



## General Assembly

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ENGLISH

Forty-second session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Monday, 19 September 1988, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic)

- Resumption of the forty-second session
- Expression of sympathy to the Governments and the peoples of Bangladesh, Jamaica and Mexico
- Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations [121] (continued)
- Armed Israeli aggression against the Iraqi nuclear installations and its grave consequences for the established international system concerning the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and international peace and security [28] (continued)
- The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives [34] (continued)
- Current financial crisis of the United Nations [43] (continued)
- Question of Cyprus [46] (continued)
- Consequences of the prolongation of the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq [47] (continued)
- Report of the Committee on relations with the host country [136] (continued)
- Concluding statement by the President
- Minute of silent prayer or meditation [2] (continued)
- Closure of the forty-second session

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF THE FORTY-SECOND SESSION

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I declare the forty-second session of the General Assembly resumed.

EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY TO THE GOVERNMENTS AND THE PEOPLES OF BANGLADESH, JAMAICA AND MEXICO

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): Before we proceed with the closure of the forty-second session of the General Assembly and with the consideration of the items retained on its agenda pursuant to decision 42/460 of 21 December 1987, I should like, on behalf of all the members of the Assembly, to extend our deepest sympathy to the Governments and the peoples of Bangladesh, Jamaica and Mexico with respect to the tragic loss of life and extensive material damage resulting from the natural disasters that have recently affected those countries.

May I also express the hope that the international community will show its solidarity and respond promptly and generously to any request for help.

I call now on the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. MOHIUDDIN (Bangladesh): Mr. President, may I say how deeply touched I am that you should have made mention of the calamity that has befallen my country, Bangladesh.

The floods that have inundated three-fourths of Bangladesh and overwhelmed the total population have no parallel in our living memory. Life has come to a total standstill. The final assessment of the havoc created is yet to be made. Nearly 50 million people have been affected; the harvest on which the 100 million people of Bangladesh are so utterly dependent has been washed away; the communications infrastructure has sustained colossal damage.

Though the water level has somewhat receded in certain parts of the country, the situation remains critical. Hundreds of thousands are still marooned. The Government has fully mobilized its machinery to provide succour to the affected millions. Members are aware that our resources are meagre; consequently, we had to turn to the global community for assistance.

I am pleased to be able to say that the response of the world has been heartening. The Secretary-General lost no time in activating United Nations agencies. A special representative, Under-Secretary-General Essaafi, was sent to the area to make a preliminary study of damages. We know that the hands of our Secretary-General are currently full; yet his initiative in this respect amply demonstrates that his humanitarian sensibilities admirably match his passion for peace. Many Member States have responded most generously, and on behalf of the Government of Bangladesh I deeply acknowledge both the material help and the moral comfort we have received from all our friends.

(Mr. Mohiuddin, Bangladesh)

While the prevalent critical situation still calls for further emergency relief in terms of food and medicine, the immediate rehabilitation programme will require cash assistance, house-building material and inputs for future harvest. A long-term plan must be contemplated not only to alleviate human suffering but also to take measures to prevent, if possible, a recurrence of the tragedy.

I take this opportunity to call for the early implementation of General Assembly resolution 40/231, entitled "Long-term and effective solution of the problems caused by natural disasters in Bangladesh". The United Nations must investigate the causes of the calamity. This could well be the consequence of environmental and other changes in our region and on our planet. If so, a regional as well as a global effort will be necessary to meet this new threat. I know that this is an enormous task; I also know that no problem is insurmountable to human genius and can be resolved given the will and determination.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Jamaica.

Mr. BARNETT (Jamaica): For those of you who have not suffered the aftermath or experienced the onslaught of a hurricane, the devastation and damage that can be caused is well nigh inconceivable. Howling winds, sheets of rain, floods, flying debris, falling trees wreak havoc on communities, and particularly in our case, a small island country, making the people of those communities suffer inordinately.

It is therefore with a deep sense of appreciation that we accept your sympathy, Mr. President, and that of the members of the General Assembly at this hour of our tragedy.

(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

Hurricane Gilbert which hit Jamaica on 12 and 13 September 1988 was the worst natural disaster Jamaica suffered in this century. The television pictures members have seen tell only a small part of the story. Our society had just begun to recover from long years of economic decline and the economy had been turning around on the path of what we hoped would be sustained growth. Now we have to start all over again, and for a society in a small country such as ours this is even more difficult.

