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Chairman: Mr. Hermod LANNUNG (Denmark).

Organization of work

1. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia), supporting the request made by the Afghan representative (707th meeting) that the Committee should devote most of its time to item 31 of the agenda of the General Assembly (Draft International Covenants on Human Rights), observed that the inclusion of item 32 (Recommendations concerning international respect for the right of peoples and nations to self-determination) gave rise to certain misgivings. Several delegations, remembering the way in which the question of freedom of information had been put aside, feared that the same thing might happen with regard to the right of peoples to self-determination. In the draft Covenants that right was the subject of a very important provision. It would be best, therefore, to make the greatest possible effort to complete the examination of the draft Covenants, for which purpose the Committee could decide to devote a minimum of thirty-five meetings.
2. In reply to a question by Mr. BRENA (Uruguay), the CHAIRMAN said that it would be preferable to avoid a general discussion of the draft Covenants.
3. Mr. BRENA (Uruguay) welcomed that authoritative opinion, since in view of the short time left to the Committee and the rate at which it had been progressing, the draft Covenants could not be submitted to the General Assembly before 20 February unless all unnecessary delays were avoided.
4. Mr. CHENG (China) thought that the Committee should take up all the questions included in its agenda. It could decide to discuss the draft Covenants until 26 January, an arrangement which would probably oblige it to restrict itself to the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and would then have about two weeks more to discuss the three remaining agenda items. If, on the other hand, the Committee did not necessarily have to refer the articles which it had adopted to the General Assembly, it might be able to continue its work until 15 February.
5. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) asked the Committee Secretary how many meetings it would be possible to hold before the end of the session and how many would be required for the discussion of each agenda item.
6. Mr. MESSADI (Tunisia) noted that certain fundamental questions seemed to have arisen in the course of the procedural debate and he wished, therefore, to make clear his delegation's views in the matter. In the first place, as the United Nations had already

devoted considerable time to the preparation of the draft Covenants, the discussion of that matter should be brought to a conclusion at the current session of the General Assembly. The efficacy of the United Nations and its organs was at issue, for they had undertaken to ensure recognition of and respect for human rights, still all too often flouted by men and by Governments. That did not mean, however, that the discussion of recommendations concerning respect for the right of peoples to self-determination should be dispensed with, for man considered as an individual could not be separated from man considered as a member of a group, a people or a nation. Human rights and the rights of peoples were interdependent; any guarantee of human rights would be meaningless if the rights of peoples were not also defined and guaranteed. Thus, he could not support the suggestion that consideration of item 32 should be put off to a later session, both for reasons of substance and because he represented a country which had only just attained its independence and which recognized the price that mankind was continuing to pay, in countries like Hungary and Algeria, for the failure to acknowledge the right of peoples to self-determination.

7. The Committee should make every effort to examine not only the draft Covenants but also agenda item 32. With a little good will, it should be possible to do so. He therefore asked his colleagues to strive to bring their work to a positive conclusion before the end of the session.

8. Mr. VAKIL (Secretary of the Committee) reminded the Committee that at the opening of the current session (685th meeting) he had given an estimate of the probable number of meetings. There had so far been no reason to change that estimate, according to which there would be about fifty more meetings before the end of the session. It was difficult to anticipate how many meetings the Committee would devote to items 32 and 60, but as a rough estimate he would suggest eight and five meetings respectively.

9. The Committee had to submit a report to the General Assembly, which would complete its work on 15 February. Taking into account the time necessary for the drafting and translation of its report, the Committee should conclude its work by 9 February at the latest.

10. Mr. GOMEZ ROBLEDO (Mexico) thought that if the Committee was really to complete its work by 9 February, it should perhaps put aside the less important items in order to devote as much time as possible to the two draft Covenants.

11. Mr. DIAZ CASANUEVA (Chile) felt that the Committee should give priority to the examination of the draft Covenants but should reserve a certain number of meetings for the consideration of the other agenda items, which it could not neglect entirely. Even if that were done, however, the discussion of the draft Covenants obviously could not be completed at the

current session. Most of the delegations, it was true, had already explained their positions in detail, but the representatives of the new Member States would certainly want to make known their general attitude with regard to the Covenants and their views on each of the articles. Furthermore, while most of the substantive articles should present no difficulties, the same could not be said of the operative articles and the general clauses. The Committee should in any case appeal to the spirit of discipline of each of its members and should strive to complete the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

12. Mr. EUSTATHIADES (Greece) said that the Committee should organize its work in an orderly manner and should not proceed with undue haste. Procedural questions were rarely of only secondary interest and were always more or less closely connected with important questions. Everyone seemed to be in agreement that the study of the draft International Covenants on Human Rights should be carried forward, but, as the representative of China had so aptly stated, the Committee would have reason to be satisfied if it succeeded at its current session in completing its study of articles 6 to 16 of the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It could not be expected to do more. Experience had shown, for example, that a single clause in the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women had taken several meetings.

