



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Forty-third session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Thursday, 20 July 1967
at 10.45 a.m.

PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA

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Agenda item 1:

Adoption of the agenda

Question of the inclusion of a supplementary item
proposed by the USSR (*continued*) 101*President*: Mr. M. KLUSAK (Czechoslovakia)*Present*:

Representatives of the following States: Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, France, Guatemala, India, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Venezuela.

Observers for the following Member States: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Central African Republic, Chile, China, El Salvador, Finland, Greece, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Tunisia, United Arab Republic, Yugoslavia.

Observers for the following non-member States: Federal Republic of Germany, Switzerland.

Representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Health Organization.

The representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

AGENDA ITEM 1

Adoption of the agenda

QUESTION OF THE INCLUSION OF A SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM
PROPOSED BY THE USSR (E/4409) (*continued*)

1. Mr. COX (Sierra Leone) said that he wished to rectify certain incorrect statements pertaining to his Government made at the two previous meetings by the observer for the United Arab Republic and the representative of Libya.

2. The question at present before the Council was whether or not to include in the agenda a proposal of a political nature which, in the view of his delegation, could in no

way assist the Economic and Social Council in attaining its objectives.

3. Questions relating to imperialism and neo-colonialism were the province of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which had been dealing with the question of the Middle East. It was because his country understood the nature and essence of neo-colonialism and imperialism that it had been able to win its independence and subsequently to maintain the best of relations both with the United Kingdom and with all other countries, large and small, whatever their policies.

4. He regretted that the Governments of countries north of the Sahara had not seen fit to consult their brothers in other regions of Africa before the situation took a tragic turn. If they had done so, events might have turned out differently; and at least the Governments in question had been able to acquaint themselves with the position of the non-Arab African countries, which was both coherent and objective.

5. His delegation had the greatest respect for the Egyptians and the leading role they had played in the history of civilization. Since his Arab brothers had inferred from a decision taken in a spirit of objectivity that the Government of Sierra Leone had no sympathy with them, he wished to point out that even in the most united families differences of opinion sometimes arose. His Government was for its part determined to maintain its traditionally friendly relations not only with the Arab States, but also with Israel.

6. In reply to the representative of Libya, who had insulted his Government by saying that it had allowed itself to be corrupted and influenced by vicious propaganda, he wished to say that his delegation's views were founded above all on honesty and objectivity, which could certainly do more to strengthen international brotherhood and co-operation than unwarranted insults.

7. The reason for his delegation's refusal to discuss political issues in the Council was not its antipathy to any person or persons but the fact that the Council was not a suitable body for such discussions.

8. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) said that his delegation's position on the inclusion in the agenda of an item relating to the economic and social consequences of the Zionist aggression was based primarily on its conviction that the Council could not remain indifferent to the economic and social damage inflicted on Member States by a savage and long-premeditated act of aggression, and that the

Council should make it a practice to assess the extent of economic and social damage caused by war, in relation to the needs of economic development and the promotion of international co-operation on a basis of mutual respect and common interest. During the discussion on agenda item 2 nearly all speakers had referred to the destructive nature of the armaments race, the violence to which it led and its harmful effects on economic and social development, thereby confirming that war and military activities were of the greatest possible concern to the Council. The Council should therefore study the USSR proposal in an entirely dispassionate spirit. At the present stage the discussion related only to the inclusion of an item in the agenda. Unfortunately some representatives, following the envoy of the Palestine Zionist authorities, had attempted to transform the discussion into a political debate in the true sense, and his delegation consequently felt compelled to add a few remarks to its statement made the previous day.

9. At the 1490th meeting the representative of the Palestine-Zionist authorities, abusing the Council's patience and the privilege he had been granted to speak, had spent more than half an hour on mendacious propaganda, and had asserted that members of the Council who had supported the USSR proposal had been engaging in propaganda tactics. But who was engaging in such tactics? Was it, for instance, Libya or the actual representative of the aggressor State who was attempting to glorify the State's conquests and savagery?

