



General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/45/PV.46
4 December 1990

ENGLISH

Forty-fifth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 21 November 1990, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. MOUSSA
(Vice-President)

(Egypt)

- Critical economic situation in Africa [152] (continued)
- (a) United Nations programme of action for African economic recovery and development 1986-1990
 - (b) Report of the United Nations Secretary-General's Expert Group on African Commodity Problems
 - (c) African charter for popular participation in development and transformation
 - (d) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Secretary-General's Expert Group on African Commodity Problems

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(e) Draft resolutions

Election to fill vacancies in principal organs [15] (continued)

(b) Election of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council

In the absence of the President, Mr. Moussa (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 152 (continued)

CRITICAL ECONOMIC SITUATION IN AFRICA

- (a) UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT 1986-1990
- (b) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL'S EXPERT GROUP ON AFRICAN COMMODITY PROBLEMS
- (c) AFRICAN CHARTER FOR POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION
- (d) NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING THE REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL'S EXPERT GROUP ON AFRICAN COMMODITY PROBLEMS (A/45/581 and Add.1)
- (e) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/45/L.20, A/45/L.21 and Corr.1, A/45/L.22)

Mr. KUDRIAVTSEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Among the issues involved in the building of a stable and just world order, pride of place goes to the development of a constructive dialogue on ways and means of dealing with the critical economic situation in Africa. An effective solution to this multifaceted problem is a human imperative and an economic requirement in today's interdependent world. It seems to us that, specifically, we should be talking about using tried and true practices and approaches to the solution of this problem and, at the same time, persevering in our search for new ways in which to step up national, regional and subregional efforts by African countries to deal with their economic underdevelopment. We should be talking also about increasing the effectiveness of the international community's support for the actions of those countries and about creating the right domestic conditions to enable them to adapt to the new realities of the world economy.

This year is particularly significant for African peoples. It is 30 years since the process of their accession to independence got fully under way. But

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freedom can be full only if it is supported by economic independence, and it has to be recognized that, unfortunately, the critical economic situation of the continent persists. It is exacerbated by the heavy burden of foreign indebtedness that African countries bear, the unfavourable dynamics of world commodity prices, sharp fluctuations in exchange rates and interest rates, and artificial barriers to international trade. We must mention, also, that efforts to deal with the crisis at the national level have not always been appropriate or effective.

In these circumstances it is the view of the Soviet delegation that the economic problems of the African countries must be resolved within the context of other global problems, taking into account the new possibilities arising from the improvement in the international situation, the process of real disarmament that is now under way, and the need to preserve and restore the environment in order that greater meaning may be given to the social aspects of development.

We in the Soviet Union support the African countries in their desire to deal with their critical economic situation. We support their efforts to create domestic conditions in which to restart economic growth as the basis for progressive development and social progress. In our opinion, the most important factor in this regard is rational utilization of domestic and foreign resources, stimulation of the most effective types of economic activity, and diversification of production.

In respect of such important issues as food self-sufficiency and the creation of production and transport infrastructures these problems can be dealt with to a significant extent by intraregional co-operation. For example, Cameroon, the Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi and Rwanda, by pooling their national efforts, have achieved a significant increase in agricultural production. This has enabled them not only to meet their own requirements but also to establish some reserves, which, where the necessary infrastructure exists, can be used to relieve the critical food

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situation in other African countries. Increased regional co-operation to encourage specialization of production and increased co-operation in the area of agricultural production, storage and processing would be very beneficial in the long term.

While advocating internationalization of approaches to this problem of indebtedness, including the indebtedness of the African countries, the Soviet Union considers it necessary to move immediately towards agreement on general principles to be applied in dealing with the debt situation. This would involve establishing the political frameworks for subsequent specific negotiations between creditors and debtors, while allowing for differences and adopting a case-by-case approach. In this process an important role could be played, within and outside the United Nations system, by multilateral co-ordination of aid and debt settlement.

Following this conceptual approach, the Soviet Union is taking specific steps, within the context of bilateral inter-State relations, to ease the debt burden of sub-Saharan African countries, especially the poorest of those countries.

