



General Assembly

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Forty-third session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 22 December 1988, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. CAPUTO

(Argentina)

- Tribute to the memory of Mr. Nagendra Singh, member and former President of the International Court of Justice
- Tribute to the memory of Mr. Bernt Carlsson, United Nations Commissioner for Namibia
- Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: Request for the inclusion of an additional sub-item submitted by the Secretary-General [8] (continued)
- Report of the Economic and Social Council: Chapters considered directly in plenary meeting [12] (continued)

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- Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments [17] (continued)
 - (h) Appointment of members of the Joint Inspection Unit
- Launching of global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development [44]
- Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council [45]
- 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 [46]
- Question of Cyprus [47]
- Consequences of the prolongation of the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq [48]
- Organization of work
- Concluding statement by the President
- Suspension of the forty-third session

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

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. NAGENDRA SINGH, MEMBER AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. BERNT CARLSSON, UNITED NATIONS COMMISSIONER FOR NAMIBIA

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): It is with deep regret that I must inform the Assembly that Mr. Nagendra Singh, member and former President of the International Court of Justice, passed away on 11 December 1988 in The Hague. Judge Nagendra Singh, a distinguished diplomat and jurist, had a long and close association with the United Nations as a representative of India to many sessions of the General Assembly and to conferences convened under the auspices of the United Nations, and as a member of the International Law Commission. I am sure I interpret the sentiments of the Assembly in expressing the condolences of the General Assembly to the family of Mr. Nagendra Singh and to the President of the Court and his colleagues. I should also like to ask the delegation of India to accept and transmit to the Government of India and to Mr. Nagendra Singh's bereaved family our expression of sympathy at this sad loss.

We have also learned with great sorrow of the tragic death yesterday of our highly esteemed colleague and recently reappointed United Nations Commissioner for Namibia, Mr. Bernt Carlsson. His death has occurred at a time when the long-awaited independence of Namibia is at last in sight. Mr. Carlsson, who was first appointed Commissioner in December 1986 after distinguished service as ambassador at large and special emissary of the late Prime Minister Olof Palme of Sweden, will not see the fruits of his labour.

On behalf of the Assembly and on my own behalf, I express our heartfelt condolences to the family of Mr. Carlsson and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. I should also like to ask the delegation of Sweden to accept and transmit to the Government of Sweden and to Mr. Bernt Carlsson's bereaved family our expression of sympathy at their tragic loss.

(The President)

I now invite the members of the Assembly to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Nagendra Singh and Mr. Bernt Carlsson.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I call now upon the Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I should like to associate myself with the grief that has been expressed concerning the death of Judge Nagendra Singh.

Judge Singh brought great distinction over many years to the International Court of Justice and to the United Nations as a whole. He was a most eminent jurist whom I counted among my personal friends.

I have expressed to the President of the Court, to the Government of India and to Mrs. Singh my sincere condolences, which I know are shared by all my colleagues.

It is a very sad duty for me to express my deep regret and that of my colleagues in the Secretariat at the untimely and tragic passing yesterday of Bernt Carlsson. The circumstances no less than the moment of his death have come as a great shock to all of us. He will be greatly missed.

Mr. Carlsson was appointed Commissioner for Namibia in 1986 and was reappointed just recently. He was a true friend of the Namibian people. He served this Organization with exemplary devotion and distinction, and constantly adhered to the internationalist principles that guided his political career. It is a matter of great sorrow that he will not see an independent Namibia join the community of nations as a Member of this Organization.

In paying tribute to Mr. Carlsson, I should also like to express my gratitude to his country, Sweden, which over the years has offered this Organization the services of so many of its eminent nationals.

May I ask the representative of Sweden, on my behalf and on behalf of my colleagues, to convey to the family of Mr. Carlsson our heartfelt condolences.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL SUB-ITEM SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/43/248)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now consider the request for the inclusion of an additional sub-item in the agenda of the forty-third session under agenda item 15, entitled "Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs". In that connection a note by the Secretary-General has been circulated in document A/43/248.