13. With regard to the other items on the agenda, the Greek delegation would flatly object to any move which, on the pretext of procedural expediency, might prevent the Committee from discussing items that were just as important and urgent as the items on the draft Covenants or might limit the number of meetings devoted to the discussion of those items.

14. The question of the right of peoples and nations to self-determination (item 32) had already been the subject of prolonged debate, and the time had come to take concrete action. The question proposed by Greece (Interim measures, pending entry into force of the Covenants on Human Rights, to be taken with respect to violations of the human rights set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights) and embodied in agenda item 60 was no less urgent or important. The Third Committee had always maintained that effective measures must be taken to protect human rights. Since it would be several years before the Covenants would be completed and subsequently put into force, interim measures were all the more necessary.

15. Mr. MAHMUD (Ceylon) pointed out that as the draft Covenants on Human Rights had been under discussion for several years, the Committee should make an effort to complete consideration of them at the current session even if it should be obliged as a result to defer the other items of its agenda.

16. Mr. BRENA (Uruguay) stated that the reputation of the Committee would suffer if it did not approve at least one of the two draft Covenants at the current session. It should therefore accelerate its efforts. To that end, he proposed that during the month of December the Committee should meet twice a day, including Fridays, and devote those meetings to the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. On the basis of what it had been able to achieve by

that time, it could then decide on the procedure to follow subsequently.

17. Mr. STEWART (New Zealand) pointed out that it would be extremely difficult for small delegations such as his own to have a representative in attendance at two meetings each day. He suggested that the Committee should hold only seven meetings a week instead of ten as proposed by the representative of Uruguay.

18. Mr. PAZHAWAK (Afghanistan) said that in his proposal at the previous meeting he had not suggested that the Committee should dispense with considering the other items of its agenda. He had simply meant that priority should be given to the draft Covenants because of their importance and urgency. If the Committee still had time, it could then turn to the other items, but it should first of all conclude its consideration of the draft Covenants, which had been on its agenda for years and might remain there for a long time if the Committee took up other questions at each session.

19. With reference to item 32, he pointed out that the question of the right of peoples and nations to self-determination was not coming before the Committee for the first time and was, moreover, dealt with in article 1 of both draft Covenants. It was therefore to be feared that consideration of item 32 might have an adverse effect on that article, which, since the General Assembly had not yet adopted it, was still under discussion. Accordingly, the delegations which were really interested in the right of peoples and nations to self-determination should in the normal course be desirous of having the draft Covenants approved beforehand.

20. Consequently, he proposed that consideration of item 32 should be postponed until the discussion of the draft Covenants had been concluded.

21. Mr. MOROZOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) understood the desire of some delegations to see the discussion of the draft Covenants concluded if possible at the current session. For its part, the Soviet delegation was prepared to support any proposal which would enable the Committee to accomplish that aim. With regard to the procedural question, the Soviet delegation, without being unduly optimistic or pessimistic, felt that no solution could be arrived at until all the factors were known. For the moment, to take any action would be equivalent to attempting to solve an equation containing nothing but unknowns, for no one was in a position to say exactly how many meetings would be necessary in order to conclude the examination of the draft Covenants. It would, therefore, be wiser, as the representative of Uruguay had suggested, to take up the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights immediately, and then, once all the necessary information was available to pass on the procedural proposals which had been made, including the one submitted by Afghanistan. In that way the Committee would be able to begin its study of the articles of that draft Covenant without losing further time in procedural discussions.

22. Mr. MUFTI (Syria) was in complete agreement with the Soviet representative's point of view. It would indeed be premature, at the current stage, to make a procedural decision involving all the questions on the agenda. It would be better to pass immediately to articles 6 to 16 of the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and to attempt to deal with

two or three articles at each meeting, and to set aside, for the time being, the other agenda items.

23. If the representatives of Uruguay and Afghanistan maintained their proposals and requested a vote on them, the Syrian delegation would find itself forced to abstain on the Uruguayan proposal. On the other hand, it would support the Afghan proposal, since it felt that to take up the other questions on the agenda before satisfactory progress had been made in the examination of the draft Covenants would be unwise.

24. Mr. VAKIL (Secretary of the Committee) pointed out, in connexion with the number of meetings proposed by the Uruguayan representative, that the Secretariat also had to take into account the wishes of the other Committees, and that it could not satisfy them all at the same time. In his opinion, the Committee should have no difficulty in meeting twice a day until the Christmas recess, a procedure which would give it four additional meetings.