We want to make it quite clear that the problems of transition that face our country are indeed difficult, as is the radical restructuring of our domestic and foreign economic mechanisms and the economic system as a whole. However, none of these factors will make us lessen the attention that we devote to Africa. On the contrary, opening up our enormous economic potential through the broad introduction of market-economy mechanisms will eventually produce new opportunities for trade and economic ties with countries in the continent and will provide the necessary flexibility, streamlining and receptivity to the quickly changing realities of the world today.

With the removal of the shackles and artificial barriers of administrative centralization, economic co-operation between the Soviet Union and African and many other developing countries will become more effective and, therefore, more responsive to the interests of both parties and more helpful to human welfare. The

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Soviet Union is willing to co-operate in efforts to resolve the problems of African countries on a bilateral and on a multilateral basis, using all available means to that end and taking account of the realities of the processes occurring in the economies of the Soviet Union and our partners.

Soviet-African trade and economic co-operation will involve to a greater extent the private sector of the African countries, as well as such new elements in the Soviet Union's foreign economic activity as independent enterprises and co-operatives. Of course, both sides could benefit from greater use of commercial credits to finance projects in African countries.

Traditionally, training has been an important aspect of our co-operation. Soviet educational institutions at the higher and middle levels have trained more than 40,000 specialists to work in various areas of the economies of African States. There are in Africa about 12,000 Soviet specialists, including 800 seconded on a cost-free basis through the Africa Fund. Certainly this aspect of our relations with Africa will not diminish over the years; in fact, the Soviet Union intends to give it increased attention.

In conclusion, I should like to say that, with a view to strengthening the complementary efforts at the national, bilateral and multilateral levels in the interests of socio-economic development and harmonization of the complementary rights and duties of developed and developing countries, due account must be taken of the environmental protection factor. In our view, if the African countries proceed in these general directions, and if they work hand in hand with the world community, they will be able to emerge from their economic crisis. The road will indeed be hard, and those countries will be able to follow it only with a common effort, perseverance, patience and willingness to compromise if necessary. The Soviet Union, for its part, will do everything it can to facilitate movement in that direction.

Mr. MOORE (United States of America): Africans bear more than their share of the world's misfortune. Wars, famine and disease are visited upon them with horrifying frequency. Widespread poverty on the continent seems entrenched, all the more so after the generally disappointing decade of the 1980s. There are glimmers of hope, some in what might seem to be unlikely places, but the short-term outlook for Africa is decidedly mixed.

The United States believes it important to comment on this agenda item regarding the critical economic situation in Africa. The United States continues to be a major donor to the development efforts in Africa. Through the Development Fund for Africa under our foreign aid legislation, we are budgeting some \$800 million for fiscal year 1991, a sum which exceeds last year's total by about \$200 million. This amount does not include food aid, in which the United States continues to be the largest donor. Our commitment to Africa thus remains steadfast despite the concerns about competing demands for new resources resulting from developments in Eastern Europe.

The problems of Africa are largely those of the least developed countries. Nevertheless, there are certain issues which are especially relevant to the African situation. Problems of commodity diversification, regional integration, availability of credit and land, privatization, the role of women, and popular participation in both economic and political life all have a special importance for Africa.

These issues are all addressed in the African Charter, formulated at Arusha in February 1990, which devotes particular attention to the need for popular participation both as an end in itself and as a means to good government and economic prosperity. We commend the participants in the Arusha Conference for their courageous recognition of the primacy of democratic institutions in the economic development process. A corollary to the Charter's advocacy of such

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institutions is its endorsement of grassroots organizations such as rural credit unions, and of indigenous African non-governmental organizations. Even more fundamental is the recognition given to the inviolability of basic human rights, including freedom of the press. We strongly support the Charter's conclusions in these areas.

Among the fundamental rights highlighted in the Charter is the right of women to fair treatment under the law. Women in Africa have long managed essential responsibilities, acting as "producers, mothers, active community mobilizers, and custodians of culture". The Charter is right in noting that it is time for their contributions to be recognized and for their particular circumstances to be considered in development planning.

