

GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING

Held at the Capitolio, Havana, Cuba, on Monday, 2 February 1948 at 5.00 p.m.

Chairmen: Mr. MALIK (India), Second Vice-President  
Mr. M. SUTENS (Belgium), First Vice-President

1. PROPOSAL REGARDING THE COMPOSITION OF A CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

(Note by the Executive Secretary, E/CONF.2/BUR/31)

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY wished to emphasize that the proposed committee should not interfere with the course of the work and that only the more difficult unsolved problems should be brought before it. He presented the suggestion of the President of the Conference that the committee should be composed as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Max Suetens (Belgium)

Dr. Coombs (Australia)

Mr. Muller (Chile)

Mr. Lleras Restrepo (Colombia)

Mr. Hakim (Lebanon)

Mr. Malik (India)

Mr. Beteta (Mexico)

Mr. Ferraro (Peru)

Mr. Abello (Philippines)

Mr. Sahlin (Sweden)

Mr. Holmes (United Kingdom)

Mr. Wilcox (United States)

He added that it had been suggested to him that the word "unsolved" be inserted in the last paragraph of his proposal before the word "problems" in order to make it quite clear that there was no question of raising questions already settled.

Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) agreed with the basis of operation for the Committee as suggested by the Executive Secretary but wondered whether a smaller and more business-like body would not be more effective. He suggested it should be composed of the Chairmen of the Sub-Committees dealing with Articles 13 and 14 (Dr. Gutierrez), 20 and 22 (Dr. Holloway),

/21, 23 and 24

21, 23 and 24 (Mr. Melander), 15, 16 and 42 (Mr. Sahlin), 94 (Mr. Tinoco), 75 (Mr. Djebbara) and the Joint Sub-Committee of Committees II and VI (Dr. Coombs), and that it should report to the General Committee as quickly as possible.

Dr. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia), Vice-President, wished for clarification on the question as to whether the Committee was being formed in order to comply with the request of the Latin American countries and consequently to consider development problems in which they were chiefly concerned, in which case he would have no objection to the list as presented by the President, or to deal with all the outstanding problems.

Mr. WAERUM (Denmark), Vice-Chairman of Committee I, agreed with Mr. Holmes' proposal.

Mr. TINOCO (Costa Rica), Vice-President, considered that it would be better for the Committee to deal only with the various problems connected with economic development, and that those connected with Articles 93, 94 and 99, which were of a more political character, should be left for settlement by some other means. He was in favour of the list suggested by the President.

Mr. NASH (New Zealand), Vice-President, thought it advisable to accept the list as suggested by the President, which he considered satisfactory for the purpose of resolving the political differences. He thought that a more useful committee would be one composed of men well acquainted with the Charter and its implications and suggested that such a one be set up as a working committee to assist the one proposed by the President. He proposed Messrs. Royer (France), Coombs (Australia), Evans or Leddy (United States), McCausland or Shackle (United Kingdom), Augenthaler (Czechoslovakia), Torres (Brazil) and Adarkar (India), with Mr. Colban as Chairman.

Mr. CHARLONE (Uruguay), Chairman of Committee IV, thought that the proposal of the Executive Secretary and the list of the President of the Conference was a sufficiently faithful reflection of the wishes of the Latin American countries. He believed that the Committee should consider all the unsolved questions and that it must function on the political rather than on the technical level in order to be effective.

Mr. PHILIP (France) preferred that the proposed group approach the questions on the technical level and favoured Mr. Nash's suggestion. If, however, it was decided that it should be constituted on the political level, he would want a larger and more representative committee than that proposed by the President.

Mr. BETETA (Mexico), Chairman of Committee II, thought that there was some confusion both as to the purpose of the proposed committee and the

/criterion

criterion for selecting its members. He wished to clarify what he believed to have been the purpose of the Latin American countries in requesting its creation.

1. That a Charter acceptable only to a majority would not be either workable nor politically acceptable to many countries.
2. That there was no reason to believe that some of the problems apparently settled in Sub-Committee or even in Committee would not be raised again in the plenary sessions.
3. That a Committee composed of representatives of the countries most dissatisfied with the present solutions and most intimately acquainted with the particular problems remaining would be able more expeditiously to reach agreement.

For that reason, the Committee composed according to the suggestion of the President would be more effective than one composed of those more intimately acquainted with the detailed provisions of the Charter.

Dr. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia), Vice-President, believed that the decision of the Heads of Delegations, taken on the basis of the letter from the Latin American countries, had been that the Committee should consider only economic development questions. He did not consider that questions of balance of payments, relations with non-members, Germany and Japan, should be included and if there were a question of their inclusion, he suggested that the debate be adjourned and the question returned to the Heads of Delegations to decide whether they should be included as well.

Mr. AZER (Egypt), Vice-President, disagreed with Dr. Augenthaler and thought that the Heads of Delegations had decided that all unsolved matters were within the competence of the Committee.

Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) asked that his suggestion be reconsidered. He thought Mr. Nash's suggestion was made with the same intention but feared it might delay the work of the Conference as his candidates were already overworked with the normal work of the Conference. The Committee composed according to his suggestion might be considered in the light of a fact-finding board and should report to the General Committee as quickly as possible. The exact inter-relationship of the various problems would then be known and it could then be decided whether the actual work of conciliation would be done by them or on a higher level, such as the Committee suggested by the President of the Conference.

