

Second United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea

Geneva, Switzerland
17 March – 26 April 1960

21st meeting

Extract from the *Official Records of the Second United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (Committee of the Whole – Verbatim Records of the General Debate)*

Twenty-First Meeting

Friday, 8 April 1960, at 11.30 a.m.

Mr. DEAN (United States): In view of what our delegation has found to be an overwhelming desire on the part of the delegations at this Conference, the delegations of Canada and of the United States of America have withdrawn their separate proposals previously submitted to the Committee, A/CONF.19/C.1/L.3 and L.4. On behalf of our Governments we have submitted this morning for your consideration a joint proposal. ^{1/} This proposal, which is a new proposal on the breadth of the territorial sea and fishing limits, has been worked out at this Conference with the delegations of both coastal and fishing States in response to a widely expressed need for a single proposal capable of receiving the overwhelming support of the Conference.

The proposal we are submitting will provide for a maximum six-mile territorial sea and for an exclusive fishing zone contiguous to the territorial sea extending twelve miles from the territorial sea baseline. It will permit foreign States whose nationals have made a practice of fishing in the outer six miles of this zone during the five years preceding 1 January 1958, to continue to do so for ten years from 31 October 1960. This proposal, our two Governments sincerely believe, will give embodiment to the desires of the coastal States, especially the newer countries which have desired to obtain sufficient jurisdiction within twelve miles of their coast, for which desire both our Governments have long felt a sympathetic concern.

The action of the United States Government in withdrawing its original proposal, for which many delegations have expressed support, and for which we have expressed our sincere thanks, requires, I believe, a word of explanation. My Government has for some time been motivated by a strong desire to find an acceptable balance between the interests of all nations with regard to the law of the sea so as to permit a successful Conference proposal to be developed; first of all, for restoring lasting order to the international law in this field.

Through our extended labours at the last Conference and in our discussions here we have progressively narrowed the area in which a thorough Conference agreement was likely to be reached. We have been assembled here for approximately two weeks. In this time we have had several proposals for consideration. With the exception of the Mexican proposal A/CONF.19/C.1/L.2, they have been proposals largely confined to the area within twelve miles of the territorial sea baseline - the area to which it appears that our consideration must be confined if agreement is to be reached. Of these proposals, the Soviet proposal for a three-twelve mile territorial sea, A/CONF.19/C.1/L.1, has been familiar to us for a long time, since it was proposed by certain other Governments at the previous Conference, A/CONF.16/L.34. A new twelve-mile territorial sea proposal has been recently submitted by sixteen Governments, A/CONF.19/C.1/L.6, and that proposal is now also before us. We have also had under consideration the United States proposal, A/CONF.19/C.1/L.3, and a 1960 proposal of the Canadian Government, A/CONF.19/C.1/L.4; these two proposals we have now withdrawn.

^{1/} Official Records of the Second United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, annexes, document A/CONF.19/C.1/L.10.

In this discussion numerous delegations have spoken in the general debate and attempted to explain their views both publicly and privately. By now, I believe, the nature of the compromise proposal needed to command the necessary two-thirds majority has been greatly clarified. I believe it is clear, for one thing, with respect to the issue of the breadth of the territorial sea that no proposal - I repeat no proposal - which would permit a twelve-mile territorial sea can hope to get the necessary support for adoption by the Conference. It is clear at the same time, I believe, that the new Canadian-United States joint proposal for a six-mile territorial sea and a six-mile contiguous fishing zone is of a nature which will meet the immediate needs and satisfy the future aspirations of the coastal States. At the same time it will protect foreign fishing from unnecessary or precipitate injury and therefore, we believe, is the only proposal which is acceptable to enough nations, both coastal and fishing, for adoption. I believe this to be not only the conclusion of the United States and Canadian delegations, but also I believe it to be the consensus of the entire Conference.

Thus, to permit agreement to be reached here and to expedite our labours towards this end and after consultations on the most widely acceptable proposal, the United States has, as I said previously, withdrawn its previous proposal, A/CONF.19/C.1/L.4.

I should like to express our deep indebtedness to the many delegations and to the many individuals who have helped with an unselfish initiative to make this compromise proposal possible. I wish I could mention all of you. In passing, I should like to pay particular tribute to the delegate of Canada, Ambassador Drew, for his great patience, wisdom and understanding, and to the representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Baig; I should like to thank also Mr. Bailey of Australia, Ambassador Gundersen of Norway, Ambassador Sen of India and many others, whose efforts to achieve such a compromise have been notable. I am also greatly indebted to Ambassador Amado of Brazil.