In discussing the problems of development planning this fall, many delegates have remarked on the importance of a human-centred development strategy. While this notion may be susceptible to a number of interpretations, it is clear that one type of strategy it excludes is large expenditures on military forces. These expenditures run directly counter to the aims of economic development, both because they all-too-frequently lead to massive destruction and because they siphon off resources that could be used for productive investment or for answering basic human needs. The importance of reducing excessive military expenditures is expressed in the African Charter, which properly calls upon African nations to redirect defence budgets towards development programmes.

In lieu of regional confrontation, the Charter proposes regional co-operation. This is an idea whose time has come. There can be little doubt that the lack of rapid economic development in Africa has been largely due to the relatively small size of domestic markets, in conjunction with the difficulty of doing business across national borders. Much of the recent work in economics has

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shown the importance to incipient industries of having access to a sizeable domestic market. The success of the European Community and other tariff unions further attests to the economic benefits of lowered trade barriers and good intraregional transportation and communication.

While much of the African Charter is both innovative and perceptive, my delegation feels that there are problems in the Charter's approach to structural adjustment. We understand how difficult implementing structural adjustment is, but the African alternative framework to structural adjustment programmes which the Charter advocates seems to us to be founded on certain questionable assumptions. One of these is that free market solutions to economic problems are not as applicable to Africa as they are to other parts of the world. A corollary to this assumption is the notion that State control of pricing and distribution is more warranted in the African context than elsewhere. Over the past three decades these beliefs have led, at various times, to the rise of large black markets and to distortions and inefficiencies in the formal sectors of domestic economies.

Another problematic assumption underlying the framework is that international financial institutions do not give adequate consideration to the human consequences of structural adjustment programmes. While it is true that economic reform often requires what we hope will be only short-term rises in relative food prices and unemployment, and while it may even be true that some past reform efforts have been heavy-handed, it is clear now that both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank give special consideration to the human impact of structural adjustment and that they are attempting to direct their aid efforts accordingly. There are now a number of successful experiences and studies, in Africa and elsewhere, which attest to the effectiveness of such programmes.

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For many African nations trade in primary commodities still furnishes the largest share of export revenues, in spite of efforts to diversify. This is often a risky business because demand for unprocessed raw materials tends to be quite inelastic. Prices for these goods are thus sensitive to fluctuations in supply. Citing this price volatility, and at times the deteriorating terms of trade, as justification, some producer nations have entered into supply cartels. Such accords have generally failed.

While the short-term prospects for the African continent are indeed worrying, both the African Charter and the Report on commodity problems provide encouragement that Africa's leaders are taking a creative and open-minded approach to solving the region's most pressing problems. The United States, for its part, will continue its long-standing efforts to provide co-operation and assistance to the continent's developing nations.

MR. CHAN (Singapore): Keen students of development have doubtless addressed the question of why it is that some countries or continents have succeeded in economic development whilst others have failed. On prima facie grounds alone, Africa should be a great success story. It is a rich continent well endowed with immense natural and human resources.

African States have themselves addressed this problem. For instance, in 1980 the Assembly of Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopted the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos. In July 1985, following a review of the implementation of the Lagos Plan, the Assembly adopted Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990. In 1987 the General Assembly adopted the Common Position on Africa's External Debt Crisis. Despite these and other efforts, Africa has remained the poorest and the least developed continent in the world. Today Africa has the greatest number of least developed countries in the world. That number has grown from 14 in 1979 to 28 in 1990. As President Masire of Botswana stated recently at the Maastricht Conference on Africa:

"The pace of development in most African nations has been deteriorating over the last decade, and in some cases the decline has reached frightening proportions".

The factors underlying Africa's dismal economic situation are well documented. Both internal and external factors have contributed to Africa's economic stagnation. These include the dependence of the African economies on a small number of primary agricultural and mineral commodities; the prices of which have collapsed in recent years; lack of access for African goods and commodities to the markets of the developed economies; Africa's large external debt as compared to its total gross domestic product, rapid population growth, which has outstripped

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the economic growth of the continent; drought and famine, which have affected many countries; and low investment flows.

