

GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SECOND MEETING

Held at the Capitol, Havana, Cuba, on 2 December 1947 at 7.00 p.m.

Acting Chairman: Mr. Max SUIETENS (Belgium), First Vice Chairman

1. REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEE ON RULE 54 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
(document E/CONF.2/BUR.3)

Mr. NASH (New Zealand), Vice President, presented the Sub-committee's report.

Mr. DEDMAN (Australia), Chairman Committee I, moved its adoption.

It was agreed to adopt the report and recommend to the Conference the amendment of Rule 54 in accordance with the report.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY stated that a Plenary Session would be convened Wednesday, 3 December at 10.30 a.m. to consider:

- (a) The General Committee's recommendation on Rule 54.
- (b) The PRESIDENT'S proposal for the nomination as seventh vice-president of Mr. Walter STUCKI (Switzerland) whose Government had now authorized him to accept this office.

2. INTERPRETATIVE NOTES REGARDING PROVISIONS OF THE CHARTER (note by the Executive Secretary (E/CONF.2/BUR/W.1)). The Executive Secretary presented this paper and asked the Committee's guidance as to:

- (a) whether the final text of the Charter should be accompanied by interpretative notes;
- (b) the form any such notes should take.

Mr. WILGROSS (Canada), Chairman Committee III, said he would welcome a decision on this point, particularly so that all committees would follow a uniform procedure. His view was that insofar as possible the text should be made so clear that no need for interpretative notes would arise.

Mr. PHILIP (France) did not favour the adoption of such a policy as a strict rule, suggesting that notes might sometimes make for a less complicated text. He agreed, however, that interpretative notes should be avoided as much as possible. Where such notes proved to be necessary, they should be made an integral part of the text.

/Mr. ALAMILLA

Mr. ALAMILLA (Cuba) concurred in the views expressed by the delegate for France.

Mr. NASH (New Zealand), Vice President, expressed the view that any court considering a case arising out of the Charter would be bound by the text only and not by any interpretative notes accompanying the text.

Mr. CHARLONE (Uruguay), Chairman Committee IV, was of the opinion that the text should be made so clear that no interpretative notes would be required, and opposed formally the inclusion in the Charter of any interpretative notes.

Mr. BEYETA (Mexico), Chairman Committee II, supported this point of view.

Mr. HAKIM (Lebanon), Chairman Committee V, supported the view that any interpretative notes which proved to be unavoidable should be incorporated into the text of the Charter.

Mr. DEDMAN (Australia), Chairman Committee I, proposed that committee chairmen should be requested to seek the elimination of all interpretative notes, but if a wider area of agreement would be made possible by the inclusion of an interpretative note, such a note should be permitted.

Mr. WUNSZ KING (China) was inclined to agree that any notes generally accepted should be embodied in the text of the Charter. However, he suggested postponing any final decision in this matter for at least a fortnight; the position to be reviewed at that time in the light of subsequent developments.

It was agreed that insofar as possible the text of the Charter should be made so clear that no interpretative notes would be required, and that committee chairmen should be guided accordingly. If it were decided ultimately that some interpretative notes were unavoidable, such notes should be made an integral part of the text of the Charter. This recommendation would be reviewed later in the light of the then existing facts.

3. OFFICIAL WORKING LANGUAGES FOR THE CONFERENCE AND ITS COMMITTEES.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY called attention to Rules 38 through 41 of the Rules of Procedure with respect to official and working languages. The question of interpretation into Spanish had been raised in several committees. Arrangements had been made for interpretation into English, French and Spanish when simultaneous interpretation was in operation. When consecutive interpretation was used, it would be possible to interpret only into the two working languages - English and French. This was the practice of the General Assembly. Additional interpreters were not available in order to provide interpretation into Spanish. It would not now be possible to install simultaneous interpretation equipment in additional large committee rooms.

/before Thursday

before Thursday or Friday of this week, due to the prolongation of the General Assembly. The Executive Secretary suggested, in view of these difficulties, that the Chairmen of Committees II and IV, which would have to meet on Wednesday and possibly Thursday in a committee room in which simultaneous interpretation was not available, should abide by the Rules of Procedure which provided for only two working languages.

Mr. BETETA (Mexico), Chairman Committee II, while appreciating that the Rules of Procedure did not provide for Spanish as a working language, urged that some temporary arrangement be made, if possible, for interpretation into Spanish pending availability of simultaneous interpretation.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY pointed out that on the basis of the available staff, interpretation into Spanish could not be provided.

Mr. WUNSZ KING (China) stated that if any of the five official languages of the Conference were to be used as working languages other than the present working languages, English and French, he would have to insist that Chinese, an official language, also be made a working language.

It was agreed to accept the Executive Secretary's suggestion with respect to working languages.

The Committee adjourned at 8.45 p.m.