Though the compromise features are I believe apparent, I would like to emphasize the two very important concessions which my Government has made. The first is to agree to place a time limitation on foreign fishing rights within the six-twelve mile area, and the second is to agree that this period should be only ten years in duration, commencing 31 October 1960. I believe the true magnitude of these concessions will be appreciated by all delegations here.

For countries which, like the United States, preferred a three-mile limit with no contiguous fishing zone, this compromise proposal goes more than half-way to meet the views of those who advocated a twelve-mile territorial sea. The concession was almost complete in regard to fishing jurisdiction, or at any rate would be within a relatively short period.

With regard to the territorial sea, it is a popular conception, more accurately a misconception, to believe that a six-mile territorial sea is only double the size of a three-mile territorial sea. Such a situation might tend to exist along a straight or fairly regular coast line without deep indentations

or off-shore islands. But the presence of islands off a coastline, each surrounded by a territorial sea of its own of the same breadth as that pertaining to the coast, adds greatly to any over-all area of off-shore jurisdiction in the territorial sea. For example, a single off-shore raft moving through the water at high tide can under a three-mile limit have a territorial sea of its own of approximately twenty-eight square miles of water surface. With a six-mile limit, the same raft would be entitled to a territorial sea of four times this area, or 112 square miles. Thus, in certain situations, the area of territorial water might increase in geometrical proportion, although the breadth of the territorial sea increases in arithmetical proportion.

Even the continental United States, with relatively few off-shore islands, has an estimated 37,500 rather than 17,300 square miles of territorial sea with the six-mile limit replacing the present one of three miles.

Some States, however, endowed with numerous off-shore islands, would triple in area sections of its territorial sea by only doubling the breadth.

Furthermore, the application of a straight baseline, as approved at the 1958 Geneva Conference, 2/ may also increase the area of sovereign waters of the coastal sea. Internal waters are created to the extent that the territorial sea baseline is pushed outward. The exact area increased, of course, depends upon the configurations of the coastline. But the presence of deep indentations and associated off-shore islands permits an appreciable water surface to be incorporated as an integral part of the State

In short, a six-mile territorial sea plus the use of a straight baseline may amount to a reduction of the high seas by a zone not just three additional miles in breadth, but one averaging four, five or even six miles.

Consequently, the United States proposal for a territorial sea six miles in breadth represents a compromise on the territorial sea issue alone to a far greater extent than I believe many nations realize. Let me comment for just a moment on certain details of the joint proposal.

The various delegations which found certain provisions of the withdrawn United States proposal A/CONF.19/C.1/L.3 to be somewhat cumbersome in operation. I call your attention to the fact that the present joint proposal is designed

2/ Official Records of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, Vol. II, annexes, document A/CONF.13/L.52, Art. 4.

to preserve complete simplicity of operation. For this reason also it commends itself. It will be noted that some delegations had presented some very useful and thoughtful suggestions to us with respect to the possibility of amending the joint proposal. The absence of these suggestions should not be taken to mean that they were not found worthy. Their omission only means that at this time this joint Canadian-United States proposal represents in our estimation the general view of what a compromise formula should contain. One exception, however, is the case of unusual situations of overwhelming dependence on fisheries within the twelve-mile zone which, as I have previously indicated, requires the careful and sympathetic consideration of the Conference.

Our joint proposal does not specifically mention the existing bilateral or multilateral fishing agreements. The final instrument in which the agreement of the Conference will be placed, we assume, will contain an article similar to article 25 of the Convention on the Territorial Seas and Contiguous Zones, to the general effect that conventions or other international agreements already in force are not to be affected thereby.

With regard to future estimates, the establishment of the basic rights of the coastal and fishing States in the fishery zone provided for in this joint proposal will not, ipso facto, settle all of the fisheries problems within this zone. These problems are many and they are complex, and they vary in different parts of the world. But the principles set forth in the proposal, it seems to us, will need to be implemented by such bilateral or multilateral arrangements consistent therewith as will permit these principles to be applied in an orderly and practical manner.

