

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY



## PLENARY MEETING

(OPENING MEETING)

SEVENTH SESSION

Tuesday, 14 October 1952, at 11 a.m.

Official Records

Headquarters, New York

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**President:** Mr. Lester B. PEARSON (Canada).

**Temporary President:** Mr. Luis PADILLA NERVO (Mexico).

#### Opening of the seventh session of the General Assembly

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): I have the honour to declare open the first meeting of the seventh session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

#### Minute of silent prayer or meditation [Agenda item 2]

2. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): In accordance with rule 64 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I invite representatives to rise and observe a minute of silence devoted to prayer or meditation.

*The representatives stood in silence.*

The printed official records of the seventh session of the General Assembly are being published in fascicule form, that is, the record of each meeting will be issued separately as soon as possible. These will be so produced that they may be collected into volumes, by organ and session. Pagination will therefore be continuous throughout each series of fascicules representing the records of a single body. At the end of the session, a separate printed cover will be issued for each series, and a prefatory fascicule containing a title page, table of contents, list of members attending, agenda, and other prefatory material. This fascicule should be placed in front of the record of the opening meeting, before binding. For ease of recognition the fascicules of the opening and closing meetings will be clearly identified as such in the masthead.

After the close of the session, collated sets of fascicules will be placed on sale for the general public.

#### Address by the Honorable Vincent Impellitteri, Mayor of the City of New York

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): The General Assembly is meeting for the first time at the permanent Headquarters of the United Nations. On this memorable occasion, we have with us the Mayor of the City of New York, the Honorable Vincent Impellitteri, who will address the Assembly. We shall also hear addresses from the Chairman of the Headquarters Advisory Committee, the Honorable Warren R. Austin, and the Secretary-General, Mr. Trygve Lie.

4. I call upon the Honorable Vincent Impellitteri, Mayor of the City of New York.

5. Mr. IMPELLITTERI: As I greet you this morning, I recall with great pride the day in October 1946 when, as the then Acting Mayor of the City of New York, I had the great privilege of welcoming the delegates at the first formal opening of the General Assembly of the United Nations in Flushing Meadow Park.

6. That was a memorable and a magnificent occasion, born in an atmosphere of good will, of optimism and of hope. All of us thrilled to the visible evidences of a great universal effort towards global understanding and peace. I said at that time that the people of this city, deeply conscience of the vital importance of your deliberations, extended a most enthusiastic and friendly welcome to the delegates. I said that we felt a sincere confidence that your efforts would be rewarded with ultimate success.

7. Six years have passed since that historic event. They have been difficult years. They have been marked

with great successes and with some serious setbacks. Time undoubtedly has reduced to some degree the original optimism, and even perhaps some of the good will. But, I submit to you, delegates, it has not diminished the hopes which rest with you. Nor has it diminished the sincerity of the freedom-loving people of the world in their efforts for a universal peace. And, finally, it has not diminished the enthusiasm of the people of the City of New York for your objectives. Public opinion in this city and nation supports the role of a determined and strong United Nations Organization in its mission to resist and stamp out aggression the world over.

8. So today I repeat that friendly welcome to you in their behalf, and reiterate the confidence that your decisions, based on the equality of human rights, will finally restore a secure peace to the world. I assure you that the people of this city have a deep-seated faith in the ability of men of all nationalities, all creeds and all walks of life to reach a common understanding without subsequent rancour, recrimination or resort to force of arms. It was this kind of faith which prompted us here in the City of New York to urge upon you the selection of our great metropolis as your permanent home.

9. We set forth what we felt were the practical advantages of making your permanent home here. We put the great facilities of this city at your complete disposal. We promised, and gave, to the United Nations Organization full co-operation in the construction of this impressive building and development of the surrounding United Nations Plaza. As we view the spacious and imposing panorama that has emerged from the welter of three years of construction work, we feel well rewarded. The vehicular tunnel on First Avenue, a most complicated engineering job, is scheduled to be finished next spring. Then this magnificent home of the United Nations, with all its beauty and convenience, will be complete.

