Twenty-First Session

FIRST COMMITTEE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOURTEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 13 October 1966, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. BENITES (Ecuador)

Organization of work

Note: The Official Record of this meeting, i.e. the summary record, will appear in mimeographed form under the symbol A/C.1/1430. Delegations may submit corrections to the summary record for incorporation in the final version which will appear in a printed volume.
ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): As is well known, the plenary meeting of the General Assembly is to be held this afternoon in order to continue the general debate. Nevertheless, the First Committee was convened in view of the urgent and important matters to be discussed today.

Members of the Committee will recall that when we adjourned on Thursday last the Committee had entrusted its Bureau with the task of consulting informally with the members of the Committee to enable the Chairman to submit to it a proposal concerning the order of priorities which might be generally acceptable to the Committee. My colleagues in the Bureau, the Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Fahmy, the Rapporteur, Ambassador Tchernouchtchenko, and the members of the Secretariat who have assisted me have enabled me to hold consultations during the past few days in order to seek a possible consensus which would help us to programme our work in a satisfactory manner.

On behalf of the Bureau, I should like to thank all delegations for their co-operation and most valuable advice. At the same time, I should like to say that it was not possible for us to contact all members of the Committee owing to lack of time, which we very much regret. We hope we shall be forgiven for not consulting you all.

While different views were expressed during the consultations, we believe that there is a very strong desire on the part of all members of the Committee to commence our work and continue in a constructive and business-like manner.

Having said this, I should like to submit for the consideration of the members of the Committee the following proposal, which is based on the views expressed to us during our consultations and which we in the Bureau believe would be generally acceptable to members of the Committee.

We would begin the substantive discussions in the Committee with the six items relating to disarmament. These separate items would be considered in the following order. First, "Renunciation by States of actions hampering the conclusion of an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons"; secondly, "Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament"; thirdly, "Question of general and complete
(The Chairman)

disarmament: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament"; fourthly, "Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament"; fifthly, "Question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament"; and sixthly, "Elimination of foreign military bases in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America".

Those representatives who wish to refer to more than one of those six items will be free to do so, and, in keeping with past practice and the rules of procedure of the Committee, we shall consider the draft resolutions relating to these items in the order in which they are submitted, relative to each item.

After completing consideration of the six items relating to disarmament, the Committee would proceed to the consideration of "Status of the implementation of the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty".

I should like to ask the Committee if it agrees with the proposal I have just outlined.

Mr. KHALAF (Iraq): My delegation was one of those which spoke at the last meeting at which this question of priority was discussed. It does not want to place any obstacle in the way of the Committee’s wishes concerning the order of priority. It agrees with the Chairman that it is very difficult for the Bureau to consult with all Committee members.

With all due respect, however, and since it was one of the very few to explain its position concerning priorities at the last meeting, it does regret that it was apparently difficult for my delegation to be consulted on the order of priorities, upon which agreement has evidently been reached.

My delegation hopes that in future it will be possible to consult all delegations, especially those who have a special interest, a special say in various meetings. It does not, however, wish to object to the order which you have proposed.
The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Iraq. I regret that, owing to lack of time, it was not possible to consult delegations again. I would assure him that whenever there are other consultations he will certainly be kept in mind.

Mr. Amjad Ali (Pakistan): I shall be very brief, Mr. Chairman. My delegation would support the order of discussion at which you have arrived after consultations. You have made it quite clear that because of some physical difficulties you were unable to discuss this matter with all delegations, but that, after due consultations, the consensus at which you arrived was that we should take up the items concerning disarmament first.

My delegation would go along with the Bureau's suggestion. I hope I am correct in my understanding that, so far as the discussion of these items is concerned, it will be open to delegations to pronounce on all the six items you have mentioned. But, as far as the discussion of specific resolutions is concerned, I hope I am right in my understanding that once we arrive at the stage of discussing resolutions we shall discuss each resolution separately, under each item, and not all at the same time.
The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to confirm that the interpretation of the representative of Pakistan is correct.

Mr. CSATORDAY (Hungary): I should like to say a few words, since it was the Hungarian delegation which last time made detailed and very concrete proposals as to the priority to be accorded the items on our agenda.

The Hungarian delegation still believes that the order suggested by it reflects the complexities of the international situation and very important questions have been suggested for priority in our proposal. The Hungarian delegation does not want to prevent the Committee from starting its substantive work at the earliest possible time but wants to afford all delegations an opportunity to prepare their statements on the items on our agenda; therefore, we raise no objection to the proposals. And, if it is agreeable to the other members of the Committee, my delegation, too, would be satisfied with this solution, and we congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on the results of your consultations.

Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): At the last meeting of the Committee on 6 October, the Soviet Union delegation was able, thanks to your understanding, Mr. Chairman, to express its views on the order of priority to be accorded various items on our agenda. There is hardly any need for us to repeat what this position was, but we should like to say that we fully shared the approach and the considerations put forward by the representative of the Hungarian People's Republic, Dr. Karoly Csatorday. We still think that his approach would be best suited to the climate which prevails here and to the actual problems confronting us in the Political Committee of this session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, taking into account the statements made by many delegations on the order of priority to be given the items on our agenda, we cannot fail to adopt an understanding attitude towards arguments put forward by them during consultations which were carried out under your distinguished guidance.
With a view to taking into account as many of the wishes of other delegations as possible, we are prepared to agree to the order of priority which you read out to the Committee a few minutes ago. At the same time, we should like to avail ourselves of this opportunity to remind the Committee of the prevailing atmosphere in which this question of priority was debated at our last meeting when several delegations, in the most clear-cut manner, stated that the Committee should, without any further delay, pass on to the discussion of the Korean question, especially in the manner in which it has been proposed by various delegations, including our own.

It goes without saying that we have all due respect for the arguments put forward concerning the view that the Korean question should be debated immediately, and we should like, once again, to speak out in favour of such an attitude and such an order of priority. We hope that when the Committee begins discussion on the order of priority for the remaining items on its agenda these views of the Soviet Union and other delegations will be fully taken into account and that the Committee will deem it appropriate to have an item as important as the Korean question discussed immediately after it concludes discussion on the items to which it has already agreed to accord priority.

Mr. SALIM AHMED (United Republic of Tanzania): The Tanzanian delegation would like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and other members of our Bureau for the efforts you have made, culminating in reaching agreement on the priority to be accorded items on the agenda of our Committee.

My delegation did not intervene in the discussion at our last meeting. This was not because of our indifference in respect of the items to be discussed; on the contrary, Tanzania has a profound interest in all the items under discussion. But it seems to be an incontestable fact that the question of disarmament is the most burning issue of our time: it affects all nations, and the consequences of success or failure may be the difference between a rich, secure and fruitful life or a poverty-stricken existence for much of mankind. These considerations, in addition to what is almost a tradition in this Committee, influenced my delegation to consider this item as an important one.
But the question of non-intervention, in our opinion, should have taken urgent priority. There can be no question that the possibility of intervention is the greatest danger besetting the smaller developing countries today. All that we hope to achieve in providing higher living standards and greater personal freedoms for our people depend upon our being left alone. Our countries need stability, and this has been seriously threatened by the more powerful nations.

We are happy, Mr. Chairman, that you have been able to announce a consensus, and my delegation is contented to co-operate with you in accepting the compromise and will do everything possible to help to make the discussions fruitful.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): Having heard no objection to the proposal made by the Chairman after the consultations, I believe I can declare it approved.

The Chairman's proposal was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I should like now to thank the Committee, on behalf of myself and my colleagues of the Bureau, for its understanding and co-operation.
May I state also that the fact that we have at this stage agreed upon the order of priorities for only some of the items on the agenda does not mean that the other items on the agenda are not important, or that they will not receive adequate consideration by the Committee. We will have to consider the remaining items as soon as possible.

We shall also have to consider the priorities concerning the remaining items, which we shall do as soon as possible.

In the meantime, I and my colleagues in the Bureau will, in accordance with the mandate already given to us; continue our informal consultations on this matter and will, this time, endeavour to consult the largest possible number of delegations.

I deem it now advisable to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the general debate in the plenary General Assembly will be concluded on 18 October and that we must, therefore, organize the work of this Committee for the consideration of the different items on the agenda. As from that date we shall be in a position to begin our work whenever this is deemed fit and, in this connexion, I call on the representative of Guinea.

Mr. Achkar (Guinea) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, I should like to congratulate you on the general agreement concerning the order of priorities. Not that our delegation is fully satisfied with this order of priorities; we should have preferred another order, but, since the Committee as a whole seems to accept this proposal, it is my duty to convey to you our congratulations and express the hope that this order of priorities will enable all of us to state the views of our Governments as soon as possible on these various items.

As concerns the organization of our work, my delegation fully understands how important it is for this Committee to start its work as soon as possible. It also understands that if the plenary general debate is to end on the 18th, it would be good if this Committee could start its work immediately afterwards.
However, I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the President of the General Assembly yesterday, during his statement, hinted that the question of South West Africa could be concluded on 19 October: important statements will be made on that day and there might even be a vote. Therefore, without wishing to delay the work of this Committee in the least, our delegation would like to see the Committee take into account the question of South West Africa and it would like to see the general debate in the First Committee not start before the 20th. That is to say that if we vote on South West Africa on the 19th, we could easily, and in a better atmosphere, start our work on the 20th.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Guinea for his most valuable suggestion, which I now put to the Committee for its consideration, namely, that we begin our work in this Committee after the 20th of this month -- either the 20th or after the 20th, bearing in mind the end of the plenary debate on South West Africa.

The suggestion of the representative of Guinea was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): The Committee accepts the suggestion that we shall begin immediately after the debate on South West Africa ends on 19 October.

As I have no speakers on my list for today on any of the items which, incidentally, have only just been included in our agenda, and since there is a very important plenary meeting going on at the moment, perhaps the Committee would prefer us to adjourn our meeting for today and begin our work as from 20 October.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.