Mr. WUNSZ KING (China) said that he would agree to any list that would hasten the work of the Conference but that he preferred Mr. Holmes' list as they were the people already doing the work of co-ordination.

The CHAIRMAN summarized the opinions expressed.

/Three members

Three members favoured the list as proposed by the President and the Executive Secretary's proposal; four opposed it for varying reasons and one raised the question of the competence of the Committee. He asked other members of the Committee to give their opinion.

Mr. STUCKI (Switzerland), Vice-President, thought that the problems extended beyond the technicalities of the Charter. Mr. Holmes' suggestion seemed to him best to answer the need for a co-ordinating committee. The President's proposal, on the other hand, would constitute a negotiating committee which, he believed, might be useful. The fact that it was supported by the Latin American delegations who had asked for the establishment of such a committee also made it appear that it would be the most useful.

Mr. TINOCO (Costa Rica), Vice-President, suggested that the articles be specified and the ones of a more political nature, i.e., 93, 94 and 99, be omitted.

Mr. WILCOX (United States) expressed concern that the Co-ordinating Committee might reopen questions which had already been settled in the Conference or that it might prevent the Conference from adopting a Charter approved by a majority. Before deciding upon the membership, a choice would have to be made as to whether the terms of reference should include all of the unsolved problems or only those relating to development. He was willing to agree to either, but suggested that the easier solution would be to confine the work to the latter since that seemed to be the desire of those who had proposed the Committee. For the same reason he believed it would be best to accept the proposal of the President of the Conference concerning the composition of such a committee, although he was willing to agree to any of the proposals put forward.

Mr. BETETA (Mexico), Chairman of Committee II, emphasized that the Charter should be acceptable to a substantial majority of the countries represented at the Conference, if it was to be workable and successful. He pointed out that there could be no question of altering the rule which permitted any delegate to reopen in plenary session or in full committee any question, even though it had been apparently settled at some previous stage. If decisions reached in sub-committees actually represented the consensus of opinion, there was no need to fear that there would be a revival of discussion and, in any event, he had understood that the Executive Secretary's proposal had been amended to include the words "unsolved questions".

Mr. CHARLONE (Uruguay), Chairman of Committee IV, agreed with Mr. BETETA. A Co-ordinating Committee would contribute to the successful conclusion of the Conference in providing as near unanimity as was possible.

/Mr. COLBAN (Norway)

Mr. COLEMAN (Norway), Chairman of Committee VI, supported the list of names submitted by the President.

Mr. WILCOX (United States) said that he had not contemplated changing the rule which permitted any delegate to reopen questions in the committee or plenary stage but he did not think that this should be a purpose of the proposed committee. He agreed that if the Charter that was finally arrived at was acceptable only to a bare majority, the Conference would have failed, but he could not agree that there must be unanimity not that any single country should have in effect veto power over a document acceptable to others. He would accept Mr. CHARLONE's formula to come as near as possible to unanimity.

Dr. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia), Vice-President, suggested that the Committee be limited to dealing with problems of development and that the Chairman's list be accepted. With regard to the remarks about the veto, certain of the sub-committees which had not met for some time should attempt either to present agreed or alternative reports, or, failing that, perhaps other groups should be appointed to deal with the problems.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that agreement might be possible on the following bases: (1) the competence of the Committee to be limited to matters of economic development, i.e., Articles 13, 14, 20, 22, 15, 16, 42, 80A and 81; (2) accept the proposal of the Executive Secretary and the list of names submitted by the President; (3) in implementing paragraph (c) of the Executive Secretary's proposal, appoint a Working Party composed of the chairmen of sub-committees to report on the progress of the work; and (4) the Co-ordinating Committee should consult with any delegation as it saw fit.

Mr. PHILIP (France) thought that the terms of reference should include all unsolved questions, or another group should be established to negotiate other than economic development problems.

Mr. AZER (Egypt), Vice-President, supported Mr. PHILIP.

Mr. NASH (New Zealand), Vice-President, also agreed with Mr. PHILIP and withdrew his suggestion in favour of the list submitted by the President and the Report of the Executive Secretary, provided, Dr. AUGENTHALER was added to the panel and the Committee would consult with the chairmen of the sub-committees as suggested by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. CHARLONE (Uruguay), Chairman of Committee IV, agreed with Mr. PHILIP that the Committee should have a wider scope.

Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) suggested that the new method be first applied to economic development questions. If it was successful the General Committee could then consider extending the method to any remaining outstanding problems.

/Mr. WUNSZ KING (China)

Mr. WUNSZ KING (China) agreed with the CHAIRMAN's proposal except in limiting the Co-ordinating Committee to economic development questions. He supported the suggestion that Dr. AUGENTHALER be included in the Committee, because Eastern Europe was not represented on the proposed list and his inclusion would show that the Committee's functions were not limited to economic development questions.

Dr. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia), Vice-President, preferred Mr. HOLMES' suggestion and thought that if it were decided later to extend the Committee's functions the list might then have either to be enlarged or modified.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee should be established as he had set forth and its functions would be limited at the beginning to economic development questions.

Mr. TINOCO (Costa Rica), Vice-President, agreed, on the condition that any related Articles other than those mentioned might be examined if considered necessary.

This was agreed.

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.

-----