

Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea

1973-1982

Concluded at Montego Bay, Jamaica on 10 December 1982

Document:-

A/CONF./BUR/SR.6

Summary records of meetings of the General Committee 6th meeting

Extract from the Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, Volume I (Summary Records of Plenary Meetings of the First and Second Sessions, and of Meetings of the General Committee, Second Session)

69. There seemed to be a majority in favour of a session of six weeks with a possible extension of one or two weeks. The General Committee also seemed to be in agreement to ask the General Assembly to make an effort to facilitate the transportation of a certain number of representatives—three or five—from each delegation.

70. He hoped to be able to get a clearer idea about those various considerations during his forthcoming consultations with the regional groups and to be in a position to submit more precise conclusions at the next meeting of the General Committee at 9 a.m. on Friday, 23 August.

71. Since several representatives had said that they were sure that Mr. Stavropoulos would be able to remove the technical obstacles to holding a session May and June—which he, personally, doubted—he gave the floor to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to explain the point.

72. Mr. STAVROPOULOS (Special Representative of the Secretary-General) said that representatives should of course realize that the Secretariat would be the first to want a session

in May. Unfortunately, experience showed that it was very difficult to find enough interpreters for all the international meetings planned for May and June. Three and a half teams of interpreters had been laid on for the current session, and that had proved insufficient. Representatives had complained that they had had no interpreters for the meetings of the regional groups. The Secretariat had arranged to recruit enough interpreters to service six meetings held concurrently and had had to bring in interpreters from all over the world to do so. Interpreters available in Venezuela had not been forgotten, of course. The Chief of the interpretation service had tested quite a number of local candidates. Five per cent of those taking the test had demonstrated that they could qualify as interpreters; 2½ per cent had met United Nations standards. It was not sufficient to know several languages well to meet those standards. Representatives would be the first to complain if the interpretation services provided them were not as efficient as they had a right to expect.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.

6th meeting

Monday, 26 August 1974, at 9.15 a.m.

President: Mr. H. S. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka).

Date and venue of the next session (A/CONF.62/BUR/2) (*concluded*)

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that document A/CONF.62/BUR/2 had set out the various possibilities with regard to the date and venue of the next session or sessions of the Conference. Since the last meeting of the General Committee, he had held talks with the chairmen of the regional groups and had obtained additional information.

2. It would not be possible to hold a session of the Conference in April–May 1975 at Geneva unless the opening of the World Health Organization Assembly, scheduled to meet at Geneva from 6 to 27 May, was put off. For that to be done, the Conference would have to request the United Nations General Assembly to take appropriate measures. In accordance with the agreement between the United Nations and the Organization, the General Assembly would have to make a recommendation to that effect, which would be transmitted to the Executive Board of the World Health Organization. The Board was scheduled to meet in the latter part of January 1975 but could be called into special session within 30 days after receipt of a request from eight of its members. Alternatively, the Director-General of the Organization could poll the members of the Board by written communication.

3. The Conference could not be accommodated at United Nations Headquarters in the spring of 1975.

4. In the circumstances, he suggested that the Conference should decide, subject to approval by the General Assembly, to hold an eight-week spring session. In view of the objections by a number of States to a meeting earlier in the year, the session might be held from 10 March to 3 May or from 17 March to 10 May 1975. The session would be held at Geneva and, if it were to be extended beyond 3 May, the United Nations General Assembly would have to make a recommendation to the World Health Organization to postpone the opening of its Assembly from 6 May to 12 May. Even without embarking on that formal procedure, it might be possible to secure an informal agreement with the World Health Organization to delay the initial proceedings of its Assembly in order to enable the

Conference to complete its work in plenary meeting, bearing in mind possible difficulties with regard to meeting rooms.

5. The fact that a spring session of the Conference on the Law of the Sea would be held concurrently with the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, which would not be over until 18 April, might entail serious difficulties with regard to staffing, office space and accommodation. He had consulted the Swiss Government to determine whether those difficulties could be overcome and, if not, whether the Swiss Government would be prepared to take the necessary measures to postpone the Conference on Humanitarian Law.

6. He was also expecting a reply from the Director-General of the World Health Organization as to whether it would be feasible to have their Assembly begin its work on 12 May instead of 6 May.

