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SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT

Chairman's Committee

(Heads of Delegations)

Summary Record of the Ninth Meeting held on Tuesday,
1 July, 1947, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman : Mr. Max Suetens (Belgium)

Agenda Item 2: Date and Place of World Conference. (E/PC/T/DEL/40)
(Cont'd)

1. A revised draft of the Preparatory Committee's Resolution to the Economic and Social Council was distributed as a basis for continuing the discussion of this item.
2. Mr. E. WYNDHAM WHITE (Executive Secretary) explained that the new draft separated the questions of date and place since it had become clear in the Committee's previous discussion that the date of the Conference was the more vital question. The new draft suggested a specific date but contained only an expression of the Preparatory Committee's views regarding the place. This was on the assumption that the Committee was in a less favourable position to know all the factors relevant to a decision on the place than was the Economic and Social Council.
3. Mr. M.P. PAI (India) proposed that a date in January be recommended by the Committee rather than the November date proposed in the draft Resolution under consideration, for the reasons advanced by his Delegation at the last meeting of the Chairman's Committee.

4. Dr. H.C. COOMBS (Australia) declared that if the Conference were fixed for a date as early as either 21 or 24 November, it would create very great difficulties for his Government and his Delegation, particularly in view of their intention to introduce before the World Conference the necessary legislation to give effect to any Tariff Agreement reached in Geneva. However, they would be prepared to attempt to complete this work by the November date if they could be certain that to delay the Conference any further would in fact mean a delay of perhaps a year in completing the work of establishing the Organization. Dr. Coombs asked to be formally reassured by the Delegates who were anxious that the Conference should begin as early as 21 November that this date was absolutely necessary from their point of view. In the absence of such reassurance, it would be very difficult for him to request his Government to support this date.

5. Mr. H. HAWKINS (United States) assured the Committee that since Mr. Wilcox's statement at the last meeting of the Chairman's Committee, this question had been reconsidered by his Delegation and with Mr. Clayton who had just arrived. The result of this reconsideration was to emphasize the need from the United States point of view of holding the Conference at the earliest possible date. He therefore wished to assure Dr. Coombs that his Delegation's reason was not a capricious one but one of very great importance to the United States.

6. Mr. J.P.D. JOHNSEN (New Zealand) indicated that his Delegation's position was analagous to that of the Australian. However, he had been impressed by what Mr. Hawkins had just said and

suggested as a compromise that the date be fixed perhaps three weeks later so as to make it early in December.

7. Mr. L.D. WILGRESS (Canada) stated that his Delegation considered it essential that the date be fixed no later than 21 November, particularly in view of the arguments advanced by the United States Delegate. Mr. Wilgress proposed further that Delegates urge their Governments to bring to the attention of the Economic and Social Council the importance of the General Assembly not being allowed to continue until it interfered with the holding of the World Conference on 21 November, if that date were decided upon.

8. Dr. J.E. HOLLOWAY (South Africa) supported 21 November, even though his country, as others, would be faced with certain difficulties in trying to meet this date.

9. Mr. J.R.C. HELMORE (United Kingdom) said that he was convinced by the statements made by various Delegates that it was essential to fix the date in November, even if less convenient than a later date. Mr. Helmore opposed the suggestion made by the New Zealand Delegate to hold the Conference say three weeks later on the grounds that this might prove to be an extremely dangerous precedent. He favoured holding the World Conference on the earliest possible date - which appeared to be 21 November - so as to do everything possible to bring the Charter into force in 1948.

10. Dr. A.B. SPEEKENERINK (Netherlands) strongly supported the date of 21 November.

11. Baron de CAIFFIER (Belgium) associated his Delegation with those favouring 21 November. To the arguments advanced by other Delegations, he added that if the opening of the World Conference were postponed indefinitely, it would be extremely difficult for his Government to explain to the Belgian people that there were no deep divergences within the Preparatory Committee which were causing the delay.

12. The Delegate for China, while expressing sympathy with the views put by the Indian, Australian and New Zealand Delegates, agreed, despite all the difficulties involved, to accept whatever date was decided upon by the majority.

13. Mr. A.V. FERREIRA BRAGA (Brazil), Mr. S.I. CLARK (Cuba) and Mr. A. FAIVOVICH (Chile), while recognizing the difficulties involved for certain Delegations, stated that their previously expressed views in favour of 21 November, had been reinforced by the arguments that had just been put. They therefore confirmed their support for this date.

14. Mr. G. HAKIM (Lebanon) said that his Delegation would prefer a longer period between the end of the work of the Preparatory Committee and the beginning of the World Conference, for reasons already stated. They were prepared, however, to accept 21 November if the majority were in favour of that date.

15. Mr. P. BARADUC (France) said that his Delegation maintained their previously expressed view in favour of convening the World Conference at the earliest possible date and therefore supported the proposal to hold the Conference on 21 November, despite the fact that in so doing his Government too would be faced by Parliamentary difficulties.

