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Chairman: Mr. Victor A. BELAUNDE (Peru).

AGENDA ITEM 21

The Korean question (A/3172, A/3203, A/C.1/L.158, A/C.1/L.159) (*continued*):

- (a) Report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea;**
- (b) Problem of ex-prisoners of the Korean war: report of the Government of India**

1. Mr. UMAÑA BERNAL (Colombia) was glad that his delegation's efforts to secure priority for the Korean question in the Committee's deliberations had been successful. It was better that the Committee should not start with questions of such burning topical interest that they might create a difficult atmosphere to work in. Besides, the problem of Korea must not be allowed to grow worse, and its importance should not be minimized.

2. Some representatives had wanted to defer the discussion of the question until the end of the session, and had given as their reason the fact that there was no fresh evidence on the problem and that the repetition of arguments already used would be pointless. But any new suggestions would be welcomed, although unfortunately none had been forthcoming. The representative of India had, as usual, made an interesting statement, but had offered no new solution. In the circumstances there was nothing to be done but to approve the United States draft resolution (A/C.1/L.158) reaffirming that the objectives of the United Nations were to bring about by peaceful means the establishment of a unified Korea and the full restoration of international peace and security in the area.

3. He did not agree with the view of the representative of Ceylon, expressed at the 818th meeting, that the United Nations was treating North Korea unfairly. North Korea was being excluded from the debates not for political reasons, but because it had of its own free will deliberately outlawed itself from the international community and the United Nations by rejecting its appeals and refusing to accept its aims.

4. The Colombian delegation would vote for the United States draft resolution.

5. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) pointed out that some delegations had expressed scepticism as to the possibility of finding a solution to the Korean problem. Their pessimism was based on past experience. The problem was obviously not easy to solve. The war, the sufferings of the people and ten years of existence as separate States had sown hostility and bitterness. Under those circumstances, as the representative of Canada had said at the 816th meeting, the aim of the debate was not to pass judgement on the cause of the dispute; efforts must be directed to finding ways and means of finally solving the problem in the best interest of the Korean people. The main task was to bring about a settlement between the parties to the dispute by uniting Korea as an independent and democratic State.

6. That was why it was deeply to be regretted that no representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had been allowed to attend the debates. It was also a pity that some representatives had seen fit to abuse the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, particularly as those were the very representatives who had excluded representatives of that Government from participating in the debate.

7. The United Nations should establish conditions favourable to the unification of Korea through the progressive elimination of obstacles to that unification and the development of co-operation between both parts of Korea. One of the first requisites would be the withdrawal of all foreign troops, so as to enable the Korean people freely to decide their own future. All those steps would make it possible to hold elections throughout Korea as a whole.

8. A conference should also be held to discuss the settlement of the Korean question, for which provision had been made in the Armistice Agreement. It was true that the Korean Political Conference, held at Geneva in 1954, had already taken up the question, but the failure of that Conference had been due partly to the intransigent attitude adopted by the nations which had fought in the Korean war alongside South Korea. It would be as well if the United Nations were to recommend that those nations should assume a more realistic attitude, which would be in keeping with the circumstances which had since arisen and the Charter of the United Nations.

9. The first step must be to ensure respect for the provisions of the Armistice Agreement, which had greatly contributed to the relaxation of tension in the world. The limitations imposed on the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC) and the fact that the Government of South Korea was pressing strongly for denunciation of the Armistice Agreement could only give cause for anxiety.

10. Poland, which was represented on the NNSC, was convinced that that body should continue to operate. There could be no denying that its task was

formidable and the conditions under which it had to work difficult. The fact that three Polish and one Swedish member had been killed in the execution of their duty was a proof of that. But the NNSC had already done useful work. It had unanimously adopted a number of decisions, and most of the inspection tours undertaken had been at the suggestion of the Polish and Czechoslovak representatives. There was accordingly no foundation for the allegations that the Polish and Czechoslovak representatives had hindered the NNSC's work.

11. The representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and of the People's Republic of China had always abided by the provisions of the Armistice Agreement. The Unified Command, on the other hand, had hindered the work of the NNSC and had refused to observe the principles unanimously accepted by its members. The aim of that action had been to prevent the activities of the inspection groups which would have made the rearming of the South Korean forces more difficult. On 31 May 1956, the Unified Command had taken a unilateral decision on the suspension of the implementation of those provisions of the Armistice Agreement relating to the activities of the NNSC in the territory of South Korea. That ultimatum constituted a serious violation of the Armistice Agreement, and the Polish Government reserved the right to demand the readmission of inspection teams when it considered that action proper and necessary.

