenda Committee of the whole. The point was not important, since the Council itself, at its second annual session, would undertake the duties previously entrusted to that Committee. But the provisions in paragraph (4)(a) of document E/AC.24/L.54 had also been omitted; and, in view of the statement made by the French representative at the preceding meeting, she thought it essential to make provision for the proper allocation of items as between the agenda of the Council itself and those of its Committees. She therefore proposed the insertion, at the end of the first sentence of paragraph 12 of document E/AC.24/L.58, of the words: "and shall allocate the items which are to be placed on the agenda of the plenary meetings of the Council, and on those of the Committees", which would ensure that items would be allocated for both sessions of the Council.

She opposed the substitution of the last Belgian amendment in document E/AC.24/L.60 for paragraphs 13 and 14 of document E/AC.24/L.58, since that would, in her view, leave the situation quite unchanged. She thanked the Philippine representative for drawing attention to the provisions of rule 67 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. But she considered that the rules governing the

operation of the General Assembly could not legitimately be applied to the Council, since the structure of the two organs was entirely different. For example, so far as the General Assembly was concerned, discussions chiefly took place in the Main Committees, since each Member of the General Assembly had five regular representatives with equal powers and status. It was for that reason that rule 67 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly provided that the report of a committee could only be discussed again if at least one-third of the Members present and voting so desired. On the other hand, governments represented in the Economic and Social Council had only one regular representative, so that members of the Council could not be expected to abandon their inalienable right to discuss, in plenary meeting, the questions submitted to the Council but dealt with in the first instance in committee.

For those reasons, she accepted, in general, the new text introduced by the United Kingdom representative, but would formally oppose the adoption of paragraphs 13 and 14 thereof.

Mr. DESAI (India) said that "underlying the Indian delegation's amendment (E/AC.24/L.57) to the joint Belgian, French and United States working paper (E/AC.24/L.54) was that duplication of discussion should be obviated in the future by carefully framed rules. The Canadian, Philippine, Swedish and United Kingdom joint working paper (E/AC.24/L.58) seemed, however, to provide adequately for what his delegation had in mind. He interpreted paragraphs 13 and 14 of that joint working paper, read in conjunction with paragraph 12, to mean that the Council would first decide on the agenda for any one session on the basis of the material placed before it by the Secretary-General, and at the same time also decide which items it would itself take as major items, and which refer to a committee. As the decision would be taken by the Council itself, his delegation would have no objection to items referred to committees being dealt with under paragraph 14: no question would be reopened unless the Council decided otherwise on a procedural motion, to be put to the vote without discussion. If, however, items the discussion on which was begun in plenary meeting were subsequently referred to a committee for further study, there would be no bar to further

agreed to be referred back to the Council, and the five-
minute limit provided in paragraph 14 would not apply.

If that interpretation was correct, the Indian delegation would be prepared to withdraw its amendment.

Mr. Van der SCHUEREN (Belgium) did not think that the misgivings expressed by the Yugoslav representative were justified. In point of fact, the text proposed by the Belgian delegation in document E/AC.24/L.60, upon its approval in Committee would give rise to a final vote and to members' explanations of their votes, without any restriction of the time allowed for such explanations. In that respect the Belgian text was an advance on the joint Canadian, Philippine, Swedish and United Kingdom proposal.

The Philippine representative wanted the Council to introduce into its rules of procedure provisions similar to those of rule 67 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. The Legal Adviser had given a very clear explanation on that subject. But it appeared from the final words of rule 67 that a proposal, supported by not less than one-third of the members present, to reopen a debate must still be put to the vote. The Belgian proposal (E/AC.24/L.60) went further: according to its terms, it would be sufficient merely for one of the members of the Council to propose a fresh debate, and for the Council to agree, for the matter to be so decided.

He was at a loss to understand the opposition to the text, which sought to curb repetitive discussion: it followed from the Belgian delegation's final amendment that, since major questions were to be dealt with by the Council itself, only secondary issues would be considered in committee.

Miss KALINOWSKA (Poland) felt that the informal consultations held earlier had made no contribution to the discussion. Instead of a unified text being placed before the Committee, a series of amendments had been circulated in piecemeal fashion, making discussion extremely difficult; she had been unable even to follow the references made to the many documents. As a result, she could not at that stage express any definite views. The new joint working paper

(E/AC.24/L.58), however, clearly provided for three sessions of the Council. In that it proposed that the Council should be reconvened after the annual session of the General Assembly for a further series of meetings additional to those of the two regular sessions. The Polish delegation could not agree to such a procedure.

There was little difference between the revised joint working paper (E/AC.24/L.58) and its predecessor (E/AC.24/L.54) so far as the conduct of the Council's business was concerned. The Uruguayan and Chilean representatives had drawn attention to the pertinence of rules 49 to 53 of the Council's rules of procedure; in her view, those rules were adequate instruments for the control of debate. Their superiority over the proposals in the joint working paper was demonstrated by the fact that the Belgian representative had found it necessary to reassure the Uruguayan representative that the relevant provision of the new joint working paper would not preclude delegations from explaining their votes in the Council.

