

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records



GENERAL COMMITTEE, 84th

MEETING

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### CONTENTS

	Page
Organization of the work of the General Assembly (A/BUR/133, A/BUR/134) ( <i>concluded</i> ) .....	23
Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the seventh session: item proposed by the Secretary-General (A/2327) .....	26

*Chairman:* Mr. Lester B. PEARSON (Canada).

#### Organization of the work of the General Assembly (A/BUR/133, A/BUR/134) (*concluded*)

1. The CHAIRMAN noted that the Committee had before it two joint draft resolutions, one concerning the suspension and resumption of the seventh session and the reallocation of two items of the agenda (A/BUR/133), the other dealing with the question of a change in the opening date of regular sessions of the General Assembly (A/BUR/134).

DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, CANADA, EGYPT, GREECE, HONDURAS, THE PHILIPPINES AND THAILAND (A/BUR/133).

2. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he could accept 24 February 1953, or an earlier or later date, for resumption of the seventh session, but he saw no reason why a final decision should not be taken at once as regards the date of resumption. The matter should not be left vague and subject to the discretion of the President. It was important that the Member States should have at least two months' notice of the resumption of the session. He could think of no problems that were likely to arise which could not wait until 24 February for consideration; if any emergency did present itself, the rules of procedure contained clear provisions for the calling of a special session. He therefore called for the deletion of the words "or at an earlier date on the call of the President", at the end of paragraph 1.

3. As regards paragraph 2, he could see no need for reallocating to the First Committee items which were already on the agendas of the Second and Third Committees respectively and which those Committees were quite capable of dealing with satisfactorily. The representative of Greece had himself said that item 70 was essentially a humanitarian question; the Third Committee was therefore the appropriate body to deal with it. The First Committee, moreover, already had a very

heavy agenda. He would therefore oppose the adoption of paragraph 2.

4. Mr. GROSS (United States of America) considered it necessary to retain the last phrase of paragraph 1 in order to provide for the eventuality that the General Assembly might find it necessary to reconvene earlier than the date fixed. The procedure envisaged was consistent with the procedure followed at the sixth session, when the Assembly had suspended its session for a brief period subject to recall by the President. The phrase in question provided an appropriate safeguard for the orderly conduct of the Assembly's business, and he did not feel that the USSR representative had advanced any cogent reasons for not adopting it.

5. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) supported the USSR proposal for deletion of the last phrase of paragraph 1. Since many representatives would be away from New York during the holiday period, it was essential that they should know in advance the exact date of resumption of the session. He agreed that a final decision should be taken at once.

6. Mr. MUNOZ (Argentina) could not agree to deletion of the words in question, in view of the fact that one of the items still remaining to be dealt with was the Korean question. He pointed out that a procedural problem was involved; although a special session could be convened to deal with any emergency which might arise, such a session could not be called to deal with an item which was still on the agenda of an unfinished regular session.

7. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the USSR proposal for the deletion of the words "or at an earlier date on the call of the President".

*The USSR proposal was rejected by 12 votes to 2.*

8. Brigadier-General ROMULO (Philippines) explained that he had voted against the proposal, first, because he had full confidence that the President would not use his discretionary power to reconvene the As-

sembly earlier than 24 February unless absolutely necessary, and secondly, because the world political situation was so fluid that the possibility of an earlier resumption should not be ruled out.

9. The CHAIRMAN put the draft resolution (A/BUR/133) to the vote, paragraph by paragraph.

*Paragraph 1 was adopted by 12 votes to 2.*

*Paragraph 2 was adopted by 11 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.*

10. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the draft resolution as a whole.

*The draft resolution was adopted by 12 votes to 2.*

DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, CANADA, EGYPT, GREECE, HONDURAS, PAKISTAN, THE PHILIPPINES AND THAILAND (A/BUR/134).

11. Mr. GROSS (United States of America) felt that the question of the opening date of regular sessions of the General Assembly was a complex problem involving many administrative considerations; and he would welcome the thorough study of the problem which the draft resolution proposed. Nevertheless, although he fully agreed that no hasty or premature decisions should be taken, he thought the Committee should not preclude the possibility of such a study being begun during the second part of the seventh session. If that were done, the question might be settled in time to alter the opening date of the ninth session. Although the draft resolution in its present form did not preclude that possibility, he suggested that it would be made clearer if the word "provisional", in the first line, were deleted, and the word "seventh" substituted for "eighth", in the same line. The phrase "not later than five weeks before the opening of the eighth regular session" in paragraph 2 should also be deleted. He pointed out that if the Assembly did not wish to consider the matter during the second part of the current session, it could defer it to the eighth session.

12. Mr. MUNOZ (Argentina) supported the United States amendment. He recalled that his delegation had originally taken the same view; it was only because that view had received insufficient support from other members that he had agreed to become a sponsor of the draft resolution in its present form. Adoption of the amendment would in no way force the General Assembly to discuss the matter during the second part of the current session, but the members should at least be prepared to begin such a discussion.