7. If all those difficulties should prove insurmountable, there would be only one option left, namely to convene the Conference in July and August 1975 in Vienna.

8. Mr. ENGO (United Republic of Cameroon) pointed out that, in his delegation's opinion, the importance of the Conference on the Law of the Sea justified giving priority to its requirements over those of other meetings. He would like to know why the possibility of holding a spring session at United Nations Headquarters was excluded *a priori*.

9. Mr. HALL (Executive Secretary) said that it would not be possible to use the Conference rooms at Headquarters for quite a long time because of the work required to install a system of interpretation into Arabic.

10. Mr. KNOKE (Federal Republic of Germany) said that he did not think it was possible to request a postponement of the Diplomatic Conference on Humanitarian Law in view of the importance and urgency of that Conference from the political point of view. Any concessions in favour of the Conference on the Law of the Sea would have to be sought from the World Health Organization, whose May 1975 Assembly would be dealing with current business. In any event a decision would

have to be taken rather soon if preparations were to be made for a possible session in Vienna in the summer.

11. Mr. TREDINNICK (Bolivia) expressed concern about the continuing uncertainty with regard to the venue of the next session and insisted that consideration should be given to holding it in Caracas. It was his understanding that the Venezuelan Government would be prepared to host the Conference again.

12. The CHAIRMAN replied that the Venezuelan Government had not yet stated its position and that in any case no official request could be made to that Government so long as the Conference had not fixed the date for its next session. Moreover, Caracas was being reserved for the signing of the convention and it was hardly likely that that final stage could be reached after a spring session of seven or eight weeks.

13. Mr. LILIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that he was in favour of a six-week spring session in Geneva in April/May, which might possibly be extended for two weeks, and he emphasized the importance of the work to be done in the interval before the opening of that session. He requested that the Final Act of the Conference should be signed in Caracas in appreciation for the hospitality extended by the Venezuelan Government and in tribute to the continent of Latin America, where new ideas on the law of the sea had crystallized in the past 20 years.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that he had taken note of the desire expressed by many delegations that the Final Act should be signed in Caracas, but he requested the Committee not to go into that question for the time being. Given the situation he had described, he further requested the Committee not to consider holding a spring session which would go on beyond 10 May 1975.

15. Mr. KEDADI (Tunisia) said that he was aware of the numerous obstacles with which the Chairman had to contend in his task of reconciling different positions, of the impossibility of giving full satisfaction to the African countries and of the difficulty of persuading other organizations to change their programme of meetings. He wondered whether it would not be more reasonable to decide immediately to accept the proposal made by the Austrian Government and recommend that a summer session should be held at Vienna, even if that might necessitate requesting the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to consider the possibility of holding a final session in the spring of 1976.

16. The CHAIRMAN said that it was not at the moment possible to entertain the suggestion made by the delegation of Tunisia, since the Chairmen of the regional groups had not informed him that they were reconsidering their earlier positions.

17. Mr. VINDENES (Norway) said that he thought the decision on the venue of the next session would be dictated almost entirely by the decision taken first with regard to the dates and duration of that session. He, for his part, could accept either of the two alternatives suggested by the Chairman: 10 March to 3 May or 17 March to 10 May. It appeared that general agreement could be reached on the principle of holding a session at Geneva during one or the other of those periods. It was not certain that the suggestion made by Bolivia would be compatible with the arrangements that the Venezuelan Government could make or with the wishes expressed by the majority of delegations with regard to the dates of the next session.

18. Mr. ANDERSEN (Iceland) said that he supported the statement made by the representative of Norway.

19. The CHAIRMAN said it was his understanding that all delegations would be in agreement that the session should be of eight weeks' duration. He announced that the Swiss Government had just made clear that the simultaneous holding of the Conference on Humanitarian Law and the Conference on the Law of the Sea would present no material difficulties.

20. Mr. ENGO (Cameroon) said he hoped that the session would not begin before April, so as to leave sufficient time for

the activities undertaken during the recess to bear fruit. He thought that a six-week session would be sufficient if, as there was every reason to hope, a brief session was to be convened for signature of the Convention in 1975. He could not support the proposal to hold one single session in the summer.

21. Mr. AL-WITRI (Iraq) said that he shared the position of the representative of Tunisia. If it became apparent that it was, in practice, impossible to hold a session in the spring, it would be preferable to decide immediately to hold the next session at Vienna during the summer.