10. It is our belief that future historians will record that from this site emanated the wisdom and concord that brought peace and happiness to a troubled world. The City of New York is now indeed the world centre of hope.

11. Our people are aware of their individual responsibility in providing an atmosphere conducive to mutual understanding. Through the years we have got along very well with people of all nations. We have made and are making and will continue to make every effort to provide you with our traditional hospitality and co-operation.

12. We greet you in the spirit of true friendship. We wish you god-speed in your work as you begin your momentous seventh session in this new General Assembly Hall.

13. Our common destinies are completely in your hands.

**Address by the Honorable Warren R. Austin,  
Chairman of the Headquarters Advisory Committee**

14. Mr. AUSTIN: We stand together today in a bright beam of history. Human craftsmanship, expressed now in these United Nations buildings, earlier raised magnificent structures in Asia: Angkor Vat and

the Taj Mahal. Such craftsmanship, in the Western Hemisphere, built Mayan temples and modern cities in Latin America. It lifted high in France and England and cathedral arches of Chartres and Salisbury. Looking about us to these buildings we discover strong affiliations with the world's greatest cultures. We recognize a heritage with roots in Egypt and Greece. The splendour of this conception inspires us to work in this noble capitol for universal peace.

15. Let us ask, who are the craftsmen of this capitol of peace? We record the significant action of President Truman, and the Congress of the United States, in inviting the United Nations to make its home here. We feel deeply the moving generosity of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who gave this site. We are grateful to the State of New York for enabling laws, and to the City of New York for the creation of great public works. These acts made it possible to launch the structure over streets and river front.

16. We recall the role played by Trygve Lie, Secretary-General and chief administrative officer of the Organization. He chose the very elect among architects and speeded completion of the structures towards this day. We rightly think of Wallace Harrison, whose administrative and architectural genius harmonized the multiplicity of ideas brought forth by the board of consulting architects. The ten who foregathered with Mr. Harrison and conceived the composition from the art, knowledge, and skill of several continents, were Australia's Soilleux, Belgium's Brunfaut, Brazil's Niemeyer, Canada's Cormier, China's Liang, France's Le Corbusier, Sweden's Markelius, the Soviet Union's Bassov, the United Kingdom's Robertson, and Uruguay's Vilamajó. These were the designers who, directed by Mr. Harrison, projected a topless tower, lighted from the east and from the west, with its wide Assembly amphitheatre open to the nations of the world.

17. Let us look further. We find the work of other craftsmen. For these buildings represent more than a rich heritage from the past. They evidence more than leadership from architects, engineers and statesmen. How many hands helped create Canada's gift, the great entrance doors for the General Assembly? What are the names of men and women in Denmark, Norway and Sweden whose labour helped beautify the three main Council chambers? Who cut and fashioned the wood from Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, which has enriched the General Assembly building? Who brought black pebbles from Rhodes so that the fountain given by countless school-children could be further beautified? And what are the stories at the back of each child's giving?

18. In these Headquarters of the United Nations there are combined stone, glass, metal, wood and textiles, with elements of the human heritage which the Charter promotes. Thus, "We, the peoples of the United Nations", animate our symbols with a soul-stirring desire for the supremacy of morality, law and order. These buildings are grounded physically on the rock of Manhattan, but they are established in venerable aspirations of men—hearers and doers of the word—men likened to "a wise man, who built his house upon a rock". They are founded upon the sacrifice of those who have died for the United Nations in Korea, and in the selflessness of others who, like Count Berna-

dotte, have given their lives to the ideal of peaceful settlement of disputes.

19. These buildings symbolize our faith and our collective determination to defend human lives and extend human liberty. But these great structures would remain inert without "works". Aggression could crush the craftsmen who have lifted these buildings of peace. Power to destroy has grown to include power to sear the cultural resources which collectively have given purpose to these buildings.

20. However, resources of moral power can be achieved and magnificently strengthened through deeds and the spirit of the word. Better understanding of men and women in all nations is the vital necessity for unity and co-operation to maintain international peace and security through these United Nations Headquarters. As we take our places in the General Assembly, and at the Council meetings, let us begin all our work in the name of God, for the solution of all our problems is a spiritual one. Our collective practice of truth, justice and friendship among nations can radiate the beam of history into every region and among all peoples. Thus to craftsmanship, we shall add statesmanship in the capitol of peace.