10. The Zionist representative had mentioned the General Assembly's rejection of the resolution of the non-aligned Powers calling for unconditional withdrawal from the occupied territories. He had argued that the Assembly had thereby recognized the legality of the occupation. But had not his Government stated in advance that it would reject any resolution calling for the withdrawal of its troops, even if it were adopted by 121 votes? Was that not a flagrant case of defiance of international law? Did that arrogant Government regard the General Assembly's decisions as important only when they served its own aims? Why had not the Zionist representative mentioned the other decisions by which the Assembly, in its great wisdom, had described the annexation of Jerusalem as illegal and invalid and had refused to tie the withdrawal of the occupation troops to the initiation of direct negotiations?

11. According to an article headlined "Israeli Envoy Dismisses Arab Claims" published in the *International Herald Tribune* on 19 July 1967, the representative of the Zionist authorities in Paris, Mr. Walter Eytan, had said he thought there would be another war about 1975 unless the Arabs recognized Israel and agreed to a settlement. Mr. Eytan had said that Israel set no preconditions for negotiations, but that Jerusalem was not negotiable and that Iraqi troops should be withdrawn from Jordan. Claiming that the west bank of the Jordan had been unilaterally annexed by Jordan—whereas in fact the incorporation of that region in Jordan had been approved by a popular referendum—Mr. Eytan said he did not see how that State could legally claim to have better rights than those of Israel. According to the Zionist Ambassador,

the same applied to the Gaza Strip and even to the occupied parts of Syria. The frontiers of Israel antedating 5 June had been only armistice demarcation lines, and the Israel-Syrian border only a line drawn by the two former colonial Powers. He conceded that Egypt might possibly have a claim to Sinai. For him, Jerusalem had never ceased to be the capital of Israel since David's time, and if that was not acceptable to the Arabs, it was too bad. Thus, although the General Assembly had rejected the principle of conditional withdrawal, the aggressor, supported by its backers, maintained its conditions and declared that the illegally occupied territories, including Jerusalem, would be definitively incorporated into its territory. Given that attitude, which was certainly not founded on respect for the United Nations, should the Zionists be allowed to engage in their mendacious manoeuvres in the Council?

12. The representative of Tel Aviv asserted that the closing of the Strait of Tiran had been illegal and constituted an act of war. However, the United Arab Republic had always maintained that the Strait was within its territorial waters. Who, in those circumstances, had the right to decide on such matters except an impartial court, and why then had the Zionist State of Palestine and its supporters never taken the dispute to the International Court of Justice, despite the fact that the problem had existed for some twenty years? The only reply, of course, was that the Zionists' case lacked any juridical foundation and was merely a pretext to justify their expansionist ambitions.

13. Another argument put forward by the representative of Tel Aviv was that the withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Force at the request of the United Arab Republic had been one of the main causes of the war. If UNEF had really been a means for keeping the peace, why had the Zionists from the outset opposed the United Nations resolutions relating to its installation on both sides of the frontier? In point of fact, that argument was only another pretext intended to justify aggression. The actual root cause of the attack launched in the Middle East was the Zionist policy of expansion and domination, which required the maintenance of a constant state of tension in an area where efforts were being made to encourage immigration, despite overpopulation and unemployment. The Zionists took advantage of the smallest incident to launch large-scale attacks on neighbouring countries. In November 1966, for example, they had attacked a Jordanian village by air and land, killing the inhabitants and destroying their property, and on 7 April 1967 they had carried out a massive raid on a Syrian village, accompanying their attack with violent threats against Syrian sovereignty. It was precisely as a result of those facts that the United Arab Republic had been obliged to take certain precautionary measures, while emphasizing that it would only open fire in the event of an attack on the Arab countries. The Zionists, enraged at the United Arab Republic's refusal to accept the destruction of Syria passively, had decided to launch a large-scale attack on three fronts, while claiming that they were resisting an aggressive attack on themselves. It was hard to understand how public opinion, ill-informed as it was, could have been deceived by such a falsehood. How,

moreover, could such a statement be reconciled with the fact, loudly proclaimed by the Zionist authorities, that their aircraft had destroyed the Arab air forces on the ground, with the fact that over a period of sixteen years those authorities had been preparing plans to win the war in the first eighty minutes, and with the fact that the Cabinet had met a few hours before the attack, which had been timed to foil the Arab radar defences.