The end of the cold war has not brought with it any assurances of greater financial assistance for the African countries. On the contrary, it has raised widespread concern among African countries, and for that matter among other developing countries as well, that the West will concentrate its financial assistance and investment flows in Eastern Europe, to the detriment of Africa, Latin America and Asia. The volume of assistance and the speed at which it is organized by the industrialized West for the Eastern European economies, when compared with the slow pace of desperately needed debt relief and resource inflows for Africa, has only added to these fears. The Gulf crisis and the concomitant increase in oil-import bills has further exacerbated the situation for African countries.

The grave economic situation facing the African continent should be considered an item of the highest priority on the United Nations agenda. It would be morally irresponsible of us not to do so. Moreover, given the interdependence of nations, there would likely be adverse consequences for the entire world community if Africa were left to continue to slide into even greater poverty. From a more positive perspective, the economic recovery of Africa can benefit not only its citizens but also the rest of the world. With vast natural resources and a total population of approximately 650 million, Africa has a great untapped potential to offer to the rest of the world. A prosperous Africa would, through the multiplier effect, help increase world economic growth by providing new and untapped markets as well as opportunities for new investments from the North.

The attainment of economic recovery and development in Africa will depend on both the domestic policies and a supportive external environment. An improvement

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in the external environment that would be conducive to the acceleration of development would involve, in particular, an increased net inflow of resources, an improvement in the level of prices fetched by commodities exported by Africa in the world markets, favourable terms of trade, in particular increased access to the markets of the industrialized countries, and a reduction of Africa's external debt. Africa cannot be expected to increase its agricultural and non-agricultural exports or to make any significant progress in its diversification efforts if its products are not given access to the markets of the industrialized countries. The successful outcome of the Uruguay Round is therefore vital for Africa's economic recovery. Similarly, unless long-term measures are taken to reduce Africa's debt, the continent will find it difficult to register economic growth. In this regard, we are encouraged by the position taken by some of the industrialized countries: to write off official development assistance debts owed by the least developed countries, most of which are African.

At the same time, African countries should also undertake domestic policy reforms, in order to accelerate their economic recovery. Indeed, many African countries are already undertaking fundamental structural changes in their economies. In fact, most of them recognize that the primary responsibility for Africa's development rests with its own people and their leaders. The remaining outstanding issues revolve around the nature of the changes required and how they should be brought about. One thing which is clear is that no domestic policy reforms will work unless they are, and are seen to be, nationally inspired. In this context, it is worth noting that African leaders have sought to set their own economies on a secure footing by adopting structural-adjustment measures. So far, over 30 African countries have adopted structural-adjustment programmes in one form or another. These measures have been taken at enormous social and economic costs

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and great political risk. Their efforts should be commended and matched with appropriate support from the international community.

Singapore, like so many Members of the United Nations, would like to see the emergence of a just and equal world order in the post-cold-war era. Towards that end, we support all efforts of the United Nations to assist Africa in achieving economic recovery and growth. In our own small way we are also prepared to share our development experience with the African countries which are interested, as well as co-operating with them through economic co-operation among those countries and technical co-operation among developing countries. We share the view expressed by Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the OAU, at the recent Paul Hoffman lecture in New York that:

"The overwhelming majority of African people are hardworking people who have a desire to take care of their lives and to improve their state of living. With this spirit, the African development problems are not insurmountable. They can be overcome. With the creation of an enabling political environment, proper planning and foresight, African people can bring about economic development in the 1990s and face the challenges of the next century with confidence".

The deliberations on this agenda item provide us with an important opportunity to take stock of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development one year before the final review. We hope that these deliberations and the final review that we shall be undertaking next year will generate more concrete and action-oriented proposals which will lead to the economic recovery of Africa and prepare the continent for the challenges that lie ahead. The people of Africa deserve no less.

Mr. NAVAJAS MOGRO (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): The Group of 77, over which I have the honour to preside this year, feels that it must, in keeping with the aspirations of its member countries to development and well-being, participate in this debate in the General Assembly on agenda item 152 in order to express its firm support for and solidarity with the African countries participating in the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990.