So far as the United States is concerned, my Government believes that this compromise proposal, involving as it does large sacrifices of the interests of both the fishing and the coastal States in an effort to reach agreement, is in itself a reason why implementing agreements should be negotiated in a spirit of mutual accommodation and goodwill.

Let me comment on the date 31 October 1960, from which foreign fishing rights in the outer six miles are proposed to run. This date of 31 October 1960 is not a date of any mysterious significance. To give the ten-year period some precise termination point seemed desirable. The date 31 October 1960 has been selected since 31 October, in the year 1958, was selected as the end of the period allowed after the conclusion of the first conference for countries to become signatories to the convention, and, in fact, that was the date when the conventions adopted here two years ago were in fact signed in New York.

As is almost inevitable in the case of a true compromise, many of the delegations will find that the proposal in some respects is not all that they would have desired. To those States that will find that the joint proposal gives insignificant protection to the practice of fishing pursued within three to twelve miles of a foreign coast, I wish to remind you that my own country is among your number. I do not underestimate or undervalue the sacrifice which this proposal entails for your fishermen. In fact, I am already

receiving, by cable, protests from fishermen in the United States. Indeed, the joint proposal certainly contains a sacrifice of fundamental principle for those nations and their nationals that have, for generations, fished areas of the high seas up to the three-mile limit. It concerns as well an economic and human sacrifice of direct impact and of large dimensions. I simply say that, without these sacrifices, it is evident that no international agreement can be reached at this conference. To those States which would prefer that the period of years during which foreign fishing within six to twelve miles is to continue under the Canadian-United States proposal were shorter, I should like to make several observations.

In the first place, I believe there is almost universal agreement among the delegations here that it would be most unfair, for the purpose of arriving at a universal rule of law, to terminate abruptly fishing practices on the high seas which are presently in existence and on which countries, towns, villages, enterprises and human families are, to some degree, and in many cases to a large degree, dependent.

The representatives of India, Ghana, Pakistan, Spain and Brazil, not to mention a number of others, have taken note of this in their speeches to the Committee, for which we extend our thanks to them. It is only reasonable and just, I believe, that a period of time be allowed in which the necessary adjustments to these fishing grounds, retirement and amortization of existing fishing vessels and, in some cases, adaptation of capital and labour and families to new conditions and new industries can be made.

I assure you that the ten years proposed is considered to be an inadequate period of time by the countries and peoples adversely affected. Some of them, in fact, consider the period unnecessarily harsh. But, if all representatives here accept this provision, it will, I know, be done only out of a spirit of reaching agreement. The period of ten years proposed is, for these reasons, a figure which Canada and we agree is not subject to reduction or to negotiation for alteration in either direction.

I believe that this proposal should be acceptable to coastal States, since it will embody in international law clearly, for the first time, an important new principle concerning fishing jurisdiction. It is only reasonable and equitable that those States which will so greatly benefit by this new rule should exercise a restraint to lighten the burden of fishing States upon whom the rule will fall so heavily.

In many cases, exclusive coastal State jurisdiction will be granted immediately, owing to the absence of any foreign fishing as a practice in the outer areas.

As to the coastal States for which some present sacrifice will also be genuinely involved, I can only say to you also that, without some concession on your part, no agreement can be reached at this conference.

As I stated at the beginning, I believe that this proposal, which the delegation of Canada today is joining with the delegation of the United States in submitting, is recognized to be a proposal which contains those elements of compromise on the part of all concerned that render it capable of receiving endorsement by a two-thirds majority of the conference.

I trust that all delegations will examine and weigh this proposal with the utmost care. Where necessary, I hope they will immediately request further instructions from their Governments. With reasonable flexibility on the part of the countries concerned, and with a thoughtful regard for the successful outcome of the conference and the rule of law, this proposal can, I sincerely believe, bring our labourers here to a fruitful conclusion, which we all desire.

Therefore, we offer this joint proposal for your prayerful consideration.

Before leaving the rostrum, I should like to inform the Committee that I learned just yesterday that the four conventions and the operational protocol approved at the 1958 conference here in Geneva have been favourably reported out to the Senate of the United States by our Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I hope that that is an augury of our success here.

Mr. DREW (Canada): As you have already been told, we have withdrawn our proposal 3/ tabled on 24 March so that we may join the United States in presenting a single proposal 4/ which we do most earnestly hope will provide an opportunity for agreement at this Conference. I shall try not to repeat facts already placed so clearly and accurately before you.