16. Dr. Z. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia), while not opposing the date of 21 November, reserved a decision on the date of the Conference, stating that his Government would instruct its representative on the Economic and Social Council.
17. The CHAIRMAN asked whether the Australian, New Zealand and Indian Delegates were in a position to revise their attitude in view of the strong majority in favour of 21 November.
18. Dr. H.C. COOMBS (Australia) and Mr. J.P.D. JOHNSEN (New Zealand) both said that they were very impressed with the arguments put forward for 21 November and would do their best to persuade their Governments that this was the appropriate date.
19. Mr. M.P. PAI (India) urged that the New Zealand proposal to compromise between the November and January dates be adopted since even this short delay might make all the difference between a completely effective or ineffective Indian Delegation.
20. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the New Zealand proposal had been withdrawn since the New Zealand Delegate had accepted the 21 November date. The Chairman expressed his confidence that India would nevertheless be able to send to the World Conference the same highly qualified experts as they had sent to Geneva.
21. Mr. E. WYNDHAM WHITE (Executive Secretary) supported the proposal made by Mr. Wilgress that the date decided upon should be an absolute one and not dependent upon the termination of the General Assembly. He urged that the Governments concerned should recognize the problem which would confront the United Nations in arranging the World Conference and make every effort to assist the very strenuous efforts made by the Secretariat to enable the Assembly to terminate at least two weeks before the date on which the World Conference would begin.

22. With the exception of the Delegations of Czechoslovakia and India, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that the World Conference be held on 21 November.

23. The CHAIRMAN asked the Committee to consider the proposals put forward in the Secretariat draft as to the place of the World Conference.

24. Dr. H.C. COOMBS (Australia) proposed, first, that the reference to the First and Second Sessions being held in the Eastern Hemisphere be omitted from the Resolution on the grounds that this was an irrelevant consideration, and secondly, that the Committee, rather than recommend a specific place, confine itself to clarifying for the Council those issues which it was within its scope to advise upon. The latter could be achieved by a note, prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with Delegations, indicating the nature of the Conference, way in which it was likely to conduct its work, approximate size, number of delegations, type of accommodation required, and so on. This would enable the Council to obtain the advice of its experts as to the most appropriate place, from a technical point of view, to hold the Conference.

25. Dr. J.E. HOLLOWAY (South Africa) proposed that the words "and would favour an acceptance of the cordial and generous invitation extended by the Government of Cuba . . ." be substituted for the words "and suggest that the Economic and Social Council give sympathetic consideration to . . ."

26. Mr. E. COLBAN (Norway) feared that if Dr. Holloway's suggestion was adopted, the Committee, without knowing the practical possibilities, might tie the Council's hands.

27. Mr. J.R.C. HELMORE (United Kingdom) (a) suggested that the words "if practicable" be added to the wording proposed by

Dr. Holloway in order to meet Mr. Colban's point, and (b) added his support in principle to the suggestion made by Dr. Coombs (paragraph 24 above).

28. The Committee agreed to accept Dr. Holloway's proposal for a more positive recommendation with respect to holding the Conference in Havana, as amended by Mr. Helmore's suggestion.

29. Mr. S.I. CLARKE (Cuba) expressed his thanks to the Chairman and Delegates and again assured the Committee that there would be adequate facilities in Havana for the Conference.

30. The CHAIRMAN agreed to consider Dr. H.C. Coombs' suggestion that the Committee's Report to the Council should be presented personally by a member of the Committee.

Agenda Item 3. Invitation of Non-Members of the United Nations to the Conference on Trade and Employment. (E/PC/T/DEL/39)
(Cont'd)

31. Mr. E. WYNHAM WHITE (Executive Secretary) reminded the Committee that two main points had emerged from the Committee's previous discussion of this item:

- (i) the expression in the original draft Resolution" . . . customs territories . . . in respect to which the governments of the metropolitan country . . . declares that they possess full autonomy in the conduct of their external commercial relations and other matters provided for in the Draft Charter" should be more explicitly defined;
- (ii) the principle having been defined, the territories falling within this definition should be specified.

The Resolution had been redrafted accordingly, but only one Delegation had advised the Secretariat with respect to customs territories within this category for which it was responsible, namely, Burma, Ceylon and Southern Rhodesia.

32. Dr. Z. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia) was of the opinion that the Preparatory Committee would be exceeding its powers in making such a recommendation. Dr. Augenthaler referred to the constitution of the International Labour Office, as amended in October 1946, which established a procedure for the representation of non-metropolitan territories on Metropolitan Delegations which he considered to be appropriate for adoption by the Preparatory Committee. He suggested the possibility of establishing a committee to consult with the representatives of such territories along the lines of the Consultative Committee (Non-Governmental Organizations in Category A) but he knew of no case in which representatives of customs territories had been made full members of a conference.

33. Mr. P. BARADUC (France), while not objecting to the particular territories mentioned being represented, reiterated his previous objections to specifying any customs territories on the grounds that (a) this would prejudice the Council's final decision, (b) would be a violation of international law and (c) would exceed the Committee's terms of reference. He proposed that the Committee submit to the Council a recommendation in principle, leaving it to the Council to make a decision as to particular territories.

34. Mr. J.R.C. HELMORE (United Kingdom) said that he had not yet heard a single convincing argument on the merits of the case. The territories mentioned were completely responsible with respect to matters dealt with in the Charter, and should, in his Delegation's view, be represented at the Conference in their own right. He objected to postponing a decision by referring it to the Council, particularly since the Preparatory Committee

would in any case have to take cognizance of this issue when considering the membership Articles of the Charter.

35. Dr. G. GUTIERREZ (Cuba), while not objecting to the territories mentioned being represented, believed that if customs territories were invited to participate with the same rights as states, it would affect the voting weight and might give certain groups of countries an undue influence on decisions to be made under the Charter. He opposed the Preparatory Committee making a decision on this essentially political question.

36. The CHAIRMAN adjourned the meeting until Wednesday, 2 July, at 10.15 a.m., when the discussion on this point would be continued.

37. The meeting rose at 1.00 p.m.