

GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIRST MEETING

Held at the Capitol, Havana, Cuba, on 26 November 1947, at 4.30 p.m.

Acting Chairman: Mr. Max SUEBENS (Belgium)

1. CONSIDERATION OF RULE 54 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE.

The CHAIRMAN referred to Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure proposed by the Delegation of Chile (E/CONF.2/2/Rev.3) and adopted by the Conference.

Mr. WILGESS (Canada) proposed the following resolution and instruction to Committee Chairmen which he suggested might meet the wishes of the Delegation of Chile more appropriately than by incorporating these points in the Rules of Procedure:

(It was pointed out that under Rule 57 the Rules of Procedure could be amended by Conference decision on the General Committee's recommendation).

"Resolution of the General Committee"

The General Committee resolves and recommends to the Conference that all formal proposals, apart from those arising out of and in the course of discussion at the Conference, to amend the Draft Charter should be submitted in writing to the Executive Secretary not later than Saturday, 6 December.

Instruction by the General Committee to the Chairmen of all Committees and Sub-Committees

1. Meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees should be so arranged as to enable those members of them which have expressed a written desire to do so to participate in their proceedings.
2. As all representatives have the right to re-open discussion in the plenary Conference of any proposal for amendments to the Draft Charter rejected by a committee or sub-committee, the reports of these bodies should contain a record of discussion of all such proposals, including the results of any votes taken."

In reply to a point raised by Mr. NASH (New Zealand), Mr. WILGESS (Canada) made a distinction between formal proposals, which it should be possible for Delegations to submit by 6 December, and consequential amendments arising out of discussions in Committee.

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After considerable discussion, it was generally agreed that although a member could move an amendment at a later stage, Delegations should submit formal proposals by 6 December.

The Resolution proposed by Mr. Wilgress was adopted.

The Committee began consideration of the draft instruction to Committee Chairmen proposed by Mr. WILGROSS (Canada).

Mr. COLBAN (Norway) questioned the necessity of paragraph 1 on the grounds that it might be misused.

Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) doubted that it would be possible to anticipate whether one wished to speak on certain subjects, since points raised in Committee would have a bearing on this matter.

Mr. HAKIM (Lebanon) and Mr. BETETA (Mexico) explained what they believed the Delegation of Chile had had in mind in proposing the inclusion in the Rules of this point, i.e., that some Delegations not previously having had the opportunity, whether because they were small or because they were not members of the Sub-Committee, might wish to participate in the discussion of certain questions.

Mr. PHILIP (France) doubted the wisdom of re-opening debates, particularly because of the time factor.

Mr. NASH (New Zealand) suggested the following alternative wording:

"Chairmen of Committees and Sub-Committees shall arrange the control of meetings in such a manner as to give the maximum opportunity to all Delegates to express their views and in particular those Delegates who advise the Chairman in writing of their desire to be heard on a particular subject.

"Results of discussion and eventual voting on proposals or amendments to the Charter in Committee and Sub-Committee shall, when reported to Main Committees or Plenary Sessions, mention accepted and rejected proposals or amendments.

"Any member may re-open debate in plenary meetings on proposals or amendments rejected by committees and sub-committees."

The CHAIRMAN made the following suggestion:

"Delegations which are not members of a sub-committee shall have the right by giving notice in writing to the Chairman to submit proposals on any question before the sub-committee in which they are interested and to participate in the discussion of such proposal."

To discuss these proposals with the Delegation of Chile the CHAIRMAN appointed the following members, who would report back to the General Committee:

Mr. Philip	(France)
Mr. Hakim	(Lebanon)
Mr. Beteta	(Mexico)
Mr. Nash	(New Zealand)

2. COMMENCEMENT AND TERMINATION DATE FOR WORK OF PRINCIPAL COMMITTEES.

It was agreed to have at least one principal committee meeting simultaneously with each plenary meeting during the remainder of the present week.

The Committee agreed that beginning Monday, 1 December, two principal committees would meet simultaneously as follows:

Committees I and VI

Committees II and V

Committees III and IV

It was agreed however, that this should be a flexible arrangement in order to permit additional simultaneous meetings of principal committees when necessary, especially in the latter weeks of the Conference, on the recommendation of the General Committee.

It was agreed that the customary work week would be six days, meetings would be scheduled on Sundays only when necessary, which might be the case particularly during the latter part of the Conference, and that 25 December would be considered a holiday for the entire Conference.

It was agreed that a target date of 20 December be established for the termination of the work of Committees I, IV and V and 31 December for Committees II, III and VI.

3. CONFERENCE HOURS AND HOSPITALITY

It was agreed that conference sessions would commence at 10.30 a.m., and 4.00 p.m., the rising of the Committee to be within the discretion of the Chairman. Chairmen were urged to convene their Committees promptly at the appointed time.

The Committee expressed the hope that in the interests of the work of the Conference, official entertainment would be kept to a minimum, and that no receptions held would be scheduled prior to nine o'clock, in view of the working hours of the Conference.

Mr. ALAMILLA (Cuba) agreed to take up with the competent authorities the problem of noise near the Capitol.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.
