



Seventeenth session
Agenda item 86

IMPROVEMENT OF THE METHODS OF WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly

Rapporteur: Mr. Taieb SLIM (Tunisia)

1. At its 1129th plenary meeting held on 24 September 1962, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, included in the agenda of the seventeenth session the item entitled "Improvement of the methods of work of the General Assembly" proposed by Tunisia (A/5165), and decided to consider it in plenary meeting.
2. At its 1162nd plenary meeting held on 30 October 1962, the Assembly, on the proposal of the President, decided to refer the item to an ad hoc committee with the following membership: the thirteen Vice-Presidents of the seventeenth session (i.e. the Chairmen of the delegations of Australia, Belgium, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Haiti, Jordan, Madagascar, Romania, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America), the three past Presidents of the Assembly who are members of their delegations to the seventeenth session (i.e. Mr. Padilla Nervo of Mexico, Mr. Belaunde of Peru and Mr. Boland of Ireland), the Chairman of the delegation of Tunisia as having proposed the item, with Mr. Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, the President of the seventeenth session of the General Assembly, as ex-officio Chairman.
3. The Ad Hoc Committee was requested to study the available documentation, including the memorandum submitted by Mr. Mongi Slim, President of the

sixteenth session, in May 1962 (A/5123), together with any other suggestions that might be made to the Committee or that might occur to its members, and to report to the General Assembly when it was ready to do so, including such recommendations as it might wish to make with a view to improving the methods of work of the Assembly.

4. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Improvement of Methods of Work of the General Assembly held its first meeting on 13 November 1962, and elected Mr. Boland (Ireland) as Vice-Chairman and Mr. Taieb Slim (Tunisia) as Rapporteur. It decided that, having regard to the nature of the Committee's work, and the wish of members that the discussions should be as informal as possible, the Committee would meet in private. There was general agreement that the Committee's task was essentially to review the Assembly's methods of organizing its sessions, distributing work to its component organs and conducting effective and orderly debates rather than to review the existing rules of procedure, which were generally considered satisfactory and need not be amended unless it became apparent that there were compelling reasons for a change.

5. At its first meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee discussed the organization of its work. On the suggestion of the Chairman, the Committee decided to invite the delegations, the Chairmen of the Main Committees of the seventeenth session and those Chairmen of Main Committees of the sixteenth session who were present in New York, to submit, in writing, their views and comments on the memorandum of the President of the sixteenth session, together with any further suggestions they wished to make to improve the methods of the Assembly. With a view to facilitating the Ad Hoc Committee's work, the Secretariat was asked to compile all the available suggestions in a working paper under appropriate headings for consideration by the Committee.

6. The Ad Hoc Committee met again on 11 December 1962, when it had before it a compilation of replies which had been received from thirty delegations and from certain of the Chairmen of Main Committees of the seventeenth and sixteenth sessions, together with other working papers prepared by the Secretariat.

7. At its third meeting held on 17 December 1962, the Ad Hoc Committee heard statements by Mr. Nemi Chandra Kasliwal, Chairman of the Third Committee, Mr. J.P. Bannier, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, Miss Angie Brooks, Chairman

of the Fourth Committee at the sixteenth session, and Mr. Hermod Lannung, Chairman of the Fifth Committee at the sixteenth session.

8. In view of the considerable amount of material before it, the Ad Hoc Committee decided that it could not usefully enter into a detailed study and discussion of any of the available suggestions at this late stage in the Assembly's session. With particular regard to various suggestions which had been put forward with regard to a possible change in the date of opening of the regular sessions, the Ad Hoc Committee considered that it should inform the Assembly that it would not in any case wish to make a recommendation on this subject without a full study of all the various proposals relating to the organization of the Assembly's work; it therefore makes no proposal which would affect the opening date of the eighteenth session as laid down in the rules of procedure.

9. The Ad Hoc Committee would wish to propose that the General Assembly should authorize it to continue its work, with the present membership, after the close of the present session. It would be understood that members of the Committee who may not be able to attend certain meetings would be entitled to designate alternates from their delegations.

10. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends therefore the adoption of the following draft resolution:

IMPROVEMENT OF THE METHODS OF WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly,

Having established at its 1162nd plenary meeting held on 30 October 1962 an Ad Hoc Committee on the Improvement of Methods of Work of the General Assembly,

Having received from the Ad Hoc Committee a report in which the Committee states that it would not submit a final report to the present session of the Assembly,

1. Decides to continue the Ad Hoc Committee, with its present membership and terms of reference, and to request the Committee to transmit a report, with recommendations or suggestions, to the Secretary-General by 31 May 1963, for circulation to Member States;

2. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of the eighteenth session the item "Improvement of the Methods of Work of the General Assembly: report of the Ad Hoc Committee", and recommends that priority be given to the consideration of this item.