22. The CHAIRMAN repeated that it would be perfectly feasible to persuade the World Health Organization to defer the opening of its Assembly for a short time so as to enable the Conference to prolong its session until 10 May. It would, however, be illusory to hope that the agency would cancel its session in order to make it possible for the Conference to meet in April and May.

23. Mr. ZEGERS (Chile) said he regretted that the Conference could not accept the proposal made by the Austrian Government, but he noted that the latest information received from the Swiss Government afforded complete reassurance as to the possibility of holding a session at Geneva until 3 or 10 May. It was his understanding that the Conference could count on obtaining the agreement in principle of the United Nations General Assembly if the work done during the Geneva session developed in such a way as to make it necessary to hold a very short session at Caracas in July or August.

24. Mr. YANKOV (Bulgaria) called upon delegations not to dwell on unrealistic assumptions. For his part, he approved the proposal to hold a session from 17 March to 10 May at Geneva, where the participants in a plenipotentiary conference would have the desired facilities at their disposal. Perhaps consideration could be given to prolonging the work of that session by holding a meeting of the Drafting Committee if necessary.

25. The CHAIRMAN said that he thought it would not be very difficult to find a conference room and interpreters to service such meetings of the Drafting Committee. He asked the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to be good enough to take note of that assumption. The period from 17 March to 10 May comprised only eight weeks, but if the Conference would, for example, agree to work on Saturdays, it could accomplish a good deal during that period.

26. Mr. STEVENSON (United States of America) said that he approved the proposals made by the Chairman, and he asked that efforts should be made to reach an accommodation with the World Health Organization so as to ensure that the session could continue for eight full weeks. It was, indeed, very important that the work of the Conference should progress sufficiently to enable the convention to be signed at Caracas in 1975.

27. Mr. OGISO (Japan) said that he would have preferred the spring session not to begin until April. In view of the difficulties that had been mentioned, he would support the proposals made by the Chairman. He asked, however, whether there was not some risk of encountering difficulties with the World Health Organization.

28. The CHAIRMAN said he thought that a compromise solution could doubtless be found. If need be, the World Health Organization could keep to the date planned for the opening of its session, even if it were to defer beginning its actual work for four or five days.

29. Mr. MOTT (Australia) said he was convinced that a solution on those lines could be found, so that the session could be prolonged from 3 to 10 May. The General Committee could therefore propose that the Conference should recommend the period from 17 March to 10 May for its next session.

30. Mr. ARIAS SCHREIBER (Peru) agreed with the proposed dates but considered that it was necessary above all to

ensure that they did not present difficulties for developing countries in Asia and Africa.

31. The CHAIRMAN said that he had met with the chairmen of the African and Asian groups and the Latin American meetings and that they had expressed no objection to the next session beginning on 17 March.

32. Mr. OGOLA (Uganda) said that the only difficulty with the proposed dates was that some members of the Conference on the Law of the Sea would also have to represent their countries at the Conference on Humanitarian Law. Nevertheless, his delegation would support the majority decision.

33. The CHAIRMAN noted that the members of the General Committee had agreed on the dates 17 March to 3 May with a possible prolongation to 10 May. There were two possibilities with regard to the extra week: either the World Health Organization could be requested to postpone the opening date of the World Health Assembly or arrangements could be made with that agency whereby the work programme of the Assembly would be reduced during its first days. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee agreed to submit a proposal to that effect to the Conference in plenary meeting.

It was so decided.

34. The CHAIRMAN invited the members of the Committee to indicate their position with regard to the proposal by the representative of Bulgaria that the Secretariat should request the Drafting Committee to meet immediately after the end of the following session of the Conference in order to prepare the text of the convention.

35. Mr. AKYAMAÇ (Turkey) said that it was not yet certain whether the next session would be able to draft a convention. A decision should be taken at that session as to whether the Drafting Committee should meet. Furthermore, according to the rules of procedure, the sponsor of a proposal should be invited to meetings of the Drafting Committee and could participate in its discussions without the right to vote. That procedure should be followed. He was therefore hesitant to endorse the proposed meeting of the Drafting Committee.