As I said on 25 March, 5/ the original proposals presented by Canada and the United States sought to achieve the same fundamental objective. Each of them declared that a State is entitled to fix the breadth of its territorial sea up to a maximum of six nautical miles measured from the applicable baseline, and to establish a fishing zone contiguous to its territorial sea extending to a maximum limit of twelve nautical miles from the same baseline.

The difference - and we fully recognized the importance of that difference - was in our approach to the problem raised by the distant fishing which had been done by a number of States over many years in the coastal waters of other States. At no time did we suggest that there should be an abrupt end to long-established fishing practices. On the contrary, at the last Conference, also in the arguments we presented prior to this Conference, and at this Conference itself, we have expressed our belief that the best way to deal with this problem, which presents so many variable factors throughout the world, is to enter into bilateral or multilateral agreements consistent with the mutual interests of the coastal and distant fishing States.

3/ Official Records of the Second United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, annexes, document A/CONF.19/C.1/L.4.

4/ Ibid., document A/CONF.19/C.1/L.10.

5/ Ibid., 5th meeting.

On the other hand it was proposed that these rights be continued in perpetuity where they had been carried on for a period of at least five years prior to 1 January 1958.

During the course of the debates at this Conference the representatives of several countries have indicated their hope that the two points of view could be reconciled so that those who wished to support the principle of the 5-mile territorial sea and an additional 6-mile fishing zone could all find common ground.

The new proposal achieves that purpose in the following words:

"1. A State is entitled to fix the breadth of its territorial sea up to a maximum of six nautical miles measured from the applicable baseline.

"2. A State is entitled to establish a fishing zone contiguous to its territorial sea extending to a maximum limit of twelve nautical miles from the baseline from which the breadth of its territorial sea is measured, in which it shall have the same rights in respect of fishing and the exploitation of the living resources of the sea as it has in its territorial sea.

"3. Any State whose vessels have made a practice of fishing in the outer six miles of the fishing zone established by the coastal State, in accordance with paragraph 2 above, for the period of five years immediately preceding 1 January 1958, may continue to do so for a period of ten years from 31 October 1960.

"4. The provisions of the Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources of the High Seas, adopted at Geneva, 27 April 1958, shall apply mutatis mutandis to the settlement of any dispute arising out of the application of the foregoing paragraphs."

We believe this proposal to be in clear and simple form which should not give rise to any misunderstanding as to the intention of the words. This is the proposal which is now presented in the joint name of Canada and the United States. I would like to emphasize that this is done in response to the very general desire expressed at this Conference that we should come together so that all those who were anxious to support the basic purpose of both our earlier proposals could find common ground in this way.

Our new proposal does represent a compromise - the kind of compromise which makes international agreements possible.

Our task here is to draft legislation covering two specific questions and two alone. The general desire to achieve agreement on the only details of the law of the sea still to be determined might well be frustrated if any attempt were made to broaden the scope of the discussions at this Conference beyond the field which has been so clearly assigned to us.

At the same time may I say that we are very anxious to recognize the special problems of States which are particularly dependent upon fishing for the livelihood of their people by assuring workable and adequate safeguards for the protection of their fishing resources.

The first two paragraphs of the joint proposal which we have now tabled and which I have read, are in exactly the same words as the original proposal presented by Canada at this Conference.

The third paragraph provides that during a period of ten years those States which have been doing distant fishing in the waters of the other States for the required period may continue to do so. May I point out that this does not change in any way the basic proposition which we placed before you. It does represent our response to the many opinions expressed at this Conference that there should be a period of adjustment in which distant fishing States could make new arrangements. This involves a very considerable compromise on the part of both our delegations and those who have indicated their general support of this proposal. I do wish to express my own admiration and appreciation of the manner in which the very distinguished leader of the United States delegation, Ambassador Dean, and his associates have met us in trying to solve this problem.

We would naturally have preferred to have had our own proposal adopted in the form in which it was presented, for the reasons given at the time it was tabled. We fully recognize at the same time that this would naturally also have been the wish of the United States delegation in regard to its own proposal. In deciding on the figure of ten years as a period of adjustment during which fishing may be continued while new arrangements are made, by way of bilateral agreements or otherwise, we have accepted what we believe to be the maximum period of adjustment which could possibly be approved by those States which would have preferred our proposal in its original form, and at the same time the minimum period acceptable to those who would have preferred to see the United States proposal adopted in the form in which it was first presented.

