FIRST COMMITTEE, 1084th
MEETING

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Chairman: Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon).

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Kurka (Czechoslovakia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

Order of discussion of agenda items (A/C.1/825) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN observed that there was general agreement in the Committee that the first item for discussion should be disarmament. It remained for the Committee to decide whether all the items relating to disarmament should be discussed together, in a general debate, or whether each should be taken separately. In that connexion, the Committee had heard an Indian proposal that there should be one general debate on all the disarmament items, on the understanding that the draft resolutions submitted on each of the items should be discussed separately. It also had before it a proposal by the United Arab Republic that agenda items 67 and 86 relating to disarmament should be discussed as the first item of its agenda, the decision concerning the order of the other disarmament items being deferred until a later stage.

2. Mr. WACHUKU (Nigeria) said he had agreed that the Committee should give first priority to the disarmament question on the understanding that the items relating to Africa would be taken up next. Originally, he had wished to group together all the items relating to Africa. However, he had found, on consultation with the delegations directly concerned with the African items, that they were not in favour of grouping them and felt strongly that the question of Algeria, for example, should be dealt with as a separate item. Accordingly, he proposed that agenda item 88 (Africa: a United Nations programme for independence and development) should be the second item on the Committee's agenda and that the question of Algeria should be dealt with immediately after it, that is, as the third item. The problem of Africa was so crucial that any greater delay would be detrimental to the cause of Africa—particularly to the newly independent States—and to the world. Indeed, the situation in Africa was so delicate that but for the skilful handling of affairs in the Congo, a war might have been touched off which could have extended beyond the limits of the continent. The adoption by the Committee of a concrete programme for the independence and development of Africa would be an achievement second only to an agreement on disarmament.

3. Mr. SARR (Senegal) supported the Indian proposal that the four disarmament items, namely, agenda items 67, 86, 69 and 73, should be taken together as the first item of the Committee's agenda, and that the question of a United Nations programme for the independence and development of Africa should follow as item 2 of the agenda.

4. Mr. QUAIISON-SACKEY (Ghana) formally moved that the Committee should consider items 67, 86, 69 and 73 relating to disarmament as item 1 of its agenda and the question of a programme for the independence and development of Africa as item 2.

5. Mr. SLIM (Tunisia), supporting the Nigerian proposal, emphasized that the question of Algeria, where the situation constituted a threat to world peace, should be the third item on the Committee's agenda.

6. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), reminding the Committee of the procedure it had followed at the Assembly's fourteenth session, proposed that each of the disarmament items, with its corresponding draft resolution, should be discussed separately. However, it was not essential that they should all be discussed first; he was prepared to support the proposal made at the 1083rd meeting by the United Arab Republic.

7. Mr. LOUTFI (United Arab Republic), noting that the other proposals before the Committee were more comprehensive than his own, withdrew his proposal.

8. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), observing that there appeared to be no disagreement in the Committee as to what questions should constitute the first three main items on its agenda, suggested that the matter should be confirmed by a vote. The Committee could then decide on the procedure for discussing the first main item, namely, disarmament.

9. Mr. BHUTTO (Pakistan) supported that suggestion.

10. The CHAIRMAN stated that if there were no objections he would take it that the first three questions to be considered by the Committee would be: (1) Disarmament (agenda items 67, 86, 69 and 73); (2) Africa: a United Nations programme for independence and development (agenda item 88); (3) Question of Algeria (agenda item 71).

It was so decided.

11. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) emphasized that the object of the Committee in dealing with the disarmament problem should be to make progress on concrete questions. A lengthy general debate had already been held in plenary meetings; such a debate was now no longer appropriate and would divert the Committee from its main task, that of working out the directives to be given to other organs responsible for the detailed examination of a plan of general and complete disarmament. Of the four disarmament items on the agenda, items 67 and 86 should logically be taken together. Two draft resolutions had already been submitted on those items, both dealing with the principles of a programme for general and
complete disarmament. They bore no relation to Items 69 and 73, which concerned the suspension of nuclear tests and the prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons. Following the discussion of Items 67 and 86, therefore, the Committee should deal with Item 69. That was a distinct question, on which separate negotiations had been held; the object of the Committee should be to sift the results of those negotiations and to adopt decisions likely to expedite them. Similarly, Item 73 was a specific question which should be dealt with separately, after Item 69.