36. Mr. ABDEL HAMID (Egypt) said that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General was cognizant of the proposal which had been submitted and would take note of it; it was therefore not necessary to report it to the Conference in plenary meeting.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that even if a decision was not taken, the Conference should be informed of the possibility of such a meeting.

38. Mr. VINDENES (Norway) while supporting the position of the Chairman said that he thought the possibility that it might be necessary to hold more than one session of the Conference in 1975 should not be ruled out. It was accordingly for the forthcoming session, bearing in mind all relevant factors, to take a decision with regard to the meeting of the Drafting Committee.

39. Miss MARTIN-SANE (France) pointed out that in Switzerland there were four public holidays for Easter, which in 1975 would fall on 28, 29, 30 and 31 March; it was necessary to ensure that the Conference did not suspend its work during that period.

40. Mr. YANKOV (Bulgaria) said that it was necessary to decide at present whether the Drafting Committee should meet after the Conference but that on the other hand the decision should not be left until 9 May 1975. The possibility should be kept in mind so that a decision could be taken when the work of the Conference reached the stage when the Drafting Committee could meet.

41. Mr. KOLOSOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) endorsed the views expressed by the representative of Norway: it was not wise to commit the Conference for the future.

42. There would obviously be a plenary meeting of the Conference after the meeting of the Drafting Committee but for the moment it was important to agree on dates and a venue for the next session in order to obtain the approval of the General Assembly and the requisite funds to organize two sessions in 1975, one from March to May and a second for which dates would be fixed in the light of the results achieved at the spring session. At that time, it would be possible to decide whether one, two or three weeks were required to finish the plenary debate and sign a convention.

43. Mr. ARIAS SCHREIBER (Peru) shared the view expressed by the representative of the USSR. He saw no objection to studying the possibility of a meeting of the Drafting Committee but he recalled that in accordance with rule 53 of the rules of procedure, that Committee should report to the Conference: it was therefore necessary to ensure that sufficient time was available for consideration of the text prepared. If the Drafting Committee met for a week, would the Secretariat send all the documents to Governments to enable them to study them? Would there be sufficient time available for consideration of such a text at the signing session?

44. The CHAIRMAN said that the signing session would last for more than 10 days but first of all the Venezuelan Government would have to be consulted in that respect.

45. Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES (Brazil) endorsed that view.

46. Mr. MORALES PAUL (Venezuela) stated that the Chairman of his delegation had had a meeting with the President of the Republic of Venezuela. The President of the Republic had offered full co-operation with the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea with a view to the selection of Caracas as the venue for the signing of the Final Act. His Government hoped that the Secretariat would submit specific proposals concerning the services required by the Conference for the accomplishment of the final phase of its work. With that reservation, he personally felt that there would be no difficulty in organizing the signing session of the Conference at Caracas.

47. Mr. KEDADI (Tunisia) said that he hesitated to support a recommendation that the Drafting Committee should meet for one week only. Indeed, that recommendation would be contrary to the rules of procedure, which did not permit a main organ to hold inter-sessional meetings. Furthermore, the rules provided that the sponsors of a proposal should be invited to meetings of that committee and could participate in the discussion in order to explain their position. The representative of the Soviet Union had invoked other reasons for the Drafting Committee to meet while the Conference was in session: the text approved by the Committee had to be considered in plenary meeting.

48. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that that meeting of the Drafting Committee would not be an inter-sessional meeting, but would only be a prolongation of the Conference's work.

49. Mr. ENGO (United Republic of Cameroon) proposed that the General Committee should recommend that the Conference meet for eight weeks, with a possible prolongation permitting the Drafting Committee to meet. Delegations would continue to attend so that they might participate in the work if necessary.

50. Mr. BEESLEY (Canada), speaking as Chairman of the Drafting Committee, said that problems might arise which the Drafting Committee would wish to be able to study. There was no reason to take a decision at the present time, particularly as sufficient information was not available. The Secretariat must nevertheless prepare an emergency plan in case the Drafting Committee had to meet.

51. The CHAIRMAN asked the Chairman of the Drafting Committee to discuss the matter with the other members of the Committee. No formal decision would be taken until the spring but an emergency plan would be prepared.