The response of the Secretary-General and of the international community was prompt, and we are grateful for all the help we have received so far and for all the expressions of sympathy that have come with it. Our long-term development and our short-term rehabilitation will continue to require the support and the help of the international community, and since we are sure that they will be forthcoming we express our appreciation in advance.

In recalling the tragedy that has befallen Jamaica I cannot fail at this stage to express our deep sympathy with regard to the natural disaster in Bangladesh. We fully understand what has happened there, and we would request the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to convey to his Government and his people the deep sympathy of the Government and the people of Jamaica. Similarly, to the other sufferers from hurricane Gilbert - the peoples of the Dominican Republic and Mexico - we also extend our deep sympathy and expressions of support and solidarity.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Mexico.

Mr. MOYA PALENCIA (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the people and the Government of Mexico I should like first to express our solidarity with the peoples and the Governments of Bangladesh, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic and with all those other peoples in areas that have recently been struck by floods, hurricanes and other natural disasters.

There are a number of developing peoples represented here which, in addition to the serious problems they face owing to the current economic situation, must also endeavour to overcome the vagaries of nature.

As expressed by the President, the General Assembly's solidarity with our people, and in particular with those living in the communities that has been struck, is certainly fully appreciated by my Government. As was the case during the ill-fated days in 1985 when a terrible earthquake shook Mexico City and other places in Mexico, we are aware of the close solidarity of the international community, which has been shown by our friends both near and far and for which Mexico is most grateful in all respects. As in that difficult period, the Government and the people, together with the federal, local and municipal authorities, have done all in their power to mitigate, in so far as possible, the consequences of hurricane Gilbert, which has devastated huge expanses of the Yucatan Peninsula, the State of Tamaulipas, the State of Nueva Leone and, in particular, the city of Monterrey.

This solidarity testifies to the renewal of the fighting spirit of the emerging peoples in the face of adversity. Just as there emerged out of the ruins of Mexico City after the 1985 earthquake a new awareness and attitude with regard to the many problems we faced in our daily life, I am sure the same will now be the case in the stricken regions of our country, where once again it will be seen that great peoples become even greater in the face of adversity.

(Mr. Moya Palencia, Mexico)

Allow me to conclude by expressing my gratitude to the international community - to you in particular, Mr. President - and to all representatives who are at one in extending to us their sympathy and assistance.

I should like to add that, in addition to what the United Nations does as and when these natural disasters strike our peoples, our most important task will continue to be the betterment of economic and social conditions throughout the world so that societies will be better prepared to meet this type of natural disaster and in a better position quickly to extricate themselves from the effects of devastation.

But above and beyond considerations of purely material aspects, what is encouraging is to see that faced with tragedy the soul of great cultures remains intact and mankind retains its great destiny through its determination.

AGENDA ITEM 121 (continued)

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
(A/42/925/Add.4)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): Before turning to the remaining items on our agenda, I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to document A/42/925, addendum 4, which contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General informing me that, since the issuance of his communications dated 29 February, 1 and 18 March and 16 August 1988, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador have made the necessary payment to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of that information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 28 (continued)

ARMED ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST THE IRAQI NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS AND ITS GRAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM CONCERNING THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY, THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The Assembly decided, on 18 September 1987, to include this item on the agenda of the forty-second session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the draft agenda of the forty-third session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): That concludes our consideration of agenda item 28.

AGENDA ITEM 34 (continued)

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AND PEACE INITIATIVES

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): Members will recall that by resolution 42/1 of 7 October 1987 the Assembly decided to include this item on the provisional agenda of the forty-third session.

May I take it that the Assembly considers that the discussion of this item at the present session is concluded?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): That concludes our consideration of agenda item 34.



AGENDA ITEM 43 (continued)

CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer further consideration of this item to the forty-third session and to include it in the draft agenda?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): That concludes our consideration of agenda item 43.

AGENDA ITEM 46 (continued)

## QUESTION OF CYPRUS

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): Members will recall that on 18 September 1987 the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the present session.

It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the forty-third session of the General Assembly. May I take it, therefore, that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the draft agenda of the forty-third session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): This concludes our consideration of agenda item 46.

AGENDA ITEM 47 (continued)

## CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROLONGATION OF THE ARMED CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The Assembly decided, on 18 September 1987, to include this item in the agenda of the forty-second session.