She reserved her delegation's right to speak again when a unified text had been placed before the Committee.

Mr. OVERTON (United Kingdom) considered that the Indian representative's interpretation of paragraphs 13 and 14 of the joint draft working paper (E/AC.24/L.58) was correct. That paper, however, required various minor drafting changes to clarify its meaning.

Replying to the points raised by the Chilean representative, he said that the Indian representative's comments on paragraphs 13 and 14 of the joint working paper had already disposed of the first point she had raised. It did not seem to him that the wording of paragraph 9 would preclude the Council from meeting at the same place as the General Assembly, but it was preferable as it stood, as it would be undesirable to compel the Council to meet at the same place as the General Assembly, which might possibly cause considerable inconvenience. For example, the necessary documentation might not be available before the end of the session of the General Assembly, and delegations might thus have to spend unnecessary time away from their headquarters.

It seemed to him that it was unnecessary to add the words "other questions of a mainly procedural character" in connexion with the work to be done by the Council in the meetings outside the two regular sessions, as the point was already covered. To introduce that phrase into the text might give rise to controversy as to what were procedural matters and what were not. The present text avoided raising that issue, and was to that extent preferable.

The fact that paragraph 12 made no provision for dates to be fixed for the discussion of the questions taken up in the second annual session was certainly an omission. Again, the basic agenda for the year provided for groups of subjects for the first session, but not for the second session. Those omissions could be rectified. The programme for the year and the dates of discussions on groups of related subjects should be determined by the Council, and the order of treatment settled during the actual determination of those problems.

Finally, the Chilean representative had noted the omission from paragraph 12 of the words "allocating the items to be placed on the agenda of the plenary Council and of the Committees", which appeared in paragraph (4) (a) of the earlier joint working paper submitted by the Belgian, French and United States delegations (E/AC.24/L.54). It seemed to him, however, that such an allocation would be carried out automatically at the first meeting of each session of the Council.

Mr. HESSEL (France) thanked the Indian representative for having removed a real difficulty by indicating the proper interpretation to be placed on the new paragraphs (13) and (14), which had that moment been circulated as document E/AC.24/L.62. He entirely agreed with the Indian representative on that point.

To judge from the statements of various members of the Committee, the proposed reform was not revolutionary, and the problems it raised should be relatively easy to solve.

The new joint working document seemed to be open to three basic criticisms. The first concerned the number of sessions. It was mere quibbling to regard as a

separate session the few meetings to be held by the Council at the end of the annual session of the General Assembly, when the delegations of all Member States would be on hand, and would have the necessary time to deal with such minor questions as might crop up. There would only be two true Council sessions. Hence there was no question of governments having to send delegations to a full-length session more than twice a year. Moreover, in virtue of the new joint working paper, it was likely that those sessions would be shorter and better organized than had been the case hitherto.

The second criticism related to the question of double discussion. At the outset, some members of the Committee had been anxious to deal drastically with all attempts to discuss one and the same question twice. Under the new working paper, double discussion would no longer be proscribed, indeed, it would become one of the essential elements of the Council's method of operation.

The Indian representative had made it clear that the questions referred to the Council fell into three categories. The first category included questions not yet ripe for political discussion and generally relating to procedure. Inasmuch as such questions called for examination by the Council, they would be referred to a Committee of the whole.

The second category consisted of major questions brought before the Council in plenary meeting, and forming the subject of a thorough and full discussion. It was not always advisable to refer such questions to a committee, and hence a single debate might be sufficient.

The subjects in the third category constituted the bulk of the Council's work. They were questions of major importance involving basic principles relating to the policies to be followed in the economic and social fields. Such questions required detailed study. The procedure laid down for the study of such questions in the new paragraphs (13) and (14) was perfectly clear. The questions would be brought before the Council in plenary meeting. The Council would give them a preliminary examination, and then refer them, if necessary, to one of its Committees for further study, drafting and report. Once it received the report of the Committee concerned, the Council would undertake further study and take a decision.

He shared the opinion of the Chilean representative in that respect, and it was because of that opinion that paragraphs (13) and (14) of document E/AC.24/L.58 had been inserted. That being so, he was sorry to find that the Chilean representative was opposed to the new text. He was convinced that if she bore in mind the interpretation placed on them by the Indian representative, she would find it possible to accept them.

The third criticism related to the specialization of the Council's sessions. The new draft proposals ignored that point. The idea of having specialized Council sessions had been replaced by the idea of grouping the items of the agenda under the main topics to which they referred. That was a step in the right direction, calculated to meet the wishes of various delegations. He personally felt that such an arrangement would make it possible to re-organize the Council's work on more rational lines.

In conclusion, he pointed out that the joint authors of the new working paper had been accused of trying to restrict the freedom of expression of the members of the Council. Such an accusation could only be explained either by a failure to understand the text of the proposal, or by bad faith on the part of those who made the charge. He would like to state formally that it was not the wish of the authors of the new proposal to restrict the right of Council members to speak. All they were trying to do was to give the Council an opportunity of doing more effective work under the best possible conditions.