12. References had been made to the alleged build-up of the military forces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. But the allegations were quite unfounded, as the armed forces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had been considerably reduced and the whole people was engaged on the great task of reconstruction. The fable of North Korean rearmament was being used as an excuse for the rearmament of South Korea. The purpose of the Government of South Korea was very clear. In his recent 'New Year's message', Mr. Syngman Rhee had called for the "liberation" of North Korea. In view of that threat to the peace in that area of the world, the United Nations should reiterate its determination to carry out the Armistice Agreement and its refusal to support any infringement of that Agreement or limitation of its scope.

13. The United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK) had proved that its possibilities were limited and that it was not able to find appropriate solutions. Its dissolution could only help in reaching an agreement. It might be replaced by another more appropriate body.

14. The provisions of the United States draft resolution (A/C.1/L.158) held out no hope of such a desirable solution. It tried to substitute for the agreed principles of the Armistice Agreement the terms which the sixteen States which had participated in the Korean war on the side of South Korea had tried to impose at the Geneva Conference. As the representative of India had said (818th meeting) with regard to paragraph 3 of the operative part of the draft resolution, a decision concerning elections in North Korea which would be taken without any preliminary consultation of that Government might only lead to further complications.

15. The solution of the Korean problem required practical action, such as the liquidation of military bases and the withdrawal of troops, an appeal to

both the Korean States to co-operate, and the convening of a political conference on the unification of Korea. Poland was ready to take part in such action, which would later make it possible for Korea to be admitted to membership in the United Nations.

16. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted that, in the ten years during which the United Nations had been dealing with the Korean question, the United States had been trying to use the United Nations for selfish interests. As noted in the report of UNCURK (A/3172), the Korean question remained unsettled. Any attempt to settle it from the outside without taking into account the internal situation was clearly doomed to failure. There were two States in Korea with very different economic and social systems. Any attempt to foist the form of government of one of those States on the other was bound to fail. Unification should be achieved by the people themselves, and the function of the United Nations was to facilitate that solution.

17. The NNSC, by forming a link between North Korea and South Korea, could help enforce the Armistice Agreement and promote conditions which would encourage the unification of the country. Yet, on 31 May 1956, the United States representative in the Military Armistice Commission announced that the United States had decided to withdraw the NNSC inspection teams from the territory of South Korea. That decision had been unreservedly supported by South Korea, whose Government had pressed for further measures to abrogate the Armistice Agreement. It was thus evident that that unilateral decision of the United States was a violation of the Armistice Agreement, and was intended to bolster the aggressive policy of Syngman Rhee. If the armistice was to be enforced in Korea, it was essential for the NNSC to continue fully to exercise its functions.

18. The Korean question could and should be settled peacefully by the Korean people. That would be facilitated by the establishment of cultural and economic relations between North and South Korea. At the Geneva Conference, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had proposed the establishment of an all-Korean commission responsible for developing economic and cultural relations between the North and the South. In October 1954, that Republic had sent an appeal to South Korea to convene a joint conference of representatives of political and social organizations with a view to considering the question of economic and cultural exchanges. On 17 November 1954, 8 November 1955 and 12 July 1956, further initiatives along the same lines had been taken by various authorities of the People's Republic. All those efforts had either been rejected or had remained unanswered.

19. Nevertheless, the economic position of South Korea was unfavourable. Despite nearly \$2,000 million in United States aid, the South Korean budget for 1956 still showed a large deficit. The establishment of economic relations between North and South Korea would be useful to South Korea. It would help to bring about a more rational development of the country's economy and would promote mutual confidence.

20. The establishment of economic relations between the North and the South would lay the ground for the unification of the country without foreign intervention. However, South Korea rejected the suggestion for economic contacts on the grounds that they were Communist manoeuvres. At the same time, Syngman Rhee was planning to unify the country by force.

In his New Year message, he had said that the South Koreans were prepared to invade North Korea in 1957.