12. Mr. ORMESY-GORE (United Kingdom) pointed out that the general debate in the plenary meetings had covered all world problems. Much of the debate had admittedly been devoted to disarmament; but neither in the general debate nor in any Committee had the specific subject of disarmament been discussed. He agreed with the USSR representative that a general debate arriving at no definite result would be undesirable. That, however, could not happen under the Committee's procedure; indeed, a number of draft resolutions had already been submitted, and others could be expected.

13. Moreover, the African States had agreed to give disarmament first place on the Committee's agenda and Africa second place, on the understanding that all the disarmament items would be taken together so that they could be dealt with as expeditiously as possible, having due regard to the complexity and importance of the subject. If they were to be discussed separately, as two or three separate items, the Committee's debate on the African item would be delayed. He saw no objection to the Committee's discussing all four disarmament items together, the draft resolutions being then taken up in a specific order.

14. Mr. Krishna MENON (India) said that the issue was not, as had been suggested, whether or not there should be a general debate on the disarmament items. The point was rather to make the debate as brief as possible and to avoid any procedure which would result in the same thing being said four times over. Experience showed that a general debate would take place, whatever any individual delegation might wish; India would be satisfied if the separateness of the items was preserved at the resolution stage.

15. Mr. WACHUKU (Nigeria) said that he had accepted the allocation of the African item to second place on the Committee's agenda as a compromise. If the USSR proposal for the separate consideration of the disarmament items was now adopted, the African item would be relegated not to second, but to fourth place on the agenda. He urged that all the disarmament items should be taken together as Item 1.

16. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) assured the representative of Nigeria that his intention was not to delay consideration of the African item. The order already decided by the Committee for the first three main items of its agenda should be maintained; the only question was whether the four items related to disarmament should be discussed together or separately. The Indian delegation was not insisting on a general debate covering all four disarmament items; it merely wished to avoid any repetition of the same points in the discussion on each item. That was a reasonable attitude which should certainly be borne in mind.

17. Mr. ILLUECA (Panama) supported the Nigerian representative. If agenda Items 69 and 73 on disarmament were taken separately, consideration of the African item would undoubtedly be delayed. The four disarmament items should be taken together, on the understanding that separate draft resolutions could be submitted on each of them.

18. Mr. BRUCAN (Romania) suggested as a compromise that the four disarmament items should be dealt with under three sub-headings: (a) Items 67 and 86; (b) Item 69; (c) Item 73.

19. Mr. WACHUKU (Nigeria) said that the compromise suggestion was not acceptable since it would have precisely the same effect as the USSR proposal, namely, to delay consideration of the African item. He urged the Committee to recognize that the problems of Africa should be given comprehensive consideration; they should be kept free of the international complications which always arose in any debate on disarmament; and they should be discussed while African representatives with due authority or governmental backing could still be present at the General Assembly. In his view, the disarmament items should be taken together, it being understood that each representative wishing to speak on them would make only one speech in the general debate.

20. Mr. Krishna MENON (India) said that any representative should be free to speak on one or more or all of the four disarmament items; the draft resolutions, on the other hand, should be discussed separately.

21. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) withdrew his earlier proposal on the understanding that all four items relating to disarmament could be discussed by any representative in the order he deemed fit.

It was so decided.

22. Mr. BENABOUD (Morocco) felt that in matters concerning the order of priority of agenda items, the terms "priority" and "urgency" were generally understood to relate to the discussion of questions in which delay could result in harmful consequences. Strictly speaking, therefore, the question of Algeria, with the loss of human life it entailed, merited first priority. However, in view of the Committee's unanimity concerning the importance of the disarmament problem and of the African question, Morocco had supported the proposal to discuss disarmament as the first item and the general question of Africa second.

