

Second United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea

Geneva, Switzerland
17 March – 26 April 1960

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A/CONF.19/SR.8

Eighth 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)*

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Wednesday, 30 April 1960, at 3.15 p.m.

President: Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand)

Second report of the General Committee

1. The PRESIDENT announced that at its 2nd meeting, held that morning, the General Committee had agreed to recommend to the Conference that voting on the proposals before it should take place on Tuesday, 26 April 1960, and that the Final Act of the Conference be opened for signature on Wednesday, 27 April 1960.

The recommendation of the General Committee was adopted unanimously.

The meeting rose at 3.25 p.m.

EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

Thursday, 21 April 1960, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand)

Publication of a complete verbatim record of the discussions at the Conference: draft resolution submitted by Mexico (A/CONF.19/L.3)

1. The PRESIDENT drew attention to the Mexican draft resolution (A/CONF.19/L.3) relating to the publication of a complete verbatim record of the discussions at the Conference, and observed that he had been informed that the Secretariat had doubts about the meaning of the word "publication" in the operative paragraph thereof. The sum of \$5,000 mentioned by the representative of the Secretary-General at the 2nd plenary meeting as the estimated cost of a trilingual record, with no translation, produced from the sound recordings, referred to publication in mimeographed form; the figure would probably be considerably higher if the record had to be printed.

2. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) explained that the Mexican draft resolution had been couched in the form of a recommendation to the General Assembly, the question raised by the Secretariat being left open. The Conference might approve the recommendation as it stood and leave it to the representatives of Governments in the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, who were financial experts, to decide the appropriate form of publication in the light of the usual statement of financial implications provided by the Secretariat.

The Mexican draft resolution (A/CONF.19/L.3) was adopted without further discussion.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.

NINTH PLENARY MEETING

Friday, 22 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]

1. Mr. PETREN (Sweden) reminded the Conference of his Government's position of principle. For legal, just as much as for practical reasons, Sweden was opposed both to an extension of the breadth of the territorial sea beyond six nautical miles and to the entirely novel concept of fishery zones in which coastal States would enjoy exclusive fishing rights. Moreover, the Swedish Government believed that the creation of a new rule of international law, which was the point at issue, could not result from unilateral actions against which many Governments had raised their voice. Any such development of international law demanded the assent of the States affected, given unqualifiedly by the ratification of the texts of any conventions that might be drawn up by the Conference. In that respect, the Swedish delegation shared the views expressed by the head of the French delegation when explaining his vote at the 28th meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

2. The Swedish delegation, it would be remembered, had been unable to vote for any of the proposals before the Committee of the Whole, but of all those submitted the compromise text submitted jointly by Canada and the United States of America (A/CONF.19/C.1/L.10) had come closest to Sweden's position of principle. When that proposal had been put to the vote, the Swedish delegation had abstained. Anxious as it was to help the Conference to arrive at a constructive result, it would now be prepared, in a spirit of compromise, to vote for the proposal, which had been adopted by the Committee of the Whole, notwithstanding the fact that the solution advocated by its sponsors would entail great sacrifices by Sweden, as by many other countries not only of principle but also economically. In modifying its vote in that way the Swedish delegation hoped that delegations which saw the problems in a different light would also be moved by the spirit of compromise to make concessions and to support the proposal adopted by the Committee of the Whole. Naturally, if no compromise could be reached, Sweden would regard itself as entirely free to revert to its position of principle, so often made clear.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

* Resumed from the 6th plenary meeting.