21. While there was no need to reply to the slanders uttered by the representative of South Korea at the 817th meeting against the USSR, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China, attention must be drawn to the fact that the Government of South Korea was opposed to the restoration of peace and desirous of renewing hostilities, and for that reason was calling for the abrogation of the Armistice Agreement: Whereas the North Koreans were engaged in peaceful activities and had reduced their armed forces by 80,000 men, South Korea was keeping twenty first-line divisions and ten reserve divisions under arms and was threatening North Korea with another armed attack.

22. Unification could obviously not be brought about by force. On the contrary, the provisions of the Armistice Agreement should be strengthened and amended with a view to establishing a lasting peace, and economic and cultural relations between North and South Korea should be improved.

23. The United States draft resolution (A/C.1/L.158) was unacceptable because it proposed, as a basis of a settlement, the conditions put forward by the sixteen States which had fought in the Korean war as allies of South Korea. Thus, it tended to impose a settlement on North Korea that those States had failed to impose by force of arms. Such efforts had already been made in the past, but they had been unsuccessful because they disregarded the need for an agreement between the two parties.

24. Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand) regretted that the USSR representative in his intervention had seen fit to distort history. He had said that the Korean war had not settled the Korean question. But the Korean question had existed before the outbreak of hostilities in Korea resulting from the fact that North Korea, at the direction of outside influences, had converted the 38th parallel into an "iron curtain". The United Nations had intervened in the Korean war not to settle the Korean question, but to repel the invaders from North Korea. It was true that the solution of the Korean question must be found by the peoples themselves, but in the Soviet dictionary, that really meant the imposition of a solution by a foreign Power on a subject people.

25. Substantial progress had been made in the question of the ex-prisoners of the Korean war. The New Zealand delegation wished to express its appreciation of the part India had played in that question and to extend its thanks to the Latin-American countries which had contributed to a satisfactory solution.

26. On the other hand, there had unfortunately been no measurable progress in regard to the unification of Korea. Clearly, the United Nations could not divorce itself from the problem or deal with it perfunctorily. The restoration of peaceful conditions depended in the first instance on the maintenance of the Armistice Agreement. As was proposed in the United States draft resolution, therefore, the terms of the Armistice Agreement should be reaffirmed. Moreover, it was essential to dispose of a misconception fostered by the Communists, namely that the deadlock confronting the United Nations was caused by the insistence of certain countries that the United Nations should supervise all-Korean elections. On the contrary, the deadlock

had been brought about by the fact that the Communists did not want free elections either in Korea or elsewhere, as for example in Germany, where the question of United Nations supervision was not an issue. The situation in Korea was characteristic; Germany and Indo-China, too, were still divided—on one side of the barrier there was a Communist dictatorship, characterized by repression and economic difficulties, and on the other, democracy flourished.

27. The Communist countries were not prepared to agree to a withdrawal of troops and free elections, because they were determined for strategic reasons to maintain their domination over areas such as North Korea. A country condemned as an aggressor maintained its troops in North Korea and refused to negotiate on the basis of the principles laid down by the United Nations. To countries of the Pacific area, the situation seemed dangerous and urgent. There was ample justification for placing the question of Korea at the top of the Committee's agenda. In those circumstances, moreover, it would have been a mockery to accept the representative of a régime which flouted the authority of an overwhelming majority of the Members of the United Nations.

28. While the United Nations had submitted fair proposals at the Geneva Conference, the proposals advanced by the other side had been designed to maintain and extend Communist rule in Korea; the safeguards proposed by the United Nations to ensure free elections had been consistently rejected.

29. At the two previous sessions, his delegation had adopted a position similar to that just described by the Canadian representative. To ensure genuinely free elections, there must be effective supervision; there must be no veto in the supervisory body. The acceptability to the United Nations of a supervisory body which met that requirement might be stated in an Assembly resolution, but the supervisory body need not itself be an organic part of the United Nations. The general acceptance of that position could justify a resumption of negotiations. Failing some such broad agreement, there was no value in proposals for an international conference. One such conference without pre-conditions had already been held at Geneva in 1954. It had failed. A second failure would only increase tension.

30. New Zealand supported the resolution (A/C.1/L.158) submitted by the United States. It was appropriate that the initiative should have been taken by the United States, which had led the way and shouldered much of the burden in repelling Communist aggression, in the same way as it had now assumed the largest share of the task of Korean reconstruction, as indicated in UNCURK's report (A/3172). The United States draft, although limited in scope, was an earnest of the determination of the Assembly to prevent the resumption of hostilities and to restore unity and freedom to Korea.