#### Address by Mr. Trygve Lie, Secretary-General of the United Nations

21. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Mr. President, Mr. Mayor, honourable representatives to the seventh session of the General Assembly and distinguished guests:

22. It is with deep emotion that I, as Secretary-General, bid you welcome to your new home—your permanent home, completed just seven years after the United Nations Charter came into force.

23. When I became Secretary-General, the infant United Nations had no home except in the hearts of men. We did not know where the headquarters would be except that it would be somewhere in the United States. There was no money in sight to build it. There was not even a plan on an architect's drafting board. Through the years since then the creation of the permanent headquarters has been one of my greatest responsibilities to you, as Secretary-General. Now here it stands, aspiring in graceful lines, but solid upon the Manhattan rock—this great hall in which we are gathered today. In this, I hope, there is a good omen for all men of good will. The United Nations is founded upon the eternal truths of man's common brotherhood and the interdependence of peoples. It aspires to win wider recognition and application of these truths throughout the world.

24. We moved to New York early in 1946. Many of you will recall those days, charged with excitement and hard work in difficult circumstances. The first meeting of the Security Council was in the converted gymnasium of Hunter College and the Secretariat and delegations were scattered among temporary offices and hotels throughout the city. I remember also the meetings that we held later in the Henry Hudson Hotel.

25. When our interim headquarters were set up at Lake Success and the General Assembly was accommodated in the New York City building at Flushing Meadow later in that year, it seemed almost—by contrast with our previous existence—as though we were

well established. Many of you will share with me lasting memories of Lake Success. Those hastily converted factory buildings were hardly the most efficient setting for our labours, but much good work was done there, and at Flushing Meadow, in struggle for peace and progress in the world.

26. It was at Flushing Meadow, in December 1946, that the final decision on the permanent headquarters was made. The choice of the New York area had been questioned and, to break what seemed a stalemate, a sub-committee of the General Assembly had been sent on an inspection tour to San Francisco, Boston, Philadelphia and three locations around New York. The Fifth Committee of the General Assembly began to debate that sub-committee's report on 4 December. It was still debating on 11 December, when the United States representative, Mr. Warren Austin, whom you have just heard speak so eloquently of the new headquarters, announced that Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. had offered to give \$8,500,000 on behalf of the Rockefeller family to buy the site on which we are met today. The General Assembly accepted that offer [resolution 100 (I)] and our search for a home was ended.

27. The United Nations was promised every co-operation by the Government of the United States and the City of New York in the creation of the permanent headquarters. That co-operation has been wholehearted and generous. The \$65 million interest-free loan granted by the United States made possible the buildings in which we now work. The City, in addition to giving us additional waterfront rights, embarked upon extensive improvements of the approaches.

28. In 1947, after the necessary laws had been passed by the Congress of the United States, the State of New York and the City of New York, I was able, under the authority of the General Assembly, to accept formally both the land purchased by the Rockefeller gift and the portion of the land conveyed to the United Nations by the City.

29. It was imperative, because of the improvised nature of the facilities available to the General Assembly and the principal organs of the United Nations, that a permanent headquarters should be built as soon as possible. But there were other considerations. International collaboration on design was essential for the capital of a world organization. The development of the site called for the best engineering and architectural talent in all lands. Also, it was important that there should be close co-ordination of United Nations construction with the area improvements being carried forward by the City.

30. From the beginning, I was assisted greatly by the Headquarters Advisory Committee of sixteen members, whose Chairman throughout has been Mr. Warren Austin. His, and the Committee's, continued encouragement and magnificent support, backed unswervingly by that great and true friend of the United Nations, President Harry S. Truman, have been indispensable to the building of the Headquarters. It was with the advice and guidance of the Headquarters Advisory Committee and with the approval and authority of the General Assembly during these past busy years, that I made the necessary decisions and arrangements.