52. Mr. KOH (Singapore) asked the President of the Conference to thank the Government of Austria for its invitation and to express the Conference's regret that it would not be able to accept that invitation.
53. The CHAIRMAN said that he would see that that was done. With respect to the final phase of the Conference, including the signing of the convention, he believed that the General Committee should propose that it take place at Caracas in July–August; he did not think it was possible to fix a more precise date.
54. Miss MARTIN-SANE (France), supported by Mr. ABDEL HAMID (Egypt), said that her delegation agreed that the convention should be signed at Caracas, but it did not feel that a specific date should be set immediately for the signing.
55. The CHAIRMAN said that he would take that observation into account in the reply which he was to make to the Venezuelan Government.
56. Sir Roger JACKLING (United Kingdom) said he thought the Government of Venezuela might be told that the signing session would be held at Caracas on whatever date would be convenient to it, taking into account the progress made in the work of the Conference.
57. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that the decision did not rest with the Government of Venezuela alone; another thing which had to be borne in mind was whether the Secretariat could find interpreters and translators during July and August.
58. Mr. ARIAS SCHREIBER (Peru) warned the Committee against wishful thinking. If the Conference did not complete its work at Geneva, there would be no signing session at Caracas. The wording should therefore be flexible enough to provide against any eventuality.
59. The CHAIRMAN agreed and suggested that the signing session should be held in July–August if the work of the Conference permitted.
60. Mr. OKUNRIBIDO (Nigeria) endorsed the statement made by the representative of Peru; everything would depend on what happened at the spring session.
61. Miss MARTIN-SANE (France) said she understood the practical difficulties facing the Venezuelan Government but she supported the formula put forward by the representative of the United Kingdom. There must be no question of returning to Caracas to resume discussions. Some wording to the effect that the Final Act would be signed at Caracas, if possible before the end of 1975, would meet the case.
62. The CHAIRMAN said that the question could not be left open; the Venezuelan Government needed to know in advance whether or not the session was to be held at Caracas.
63. Mr. KOLOSOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the time and place of the second of the two sessions in 1975 should not be decided immediately.
64. The CHAIRMAN said that it was difficult to make predictions; however, he felt that it would be necessary to inform the Venezuelan Government sufficiently in advance of the dates of the session to be organized at Caracas.
65. Mr. ZEGERS (Chile) observed that it had merely been proposed that the final session of the Conference should be held in July and August 1975 at Caracas. He agreed with the representative of the Soviet Union that it was for the Conference, at its session in the spring of 1975, to take a final decision about the dates of the subsequent session. However, it was clear that the General Assembly would have to take budgetary and administrative action with regard to that matter.
66. Mr. KAZEMI (Iran) felt that it was dubious whether the Conference would make sufficient progress at its Geneva session and that a further session might be necessary. It would be as well to keep the Austrian Government's offer in reserve.
67. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, at the preceding meeting, several delegations had raised objections to the holding of two sessions in 1975. That being so, it would be necessary to think along the lines of another session in 1976.
68. Mr. VINDENES (Norway) said he favoured a flexible formulation, based on the assumption that the signing of the convention would take place during the second half of 1975.
69. Mr. RATTRAY (Jamaica), Rapporteur-General, said that a distinction must be drawn in the recommendation between what was certain and what was not. It was certain that the final instrument would be signed at Caracas, but the Conference would be able to meet at Caracas in July or August of 1975 only if it had made sufficient progress with its work. The Conference would take a decision on that point at its spring session.
70. Mr. BEESLEY (Canada) agreed that it would be for the Governments to set the dates for the following session of the Conference when they met at Geneva, in the light of the progress made. In any event, care must be taken not to raise false hopes; it would therefore be better not to set any date for the subsequent session. There were grounds for doubting that the Conference would make sufficient progress with its work during the eight weeks of its spring session, and that was why it was important to draft the recommendation in very flexible terms.
71. Mr. RATTRAY (Jamaica), Rapporteur-General, suggested that the recommendation should include the following two paragraphs:
- “1. The formal final session of the Conference shall be held at Caracas, Venezuela, for the purpose of signing the Final Act and other documents;
- “2. If sufficient agreement is reached at the spring session in Geneva on the substantive issues before the Conference, the final stages of the Conference will be held at Caracas between July and August 1975.”
72. That wording, which distinguished what was certain from what was not, would enable the Conference to decide in the spring of 1975 whether sufficient agreement had been reached on substantive issues.
73. The CHAIRMAN suggested the addition of a third paragraph stating that, should the Conference fail to reach sufficient agreement, a further session could be foreseen in July and August at Vienna.
74. Mr. ABDEL HAMID (Egypt) said it would be better not to be too hypothetical.
75. Mr. RATTRAY (Jamaica), Rapporteur-General, said that if the Conference did not make sufficient headway at its spring session, it would have to decide either to give up its work or to hold another session. The paragraph suggested by the Chairman implied that an additional session might be held somewhere, and it did not seem wise to adopt such a pessimistic attitude.
76. The CHAIRMAN explained that the Venezuelan Government was prepared to host the Conference for three weeks for the purpose of signing the convention.
77. Mr. KOLOSOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed with the representative of Canada that the Committee must find a flexible formula which would enable Governments to take a decision at the next session of the Conference, in the light of the progress achieved.
78. Mr. ABDEL HAMID (Egypt) said that there was no need to revert to matters on which the officers of the Committee had already reached a consensus, namely, the date and venue of the next session, the holding of the final session at Caracas, and the renewed offer of hospitality received from the Austrian Government.
79. Mr. MORALES PAUL (Venezuela) observed that only speculations were possible at the present stage. It was very