23. But while Algeria was one of the most urgent problems requiring a solution, it should not be overlooked that another African country—Morocco—was about to undergo the type of division which had occurred in the Congo, and which might be described as "katangization". Morocco would have preferred that question to have been dealt with on a bilateral basis with France with a view to achieving a peaceful solution. But France had decided to confront Morocco with a "fait accompli" and to divide the country. Since its confidence had been abused, Morocco had had no choice but to propose the inclusion of the question of Mauritania in the General Assembly's agenda as an urgent item.

24. So far, the Committee's agenda order had been established in respect of only three questions. But it was essential that the United Nations should discuss the question of Mauritania before 28 November, when the division of Moroccan territory was to be carried out by a unilateral decision. After that date the question would
become increasingly complicated, and any discussion of it would be more difficult. Moreover, relations between the two countries concerned might also deteriorate. Since the question of Mauritania was quite new to most of the delegations present, and since there was some confusion surrounding the issue involved, it was the duty of the Committee to act before the deterioration was complete. Accordingly, a decision should be taken to add the question of Mauritania to the agenda items already fixed.

25. Mr. WIRJOPRANOTO (Indonesia) said Mr. LOUTFI (United Arab Republic) supported that proposal.

26. Mr. RIFA'I (Jordan) proposed that the question of Mauritania should be given fourth place on the Committee's agenda.

27. Mr. FEKINI (Libya) observed that in view of the date mentioned by the representative of Morocco, the question of Mauritania should be discussed before 28 November. Accordingly, his delegation supported the proposal that the item should be taken up immediately after the question of Algeria.

28. Mr. SULAIMAN (Iraq) concurred in that view.

29. Mr. PAZHWAK (Afghanistan) said that in discussing the order of agenda items his delegation always followed the principle that not only the importance of a question but also its urgency should be borne in mind. Since the proposal to give the question of Mauritania fourth place had been based on the same considerations, his delegation would naturally support it. Moreover, there could not be a fair discussion of the question unless it was taken up before 23 November.

30. Mr. SARR (Senegal) pointed out that his country was an immediate neighbour of Mauritania, and that more than 200,000 persons of Senegalese origin were now living in Mauritania. Therefore, whatever place on the agenda was allocated to the problem of Mauritania, his delegation felt that all parties concerned in the problem should be present when the item was discussed. Senegal had made its position on the matter clear and had recognized the present frontiers of the former French colonies. That position was a positive contribution to the maintenance and strengthening of peace. In any event, he wished to reiterate Senegal's view that the question of Mauritania could not be discussed until all parties concerned were present in the United Nations.

31. Mr. ALEMAYEHOU (Ethiopia) observed that because of the urgency attaching to the problem of Mauritania, his delegation had been the first to propose that the item should be discussed immediately after the Algerian question. Accordingly, he supported the proposal that the question should be dealt with as the Committee's fourth item.

32. Mr. WACHUKU (Nigeria) also supported that proposal.

33. Mr. OBEID (Sudan) supported the views expressed by the representative of Morocco, and suggested that a date for the discussion of the problem of Mauritania should be fixed in advance, the discussion of other items being deferred, if necessary, in order that a resolution might be passed on the question of Mauritania before 23 November.

34. Mr. TOURE Ismael (Guinea) said it was most important that the problem of Mauritania should be examined before 28 November; he accordingly supported the proposal to give it fourth place on the Committee's agenda.

35. Mr. ADAM (Somalia) supported those remarks. If the question of Mauritania was not discussed by the Committee before 28 November, there would be no point in placing it on the agenda at all.

36. Mr. COOPER (Liberia) also supported the proposal to place the problem of Mauritania fourth on the agenda.

37. Mr. PADILLA NERVO (Mexico) observed that a number of representatives had spoken in favour of placing the problem of Mauritania fourth on the agenda, and that no counter-proposals had been submitted. He accordingly suggested that the formal proposal made earlier by the representative of Jordan should be put to the vote.

38. The CHAIRMAN said that if there were no objections, the problem of Mauritania would be listed as the fourth item on the Committee's agenda.

It was so decided.

