

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

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**SIXTH COMMITTEE, 1243rd  
MEETING**

Friday, 4 December 1970,  
at 10.50 a.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Paul Bamela ENGO (Cameroon).

**AGENDA ITEM 88**

**Need to consider suggestions regarding the review of the  
Charter of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/8053,  
A/C.6/L.817/Rev.1)**

1. Mr. BEJASA (Philippines) said that in response to the wish expressed by several delegations, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.6/L.817/Rev.1 had decided to issue a revision<sup>1</sup> in which the third preambular paragraph would be replaced by the following new paragraph:

*"Having heard the different views expressed during the consideration of the item at its twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth sessions,"*

2. He wished further to clarify some points in the draft resolution. His delegation had noted that in the French and Spanish versions "review" had been translated "*révision*" and "*revisión*", respectively. In English, the terms "review" and "revision" were not synonymous. What his delegation had had in mind was a re-examination of the provisions of the Charter by Member States, and there was nothing irregular about that request, since the Charter itself provided for such a procedure; moreover, a number of Member States felt that the present was an appropriate time to proceed to such a reappraisal. The draft resolution requested the Secretary-General to invite Member States to communicate to him their views and suggestions on the matter and to submit to the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly a report containing those views and suggestions. The General Assembly could then, on the basis of that report, take any measures it deemed appropriate with a view to either modifying some of the provisions of the Charter or leaving it intact, depending on which of the two courses was favoured by Member States.

3. In any event, his delegation could only reject as totally groundless the assertion that the suggestions regarding a review of the Charter constituted an attempt to undermine it. On the contrary the Philippine initiative aimed at making the Charter a more effective instrument for the achievement of the objectives defined twenty-five years earlier. Similarly, his delegation rejected the accusation that any suggestion regarding a review of the Charter undermined the very foundations of the United Nations and, consequently, the legal basis for peaceful co-operation among States. In his statement at the 1238th meeting of the

Committee, General Romulo had stated quite clearly that his Government regarded the principles of the Charter as fundamental and sacrosanct. The changes which had been suggested—purely by way of example, moreover—were of a functional nature and the Organization could legitimately consider them under Chapter XVIII of the Charter. His delegation did not see how it was possible to maintain, as some delegations had done, that suggestions which had not yet even been submitted ran counter to international co-operation and security and world peace. The least that could be said was that such a judgement was premature. It was possible that after having considered those suggestions, the General Assembly might decide to convene a General Conference in accordance with the provisions of Article 109 (1). It was also possible that that conference might recommend alterations of the Charter by a two-thirds vote. It was also possible that one or more of the permanent members of the Security Council might oppose the wish of the majority of Member States and prevent the alterations from taking effect. His delegation was prepared to take that risk. It nevertheless hoped that a review of the Charter in the light of the experience acquired over the past twenty-five years would prove constructive, if only by giving the seventy-six States which had not participated in the drafting of the Charter a feeling of deeper attachment to it and to the United Nations itself. In any event, to request the views of Member States would surely help to ascertain their attitude towards the Charter and, consequently, to give a better idea of what remained to be done to make the United Nations a centre for the harmonization of the efforts of nations to achieve the common objectives of peace, progress and justice.

4. Mr. CHE (China) noted that the draft resolution was based, essentially, on the idea that the Charter no longer met the needs of the time. It must of course be admitted that there were mechanisms or procedures which could be improved, but the important thing was the spirit in which the provisions of the Charter were applied because it must not be forgotten that the basic principles of the Charter were an expression of the noblest ideas mankind had ever had. While recognizing that the high ambitions proclaimed in the Charter had not always found concrete expression, he did not feel that a review of the Charter would improve that state of affairs. It was for the Member States themselves to do all in their power to ensure the full application of its provisions. The international community could not live in harmony unless the Charter was scrupulously respected.

5. His delegation therefore was not prepared to support any proposal for a mere general review of the Charter at the present juncture and would abstain in the vote on the draft resolution.

<sup>1</sup> Subsequently circulated as document A/C.6/L.817/Rev.2.

6. Mr. BREWER (Liberia) said that his country, as one of the fifty-one founding Members of the United Nations, recognized the exceptional value of the Charter of the United Nations; but it did not think that it should be regarded as a document which could not be changed. It seemed to him natural that after twenty-five years of existence the Charter should be reviewed for the purpose of determining whether or not it was necessary to adapt some of its provisions to the realities of the day. The question, like that of the role of the International Court of Justice, called for a decision of a political nature and it was therefore necessary to invite the views of States regarding it. While he regretted that views had already been expressed regarding the alterations which should be made to the Charter, he would support the draft resolution because its primary purpose was to ascertain the views of Member States on a matter which it was time for the United Nations to take up.

*Mr. Houben (Netherlands), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

7. Mr. SHITTA-BEY (Nigeria) said that he realized the political nature of the item under consideration. He shared the view that the Charter was a treaty which could be

revised by the States parties to it in order to bring it more into line with the realities of international life. Although he hoped that the draft resolution, which his delegation would support, would be the subject of general agreement in the Committee, he would be willing to accept an extension of the time-limit set in paragraph 1 if such an extension might help the different groups to reconcile their views.

8. Mr. FRANCIS (Jamaica) said that whatever differences of views there might be between States on the item under consideration, there could be no doubt that all wanted to safeguard the integrity of the Charter. His delegation believed that the time had come to review the provisions of that instrument, and it wished to stress that a decision to that effect would in no way prejudice any conclusions formulated as a result of such a review. His delegation would unreservedly support the draft resolution, and considered that the Committee should adopt a text on the present agenda item substantially along the lines of that draft.

9. The CHAIRMAN announced that Liberia was to be added to the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.

*The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.*