13. Mr. TSIANG (China) pointed out that a change in the opening date of regular sessions would have many other implications besides the administrative considerations involved. The Secretary-General's report should take into account the various factors pertaining to the convenience of the governments of Member States. It would save time in the eventual debate on the matter if the word "practical" were substituted for the word "administrative", in paragraph 2.

14. Mr. ALI (Pakistan) supported the United States amendment, which would greatly facilitate plans for the ninth session of the General Assembly and for the 1954 meetings of subsidiary bodies.

15. Mr. HOPPENOT (France) thought that the specific reference in paragraph 2 to "a convenient

date in April" might give the impression that an attempt had been made to prejudge the question of the selection of a date. As a more objective approach to the question, he suggested that the last line of the paragraph should be replaced by the words "to a date other than the third Tuesday in September".

16. He could not support the United States amendment. The problem was too complex to be dealt with in haste; and the procedure proposed by the United States representative would leave too little time to the Secretary-General for the preparation of his report and too little time to the delegations for the study of that report. He himself would scarcely be prepared to discuss the question in February.

17. Mr. LLOYD (United Kingdom) could accept the Chinese and French amendments, but otherwise he preferred the text of the draft resolution as it stood. The main purpose was to avoid dividing a General Assembly session into two parts; and for that reason no decision should be taken until there had been an opportunity to assess the results obtained when a session was opened at the exact time fixed, namely, the third Tuesday in September. Moreover, the far-reaching practical and administrative repercussions of a change in the opening date should not be underestimated. He agreed concerning the necessity of allowing ample time for the preparation and study of the Secretary-General's report.

18. The SECRETARY-GENERAL, in reply to a question from Mr. FAHMY (Egypt), said that it would be difficult, within the next six weeks, to obtain the necessary information from the governments of Member States and to produce a report covering the question in detail. His staff would do its best, as always, but the resulting report might not be as satisfactory as if more time had been allowed.

19. Mr. KYROU (Greece) recalled that when his delegation had originally submitted the draft resolution, he had stated that he could not agree to the inclusion of the question in the agenda of the second part of the current session. That agenda already included eight items, and it was possible that a ninth might be added. He hoped the United States representative would find it possible to accept the draft resolution in its present form, as amended by China and France. He suggested that the Secretary-General should submit his report at the earliest possible moment, and pointed out that any Member which so desired could raise the matter at the second part of the current session.

20. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stressed that undue haste in disposing of the matter was undesirable and considered the French and United Kingdom representatives' arguments to be very weighty. The question of a change in the opening date should not be discussed until the eighth session. He supported the French representative's observation that the reference to a convenient date in April prejudged the whole issue.

21. Brigadier-General ROMULO (Philippines) supported the original text of the resolution and the Chinese and French amendments. Sessions opening in September, with the exception of the fourth session, had not had a fair chance to prove themselves, as they had been interrupted by recesses.

22. Mr. ALI (Pakistan) explained that he agreed with the United States amendment primarily because he felt that the General Assembly should have ample opportunity to consider the question of a change in the opening date of its sessions. If the United States amendment was adopted, the General Assembly would be able to take up the matter at its seventh session and, if it considered that the discussion should be continued, it could submit it to further study at its eighth session.

23. While appreciating the French representative's difficulty, he nevertheless considered that the General Assembly should be given some indication that the contemplated change involved a difference of several months.

24. Mr. GROSS (United States of America) pointed out that he had in no way intended to give the impression of advocating undue haste; on the contrary, he felt that, by including the item in the provisional agenda of the eighth session, the General Assembly would not perhaps have enough time to discuss it sufficiently. He doubted whether the item could be disposed of at the seventh session, but the discussion should at least be started then. By so doing, the General Assembly would avoid having to muster a vote of two-thirds of its Members to have the item placed on the agenda of the eighth session. He was prepared to withdraw his amendment to the first paragraph in order to dispel any misunderstanding.

25. He concurred in the Pakistani representative's comment on the French amendment to paragraph 2. It was quite appropriate for a group of delegations to request a report on the administrative consequences of a change in the opening date to a convenient date in April. If other delegations preferred another date, they were free to make a similar request.

26. He supported the Chinese amendment but requested the French representative to withdraw his suggestion because it would change the character of the draft resolution.

27. Mr. HOPPENOT (France) still felt that, by instructing the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the administrative consequences of a change in the opening date to a convenient date in April, the General Assembly would be asking him to base his report on a preconceived conclusion. The only objective procedure would be to request him to prepare a report which would indicate the various advantages and disadvantages of changing the opening date to some time in the autumn or spring.

28. Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand) accepted, as a co-sponsor of the draft resolution, the Chinese and French amendments on the understanding that the latter allowed the Secretary-General some discretion in his choice of dates.

29. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) concluded from the discussion that paragraph 2 was unnecessary. The Secretariat would obviously have to inquire into the implications of any change in the opening date of regular sessions; there was therefore no reason for including a statement to that effect in the text. Again, there were difficulties in referring to any specific dates.