It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the forty-third session of the General Assembly. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the draft agenda of the forty-third session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): This concludes our consideration of agenda item 47.

AGENDA ITEM 136 (continued)

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS WITH THE HOST COUNTRY

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): In the light of the developments reported in the most recent report of the Secretary-General (A/42/915/Add.5) on this item, may I take it that the Assembly considers that the discussion of this item at the present session is concluded?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): Our consideration of agenda item 136 is concluded.

## CONCLUDING STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The forty-second session of the General Assembly, which ends today, has taken place in an eventful period of international life. The resolutions and decisions adopted by it are proof of the intensified striving for the international co-operation necessary for finding joint solutions to the problems facing mankind.

In my speech at the opening of the forty-second session I said:

"there is definite potential for political success in important areas ... A change for the better, towards an easing of tension in international relations is certainly feasible." (A/42/PV.1, p. 8)

It is not without satisfaction that we observe today that the positive trends in international relations are being consolidated and having initial results, although the serious problems that continue to exist can naturally not be overlooked. Yet it seems to me that the spirit behind any approach to resolving the problems is decisive. As President of this session I have tried consistently to use all the instruments at my disposal to ensure that it proceeds in a harmonious, constructive and fruitful way.

(The President)

The results of the forty-second session have already been summarized. I wish only to add the following today. In my opinion this session has proved that our Organization is acting and interacting in accord with the course of international relations. The forty-second session of the General Assembly has been a forum of dialogue, mutual understanding and, at the same time, frank and non-confrontational discussion in areas in which differing positions exist. With its main session period and five resumptions, and, last but not least, the holding of the third special session on disarmament, this session has been a time of intensive work.

It speaks well for the increasing authority of our Organization that 47 Heads of State or Government and 157 Foreign Ministers have spoken in the highest forum of States during this period. A major conclusion to be drawn from the session is, I believe, that the Organization must be used even more as a centre of dialogue and negotiations to enable it to engage in activities that will make an even greater contribution to the solution of international problems.

I wish to make another remark on the subject of the various resumptions of the session: the question of the status of the Observer Mission of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). It is a good thing that here too realism has gained the upper hand. Our Organization has from the outset taken a stand in conformity with international law.

In sum, one can say that experience, including that of the session of the General Assembly that is now ending, shows that the task assigned to the United Nations at its foundation - "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" - has not become any less relevant; that the Organization continues to be the unique forum for dialogue and co-operation; that the activity and efficiency of the Organization and its organs are increasing as the world changes and that the Organization provides the means of multilateral co-operation required by the new

(The President)

dimensions of international co-operation in resolving global problems as they emerge.

In view of the heavy workload and the financial constraints on the Organization, the conclusion of our extensive agenda with good results is a great achievement by all those involved. This has been possible thanks to the purposeful work of the Committees and their Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteurs, whom I should like to thank once again. The preparation and observance of the General Assembly's working schedule in close collaboration with delegations, the agreement to dispense with the quorum in the plenary Assembly and in the Committees when no decisions had to be taken, and the setting of a uniform time for the beginning of the meetings of the plenary Assembly and the Committees have proved useful. In my opinion the continuance of this practice would be conducive to the effective working of the Organization.

(The President)

It has been a great honour and no ordinary task to collaborate with members in carrying out my function. I thank you for the confidence you have shown in me, and for your close co-operation. I wish to express my particular thanks and esteem to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, who has had to manage a very heavy work-load this year; the results of his work speak for themselves. My sincere thanks go to the Vice-Presidents and to the Chairmen of the regional groups. We have worked together to make this session a success.

It is with special satisfaction that I look back at a year of constructive co-operation with the members of the Secretariat, co-operation marked by mutual respect and assistance. For this I address my personal thanks to Under-Secretary-General Joseph Verner Reed and all staff members of his Office, the Department of Conference Services, the Department of Public Information and the Office of Legal Affairs, as well as all other staff members who have contributed to the success of our endeavours.

I am certain that the United Nations will continue to grow in international importance, prestige and influence. Let us work together towards this objective.

Thank you, and best wishes to all of you.

AGENDA ITEM 2 (continued)MINUTE OF SILENT PRAYER OR MEDITATION

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): We are now coming to the end of the forty-second session of the General Assembly. I invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The members of the Assembly observed a minute of silent prayer or meditation.

CLOSURE OF THE FORTY-SECOND SESSION

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I declare closed the forty-second session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.