One point I do wish to emphasize. In the very nature of the way in which this figure has been reached, it cannot be a bargaining figure. Our discussions on both sides have made it perfectly clear that those who would have wished for the continuance of fishing rights in perpetuity, or for a much longer period, will not accept less, and that those who have been associated with us in seeking a straight 6-mile territorial sea with a contiguous 6-mile fishing zone will not accept more.

In the desire to achieve agreement at this Conference, we have reached a compromise which we believe is reasonable under all the circumstances, and which we trust will receive general support when it is fully examined and its effect considered.

While it is not my purpose now to discuss in detail the various arguments which have been presented, I do think I should mention one very important consideration which must be in the mind of every one of us. From the statements which have already been made, it would seem that there is almost unanimous agreement that there should be a fishing zone extending to a total breadth of twelve miles from the baseline. But there is still a wide difference of opinion expressed in regard to the measurement of the territorial sea.

May I urge with the utmost earnestness that those countries which, for one reason or another, have adopted a territorial sea of more than six miles will not take a rigid position that under no circumstances will they reduce the width of their territorial sea. I have already pointed out, and I submit that the record clearly supports my contention, that in most of the earlier cases where the measurement of the territorial sea was extended to twelve miles, it was done for the sole purpose of asserting control over fishing at a time when the concept of a fishing zone, as distinct from the territorial sea, had not been accepted, and when the adoption of the wider territorial sea provided the only method by which that authority could be established. Full control over fishing would now be provided by the rights conferred in a fishing zone. Surely, under those circumstances and with the other powers conferred in the conventions accepted at the last Conference, there can be no question that any nation is called upon to concede any established rights in accepting the narrowest territorial sea which is supported by the overwhelming majority of those countries which provide and operate the peaceful transportation of the world by sea and air.

May I point out that we in Canada are one of the many countries engaged in peaceful navigation by sea and air which still have a three-mile territorial sea. We would have preferred that this measurement should have been retained. In an effort, however, to reach reasonable compromise, those who believe in the freedom of the high seas have nevertheless indicated their willingness to extend their territorial seas to what is regarded as the maximum reasonable figure of measurement.

With the adoption of a 12-mile fishing zone every State would then have every essential control which does not interfere with the freedom of the high seas. Surely six miles is more than enough for the breadth of the territorial sea. I hope that it will be accepted, but under no conceivable circumstances could Canada be regarded as an aggressor State, and I can only repeat with the utmost emphasis our firm belief that the extension of the territorial sea beyond that breadth adds nothing whatever to the ability of any country to defend itself under modern conditions, but does limit freedom of navigation and does impose unnecessary burdens upon the coastal States which will be called upon to carry out the added duties imposed by such an increase.

Before closing these brief remarks, which have not attempted to deal with other proposals or the details of the questions you will be called upon to decide next week, may I say how much we are all, at this Conference, indebted to the extremely useful suggestions which have been made by the representatives that

have spoken here in the Conference itself, and who have discussed this subject in private meetings as well. The course we are now following I hope offers convincing proof of the very real value of the kind of well-informed discussion which we have heard here during the past three weeks.

Those States which are seeking agreement on a convention which will provide for a narrow territorial sea with a contiguous fishing zone, offering every measure of control which does not interfere with the freedom of the high seas, have already made a very great concession in their offer to extend the territorial sea from three to six miles. As the representative of one of the younger, and certainly one of the most peace-loving nations may I respectfully urge that others meet us half way so that we may demonstrate to the whole world that the eighty-eight countries represented here are not divided by any arbitrary barriers or doctrinaire positions, and that we are prepared to come together in a friendly meeting of minds for the one purpose of extending the prosperity, peace and security of all mankind.

Mr. CAABASI (Libya): The intervention of the Libyan delegation was not intentionally made to come immediately after the introduction of the combined proposal by the United States and Canada. The Libyan delegation reserves the right to comment on this new proposal in due time.

Not having been able to take part in the general debate, may I be allowed to say that it is quite gratifying for us to see the assembling of all our delegations again in this hall to finish our codification task of the law of the sea. In this same hall four conventions connected with the law of the sea have been adopted after strenuous sessions lasting two consecutive months in 1958. It is true that the achievements of 1958 were very considerable, but no agreement was reached on the two questions dealing with the delimitation of the breadth of the territorial sea and the fishing zones. The international effectiveness of the conventions already adopted depends on the item and deliberations to be patiently reached by this session. Indeed to translate those four conventions into reality, our present Conference must face the actual reality that international practice is not uniform as regards the delimitation of the territorial sea.