In his note the Secretary-General informs the Assembly that the death of Judge Nagendra Singh of India has resulted in a vacancy in the International Court of Justice and draws the attention of the Assembly to the provisions of the Statute of the International Court of Justice whereby the members of the Court shall be elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council and whereby the Security Council is to fix the date of the election.

Inasmuch as agenda item 15 of the forty-third session of the Assembly does not include a sub-item relating to the election to fill this vacancy, it is proposed that such a sub-item should be included in the agenda of the forty-third session on the understanding that it would not be considered at the present time but would be taken up at a meeting of a resumption of the present session on a date fixed by the Security Council.

Unless there is an objection, I shall take it that the General Assembly agrees that, under the circumstances described in the note of the Secretary-General, the provision of rule 40 of the rules of procedure, which would require a meeting of the General Committee on the question of the inclusion on the agenda of a sub-item, should be waived.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): May I also take it that the Assembly wishes to include an additional sub-item under agenda item 15 to read as follows: "(c) Election of a member of the International Court of Justice"?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 12 (continued)

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL: CHAPTERS CONSIDERED DIRECTLY IN PLENARY MEETING [CHAPTERS I, II, III (SECTIONS A AND B (a)), VI (SECTION C) AND VII] (A/43/3)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Members will recall that chapters I, II, III (sections A and B (a)), VI (section C) and VII of the report of the Economic and Social Council were assigned to plenary meetings for consideration.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of those chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 12.

AGENDA ITEM 17 (continued)

APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS:

(h) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (A/43/976)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): As is indicated in the note circulated in document A/43/976, the General Assembly is required, at its current session, to appoint a member of the Joint Inspection Unit to fill the vacancy that will arise from the expiration on 31 December 1989 of the term of office of Mr. Kahono Martohadinegoro of Indonesia. As is further indicated in the note, the Assembly is also required to appoint a member to fill the vacancy that will arise from the resignation of Mr. Enrique Ferrer Vieyra of Argentina effective 1 April 1989.

In accordance with the procedures described in Article 3, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, the regional groups concerned were consulted and it was determined that Indonesia and Argentina, respectively, should be requested to propose candidates to replace Mr. Martohadinegoro and Mr. Ferrer Vieyra.

As a result of further consultations in accordance with Article 3, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, including consultations with the President of the Economic and Social Council and with the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, I now submit to the Assembly the candidatures of Mr. Kahono Martohadinegoro of Indonesia for appointment as member of the Joint Inspection Unit for a term commencing on 1 January 1990 and expiring 31 December 1994 and of Mr. Raúl Quijano of Argentina for a term commencing on 1 April 1989 and expiring on 31 December 1993.

(The President)

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to appoint those candidates?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We have concluded our consideration of sub-item (h) of agenda item 17.

AGENDA ITEM 44

LAUNCHING OF GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): In connection with this item representatives will recall that on 23 September 1988 the Assembly decided to include the item in the agenda of the forty-third session.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda of the forty-fourth session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): This concludes our consideration of agenda item 44.

AGENDA ITEM 45

QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I understand that there is no request to consider this item at the present session.

That being the case, may I take it that the Assembly decides to include the item in the provisional agenda of the forty-fourth session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): This concludes our consideration of agenda item 45.

AGENDA ITEM 46

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 Spanish): It is my understanding that agenda item 46 should be retained on the agenda of the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to retain the item on the agenda of the forty-third session?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 47

QUESTION OF CYPRUS

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Members will certainly recall that on 23 September 1988 the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the present session but deferred any decision on the allocation of the item to an appropriate time in the future.

It is my understanding that it would be desirable to leave the question of Cyprus open at the present session.

May I take it that the Assembly agrees to that understanding and decides to retain the item on the agenda of its forty-third session?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 48

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

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I have received a request that this item be kept on the agenda of the current session.

(The President)

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to retain the item on the agenda of the forty-third session?