Mr. GONZALEZ SOSA (Mexico) explained that his amendment (E/AC.24/L.56) had been made to the earlier joint working paper (E/AC.24/L.54). If the authors were prepared to accept the addition to paragraph 7 of the new joint working document (E/AC.24/L.58) of the words "at the headquarters of the United Nations, unless the Council decides otherwise", he would withdraw his amendment.

Mr. OVERTON (United Kingdom), for his part, was prepared to accept the Mexican amendment.

Mr. MICHALEK (Sweden), speaking of the joint working paper (E/AC.24/L.58), of which he was one of the co-sponsors, said that the Council had suffered greatly

during 1951, and especially at the present session, from the lack of a basic agenda and programme of work for the year. He hoped that it would be possible in the future to work out such an agenda and programme and to stick to them. The programme should be so worked out that related subjects were dealt with in groups, the discussion of each group to start on a date fixed in the annual programme. Several delegations had claimed that it would be difficult to group items in that way because of the close inter-relationship of economic and social questions. Such a relationship certainly existed, but it was obviously possible to separate items; indeed, separation was already made by the mere fact that some items were remitted to the Economic Committee, some to the Social Committee and yet others to the Co-ordination Committee. His own small delegation had had to segregate the items in order to deal with them, and had found no difficulty in deciding which of the two terms it had set up should deal with each of them.

He was more dubious about the French representative's grouping of items into important, less important and procedural categories. Such a grouping would be extremely difficult to put into practice. A third way would be to divide items into those which were, and those which were not, ripe for consideration, or into well prepared items and inadequately prepared items. Had those items which, in the opinion of the majority, were not ripe for consideration, been deleted, the agenda for the present session would have been considerably lighter.

No discussion could ever be adequate unless the necessary documentation was delivered to governments in good time. In the case of his own country, six weeks was a very short time, especially if the Council's session began in July, for the summer was brief in his country, and it was difficult to find enough experts in Government departments to study the documents in time for the session. Similar considerations were perhaps equally valid in the case of other countries. If the Council had not the courage to follow up its own ideas on the concentration of its efforts and resources, and if it failed to defer items until they had been fully prepared, it would never achieve any but poor results.

From the point of view of the Secretariat, too, it was of importance that the Council should deal with items in related groups. Again, when sessions were held

away from headquarters too many officials were kept waiting about for items to come up in the Council; if subjects were dealt with in groups, some of those officials could remain at their posts in New York until the date fixed for the discussion.

Mr. Atwar HUSSAIN (Pakistan) explained that his amendment (E/AC.24/L.59) had been made to the earlier joint working paper (E/AC.24/L.54) that had now been superseded, and on the assumption that the Indian amendment (E/AC.24/L.57) stood; as neither of those proposals existed any longer, he would withdraw it.

Mr. REYES (Philippines), referring to the Belgian representative's comments on rule 67 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, said that he had made no formal proposal, but only a tentative suggestion, regarding the adoption of a similar rule by the Council. He understood the Belgian representative's interpretation of rule 67 to mean that after a request for the reopening of a discussion in plenary meeting had been made, that request would then be considered a procedural motion and decided by a majority vote. In his experience, rule 67 had been interpreted liberally, and he could recall no case in which the President of the General Assembly had denied the request of a sufficient number of members that discussion should be reopened on any topic. If the Belgian representative's interpretation of the rule was accepted, however, he would withdraw his suggestion, and would support the views expressed by the Chilean and Uruguayan representatives instead.

With regard to the Indian representative's interpretation of paragraphs 13 and 14 of the new joint working paper (E/AC.24/L.58), the difficulty was to determine what items were of major and what of minor importance. A majority of members, for example, might decide that certain items were major. The Philippines delegation could not agree, to take a specific case, that freedom of information was of minor importance, though a majority of delegations at the present session seemed to consider it as such. If a vote was taken on the new joint working paper, therefore, he would request that paragraphs 13 and 14 should be voted on separately.

Mr. ALVAREZ OLLONIEGO (Uruguay) thanked the Belgian representative for his explanations. Actually, what he was aiming at was not so much to see that it was generally agreed that members of the Council should address the Council, but to see that provisions were adopted establishing their right to do so. There was a fundamental difference between those two matters.

The CHAIRMAN felt that discussion of the question would be greatly simplified if there was one basic text, to which amendments could be made. He asked whether the delegations of Canada, Sweden and the United Kingdom, which appeared to be in agreement, would be prepared to submit a joint text. The Secretariat could then be asked to prepare a document relating thereto, the amendments remaining before the Committee for consideration at the next meeting.

It was so agreed.

Mr. MOROSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the problem before the Committee was not to prepare a consolidated text and to vote upon it, but to avoid the consideration of any draft resolution that would affect the normal working of the Council. The Soviet Union delegation had not had an opportunity of studying the joint proposal introduced by the United Kingdom representative at the beginning of the meeting, and therefore reserved its right to speak on it at the next meeting.

The meeting rose at 7.50 p.m.