31. It was not difficult to decide upon the chief architect for this great project. Wallace K. Harrison, because of his wide experience and great distinction, was

the obvious choice. At his suggestion, the governments of Member States were asked to nominate architects and engineers to serve on an international board of design. Representatives of fifteen Member States were selected and spent some five months with Mr. Harrison developing the basic architectural scheme for these buildings and their surroundings. Mr. Warren Austin has already named ten of these men. I should like to add my own personal tribute to all of them. Surely it must be recognized as a great achievement in international co-operation and collaboration—this success of an international team of architects in producing designs acceptable to all of them and approved unanimously by the General Assembly.

32. When the designers from all over the world had returned to their homes, the great task of executing the plan was the heavy responsibility which Mr. Harrison and his staff assumed under my responsibility to the General Assembly. I should have liked today to mention many members of Mr. Harrison's staff, had there been time, but there is one I must mention—Mr. James A. Dawson, chief construction engineer. His executive skill and his diplomacy, day in, day out, never failed to keep things running smoothly.

33. We have had many difficulties—delays, shortages of materials, construction problems and rising building costs. But we have so far been able to surmount them all. If we were starting over again today, it would cost at least \$100 million—not \$68 million—to create these buildings—buildings that not only we, but generations that come after us, will hold in pride and affection.

34. There are so many to thank. There are the architects and engineers and construction experts, but there are also the draftsmen who pored over details of a segment of a single plan, the workmen with drill and rivet hammer, crane or bulldozer or shovel. The detailed plans for the foundations, the design of the complicated structural steel and the specifications for the large and complex mechanical installations demanded the best of the best engineering talent in the world.

35. I wish that I could thank them all individually today—every one. I wish, too, that I could thank individually all the many contracting firms which, together with the great labour organizations, provided the management and the workers for the day-to-day building operations. What has been accomplished here in a brief time is the result of well organized teamwork by American labour and American industry. When I pay tribute to the Fuller-Turner-Walsh-Slaterry Company, general contractors for these buildings, for a job well done, I am thinking of every single person who contributed time, skill and devotion to the task. I would emphasize my gratitude to every single worker. I am sure that men often worked harder and with more interest because the rivets they were driving, the stone they were setting, the concrete they were pouring, and the wires they were fastening had for them, in this instance, a special significance and meaning.

36. You have to look about you to see that the authorities of the City of New York, under Mayor O'Dwyer and later under Mayor Impellitteri, who is with us today, are carrying forward the improvements around the site which they volunteered to undertake. Reconstruction of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive, a co-operative venture by the City and the United Nations, was completed early this year, and most of the alterations

on the other streets have made good progress, with the assistance of Manhattan Borough President Robert F. Wagner, Jr. The City has kept its commitments to the United Nations, kept them when many demands were being made upon the authorities for other public projects, and rising costs necessitated additional appropriations and special efforts.

37. Much of the credit for the co-operation between the City and the United Nations must go to City Construction Co-ordinator Robert Moses, whose constant interest and enthusiastic support have been most helpful to me, and to us all. New York City's friendly hospitality, first demonstrated in the days of Hunter College, Lake Success and Flushing Meadows, has been unflagging. For this I am grateful.

38. Our buildings have been enriched by many gifts from many Member States. Mr. Austin, in his tribute, has mentioned some of them. Eventually, I am sure, we shall have at this headquarters, both within the buildings and in the landscaped areas, something of the culture of all the Member States. That is as it should be.