39. Mr. OBEID (Sudan) proposed that a date should be fixed for the discussion on the question of Mauritania, or that a decision should be taken to discuss it before 28 November.

40. Mr. BENABOUD (Morocco) considered that a wise proposal. The problem of Mauritania was quite a new item for the United Nations, and distorted ideas on it had been deliberately spread abroad. Some time would therefore be needed to allow the question to be set forth fully and clearly. He proposed that in order to give time for adequate discussion, the question should be taken up not later than 15 November.

41. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti) pointed out that the representative of Senegal had urged that all parties concerned should be present in the Committee when the item was discussed. Senegal had been aware, no request had been submitted to the Committee by any parties not present at the United Nations, he would like to know if the representative of Senegal could throw any light on the matter before a decision was taken on the date proposed by the representative of Morocco.

42. Mr. N'GOOUA (Gabon) said that his delegation did not underestimate the importance of the Mauritanian question. However, the order of the items already fixed had been determined by their relative importance, and he felt that they should be discussed before the problem of Mauritania, according to the order already established.

43. Mr. SARR (Senegal), replying to the representative of Haiti, said he believed that all parties concerned in the Mauritanian question could be in New York by the second half of November. Accordingly, if the representative of Morocco pressed the date of 15 November he would raise no objection; but he doubted whether the Committee could at the present stage determine the amount of time it would need to discuss the first three items already fixed.

44. Mr. COOPER (Liberia) said that without knowing how long the debate on its first three items would last, it would be impossible for the Committee to fix a date for the discussion of the problem of Mauritania.

45. Mr. BENABOUD (Morocco) said that he had proposed that the question should be discussed by 15
November because Morocco had been placed in a very difficult position, having been confronted by a "fait accompli" consisting in the unilateral establishment of a specific date. However, he would bow to the will of the Committee, and he hoped that a decision could be taken that would be in the interests of all.

46. Mr. QUAINSON-SACKEY (Ghana) suggested, as a compromise, that the Committee could take note of the fact that 28 November was a decisive date so far as Mauritania was concerned, and agree that there could be a suspension of the debate on one of the items preceding that relating to Mauritania—at the approach of that decisive date—so as to permit a discussion of the problem of Mauritania at that point. Such a procedure had been followed in the past.

47. Mr. BENABOUD (Morocco) said that he would agree to that compromise solution, on the understanding that it took into account the importance and urgency of the problem and the fact that sufficient time should be allowed to bring out the problem fully, since it was surrounded by so much misunderstanding.

48. In reply to a question from Mr. BERARD (France), the CHAIRMAN explained that the Committee was master of its own procedure, and could at any time suspend its consideration of an item and proceed to another item. The adoption of the Ghanaian representative's proposal would not affect the Committee's decision to give the Mauritanian item fourth place on the agenda. If there were no further observations on the subject, the Committee could consider the remaining items on its agenda.

49. Mr. QUAINSON-SACKEY (Ghana) proposed that the remaining items should be taken up in the following order: fifth, the Korean question (agenda item 21); sixth, the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (agenda item 22); and last, the complaint of the USSR about a menace to world peace created by aggressive actions of the United States of America against the USSR (agenda item 90).

50. Mr. MATSCH (Austria) suggested that the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be the last item on the agenda, since such a report was not yet in existence.

51. Mr. QUAINSON-SACKEY (Ghana) said that in view of the Austrian representative's observation he would agree to the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space being discussed last. The order he proposed was therefore amended as follows: fifth, the Korean question; sixth, the complaint of the USSR; and last, the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

52. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that the fifth item should be the complaint of the USSR about a menace to world peace; the question had already been discussed in the General Assembly, and before that in the Security Council, and should be settled definitively. Action on the matter was essential to prevent a further deterioration in the international situation and avert possible conflicts. So far as concerned the other items referred to by the representative of Ghana, his delegation had no objection to the order proposed.

53. Mr. WADSWORTH (United States of America) said that his delegation would support the order of items proposed by the representative of Ghana without any change.