25. He pointed out, however, that the Economic and Social Council would resume its session the following week and that, if the Committee decided to hold two meetings a day, it would be meeting at the same time as the Council.

26. Mr. DIAZ CASANUEVA (Chile) felt that it would be unwise to postpone consideration of item 32, as the representative of Afghanistan had proposed, because world public opinion might interpret that action as a refusal on the Committee's part to consider the question. Moreover, there was no reason for the fear expressed by the Afghan representative that consideration of the item would affect article 1 of the two draft Covenants, for the Committee had already dealt with that article. At each session of the General Assembly the Committee would always have on its agenda, in addition to the draft Covenants, questions which the international situation made it necessary to include. Thus, at its current session the Committee had had to deal with the problem of the Hungarian refugees.

27. With regard to the Uruguayan proposal, he pointed out that increasing the number of meetings would not provide a guarantee that the Committee would conclude its study of the draft Covenants.

28. For all those reasons, he proposed that the Committee should devote its last ten meetings to items 32, 60 and 12, whether or not it had completed its discussion of the draft Covenants.

29. Mr. EUSTATHIADES (Greece) agreed with the Chilean representative and would support his proposal. He pointed out that by beginning the meetings on time the Committee would gain several hours a week, which was about the equivalent of two meetings.

30. Mr. PONCE (Ecuador) was aware of the need to make progress in the examination of the draft Covenants and to proceed to the other agenda items. However, his delegation found itself in the same position as that of New Zealand and would be unable to send a representative to two meetings a day, particularly as the Economic and Social Council would be meeting at the same time. In his opinion, the Soviet suggestion was the one which seemed the most realistic. It would be better to pass immediately to consideration of the pertinent articles of the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and to decide later on the most appropriate course for consideration of the other agenda items.

31. Mr. THIERRY (France) endorsed the observations made by the delegations of New Zealand and Ecuador concerning the material difficulties which two meetings a day would occasion.

32. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) pointed out that the Uruguayan proposal to the effect that the Committee should hold two meetings a day during December had various drawbacks. It would be difficult to put into practice for the reasons given by the Committee Secretary; it would inconvenience the representatives, who would not have enough time for study and reflection; and it would create difficulties for the delegations that did not have a large staff.

33. The Committee should vote without delay on the Chilean proposal, which would allow about thirty-five meetings for consideration of the draft Covenants. After that matter had been dealt with, a decision could be made on the questions to be taken up before the end of the session. A vote on the Afghan proposal could therefore be put off until that time.

34. Mr. BRENA (Uruguay), taking into account the remarks made by certain delegations—particularly that of Greece—withdrawed his proposal.

35. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) expressed the hope that the meetings of the Economic and Social Council and those of the Committee would not take place simultaneously and that the schedule of meetings would allow representatives sitting in both bodies, as well as the Committee Secretary, to discharge their double task without difficulties.

36. Mrs. ELLIOT (United Kingdom) agreed with the representative of the Dominican Republic and said she was in favour of the Chilean proposal.

37. Mr. VAKIL (Secretary of the Committee) said that the few meetings to be held by the Economic and Social Council would alternate with those of the Committee, which could continue its work in the normal way.

38. Mr. MUFTI (Syria) felt that the misgivings of the Chilean representative concerning the Afghan suggestion were unfounded, since Afghanistan was not proposing that item 32 should be dropped from the agenda but simply that the discussion of it should be postponed. It would, moreover, be surprising if a delegation as attached to the defence of self-determination as was the delegation of Afghanistan did not accord to item 32 all the importance it deserved.

39. He urged the Committee to proceed in a rational manner. It should not forget that the draft Covenants contained provisions that would ensure respect for the right of peoples to self-determination. The Committee should therefore ensure that any recommendations it might make on item 32 should not be regarded as a substitute for those provisions. Recommendations without binding force could not be as effective as the measures provided for in the draft Covenants.

40. The Committee should accordingly take up the draft Covenants as soon as possible, and in particular the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and should avoid a general discussion that would be of extremely doubtful value. The best way to expedite matters would therefore be to put off to a later date any procedural decision concerning agenda items 32, 60 and 12.

41. Mr. CHENG (China), referring to the Chilean representative's proposal, said that he would be sorry if only ten meetings were allowed for the last three

items of the agenda. Since eight meetings were usually taken up in examining the report of the Economic and Social Council (item 12), only two meetings would be left for items 32 and 60, and that did not seem to be enough.

42. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) and Mr. EUSTATHIADES (Greece) felt that to allot eight meetings out of ten to item 12 would mean that items 32 and 60 would be virtually eliminated.