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Apart from matters that may arise relating to the agenda and organization of the current session, of which the General Assembly remains seized, and bearing in mind the action already taken at its 76th, 82nd and 83rd plenary meetings as well as action taken at the present meeting concerning agenda items 15 (c), 46, 47 and 48, the General Assembly will retain on the agenda of the forty-third session the following agenda items:

- Item 15 (c) Election of a member of the International Court of Justice;
- Item 37 Question of Palestine;
- Item 46 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;
- Item 47 Question of Cyprus;
- Item 48 Consequences of the prolongation of the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq;
- Item 82 Development and international economic co-operation;
- Item 137 Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We have thus concluded our consideration of the agenda of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. This session, which has taken place in what we might describe as an exceptional climate, has given us much food for thought. Many of the events that have occurred here are freshly engraved in our memories; we are all familiar with them. Because of their scope, their overriding importance and their significance for the future of the international community, however, they merit being recalled to mind this afternoon.

At the beginning of this session I noted that we were gathering at a special time in modern history: The general climate in international relations was positive; for the first time, the confrontational atmosphere of recent decades had given way to dialogue and co-operation; the new relationship and disarmament agreements between the super-Powers and the gradual solution of major regional conflicts had at one and the same time fueled and resulted from this new climate.

It was our responsibility to ensure that these positive developments were placed on a sound footing. I believe we can take satisfaction from having fully discharged our duty in this respect. Both the decisions that we have taken and the tone of the debates have served to strengthen and promote the process of dialogue and détente.

Just a few hours ago, in this very building, we witnessed the signing of an agreement that will at last enable the process of independence for Namibia to begin. Thus, after a lapse of 10 years, the United Nations will have the historic task of putting into effect Security Council resolution 435 (1978). In this connection, I wish to note that in the last several hours a number of delegations have inquired whether I might inform the Assembly on the possibility of a resumed

(The President)

session of the Assembly to consider the most practical and suitable ways of contributing financially to the effective and thorough implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and to the agreements signed today in New York by the representatives of Angola, Cuba and South Africa.

For the first time the General Assembly has adopted by consensus and without discussion a resolution on Afghanistan. To a greater or lesser extent, the resolutions on Kampuchea, Western Sahara and the Middle East, also reflected a promising development.

For its part, the General Assembly had occasion a few days ago, in Geneva, to adopt a series of resolutions which will, without question, give new momentum to the search for a solution to the Palestinian problem. They reflected the grave concern felt by the international community at the deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and at the continued non-compliance with Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on these matters. In a global framework of détente, it is vital for all the parties directly involved in the conflict to open a dialogue as early as possible, so that peace may finally be restored to the Middle Eastern region. In this respect, the decision of the United States Government to initiate a substantive dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) represents a striking step forward, which I hope will give fresh impetus to the peace process in the region.

With similar concern, the General Assembly considered the critical situation prevailing in South Africa as a result of the unacceptable policy of apartheid. The persistence of apartheid represents a hotbed of tension that imperils international peace and security. The General Assembly reaffirmed its conviction that the Security Council should impose mandatory sanctions on South Africa pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter.

(The President)

The recognition of the major changes that have been occurring in international economic relations, their increasingly global and interdependent nature, and the prolonged economic crisis besetting most developing countries - particularly the debtor nations - had an impact on the work of the Second Committee. Noteworthy in any assessment of the outcome of that work are the role entrusted to the Secretary-General in connection with the issue of the external indebtedness of the developing countries, the progress achieved towards convening a United Nations conference on environment and development, the international strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade, and the possibility of holding a special session of the General Assembly in 1990 devoted to international economic co-operation.

Apart from the aforementioned developments in these particularly important issues, the forty-third session of the General Assembly maintained a pace of work consonant with the demands of the present circumstances.

In the field of disarmament and international security, there was a significant narrowing of views among delegations, and a great number of resolutions were adopted by consensus. The negotiations in this field are undoubtedly passing through a historic phase which the multilateral environment should foster and promote.

With respect to social and humanitarian questions, the debates reflected a willingness on the part of all delegations to strive for consensus in the adoption of texts. Indeed, the way has been paved for candid dialogue, leaving behind dogmatic ideology and reciprocal accusations.

I should also like to note that, consistent with the commitment we undertook in initiating the exercise established by resolution 41/213, the Assembly achieved a high degree of agreement on budgetary matters.