39. Already decorations and furnishings, the gifts of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, have been installed in the three Council chambers. In this building, lacewood and rimu wood panelling for the office suite of the Assembly President and for the delegates' entrance hall are the gifts of Australia and New Zealand. The United Kingdom has panelled and furnished a committee room. A gift of tapestry from Belgium, created by Peter Colfs, has been accepted for the south entrance area. Canada gave the ornamental metal doors at the north main entrance. Brazil plans to give murals for the south lobby by its great muralist, Candido Portinari. Yugoslavia has offered an important work by the renowned sculptor, Anton Augustincic, for the area north of the building. Greece is giving a classical statue for the gardens. Ecuador is giving carpeting for the committee area, and rugs have been given by India, Turkey and Iran. In the courtyard of the Secretariat Building is a fountain given by the schoolchildren of the United States. Pebbles in its pool were gathered by the women and children of the Island of Rhodes, as Mr. Austin has just mentioned, and are the gift of the Government of Greece. The City of New York has made an appropriation for the greater part of the ornamental fence which will surround the site. Israel is providing stone from Jerusalem for the gardens. The Netherlands has indicated its desire to make a gift for the main entrance ramp at the front of the Assembly building. The Union of South Africa is planning a gift of sculpture. The Guggenheim Foundation of New York City has donated the services of the Dominican painter, José Vela Zanetti, who has begun a mural in the corridor outside the Trusteeship Council chamber. The two abstract murals on the walls of this Assembly hall, by the great French artist, Fernand Léger, were made possible by a generous donor. I do not doubt that there will be many other gifts to come. I am sorry that some gifts are hidden from you. I had almost forgotten to mention an old and solid friend of the United Nations, Mr. Thomas J. Watson. He has given us the world's most modern equipment for the speaker's rostrum and the President's desk. When the speakers come to the rostrum, they will find a green light, a yellow light, a red light and a big watch, so that the President will have in his hand every possibility to be at the will of the General



Assembly and to control the length of all the speeches. I thank Mr. Watson for his very valuable gift.

40. All these things add to the beauty and distinction of a headquarters which, quite apart from its noble function, already is known throughout the world as a great international architectural achievement. This workshop for peace—by its simplicity, its grace and its clean architectural line—is already becoming a focal point for visitors from all over the world. There is much to be added, of course, in the way of embellishments—landscaping, furnishings, and decoration. But we must all rejoice that at long last our permanent Headquarters is fully established, occupied and at work.

41. It is well that we are at work in this new home, and that we have, at last, all the tools which you the representatives and we in the Secretariat need for full efficiency: You will need them all in the immense difficulties which confront you—political, social and economic. We must all work with a high heart and firm determination as we begin this seventh session of the General Assembly.

42. We begin our labours in a home that is built to last for generations to come. We do so in the knowledge that we are travelling on a long and hard road in our fight to prevent a third world war and to improve the chances of a lasting peace. This session upon which you are embarking is only one stage—and a very difficult one—in a journey which will take many years. I do not know how far you can move forward in the next nine weeks. The Secretariat of the United Nations and I are at your disposal, and we shall do our utmost to assist you to have a successful session in this new but permanent home of the United Nations.

43. As your chief administrator, I wish you all welcome to the permanent Headquarters of the United Nations and to the seventh session of the General Assembly.

**Address by Dr. Luis Padilla Nervo, President of the sixth session**

44. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to express my gratitude to Mayor Impellitteri for the cordial words of greeting he has extended to us. The valuable collaboration which the authorities of the City of New York have offered to the United Nations to facilitate its work and to enhance its permanent Headquarters is a true expression of the broad international outlook characteristic of this great city, and it deserves our sincere appreciation. The General Assembly rightly should also extend its gratitude to the members of its Headquarters Advisory Committee, whose advice and important decisions have helped to guide the planning and the construction of this building; to the Secretary-General, Mr. Trygve Lie, for his untiring and firm support, which has contributed in such a degree to the completion of this unique undertaking; and to the group of planners, technicians and workmen of all levels who have participated in one form or another in the construction of buildings which are to be called on to serve as the outstanding monument of world peace.

45. (*Translated from Spanish*): The General Assembly of the United Nations today begins its seventh session on an international scene still dominated by care and anxiety.

46. This is the first time that the General Assembly has met in this magnificent building which from now on will be its own permanent Headquarters. Let us do all in our power to give this event a symbolic meaning, so that the inauguration of our home shall signify our determination to remain united, whether we agree or disagree, under the rule of a common ideal.

47. Little progress has been achieved during the past year. The indubitable value of the Organization has been proved in the social and economic fields. The world will maintain its hope in the United Nations as long as the United Nations, through its principal organs and the specialized agencies, is able to maintain the solidarity of peoples and nations in the hope of bettering human existence.