Today, more than ever, in view of the growing interdependence of international relations, no country can distance itself from the efforts of any other country, much less that of an important group of countries, to emerge from a state of economic prostration and underdevelopment. This is all the more obvious bearing in mind that some of the countries of Africa have been and continue to be the victims of natural disasters of great severity and long duration that not only undermine the foundations on which their development must be based, but cause unprecedented human suffering that cannot be disregarded in today's world.

Most of the countries in the Group of 77, impoverished as never before, are engaged in a dramatic struggle, fraught with sacrifice, to overcome our poverty and underdevelopment. For this reason, we can identify with the legitimate aspirations of the countries of Africa, which are also the aspirations of all developing countries, and for this reason we give our full support in the achievement of the objectives set out in the Programme of Action.

This is the fifth and last year of the Programme. It was quite natural that a time-limit, of necessity arbitrary, was set, and that limit is reached this year. But we must ask ourselves whether, within that period, the aims and purposes that underlay the Programme have been achieved. In other words, as the Programme of Action comes to an end, can we say that the underdevelopment that prompted its initiation is also coming to an end? We must ask ourselves whether the Programme

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has generated recovery and development in Africa, or at least imparted a strong enough impetus to trigger the revitalization and self-sustaining progress of the countries of the African continent.

Regrettably, we believe that this is not the case, for, if we compare the aims of the Programme of Action with its results after these five short years, if we compare those results with the still very clear needs of the peoples of Africa, we must conclude that there are no grounds for optimism. According to World Bank data, in the past two years there has been only modest, uneven recovery. Measured in economic terms by per capita income, the modest recovery reflected in the statistics pales in comparison with the existing reality, which is in most cases a situation of stagnation, if not regression.

Furthermore we see with disquiet the threatening clouds looming over the developing countries, particularly the lowest-income countries, as a consequence of the crisis in the Gulf. We believe that a thorough review of the Programme of Action is necessary, from the standpoint of unsatisfied needs, stunted development and continued international co-operation for the development of Africa, which will continue to be necessary after the arbitrary date of 1990.

Let us examine the reality described so clearly by speakers who have preceded me, in particular the Ambassador of Uganda. It is worth recalling that only 23 per cent of Africans have access to drinking water, that there is only one doctor per 24,000 people, and that infant mortality is at an alarming level. We should also recall that most of the low-income countries suffering a very heavy debt burden are in Africa and that 28 of the 43 least developed countries are also in Africa.

It is thus vitally necessary for us to redouble our efforts to remedy this unjust situation and to do so now, within the framework of the Declaration and the Programme of Action adopted at the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed

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Countries in Paris last September. In this context it is of primary importance and essential to find a swift and lasting solution to the crushing problems of external debt and the problem of commodities, with particular regard to prices and access to export markets.

It must be stressed that, among the development and recovery needs under the Programme of Action and within the dynamic process of development, international trade is of major importance. The opportunities for countries to sell their products without any limits other than those set by their own productivity, within the development-trade equation, were the subject of a study by a Group of Experts set up by the Secretary-General at the request of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The Experts' report was well received and contains recommendations that will prove valuable provided they are properly fulfilled and given practical application. It is therefore necessary to ensure that they are fulfilled by providing the appropriate elements and, at the same time, filling certain gaps that have been detected in the report.

The African region is committed to promoting popular participation in the process of development and transformation on the basis of its tremendous human potential, which is undoubtedly a mainstay of its development, as is recognized in the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, adopted in Arusha.

With regard to the endeavours to ensure proper implementation of the Programme of Action, it is only fair to recognize the efforts of the Secretary-General to mobilize the support of international organizations for the Programme. On behalf of the Secretary-General, the Director-General of the OAU presides over a governing committee in which the OAU and non-governmental organizations are active participants.

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The Programme of Action should not be seen in the short-term context of crisis control but as a catalytic boost in the long-term to the development of a whole continent. We believe that this approach and outlook should guide our discussions on this important issue in the review exercise that we are beginning. For this reason, we hope that the Secretary-General's report on the Programme of Action not only will be retrospective in terms of its implementation, but will determine guidelines and contain recommendations on the kind of support that Africa needs and hopes to get from international organizations and the international community for the rest of the decade.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

Action on draft resolutions A/45/L.20, A/45/L.21 and Corr.1 and A/45/L.22 will be taken at a later date, which will be announced.

