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SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
2nd meeting
held on
Tuesday, 1 October 1985
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KORHONEN (Finland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Mr. ABDULLATIF (Oman) nominated Mr. César (Czechoslovakia) for the office of Vice-Chairman.
2. Mr. ZUCCONI (Italy) nominated Mr. Kouassi (Togo) for the office of Vice-Chairman.
3. Mr. César (Czechoslovakia) and Mr. Kouassi (Togo) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.
4. Mr. BARJUCH (Colombia) nominated Mr. Gonzalez (Chile) for the office of Rapporteur.
5. Mr. Gonzalez (Chile) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.
6. Mr. CONDE (Guinea), speaking on behalf of the previous Chairman of the Committee, congratulated the Chairman and the other officers on their election to their respective posts.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/SPC/40/1; A/SPC/40/L.1)

7. The CHAIRMAN said that the observance of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and the commemorative session of the General Assembly would place considerable pressure on the Department of Conference Services. Although the Secretariat would do its best to expedite the work of the Committee, there might be unavoidable delays in the distribution of documentation and limitations on the provision on services to the Committee. He reminded delegations of the importance of punctuality and of doing sufficient preparatory work so that time was not lost by the failure of speakers to sign the list of speakers and make their statements in good time. The list of speakers on each item would be closed when one third of the meetings allocated to the item had been held. Once the list had been closed, changes in the order could be made only by mutual consent among delegations. The name of any representative not prepared to speak when his name came up on the list would be placed at the end of the list of speakers.
8. He recalled that the General Assembly had decided to allow delegations to exercise their right of reply only twice, the first time being limited to 10 minutes and the second to five minutes. Explanations of vote should be limited to 10 minutes, and delegations should make them only once, unless their votes in plenary meeting were different from their votes in the Committee. The General Assembly had decided to impose a mandatory deadline of 1 December for submission to the Fifth Committee of all draft resolutions having financial implications and to allow a minimum period of 48 hours between the submission of and the voting on any draft resolution involving expenditure.

(The Chairman)

9. He appealed to all delegations to limit their requests for additional documentation and for duplicate copies of material already distributed. He drew attention to the procedure for submitting corrections to provisional summary records, which was explained on the cover page of each record. The Committee was authorized to receive, on specific request, transcriptions of the debates of some of its meetings, or portions thereof.
10. He drew attention to documents A/SPC/40/1 and A/SPC/40/L.1 and noted that the proposed timetable would have to be interpreted with flexibility, because the Committee's work must be co-ordinated with that of the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and other bodies. The Committee's programme of work had been prepared with due regard to documentation currently available and to the time at which other basic reports were expected to be issued.
11. On item 74, document A/40/417 had already been issued. On item 77 no basic documentation was expected. On item 80, document A/40/385 had been issued. On item 83, no basic documentation was expected.
12. On item 75, one of the reports in question was expected imminently from Geneva and would be processed as expeditiously as possible as soon as it was received. Documents A/40/575, 541, 542 and 583 had already been issued, and the reports in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 39/95 A and F would be issued. On item 79, the Commissioner General's report would be issued shortly as document A/40/13, and documents A/40/580, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616 and 543 had already been issued. Reports would also be issued in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 39/99 F and I. He also drew attention under that item to documents A/40/207, 216, 299 and 350. The report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East would be available before the Committee commenced its consideration of the item.
13. Under item 78, the report of the Committee on Information would be available shortly as document A/40/21, and the report of the Director-General of UNESCO would soon be issued as document A/40/667. Document A/40/617 had already been issued.
14. Under item 76, documents A/40/20 and Corr.1 and A/40/621 and Corr.1 had already been issued. No basic documentation was expected for item 82. Under item 81, the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 39/101 would be issued before the Committee took up the item.
15. He invited members to comment on the proposed timetable.
16. Mr. BURAYZAT (Jordan), supported by Mr. AL-MOSFIR (United Arab Emirates), proposed that item 75 should be scheduled either earlier or later on the timetable.
17. Mr. TAHINDRO (Madagascar) said that the subject of item 83 was one usually discussed towards the end of a session and wondered whether any new factor might explain why it had been scheduled for discussion near the beginning. He suggested that the order for consideration of items 75 and 76 should be reversed.

18. Mr. FREUDENSCHUSS (Austria) said that it would be more convenient for his delegation to leave item 76 where it was, so that the Austrian expert in that field might be present for the debate.

19. The CHAIRMAN said, in reply to the question raised by the representative of Madagascar, that item 83 has been so scheduled because there was no documentation available for it. The main factors in deciding the schedule were the availability of documents and co-ordination with the work of other bodies. In view of the questions raised, however, he suggested that a decision on the timetable should be deferred until the following meeting so that he could confer with members of the Bureau.

20. Mr. RODRIGUEZ MEDINA (Colombia) said that he supported the Chairman's suggestion. He also proposed in connection with item 76, the establishment under an Austrian chairman, of a working group on international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space with authority to hold informal consultations and reflecting equitable geographical distribution. It must also be ensured interpretation services.

21. Mr. FREUDENSCHUSS (Austria) said that his delegation would be pleased to chair such a working group but proposed that the organizational details should be deferred until the prospective Austrian chairman arrived in New York.

22. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to establish an open-ended working group chaired by Austria to prepare the draft resolution on item 76.

23. It was so decided.

24. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the General Assembly had decided, in connection with agenda item 35, that organizations and individuals having a special interest in the question of apartheid should be permitted to be heard by the Special Political Committee. He suggested the following procedure for such hearings: Organizations and individuals wishing to be heard should submit their requests in writing to the Chairman no later than 18 October; communications containing requests for hearings should be circulated as Committee documents and considered by the Committee at a subsequent meeting prior to the hearings; and organizations and individuals approved by the Committee should be informed by the secretariat of the date of the meeting. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that procedure.

25. It was so decided.

26. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should establish an open-ended working group, to be chaired by one of the Committee's Vice-Chairmen, to prepare the draft resolution on item 78. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that suggestion.

27. It was so decided.

28. Mr. AL-MOSFIR (United Arab Emirates) said that, in the past, the Arabic versions of the Committee's summary records had not been received promptly, and sometimes not at all and that documents had often not been available in Arabic in time for the meetings at which they were to be considered. He requested that appropriate action should be taken.

29. Mr. ORTNER (Secretary of the Committee) said that the secretariat would take up the matter of summary records with the relevant services and would make sure that documents were provided on time.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.