difficult to predict what progress the Conference would make. It would no doubt be preferable for the Conference to decide, at its spring session, exactly when the convention could be signed at Caracas.

80. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the recommendation should read: "The formal final session of the Conference shall be held in Caracas, Venezuela, for the purpose of signature of the Final Act and other documents of the Conference, such session to be held if possible, between July and August 1975".

It was so decided.

Other matters

81. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the members of the Committee to two matters: first, the advisability of asking the Secretariat to prepare an analysis of the statement made in the plenary and the Committees, and secondly, the question of the procedure for the closing ceremony. On the first point, he stressed that the document would contain references to the summary records and would be a useful working tool both for the unofficial negotiations that would take place before the spring session of the Conference and for the official negotiations with which that session would begin. Statements would be arranged in the document according to the subjects to which they related.

82. Mr. HALL (Executive Secretary) said that the Secretariat was ready, if so requested, to prepare a subject-by-subject analysis of the general statements made in the plenary and in the Main Committees based on original statements where possible and, failing that, on the corrected summary records.

83. Sir Roger JACKLING (United Kingdom) said that he was strongly opposed to the suggestion which was contrary to the normal negotiating process and might reopen a good number of issues.

84. Miss MARTIN-SANE (France) endorsed the view expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom. It would be almost impossible to prepare a document of the type contemplated where such delicate negotiations were involved.

85. Mr. ENGO (United Republic of Cameroon) said he did not see how the Secretariat could reflect the collective posi-

tion of a group of States in such a document. At most it might collect the statements made by heads of delegation on the plenary, as was sometimes done in the United Nations. But making summaries of the summary records of the debates should be avoided at all costs.

86. Mr. ARIAS SCHREIBER (Peru) said that he was in favour of the preparation of such a document. No one should be afraid of the Secretariat taking stock of the situation. The law of the sea had developed over recent decades; that development must be clearly brought out.

87. Mr. ZEGERS (Chile) reminded the Committee that the document his delegation had suggested should be prepared, should be purely informative and factual. The work of the current session must be recorded in a document that would be an objective analysis of the views of delegations. Collective opinions could perfectly well be reported as collective opinions. He was surprised that some delegations were opposed to the preparation of such a document, since none of them would be obliged to make use of it.

88. Mr. YANKOV (Bulgaria) pointed out that there had been many unofficial negotiations and that it would be difficult to take them into account. It had been stated explicitly in some of the working papers that they did not necessarily express the final position of their authors. The Secretariat could follow the procedure used by the General Assembly, which put all the general statements in a document that was not an official record of any kind.

89. The PRESIDENT indicated that the suggestion being discussed had been withdrawn.

90. Speaking on the subject of the closing ceremony, he said that on 29 August 1974, the chairmen of the regional groups would thank the Venezuelan Government for its hospitality; the Head of the Venezuelan delegation, the Foreign Minister of Venezuela would reply. The President would make the closing speech and after a minute's silence for prayer or meditation would declare the session closed. Representatives would then proceed to the entrance to Parque Central to attend the ceremony of the lowering of the flags.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.