Various countries here represented have extended their territorial sea to different limits, and on this point we have the advice of the International Law Commission which considers that international law does not permit an extension of the territorial sea beyond twelve miles. This legal advice is worthy of every consideration and, if I may say so, is the result of eight years of patient juridical study spent in the process of preparing the draft law that this plenipotentiary Conference is called upon to codify.

The Libyan delegation has followed with keen interest the general debate on the two delicate questions on our agenda. Two schools of thought have been ably defending their respective theories with regard to the delimitation of the

territorial sea and the fishing zone. The first group, mostly composed of maritime Powers, while maintaining the theory of the three-mile limit, is ready to compromise by extending their territorial sea to six miles and a 12-mile fishing zone with or without exclusive fishing rights. The second group maintains the right to fix the breadth of its territorial sea up to a maximum of twelve miles, embracing within the same limit their exclusive fishing rights. Both groups aim to protect best the security of their shores and the benefits from the legal resources of their coastal sea. In essence, both groups do not aim at exchanging the twelve-mile sea limit, be it territorial sea or fishing zone or combined. This tendency would be regarded as an acceptance of the advice extended by the International Law Commission. The difference lies only in the question: should all nations have an equal limit of the territorial sea or less than three to establish it not beyond the accepted legal advice of twelve miles? To this end, various proposals have been presented to this Conference for consideration.

The Libyan delegation has co-sponsored the proposal contained in document A/CONF.19/C.1/L.6 and supports the legal approach expressed in article 1, of the sixteen-Power proposal. The Libyan delegation, while it cannot give its support to the provision aiming to give a legal right in this convention to vessels belonging to other States to continue fishing in the territorial sea of other countries under the umbrella of rights gained by history, recommends to the Conference article 7 of the sixteen-Power proposal which states that nothing in the provisions of this convention shall be construed so as to preclude the conclusion, subject to the established rules of international law, of bilateral or multilateral agreements of a regional character to regulate all matters of fishing among States with common interests. This formula does not give historical rights, but it supports the principle of accommodating reciprocal benefits among the States concerned.

The sea constitutes for Libya an important production source of revenue in the fishing zones and tuna fish industries which my country is developing as one of its most productive economic resources unquestionably needed for internal consumption and export. Though Libya, in accordance with an Act of Parliament, applies today the breadth of twelve miles of territorial sea, it still faces the problem of foreign fishing vessels which are caught often, if not weekly, in its territorial sea unlawfully exploiting its coastal legitimate fish and sponge resources.

These are tangible considerations which lead Libya to ask for the wider breadth of the territorial sea not exceeding twelve miles. Reference could be made in this respect to the opinion of the International Law Commission in paragraph 5 of its commentary of article 3, in which it is stated: "that in all cases where the delimitation of the territorial sea was justified by the real needs of the coastal State, the breadth of the territorial sea was in conformity with international law". 6/

6/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Eleventh Session, Supplement No. 9, para. 33.

May I be allowed to say that the convening of our two Conferences on the law of the sea marks a historical event since the establishment of the United Nations Charter, thus opening a new era in promoting the progressive development of international law. No previous set of rules, of legal provisions of an international character have ever witnessed in the history of mankind such active participation by free, independent countries, new and old, great and small, all interested in making a valuable contribution. This important factor is a new development which has its bearing on our task to codify and promote international law.

The diversity of national interests between advanced countries and States in the process of development should not hamper but calls for deeper understanding in the process of making international law which must be adjusted to the new setting of world affairs.

Mr. RAFAEL (Israel): I have asked for the floor to reply to certain remarks which were made here yesterday afternoon, not because my delegation is concerned that distinguished delegates do not know the proper facts of geography and history but merely to keep the record of this conference straight. I shall be very brief. In regard to the position of certain ports mentioned, I have already had an opportunity to state in what country they are situated. As to the gulf of Aqaba, the position of my country, which is one of the four coastal States on the gulf, remains as stated by the Foreign Minister of Israel at the 666th meeting of the General Assembly on 1 March 1957. 7/

7/ Ibid., Eleventh Session.