14. The Zionist representative had described the 1948 war of aggression as a popular liberation movement. One might well ask whose liberation he meant, seeing that there were at that time only 300,000 Zionists in Palestine as against a million Arabs. Was it acceptable that a minority enjoying powerful foreign backing should drive out a majority which had lived in the country for thousands of years?

15. The Zionist representative claimed that during those wars his people had never deliberately killed civilians. He had doubtless forgotten the massacres at Dar Yassem, Gaza and other places and the bombings in which many innocent people had died, as at Qalqiliya.

16. The Zionists had jeered at the Arab States, which, in their words, had run to the United Nations to complain of their sufferings. The Arabs had not run to the United Nations to complain. The question had been brought before the Organization because of its responsibility for the maintenance of peace. Such remarks could only come from the State which had never ceased to defy the United Nations and which bore responsibility for the death of the mediator Folke Bernadotte and of the Indian and Brazilian soldiers of the Emergency Force.

17. Again according to the *International Herald Tribune*, a recently organized opinion poll showed that the most popular man among the Zionists was President Johnson, and the least popular the Secretary-General of the United Nations. That fact alone clearly demonstrated the effects of propaganda current in the aggressor country.

18. In conclusion, he wished to refer to some points raised at the previous meeting. The Canadian representative's remark that the Arabs would do better to listen to those who filled their granaries than to those who filled their arsenals seemed neither appropriate nor opportune. The Arabs were not beggars; their relations with other countries were founded solely upon mutual respect and dignity, and at a time when they found themselves under the heel of a foreign occupying power they should hardly be asked to think of their stomachs rather than their armaments.

19. He was extremely sorry that the representatives of Sierra Leone and Dahomey should have felt that he was in any way making charges against their Governments. All he had said was that organized and mercenary propaganda had been brought to bear to mislead and hypnotize public opinion. There was nothing in that to offend any delegation, least of all that of Sierra Leone, which he had never mentioned.

20. The Arabs—whether of Libya, where a third of the population had been exterminated by fascist Italy, of Algeria, which had lost a million of its sons and daughters

in the struggle against another colonial Power, or of other countries—would never bow the knee to their enemies, and would never renounce their right to live in peace in the land of their forefathers.

21. Mr. SEKULIĆ (Observer for Yugoslavia), speaking under rule 75 of the rules of procedure, said that his delegation fully supported the Soviet proposal. It was difficult to deny that the damage suffered by the three countries which had been Israel's victims raised a problem of the most urgent nature which was within the Council's competence; and it was idle to make fine speeches about the Development Decade if some of its achievements were destroyed by aggression.

22. Mr. NJINÉ (Cameroon) said that at the emergency special session of the General Assembly his delegation had spoken in favour of the unconditional withdrawal of Israel forces from the occupied Arab territories. However, the United Nations had a task of supreme difficulty before it to ensure a lasting peace in that area, and the Cameroonian delegation felt that any stand likely to interfere with the action taken by the highest organ of the United Nations, to which the Council was answerable, would be untimely and ineffective. It would therefore abstain if the Soviet proposal was put to the vote.

23. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Observer for Poland), speaking under rule 75 of the rules of procedure, said that the decision the Council was called upon to take would show whether it was capable of discharging its responsibilities in the economic and social fields and in the field of human rights. It was impossible to study the situation of the world economy while trying to ignore facts which had helped to worsen it, facts which, furthermore, constituted a flagrant violation of human rights. Poland, which had suffered cruelly under aggression and Nazi occupation, supported the Soviet proposal and considered that the aggressor must be held accountable for the economic damage it had inflicted on the Arab countries, and must make good in full the value of what he had destroyed.