31. Mr. YANG (Republic of Korea) said that reference to the principles of the United Nations and to the action it had taken to repel Communist aggression had confirmed the moral obligation of the United Nations to bring about the unification of Korea. The delegations which had supported the United States draft resolution (A/C.1/L.158) had adopted a constructive attitude, but other representatives had made allegations that must be refuted. He would like to point out at once, however, that United Nations action in Korea had been honest and consistent, and that the

Korean people, the beneficiaries of its policy, were entitled to expect the United Nations to remain true to its principles.

32. First, it had been proved beyond a doubt that the invasion of Korea had been inspired, directed and equipped by the Soviet Union and that, following the failure of the first onslaught, a Chinese invasion had been launched. Communist China was still branded as an aggressor in United Nations documents, and it was also a fact that the puppet régime in North Korea had been imposed on the people by foreign Powers. The Government of the Republic of Korea, on the other hand, had been established by free elections under the supervision of the United Nations.

33. Secondly, there were not two Koreas; the puppets of North Korea owed obedience to their Russian and Chinese masters. Of 10 million inhabitants of that region at the time of the arbitrary division of the country, no more than 3 to 5 million Koreans remained, but that number had been increased by the settlement of some of the invaders.

34. Thirdly, some delegations had alleged that the Republic of Korea wanted to repudiate the armistice in order to unify the country by force. In reality, however, it was the Communists who had consistently violated the armistice by increasing their sea, air and land forces while the United Nations Command had complied with the terms of the armistice. A divided country aware of the fact that the invader was receiving reinforcements was entitled to try to obtain arms and munitions to defend its freedom. For that reason the Government of the Republic of Korea, conscious of its duty towards its citizens and with its experience of the Communist invasion, was acting in the same way as many other countries which accepted the burden of taxation and public debt in order to ensure their defence. Those who criticized the budget of the Republic of Korea should realize that such sacrifices were being made only in order to defend its threatened freedom. Unlike the democracies, in which government expenditure was a matter of common knowledge, the Communist régimes shrouded such figures in a veil of mystery which concealed, for example, the origin of the 700 aircraft brought into North Korea since the armistice.

35. The Republic of Korea wanted free and democratic elections and knew of no "international body" greater than the United Nations. The proposals to establish an "all-Korean commission" were a fraud, particularly if based on the assumption that there were two Koreas, and that the 3 to 5 million people in the North and the 23 million in the South should enjoy equal representation. In reality, an attempt was being made to establish an international supervisory body with the right of veto, as had been done in the so-called Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. The Korean people could not imagine that the United Nations would abdicate its position in favour of another international body.

36. The Republic of Korea expressed its gratitude to the Governments of Brazil, Argentina and Mexico and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for their efforts on behalf of the seventy-six Koreans among the ex-prisoners of war about whom the Government of India had made a report. It also thanked India for undertaking a difficult task, but regretted that no Korean had yet been repatriated to the Republic of Korea, although the Korean Embassy

at Washington had in its files many letters from prisoners of war who had expressed a wish to return.

37. Mr. GREENBAUM (United States of America) referring to certain remarks made by the representatives of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and Poland, said that, contrary to what the Polish representative had stated, the record indicated that the Czechoslovak and Polish members of the NNSC had abused their position in acting as Communist agents. Moreover, the North Korean authorities had hampered the activities of inspection teams, as was clear from the Unified Command's report of 15 August 1956 (A/3167), which contained the unimpeachable evidence of the Swiss and Swedish members of the NNSC. In the circumstances, it was surprising that the work of the NNSC had not been suspended long before June 1956.

38. The Australian representative had already dealt with the matter (818th meeting) and therefore the United States delegation wished to emphasize that the real issue was the reunification of Korea and that the purpose of the draft resolution submitted by the United States (A/C.1/L.158) was to keep the subject before the United Nations, so that constructive results could be achieved.

39. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) felt that the statements of the Czechoslovak and Polish representatives had disposed of the allegations made against two members of the NNSC. Moreover, the records of that body would show that in most cases it had acted unanimously, for example in opposing the abolition of the inspection teams.