48. An organization like ours, which can daily extend its beneficent action to every corner of the globe, is sowing the seeds of a peace that will inevitably arise one day as a result of the well-being and wisdom of man. Thanks to our peoples' hopes we can meet again today and face our tasks with enthusiasm, confident that, by patient and persevering effort, we shall in the end achieve the Purposes and Principles of the Charter.

49. In the political sphere, the results this year have not been very heartening. All activities are governed by the fear of war, and the atmosphere is one in which few dare to talk about agreement and conciliation because they doubt whether their sentiments will be thought sincere. It is thus all the more urgent to assert that our duty—and this applies particularly to the small and medium-sized Powers—is one of conciliation, which we must insist on undertaking at once, before it is too late.

50. The United Nations must, if it is to survive, be a centre where the nations may reconcile their differences and efforts in order to attain universal objectives. Otherwise there is a danger lest the States which are now Members of the Organization may find themselves irrevocably separated, or form groups with no other motive but their own national interests or immediate necessities.

51. All the great outstanding questions have become either alarmingly more acute or, failing hope of an immediate solution, inextricably complicated. After the longest and most patient negotiations in history, the Korean question is now again being debated by guns. The Disarmament Commission has made no progress. The problems of German unification and the peace treaty with Austria have practically been shelved. Everything seems to have become futile, and wherever we look, in this sad scene, we find pessimism and indifference.

52. Only two years ago, before Korea, we could suppose that the peace—if the situation that has existed since 1945 can be called peace—was still too young in comparison with the length of the war. We could hope that, after all, time would help to strengthen the infant speech of a world just reborn to peace after a terrible catastrophe. Is the breakdown of the collaboration which united the great Powers during the Second World War in danger of becoming final and irrevocable? Is it still possible to build something solid, now, upon the evils resulting from that breakdown?

53. After seven years that the United Nations has been in existence, we must admit objectively that, far

from achieving our fundamental goals, we are faced with a situation in which the prospects of peace are growing ever smaller and the world, full of alarm and fear, is every day losing—as has been the case for the past seven years—its best opportunities of spiritual and material progress. We cannot face this picture without distress. We cannot help thinking of the final hour of reckoning, when the world will take to task those who have driven it to this situation, which is completely unjustifiable, because nothing but freedom can be worth one hour of the well-being and prosperity of millions of people.

54. Fortunately, however, the United Nations has been able to counteract some of the adverse factors by measures that clearly show its desire to overcome its initial mistakes and deficiencies. Thus, side by side with the system of collective security laid down in the Charter, there has been developed a subsidiary system that can work under the authority either of the Security Council—which still lacks certain prerequisites for coercive action—or of the General Assembly, if the Security Council is not able to take a decision.

55. The Collective Measures Committee has this year completed the essential features of its study of methods and procedures which the United Nations could use in case of aggression, provided in the resolution [377 (V)] entitled "Uniting for peace". Many Member States think that this system may not prove effective enough against aggression by a great Power, which the original system of the Charter did not contemplate. We must not worry too much about this. The value of any system of security depends less on its theoretical perfection than on the psychological factors which determine and maintain the solidarity of States.

56. Perhaps the greatest strength of the United Nations resides in the unalterable adherence of the vast majority of its Members to the principles of the Charter, and in the love that each of them has for its own liberty and independence. We are firmly convinced, therefore, that each of them in the moment of trial would back its convictions and ideals with all the strength it possessed.

57. Others hold different doubts about the directions in which the United Nations is developing in collective security and other matters. Such doubts are principally of a legal nature, and hinge on the basic question whether the principle of the world organization is not being sacrificed to a policy of balance of power among the great Powers, and whether, consequently, at least in theory, a step has not been taken back towards an idea of security which, as history has repeatedly proved, has been incapable of preventing war. We must in this respect admit that these developments have resulted from events. Faced with the great dangers that menace us, nothing would have excused the United Nations had it chosen to remain inactive instead of preparing itself for an emergency. However, the time has come to give very special attention to all these problems, in order that we may in due course adopt a permanent system of collective security that will place all aspects of coercive action—political decisions as well as the control of military operations—under the guiding principle of the equal responsibility of all Member States.