30. Brigadier-General ROMULO (Philippines) remarked that the inclusion of the reference to a con-

venient date in April was more specific than what the Committee had decided at its previous meeting. It was important to include paragraph 2, because, as principal executive officer, the Secretary-General had the wide knowledge and experience necessary to provide Member States with useful information.

31. Mr. CARIAS (Honduras) accepted the Chinese amendment in his capacity as co-sponsor of the draft resolution. At the previous meeting he had suggested that a date at the beginning of April might be preferable to a date in September for the opening of regular sessions and had remarked that the establishment of a working party to consider all the implications of such a change would be advisable.

32. Mr. TSIANG (China) observed that any report on the consequences of a change in the opening date of regular sessions would have to be related to some specific date within certain limits.

33. Mr. MUNOZ (Argentina) said that he was prepared to accept the omission of the reference to April, but pointed out that, if no date was indicated, the Secretary-General would have to refer to the matter at a later stage in the Committee or in plenary session.

34. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) supported the USSR representative's proposal for the deletion of paragraph 2. The most important observations by delegations on the implications of a change in the opening date, on the work of the Secretariat and on the calendar of meetings would be made in plenary session.

35. The CHAIRMAN remarked that it was impossible for the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the consequences of a change of only a few weeks. If the French amendment was adopted it should be understood that the report was to refer to a substantial change of date.

36. Mr. GROSS (United States of America) said that he would vote against the French amendment as he considered that it would destroy the sense of the draft resolution and reserved his right to explain his position in greater detail after the resumption of the session.

37. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the USSR amendment proposing the deletion of paragraph 2.

*The USSR amendment was rejected by 10 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions.*

38. Mr. HOPPENOT (France) agreed to reword his amendment to read "from the third Tuesday in September to another date earlier or later in the year".

39. The CHAIRMAN put the French amendment to the vote.

*The French amendment was adopted by 7 votes to 5, with 3 abstentions.*

40. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the Chinese amendment to substitute the word "practical" for the word "administrative" in paragraph 2.

*The Chinese amendment was adopted by 11 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.*

41. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) explained that he had not participated in the vote on the Chinese amendment because he considered it to be illegal in origin. He then proposed the substitution

of the word "Secretariat" for the word "Secretary-General".

42. The CHAIRMAN put the USSR proposal to the vote.

*The USSR proposal was rejected by 12 votes to 2.*

43. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the amended draft resolution (A/BUR/134) as a whole.

*The amended draft resolution was adopted as a whole by 12 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.*

44. Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand) said that he had abstained in the vote on the French amendment because he considered the final wording to be too vague.

**Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the seventh session: item proposed by the Secretary-General (A/2327)**

45. The CHAIRMAN asked whether the Committee had any objection to considering the Secretary-General's request (A/2327) for the inclusion on the agenda of the current session of the item "Report of the Secretary-General on personnel policy".

46. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that there was no justification for considering the item mentioned by the Chairman as it was not on the agenda and because it had been submitted too hastily.

47. The CHAIRMAN replied that it was for the Committee to decide whether it wished to take up the item at its current meeting.

*The Committee decided by 12 votes to 2 to consider the Secretary-General's request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the seventh session (A/2327).*

48. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that the proposed item should not be included in the agenda of the current session. The report on personnel policy was not yet available; it was therefore not clear with what subject the General Assembly was expected to deal. When a request was made for

the inclusion of an additional item, it was usually accompanied by an explanatory memorandum so that the General Assembly could consider the merits of the case. No decision could be reached at the moment as even the necessary elementary information was lacking.

49. Mr. FAHMY (Egypt) disagreed with the USSR representative, and congratulated the Secretary-General on his initiative in introducing a very important matter. He hoped that the comprehensive report on personnel policy would be distributed at least two weeks before the resumption of the session.

50. Mr. MUNOZ (Argentina) agreed with the Egyptian representative. The question of personnel policy was very important and was referred to in Article 101 of the Charter. The fact that the Secretary-General wished to submit a report on the matter was sufficient for it to merit serious consideration. He would vote for the inclusion of the proposed item.

51. Brigadier-General ROMULO (Philippines), speaking as Chairman of the Fifth Committee, remarked that various delegations on the Fifth Committee had asked when the report on personnel policy would be submitted. The Secretary-General, in proposing the item, was merely responding to their inquiries.

52. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed that it was proper for the Secretariat to keep all delegations informed about personnel policy and action, but the submission of a report did not automatically place the item on the General Assembly's agenda. The Secretariat should prepare its report for delegations to study, after which the matter could be taken up at the eighth session. The Committee should not be asked to include the proposed item when it was unaware of the contents of the report.

53. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the Secretary-General's request for the inclusion of the item "Report of the Secretary-General on personnel policy" on the agenda of the seventh session.

*The Committee decided, by 12 votes to 2, to recommend to the General Assembly the inclusion of the proposed item in its current agenda.*

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.