



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Sixteenth Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Monday, 27 July 1953
at 3 p.m.

PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA

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President: Mr. Raymond SCHEYVEN (Belgium).

Present:

The representatives of the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, China, Cuba, Egypt, France, India, Philippines, Poland, Sweden, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Observers from the following countries: Brazil, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Italy, Libya, Netherlands.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, International Monetary Fund, World Health Organization.

Signing of the armistice in Korea: tribute to the fallen

1. The PRESIDENT said that in his capacity as president of one of the principal organs of the United Nations, then in session, he had felt it his duty to convene a solemn meeting of the Economic and Social Council to celebrate the signing of the armistice in Korea, a great and splendid day for the United Nations. At the beginning of that session he had indeed expressed the hope that the signature of the armistice might be celebrated at Geneva.

2. Emphasizing the futility of the war in Korea, as demonstrated by the fact that the armistice line was roughly the same as the former line of demarcation between North and South Korea, he pointed out that all that the war had accomplished was the death of hundreds of thousands of human beings, great suffering, and incalculable destruction. The Council had not met to celebrate the victory of either side, but to rejoice in the fact that the great principle of collective security had been safeguarded. It was now for the United Nations to fulfil by peaceful means—the only means laid down in the Charter—its promise of a unified, free and democratic Korea.

3. He trusted that now that the guns were silent on the Korean front it might be easier to stamp out the flames which unfortunately were consuming other parts of the world, and to find in concert a peaceful solution for outstanding differences.

4. Without wishing in any way to damp the universal rejoicing, he called on the members of the Council to turn their thoughts towards the unhappy land of Korea,

devastated by war. It would be the duty of the United Nations as a whole and of each of its Members individually to come to the assistance of Korea in a spirit of generosity, and to help her heal her wounds. Aid in the reconstruction of Korea would be a proof of solidarity in a great peaceful endeavour.

5. He paid respectful tribute to the hundreds of thousands of men and women who had sacrificed their lives or their health for the sake of the great ideal which bound together the Members of the United Nations. His sympathy went out to the families and friends of the victims in their affliction.

6. The road ahead was still long, arduous and full of pitfalls, and the achievement of the ultimate goal—real peace throughout the world—called for intelligence, courage, understanding and, most of all, a spirit of conciliation. The memory of the sacrifices made and the ideals cherished by those who had been called upon to do the actual fighting on the battlefield would prove a source of strength to all in the work for the attainment of that peace for which some had fallen and others had suffered or were still suffering. They had earned the promise that their sacrifice would not be in vain. They had fought for a better world, and it was for the Members of the United Nations to see to it that their hopes were realized.

7. Before declaring the meeting closed, he asked the members of the Council and all present to rise and observe one minute's silence in memory of all the victims of the Korean war.

The members of the Council and all attending the meeting rose and observed one minute's silence.

8. Mr. ARUTYUNYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation associated itself with the President's remarks regarding the futility of the Korean war and with his invitation to Members of the Council to honour the memory of all those who had sacrificed their lives for a great ideal. The President would certainly understand that the ideal to which he had referred was also cherished by the soldiers of the armies of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea and the Chinese volunteers who, to no less a degree, had fought for their ideal. The war had shown once again that the ideal of peoples fighting for their freedom was an ideal which could not be destroyed by any weapon whatsoever. In accepting the President's invitation to stand and honour the memory of the fallen, the Soviet Union delegation had wished to emphasize that the sacrifices made for that ideal would not be in vain and that Korea would really become a united, democratic and peace-loving country.

The meeting rose at 3.20 p.m.