(The President)

The high percentage of resolutions adopted without a vote on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee, the adoption of the revised estimates for the current budget, the agreement on the budget outline for 1990-1991, which launched the new budgetary cycle, and the resolution just adopted on the future scale of assessments, are achievements unprecedented in the history of the Organization.

I venture to hope that this process will continue to enhance our Governments' commitment to the Organization, and that the budgetary uncertainties that now beset us will soon disappear entirely.

In the area of legal matters, years of work in important subsidiary organs of the Sixth Committee came to a successful conclusion with the unanimous adoption of the Draft Convention on International Bills of Exchange and International Promissory Notes, the Declaration on the Prevention and Removal of Disputes and Situations which May Threaten International Peace and Security and on the Role of the United Nations in this field, and the Draft Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment.

This brief summary confirms that the forty-third session of the General Assembly has reflected and contributed to the progress that has been made towards peace and security and that this year has been marked by fresh developments in international co-operation.

It is of great significance to all Members of the United Nations to see the beginning of a new relationship, based on disarmament, between the Soviet Union and the United States. Addressing the Assembly at the beginning of our session, the President of the United States, Mr. Ronald Reagan, spoke of the great challenges facing the international community; then, virtually at the end of our session, the President of the Supreme Soviet, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, referred to a new age of responsibility and international relations that reflect a new reality.

(The President)

The President of Argentina reflected the feelings of many when, speaking here about this new relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union, he declared that, four decades after Hiroshima, the political realities of the nuclear age were finally being understood.

(The President)

Many leaders and statesmen have made the General Assembly their forum. The reinvigoration of the United Nations, epitomized by the awarding of the Nobel Prize to the peace-keeping forces, is testimony to the achievements that have marked this year 1988. The role that the United Nations can play and the way in which the Organization can continue to contribute significantly to world peace have been demonstrated. The Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, deserves all our gratitude for having so dynamically maintained the role of our Organization on all fronts - economic, social and political. Our special appreciation and recognition go to those Member States that have exceeded their obligations, and to the United Nations peace-keeping forces and other bodies devoted to peace, as well as the thousands of staff members of the United Nations system. They have ensured this Organization's continued existence and richly contributed to this year's promising results.

A look at the agenda of the General Assembly reveals the United Nations broad-ranging and profound contribution to improving our world. As a result of the recommendations, studies and conclusions of the various committees, the Assembly's work was highly satisfactory. In presiding over this session of the General Assembly I have benefited from the endeavours of each of you. The specific results achieved in the various committees have proved that our energies have been channelled effectively, generously and productively. My sincere and special thanks go to the chairmen and members of those committees for having made all this possible.

Against this generally positive backdrop, however, there is a fundamental problem which calls for the same devotion and energy. I am referring to the question of economic development and social justice in the world. This session served to confirm the inescapable priority nature of this question and the urgent

(The President)

need to take specific and concrete initiatives based on consensus. The recognition of interdependence means that we must recognize that the cold war, nuclear weaponry and regional conflicts are not the only threats to peace and stability. Time and again it has become plain in this forum that in the final analysis another indispensable guarantee of peace is economic development, and until specific measures are taken to alleviate the unjust economic situation and social status of two thirds of mankind any achievement in the area of security will remain precarious.

The developing countries have demonstrated a clear determination to take a fresh approach to international economic co-operation in the light of changing circumstances. For this reason the warnings and the recommendations of the Bruntland Commission must be heeded. Our common future, one chosen and designed by ourselves, must take a vigorous approach within the economic field and in the area of environment, not only through a lack of confrontation but through co-operation among our peoples to bring about a new international security.

The recognition of the United Nations achievements is a tribute also to many world leaders and international citizens who preceded us. The commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights calls to mind an ardent champion of the United Nations, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, of whom it was said that she would prefer to light a single candle rather than curse the darkness. We have many candles alight around us; it is now up to us to keep those flames alive.

SUSPENSION OF THE FORTY-THIRD SESSION

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Wishing all representatives a very happy year 1989, I hereby declare the forty-third session of the General Assembly suspended.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.