24. Mr. HARKETT (Morocco) said that the statements of policy of the Israel leaders belied the Israel observer's statement that Israel had always worked for peace with the Arab world, and exposed Israel's expansionist aims. The fact that the aircraft of the Arab countries had been destroyed on the ground clearly showed where the aggression had come from. It was the Council's duty to look into the economic consequences of Israel's aggression. Nobody seriously denied that Israel was occupying Arab territories and exploiting their wealth. The Moroccan delegation supported the Soviet proposal and considered that the Council was fully competent to discuss the question.

25. Mr. GOLDSCHMIDT (United States of America) said that his delegation would vote against the inclusion in the agenda of the supplementary item proposed by the Soviet Union. The lengthy discussions of extraneous political issues that the Council had already engaged in had diverted it from the important economic and social issues on its agenda. The USSR proposal raised highly

sensitive political issues currently being discussed by the competent bodies of the United Nations—the General Assembly and the Security Council. It was an indirect attempt to have one State Member of the United Nations branded as an aggressor, although the General Assembly and the Security Council had rejected draft resolutions designed for that purpose. The substance of the USSR proposal was exactly the same as that of operative paragraph 3 of the USSR draft resolution which had been rejected by a large majority in the General Assembly—including a large majority of the States members of the Council—on 4 July 1967. The Assembly had rejected it, and no useful purpose would be served by taking it up in the Council. To single out one State for such condemnation, apart from being neither equitable nor constructive, might complicate the efforts of the competent United Nations bodies to find a lasting political settlement for the problems of the Middle East, to heal the wounds left by the war which had begun in 1948, and to usher in an era of economic and social progress in that part of the world.

26. The President of the United States had said that if the nations of the Middle East turned towards the works of peace they could rely on the friendship and assistance of the United States—for example, in matters such as a solution for the refugees, regional co-operation, and the application of nuclear energy to the desalination of sea water. The President had already put the United States squarely behind the emergency relief measures now being taken to alleviate suffering in the area. That was in the best tradition of the American people, who were never found wanting when human beings were in need. The Council must not be diverted from its special tasks. Once the Security Council and the General Assembly had charted the way to a political settlement, the Council could at their request tackle the urgent and important work of reconstruction and development of the Middle East.

27. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that so far as concerned the consequences of Israel's aggression, the Soviet Union's position was absolutely clear. Israel must not only evacuate the territories it had occupied, but also compensate the Arab States for the loss it had caused them. The urgency and gravity of the problem of the economic consequences of the aggression were denied by no one. Consequently, the Council, which, according to the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter, was responsible for the economic and social policy of the Organization, could not wash its hands of the problem.

28. It had been argued that the conflict was essentially a political one and that all its aspects, including the economic ones, were matters for the Security Council and the General Assembly. But the General Assembly's consideration of the political aspects of the conflict was in no way incompatible with the Council's consideration of its economic aspects. It need only be remembered that in the first few years of the Organization's existence the Economic and Social Council had actively concerned itself with the liquidation of the consequences of the Second World War, the reconstruction of devastated

areas and other similar problems. Arguments alleging the Council's lack of competence were in point of fact strained and unfounded.

29. Some had tried to argue that the Arab States had not suffered any economic damage at all as a result of the aggression, and that consequently there was no case to debate. Those arguments were rebutted by the facts. For instance, the interruption of tourism and of shipping in the Suez Canal, and the occupation of the oil fields in Sinai, etc., had caused the United Arab Republic losses estimated at \$500 million or almost 40 per cent of its foreign exchange earnings. Nor could any argument be derived from the recent votes in the General Assembly. All the Mediterranean countries except Italy had voted in favour of the draft resolution condemning Israel's aggression and demanding the immediate withdrawal of the occupation troops. Of the twenty-seven members of the Council only ten, most of them members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Organization of American States, had voted against the draft resolution.

30. The representatives of Canada and the United States had argued that the Council's agenda was overloaded; but it was unthinkable that matters such as multilateral food aid, the United Nations Development Decade or the development and utilization of human resources should be considered without any reference to the consequences of the aggression perpetrated in the Middle East. Could they without hypocrisy be passed over in favour of technical details and abstract talk about the benefits of international co-operation?