40. Allegations of that kind would contribute little towards finding a solution for the Korean problem. More to the point were the statements by the representatives of Ceylon, India, Canada and Czechoslovakia and, in so far as he had shown himself willing to envisage a new approach, that of the representative of Australia.

41. Mr. WINKLER (Czechoslovakia) wished to maintain in full the views he had expressed previously (817th meeting), including the statement he had quoted from his Government. The United States representative, unable to bring forward any facts to refute the Czechoslovak delegation's assertions, had merely referred to a report of the Unified Command, a document which, even though submitted to the United Nations, still only stated the viewpoint of one of the belligerents.

42. Mr. PERERA (Ceylon) spoke of the patience, skill and tact displayed by the Government of India in regard to the prisoners of war. He also thanked the Governments of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico for their co-operation in that matter.

43. He submitted an amendment to the draft resolution submitted by Ecuador, El Salvador and Venezuela (A/C.1/159) to the effect that the General Assembly should request Member States which were able to do so to complete the resettlement of the remaining ex-prisoners of the Korean war — so that the chapter could be regarded as closed.

44. Mr. URQUIA (El Salvador) suggested, on behalf of the three sponsors of the draft resolution, that the amendment be put in the following form: "Add at the end of the draft the phrase 'and its hope that the ex-prisoners who are still in India will be resettled in the near future through the co-operation of Member States'."

45. If the representative of Ceylon accepted that wording, the sponsors of the draft would incorporate the amendment in their text.

46. Mr. PERERA (Ceylon) accepted the wording suggested by the representative of El Salvador.¹

47. Mr. TARAZI (Syria) recalled that his delegation had always been in favour of efforts to reunify a divided country. It had often expressed the view that the division along the 38th parallel should be merely a temporary measure.

48. The Syrian delegation agreed with India and Ceylon on the necessity for practical measures, and felt that the United States draft resolution was inadequate. It would accordingly abstain in the vote.

49. On the other hand, it fully supported the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.159) as amended by the representative of Ceylon, and would vote in favour of that text.

50. Mr. D. POPOVIC (Yugoslavia) agreed with the objectives set forth in the operative paragraph 1 of the United States draft resolution (A/C.1/L.158), but felt that the methods used so far to attain those objectives had not been satisfactory. Nothing could be achieved without the co-operation of the Government of North Korea. The Yugoslav delegation had consequently voted in favour of the proposal to invite that Government to participate in the debate and regretted that no invitation had been extended. The United States draft did not provide for consultations with North Korea, although it added a new item to the terms of reference of UNCURK. Consequently, although the Yugoslav delegation would vote in favour of operative paragraph 1, it would abstain on the draft resolution as a whole.

51. Mr. GLEBKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) believed that Korea should be unified by

¹The revised text of the draft resolution submitted by Ecuador, El Salvador and Venezuela was subsequently distributed as document A/C.1/L.159/Rev.1.

peaceful means on a democratic basis. However, the experience of previous years had shown that a draft resolution such as that submitted by the United States would merely set the problem in the interest of a small group of States which had made use of the United Nations in order to achieve their own purposes. Once again the United States was seeking to impose unacceptable principles on the people of Korea as a condition of Korean unification. However, all representatives were agreed that the breaking-off of economic, political, social and cultural relations between North and South Korea was an abnormal state of affairs which must lead to tension. The Committee must break away completely from its routine resolutions and advocate the only possible solution, namely the restoration of contacts between Koreans in all spheres. That was the only way to unification and the establishment of a peaceful and democratic State.

52. The Byelorussian delegation would vote against the United States draft resolution, which rejected a just settlement of the Korean question.

53. Mr. TSIANG (China) said that, among the eighty-eight ex-prisoners of the Korean war, were twelve Chinese, and although his delegation would vote in favour of the three-Power draft resolution, it wished to maintain its previous reservations in regard to their treatment which it had expressed in the First Committee at the tenth session (290th meeting, para. 36).

54. Mr. GREENBAUM (United States of America) said he had already paid a tribute to the efforts of the Governments of India, Brazil, Mexico and Argentina (815th meeting); and he now expressed the hope that the three-Power draft resolution, as amended, which gave recognition to the great humanitarian work of the Governments, mentioned therein, would be unanimously adopted.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.