

Second United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea

Geneva, Switzerland
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Third Plenary Meeting

Extract from the *Official Records of the Second United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (Summary Records of Plenary Meetings and of Meetings of the Committee of the Whole, Annexes and Final Act)*

General Assembly included funds only for summary records. He regretted therefore that the Secretariat did not have either the trained personnel or the financial means for providing verbatim records. Indeed, the Conference of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament and the Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapon Tests at present sitting in the Palais des Nations were both working with a reduced number of verbatim reporters, owing to the lack of staff. There was thus no possibility of finding verbatim reporters for the present conference.

24. As the Mexican delegation had pointed out, verbatim records of the Sixth Committee had been made available to the first United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.² Those records had been prepared, however, from tape-recordings, and had not been available till two months after the end of the General Assembly's session. That method, therefore, would be of little use to the present Conference. A trilingual record with no translation, produced from a tape-recording, would cost approximately \$5,000 and would involve no additional expenditure in view of the saving on précis-writers, but verbatim records in the three working languages would cost \$52,000, which was approximately \$46,000 more than had been budgeted for. In either case, no records would be available till approximately two months after the close of the Conference.

25. The general practice at conferences held under the auspices of the United Nations was to provide summary records only, and verbatim records had so far as he was aware been provided only at the two Conferences on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Those records had consisted mainly of scientific papers, and the funds for their reproduction in full had been budgeted for in advance. He understood the general concern that the records of the Conference should represent fairly and accurately the views expressed, but hoped that that aim could be achieved by taking advantage of the right enjoyed by all delegations of submitting corrections for incorporation in the final record.

26. Mr. DEAN (United States of America) said that, although he recognized the cogency of some of the arguments adduced by the Mexican delegation, in the light of the information just given he felt that it might now wish to withdraw its amendment to rule 54 of the provisional rules of procedure.

27. Mr. FATTAL (Lebanon) said the Conference should defer to the arguments advanced by the representative of the Secretary-General. He would like, however, to suggest that it might be of advantage to use the services of French and Spanish précis-writers for reporting speeches made in those languages. The fact was that, however experienced translators might be, successive translation tended to distort the meaning of a speech. That was merely a suggestion to help the Conference, however, and must not be regarded as a formal proposal.

28. Mr. TUNKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that no one would deny the desirability of keeping full and accurate records of the Conference, and his

delegation therefore supported the Mexican proposal in principle. The statement by the representative of the Secretary-General, however, made it clear that that was quite impracticable for both financial and technical reasons. He accordingly hoped that the Mexican delegation would take those reasons into account.

29. Mr. GARCIA-ROBLES (Mexico) agreed that it would have been more appropriate to raise the question of substituting verbatim records for summary records at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly, but pointed out that at that time an opportunity to do so had not arisen, as the convening of the Conference had itself then been at issue. He hoped the arrangements for future conferences of that nature might receive fuller consideration.

30. In the light of the statement by the representative of the Secretary-General, his delegation was prepared to withdraw its amendment to rule 54, provided that the period of three working days allowed for the submission of corrections to summary records was extended to five working days and that the trilingual verbatim record mentioned by the Secretary-General's representative was made available in due course for consultation. His delegation would submit a resolution on the subject of the provision of verbatim records of the Conference.

31. Mr. STAVROPOULOS (Legal Counsel, representing the Secretary-General) said that the time allowed for the submission of corrections to summary records would be extended to five working days, as requested by the Mexican delegation; he could give an assurance that every effort would be made to provide very accurate summary records.

32. The PRESIDENT suggested that, as the Secretariat had agreed to extend the period allowed for the submission of corrections to summary records to five working days, the Conference could now adopt rule 54 of the provisional rules of procedure as amended.

It was so agreed.

The provisional rules of procedure (A/CONF.19/2), as amended, were adopted.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Friday, 18 March 1960, at 3.15 p.m.

President: Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand)

Election of Vice-Presidents

[Agenda item 5]

1. The PRESIDENT invited the Conference to elect seventeen Vice-Presidents, in accordance with rule 6 of the rules of procedure.

2. The representatives of the following seventeen States had been nominated for the office of Vice-President: Albania, Argentina, Canada, China, France, Ghana, Guatemala, Italy, Iran, Mexico, Norway, Poland,

² A/CONF.13/19.

Switzerland, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. He thought that list would ensure the representative character of the General Committee in conformity with rule 6. If there were no further nominations and no objections, he suggested that the Conference should regard the representatives of the States he had enumerated as duly elected Vice-Presidents.

It was so agreed.

Appointment of the Credentials Committee

[Agenda item 7]

3. The PRESIDENT, referring to the provisions of rule 4 of the rules of procedure, proposed that the following States be appointed to constitute the Credentials Committee: Brazil, Chile, France, Greece, Indonesia, Liberia, Sudan, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.

It was so agreed.

Consideration of the questions of the breadth of the territorial sea and fishery limits in accordance with resolution 1307 (XIII) adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1958

[Agenda item 9]

Adoption of conventions or other instruments regarding the matters considered and of the Final Act of the Conference

[Agenda item 10]

4. The PRESIDENT suggested that the two substantive items on the Conference's agenda should be referred to the Committee of the Whole established under rule 46 of the rules of procedure.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Friday, 8 April 1960, at 11 a.m.

President: Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand)

Tribute to the memory of General Guisan

On the proposal of the President, the Conference observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of General Guisan, commander-in-chief of the Swiss armed forces during the Second World War.

1. Mr. RUEGGER (Switzerland), speaking on behalf of the Swiss Federal Council and the delegation of the Swiss Confederation, thanked the President for his expression of sympathy. Having paid a tribute to the personality of General Guisan, who could be regarded as a symbol of the active neutrality of the Swiss people, he said that the name of that great leader would henceforth live in history, a history fraught with danger and

suffering but also imbued with hopes which were, even if only partially, in process of fulfilment.

Report of the General Committee

2. The PRESIDENT announced that the General Committee had decided to recommend to the Conference that Friday, 22 April 1960, be fixed as the target date for the conclusion of the discussions and voting on the proposals before it — on the understanding that, if necessary, the Conference would meet again on Saturday, 23 April 1960 — and that the Final Act, and other instrument or instruments which might be adopted by the Conference, could be signed during the afternoon of Monday, 25 April 1960.

3. He proposed that the Conference should adopt that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Tuesday, 19 April 1960, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand)

Consideration of the questions of the breadth of the territorial sea and fishery limits in accordance with resolution 1307 (XIII) adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1958 (A/CONF.19/L.4 to L.6) *(continued)**

[Agenda item 9]

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (A/CONF.19/L.4)

1. The PRESIDENT invited the Rapporteur of the Committee of the Whole to present the Committee's report (A/CONF.19/L.4) to the Conference.

2. Mr. GLASER (Romania), Rapporteur of the Committee of the Whole, introduced the Committee's report.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

Wednesday, 20 April 1960, at 10.50 a.m.

President: Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand)

Consideration of the questions of the breadth of the territorial sea and fishery limits in accordance with resolution 1307 (XIII) adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1958 (A/CONF.19/L.4 to L.6) *(continued)*

[Agenda item 9]

1. Mr. DREW (Canada), referring to current speculation about the possibility of adjourning the Conference,

* Resumed from the 3rd plenary meeting.