58. To be consistent with the principles and purposes of the United Nations, such a system should first seek

really to eliminate war—that was the object of the principle of the unanimity of the great Powers—and only secondly to maintain international peace and security.

59. No system of collective security can be complete if it is limited to methods and procedures to be employed in case of aggression. Any complete system of security designed to resolve conflicts rather than punish transgressions must necessarily include machinery for peaceful settlement. The fact that the Collective Measures Committee has already prepared the ground for such a system, suggests that a similar group would do well to study methods and procedures by which the United Nations could help Member States to solve their disputes peacefully.

60. Other encouraging progress has been made between the sixth session of the General Assembly and the present one. I would draw attention first to the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Commission on the self-determination of peoples and nations.<sup>1</sup> I know that these resolutions will probably provoke controversy, but I am sure that the debate need not be sterile but will enable us to define in the simplest terms a principle which became a corner-stone of the United Nations merely through being written into the Charter.

61. The fundamental value of this principle cannot be denied. Individual human rights are based on it, and without it they have neither meaning nor reality. The respect which this principle deserves from all will help to bring about the future independence of those peoples and nations who do not yet possess this inestimable boon, and will also be a powerful impulse towards international friendship and peace.

62. There may be many conflicting opinions about the drafts prepared by the Human Rights Commission, but we must welcome them in substance as marking a step forward in the study of a highly important problem.

63. I should like to draw attention, with especial satisfaction, to the work done during the fourteenth session of the Economic and Social Council, and in particular to its examination of the economic development of under-developed countries. I do not know whether, in the midst of the worries which beset us so urgently, we realize the extraordinary importance of the functions which the Charter gives to the Economic and Social Council. The Council itself, perhaps aware of the present limitations of its possibilities, has not yet succeeded in fulfilling its mission completely or in carrying out its functions fully and with authority. This situation ought to change radically, because the Economic and Social Council is the best instrument which the United Nations possesses for establishing an organic peace in the world.

64. The economic development of the under-developed countries is the most important problem facing the Economic and Social Council. The problem is so vast that it is of the very essence of the Council's mission. Technical assistance for economic development has expanded during the present year in such a way as to raise great hopes in its effectiveness, particularly in countries with very little or no industrial development

<sup>1</sup>See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 4.*

and a primitive agriculture. We must understand, however, that technical assistance is only a preliminary step toward economic development and that the receiving countries can profit by it only if commensurate national and international finance is forthcoming at each stage.

65. This fact gives special importance to the recent decision of the Economic and Social Council<sup>2</sup> to study the possibility of setting up an international fund to provide long-term loans and subsidies for carrying out non-self-liquidating projects in the under-developed countries.

66. The world's salvation undoubtedly depends on the help that can be given to these countries to improve their agriculture and industry with all speed. The resulting expansion of world economy is bound to benefit all, rich and poor. The creation of economic stability in many countries would at once strengthen international solidarity. The Achilles' heel of the free nations of the world is the poverty, disease and ignorance in which the majority of them live. This is an essential weakness that the possession of a few modern weapons of war can neither help nor hide.

67. The Korean question is now going to come before the General Assembly which, perhaps with unfortunate results, refrained from dealing with it while the talks at Panmunjom still held out some hope of a satisfactory conclusion. The development of events has been anxiously watched by the whole world from the moment that these talks reached a deadlock over the prisoner-of-war question, which was, at least apparently, the only unsolved problem. Anxieties and fears have been further accentuated by the resumption of hostilities on a considerable scale during the last few months, and by the suspension *sine die* of the armistice talks.

68. It is not easy to judge this question. Not all Member States are fully able to assess it accurately in all its aspects. Nevertheless, one thing appears clear: that if an armistice has in fact been delayed only by the prisoner-of-war problem, some other ways of solving this problem or of concluding an honourable armistice in some other form should be sought. Having succeeded in preventing the aggressors from achieving their purpose, the United Nations should concentrate on preventing further destruction of life and property.