31. The observer for Israel had not hesitated in his statement to abuse the Council's patience. Admittedly, as the proverb went, a tissue of lies could be woven with shreds of truth. With monstrous cynicism the Israel observer had even gone so far as to laud the advantages of Israel's occupation of the Arab territories. His attacks on the Soviet Union and its Government could not possibly impress Soviet people, whose only reaction to lucubrations of that kind was disgust.

32. The Soviet delegation was prepared to study the proposal made by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania at the 1490th meeting for the establishment of a group of experts to study the economic and legal aspects of the Middle East conflict and report to the Council.

33. Mr. TRIVEDI (India) said that the members of the Council must not be influenced in their work by political or historical considerations. Although it was true that political considerations and problems of security often affected economic problems, it was even truer that the developing countries attached paramount importance to economic problems. Taking his stand on the Charter, especially Chapter III, he maintained that although the General Assembly did occupy a predominant position among United Nations organs, because all Member States were represented in it, the Economic and Social Council remained one of the principal organs and must not be treated like an inferior body.

34. The proposal now before the Council raised three issues: the Council's competence to deal with the matter,

the question whether it was appropriate for the Council to consider it, and the wording of the item proposed for inclusion in the agenda. There was no doubt, under the terms of the Charter (Article 1 (3), Article 55 (b) and Article 62), that the Council was competent to deal with the question. Furthermore, the Secretary-General had described the Middle East situation as a crisis of world proportions; consequently it was not only appropriate that the Council should consider the situation, it was its duty to do so. Since the General Assembly and the Security Council were concerned with settling political questions and security problems, it was for the Council to study the economic consequences of the Middle East war. India for its part—like the Arab countries, it was sure—desired a lasting peace in that part of the world. Consequently it could not endorse conquests by arms or threats of armed intervention. As to the wording of the item proposed for inclusion in the agenda, certain facts of which all members were aware should be borne in mind: there had been a war, Arab territories were now under occupation, and some Arab countries had suffered serious economic damage. Certain proposals had been made to the Council, e.g. by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, and consultations had taken place. But the Council was now at the end of the second week of its session and had not yet begun consideration of many items of its agenda. Furthermore, a period of reflection and consultation seemed necessary, particularly to allow time for tempers to cool off. Consequently, the Indian delegation proposed that consideration of the question should be postponed to a later date, after consultations had been held between States Members of the Council with the participation of the President.

35. Mr. COX (Sierra Leone) said that if the Council postponed consideration of the matter the political aspects of the question might in the meantime be settled and the Council would be able to concern itself with its purely economic aspects with every prospect of success. Consequently, he supported the Indian representative's proposal.

36. Mr. WALDRON-RAMSEY (United Republic of Tanzania) unreservedly supported the Indian proposal,

which, given a little good will on both sides, once tempers had calmed down, should pave the way to most constructive results.

37. The PRESIDENT expressed the view that the discussion, the speakers' statements and the attention given to the subject by all Council members, despite their differing opinions regarding the substance of the problems arising out of the situation in the Middle East, reflected the gravity of the question, the solution of which called for a serious approach on the part of the Council. The wishes and ideas that had emerged from the discussion continued to preoccupy the members of the Council.

38. He was prepared to proceed as the Indian representative had proposed. He would, if that was the Council's wish, continue and participate in the consultations with delegations. The success of such consultations would, however, depend largely on the members of the Council.

39. Mr. GOLDSCHMIDT (United States of America) said that he was willing to go along with the proposal for postponement of the question of inscribing the supplementary item on the agenda. It was his understanding, however, that the Council would not revert to the matter of the inscription of the proposed item unless and until the delegations had to all intents and purposes reached agreement.

40. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he was not opposed to the proposal for consultations.

41. The PRESIDENT announced that the Council would adopt the Indian representative's proposal to postpone its consideration of the USSR proposal to a later date, on the understanding that the President would continue the consultations with Council members, especially those directly concerned with the issue, taking into account the statements made during the discussion, and would report to the Council at an appropriate time.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.