43. Mr. PAZHAWAK (Afghanistan) explained for the benefit of the Chilean representative that his delegation had no intention of eliminating any agenda item. It merely wished the Committee to devote as much time as possible to the examination of the draft Covenants. If item 32 was not considered during the current session, it could be dealt with at a later session. The Afghan delegation wished to leave no doubt as to the purpose of its proposal. Its suggestion that the consideration of item 32 should be deferred had been made with the sole object of advancing the cause of self-determination, a cause for which it had unremittingly striven.

44. In view of the observations made by some delegations he would not press for an immediate vote on his proposal if the Committee did not wish him to do so. He would not, however, withdraw it. The Committee would thus be able to take a decision upon it after devoting as many meetings as necessary to the examination of the draft Covenants. In any event it would do well to begin at once its study of article 6 of the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

45. It was to be hoped that Chile would not ask the Committee to vote on its proposal.

46. Mr. DIAZ CASANUEVA (Chile) took the view that the quickest way for the Committee to put itself in a position to begin the study of article 6 of the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was to take an immediate vote on his proposal.

47. Mr. BRENA (Uruguay) felt that the Committee should undertake its study of article 6 as soon as possible and avoid a lengthy procedural debate. That would be the best for it to perform efficiently its task of approving the draft Covenants. To consider interim measures pending entry into force of the Covenants before the draft Covenants had been adopted would be somewhat illogical, because the interim measures were based on the premise that the draft Covenants had already been adopted but not yet applied. The Afghan representative was therefore right in not pressing for a vote on his proposal at the current stage of the discussion.

48. Mr. MOROZOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) considered that the Chilean proposal and the proposal just made by Afghanistan, to the effect that no vote should be taken on the Afghan proposal for the time being, were entirely compatible. The two delegations could perhaps agree on a practical procedural proposal for submission to the Committee. Meanwhile the Committee should waste no time, but should proceed without delay to examine article 6 of the draft Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as the Uruguayan representative had suggested.

49. It would certainly be preferable if the Committee did not take a vote, but if delegations insisted otherwise, the Soviet Union would have to take a definite stand. It would vote in favour of the latest Afghan proposal. That did not mean, however, that it would subsequently

oppose the Chilean proposal, for in its view there was no conflict between the two proposals.

50. Mr. EUSTATHIADES (Greece) felt that the Committee should vote on the Chilean proposal.

51. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) proposed, in order to expedite the Committee's work, that the Chilean proposal should be so amended as to enable the Committee to devote a minimum of thirty-five consecutive meetings to the draft Covenants. When the study of the draft Covenants was completed, the Committee would decide how to organize its concluding meetings.

52. Mr. PAZHAWAK (Afghanistan) proposed that the Committee should begin discussing the draft International Covenants on Human Rights at its next meeting and should devote a minimum of thirty-five meetings to that item.

53. The CHAIRMAN noted that the Saudi Arabian and Afghan proposals were not, properly speaking, amendments to the Chilean proposal in the sense of rule 131 of the rules of procedure. For that reason he would be unable to put them to the vote before that proposal.

54. Mr. MUFTI (Syria) proposed, as an amendment to the Chilean proposal, that the Committee should devote its last ten meetings to items 32, 60 and 12 only if it had completed the examination of the basic articles of the draft Covenants.

55. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) considered that his proposal did constitute an amendment to the Chilean proposal. It was worded differently but was a direct and logical outcome of that proposal. Assuming that the Committee would have about forty-five more meetings, the figure of thirty-five meetings mentioned in the Saudi Arabian amendment and the figure of ten meetings referred to in the Chilean proposal were perfectly compatible, because the former figure applied to meetings devoted to study of the draft Covenants, and the latter figure to meetings devoted to the remaining three agenda items.

56. He realized, moreover, that the Chilean proposal and the amendment he had just presented would allow a debate on procedure to be resumed at a later date. Rather than take a hasty vote, it would probably be better for the Committee to make an immediate start on the study of the draft Covenants. If Afghanistan and Chile reached agreement, there would be no need for further procedural debate after the thirty-five meetings on the draft Covenants.

57. Mr. DIAZ CASANUEVA (Chile) said that the Committee would need at least ten meetings to deal with the last three agenda items. The latest Afghan proposal did not specify the subjects to be covered at the last ten meetings. That should not, however, be left to chance. He could agree to a proposal for the Committee to allot thirty-five meetings to item 31 and the last ten meetings to items 32, 60 and 12, but he could not countenance a proposal which said nothing about how the work of the concluding meetings would be organized. Unless that point was clarified, Chile would maintain the proposal it had laid before the Committee, though it would not ask for an immediate vote.

58. The CHAIRMAN asked those representatives who had made proposals to communicate them to the Secretariat in writing.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.