AGENDA ITEM 15 (continued)

ELECTIONS TO FILL VACANCIES IN PRINCIPAL ORGANS

(b) ELECTIONS OF EIGHTEEN MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

The PRESIDENT: As representatives will recall, at its 41st plenary meeting, on Friday, 16 November, the Assembly elected 17 members of the Council for a three year term beginning on 1 January 1991.

As the result of the third restricted ballot held at that meeting was inconclusive and since one seat still remains to be filled from among the Asian states, we shall now proceed to the first unrestricted ballot. This fifth round of balloting is being held in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

May I remind the Assembly that, pursuant to rule 94, votes may be cast for any eligible Member from the Asian States. The Members from the Asian States that are not eligible are those that are already members of the Economic and Social Council as well as those that were elected on 16 November 1990. The names of the Members that are not eligible for election in the present balloting are: Bahrain, China, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Pakistan and Thailand.

I now call on the representative of Cyprus, who wishes to make a statement.

Mr. MAVROMMATIS (Cyprus): Upon instructions from my Government, I should like to announce that Cyprus is no longer a candidate in the elections for the remaining Economic and Social Council seat. Therefore, our candidacy is hereby withdrawn - and, if I am permitted to say so during an unrestricted election, in favour of our neighbour and friend the Syrian Arab Republic.

(Mr. Mavrommatis, Cyprus)

As a matter of fact, last Friday when we had the first round of voting we agreed to a suspension of the meeting in order to seek instructions to withdraw because we felt that we should not continue and appear to be fighting it out, as it were, with the Syrian Arab Republic, a friendly country, which has been endorsed by the Asian Group.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cyprus for his co-operation.

I now call on the representative of Myanmar.

Mr. TUN (Myanmar): As delegations are aware, Myanmar was a candidate for election to the Economic and Social Council at the elections held on Friday, 15 November. Our candidature was presented in the conviction that we could contribute effectively to the work of that important body, and also because we have never had the opportunity to serve on the Council since we joined the United Nations in 1948. In view of the fact that only one vacancy remains to be filled today, and as the Syrian Arab Republic is the only candidate endorsed by the Asian Group, we wish to reaffirm our support for that friendly country and to announce the withdrawal of our own candidature.

May I take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to all delegations who have given their support to our candidature.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Myanmar for his co-operation.

I now call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): In accordance with the General Assembly's rules of procedure, I should like to delay the proceedings for a moment in order to thank the Ambassadors of Cyprus and Myanmar for withdrawing their countries' candidacies in favour of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The PRESIDENT: Taking into account the statements made by the representatives of Cyprus and Myanmar, we shall now proceed to the first unrestricted ballot.

The ballot papers will now be distributed.

I would request representatives to write on the ballot papers the name of the State from among the Asian States for which they wish to vote. Ballot papers bearing more than one name or the name of a State outside the region or the name of a State not eligible will be declared invalid.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Panov (Bulgaria), Mr. N'Cho (Côte d'Ivoire), Mr. Conmy (Ireland) and Ms. Dreyfus (Nicaragua) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 4.25 p.m. and resumed at 4.35 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The result of the voting is as follows:

<u>Number of ballot papers:</u>	146
<u>Number of invalid ballots:</u>	0
<u>Number of valid ballots:</u>	146
<u>Abstentions:</u>	6
<u>Number of members voting:</u>	140
<u>Required two-thirds majority:</u>	94
<u>Number of votes obtained:</u>	
Syrian Arab Republic	131
Cyprus	5
Kuwait	1
Mongolia	1
Myanmar	1
Saudi Arabia	1

The Syrian Arab Republic, having obtained the required two-thirds majority, was elected a member of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1991.

The PRESIDENT: I congratulate the Syrian Arab Republic, which has just been elected a member of the Economic and Social Council, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in this election.

We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 15 (b).

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.