54. Mr. DAVID (Czechoslovakia) said that the complaint of the USSR about a menace to world peace created by aggressive actions of the United States of America against the USSR was a very important item. The actions complained of were a gross violation of the essential principles of peaceful coexistence and cooperation among States, namely, mutual respect for sovereignty, non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States and the prohibition of aggressive acts against other States. In order to promote conditions for a reduction of international tensions, the item should be discussed immediately after the question of Mauritania.

55. Mr. ILLUECA (Panama) supported the order of items proposed by the representative of Ghana.

56. Mr. WINIEWICZ (Poland) felt that having wisely recognized the urgency of all the previous items and placed them in appropriate order, the Committee should not overlook the urgency and importance of the complaint of the USSR. The item related to actions which had already had grave consequences and had unfavourably influenced the international situation. It involved the problem of safeguarding the sovereignty of Member States, in other words the problem of peace and proper international conduct. It should be dealt with as the fifth item on the Committee's agenda; accordingly, the Polish delegation supported the Soviet representative's suggestion.

57. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) drew the attention of the Committee to the resolution on the co-operation of States which had just been adopted unanimously by the General Assembly (resolution 1495 (XV)). That resolution urged all Member States to refrain from actions likely to increase tension in international relations. If the Committee considered the Soviet complaint as the fifth item on its agenda it would be acting in harmony with that resolution.

58. Mr. TOURE Ismaël (Guinea) supported the order of items proposed by the representative of Ghana, since it appeared to represent a compromise solution, and requested that the proposal be put to the vote.

59. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he failed to see how the proposal submitted by the representative of Ghana could be considered a compromise. His own proposal should be considered first, since it dealt with the question of the item to follow the previous—that is, the fourth item. It was item 5 which now had to be decided. He proposed that item 5 should be decided immediately, since the order of the remaining items give rise to no objections, and no vote on it would be required.

60. Mr. TOURE Ismaël (Guinea) said that the proposal of Ghana was comprehensive, and therefore offered a more practical solution, which would obviate lengthy discussion. It seemed to represent a middle course, since it had been modified following information supplied by another delegation. He therefore considered that that proposal, which had been submitted first, should be voted on first.

61. Mr. WIJOPRANOTO (Indonesia) felt that the Korean question, which was a routine matter discussed every year, might be discussed after the Soviet item, which was not a routine question. He would therefore have no objection to giving the Soviet item fifth place.
62. Mr. WADSWORTH (United States of America) said that the representative of Ghana had made his proposal first; it should therefore be voted on first.

63. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) considered that of the three questions on which the Committee was required to decide, only one was controversial and that should accordingly be settled first. The Committee was discussing the question of the fifth item, and not the others.

64. Mr. QUAISON-SACKEY (Ghana) considered that his proposal, namely that item 5 should be the Korean question, had been made first and should therefore be voted on first.

65. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that from the procedural point of view the representative of Ghana was in error, since he had not submitted a proposal that the Korean question should be fifth but had made an over-all proposal concerning the order of all the remaining items. If a decision was to be taken concerning the fifth item, then the Soviet proposal should be voted on.

66. Mr. URQUIA (El Salvador) said that the Soviet representative's proposal could be regarded as an amendment to the proposal submitted by the delegation of Ghana, and as such should be voted on first.

67. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed with that point of view.

The proposal of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was rejected by 44 votes to 15, with 27 abstentions.

68. Mr. PAZHWAK (Afghanistan) requested a vote on the proposal made by the representative of Ghana. His delegation would abstain, as in the vote on the previous proposal.

The proposal of Ghana was adopted by 58 votes to 11, with 16 abstentions.

69. The CHAIRMAN announced that, in accordance with the decisions taken, the Committee would consider the items allocated to it in the following order: (1) Disarmament (agenda items 67, 86, 69 and 73); (2) Africa: a United Nations programme for independence and development (agenda item 86); (3) Question of Algeria (agenda item 71); (4) The problem of Mauritania (agenda item 70); (5) The Korean question: report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (agenda item 21); (6) Complaint of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics about a menace to world peace created by aggressive actions of the United States of America against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (agenda item 80); (7) Report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (agenda item 22).

The meeting rose at 6.5 p.m.