69. The principle that prisoners of war should not be forcibly repatriated is both reasonable and progressive, confirming the just supremacy of human rights over conventional standards and traditional practices in this field. It is inconceivable that this principle should not honour and ennoble those who profess it, or that the two sides should not be able to come to an agreement about it, except for reasons which have nothing to do with the essence of the principle. The principle of no forcible repatriation, together with a formula that would remove all doubts about the use of prisoners of war in activities prejudicial to their countries of origin, should lead to the conclusion of an armistice or should make it clear that there never had been any intention to conclude one.

70. Mexico has presented a plan which would allow non-repatriated prisoners of war to find work in territories of Member States of the United Nations

willing to give them temporary asylum. Other countries may have or may think of better solutions. In any case, it is an inescapable obligation to make one more attempt to study the problem so that the Korean war may end.

71. I have thought it my duty, in accordance with precedent, to unfold before you the international situation that has developed between the last session of the General Assembly and the present one. It was my wish to call your attention to the most important problems facing us today, because I am convinced that the United Nations still has before it a chance to establish the rule of peace.

72. The division of the world into two halves—on the one side the traditional democracies and on the other the peoples' democracies—is at the root of all our difficulties. The effects of this split are found everywhere. We find them in each one of our States, and in the United Nations they have constantly hampered our progress. They have made the work of governments difficult; they have made international agreement impossible, and, what is worse, they have immensely harmed the ordinary man in body and soul by inflicting upon him untold sacrifices and all the tortures of despair and fear. This state of affairs cannot last many years more. Mankind will not tolerate it. If the United Nations is to escape from that threat of dramatic disruption which is undermining its very foundations, it must search actively for means of putting an end to the situation.

73. We must try to return to the spirit which presided over the birth of the United Nations. The Charter was written, not to enshrine the discords of a divided community, but to direct the march of a community united in the highest ideals of progress.

74. If only the capitalist States and the communist States could convince each other of one thing, that neither of the two plan the destruction of the other, the suspicion which divides them would be eliminated. This would produce the only really indispensable factor for the union of the two groups in the service of the superior interests of the human race, which are a thousand times more important than any political, economic or social doctrine.

75. There must be a way of achieving this result. There have always been means of attaining an end when the will to attain it exists. If this will does not exist, and if one or both of the two groups places the objectives of its national policy above the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations and feels that it cannot attain those objectives without annihilating or disintegrating the other group, then we must admit that the very concept of world community has failed. The tremendous war which would follow would be the most complete denial of our aims.

76. If, however, the United Nations succeeded in solving this vital problem, we should have fulfilled the pacific mission which we accepted as a sacred duty after the desolation and ruin of the Second World War.

#### Appointment of a Credentials Committee [Agenda item 3]

77. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): The Assembly's next business is to appoint the Credentials Committee. Rule 28 of our

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Supplement, No. 1, resolution 416 A (XIV).

rules of procedure states that the Credentials Committee "shall consist of nine members, who shall be appointed by the General Assembly on the proposal of the President". In accordance with this rule, I propose to the Assembly that the Credentials Committee should be composed of the following Member States: Belgium, Burma, Lebanon, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.

*It was so decided.*

### **Election of the President**

[Agenda item 4]

78. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the seventh session of the General Assembly. Rule 92 of the rules of procedure states that all elections shall be held by secret ballot and that there shall be no nominations. We shall therefore proceed immediately to the vote. Each delegation will write on the ballot paper the name of the person for whom it wishes to vote.

*A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

*At the invitation of the Temporary President, Mr. Muñoz (Argentina) and Mr. Barrington (Burma) acted as tellers.*

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	60
<i>Number of abstentions:</i>	5
<i>Number of invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	60
<i>Required majority:</i>	28

#### *Number of votes obtained:*

Mr. Pearson (Canada) .....	51
Mrs. Pandit (India) .....	4

*Mr. Pearson (Canada) having obtained the required majority of the Members present and voting, was elected President of the seventh session of the General Assembly.*

*The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.*