

Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea

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A/CONF.62/SR.123

123rd Plenary meeting

Extract from the *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, Volume XIII (Summary Records, Plenary, General Committee, First and Third Committees, as well as Documents of the Conference, Ninth Session)*

123rd meeting

Monday, 24 March 1980, at 11.55 a.m.

President: Mr. H. S. AMÉRASINGHE

Organization of work

1. The PRESIDENT said that, at its 52nd meeting, the General Committee had decided to recommend that the first stage of the programme of work for the ninth session should be extended up to and include 26 March, that the General Committee should meet again on 27 March, and that, unless the General Committee recommended and the Conference approved further modifications, the second stage, consisting of statements by delegations concerning the changes proposed to the revision of the informal composite negotiating text (A/CONF.62/WP.10/Rev.1), would commence on the morning of 28 March.
2. Mr. WARIOBA (United Republic of Tanzania) expressed doubt as to whether the negotiations at the committee level

could be completed during the proposed extension of the first stage and inquired how work would be conducted during that period.

3. The PRESIDENT said that the chairmen would convene their respective committees, receive the reports of all negotiating groups and other groups working within the framework of those committees, and then submit those reports for discussion in plenary meeting.
4. If he heard no objection, he took it that the Conference wished to adopt the procedure recommended by the General Committee.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.

124th meeting

Thursday, 27 March 1980, at 11.55 a.m.

President: Mr. H. S. AMERASINGHE

Organization of work

1. The PRESIDENT said that, at its 53rd meeting, the General Committee had decided to recommend that the first stage of the programme of work should be extended a few days. Negotiations in the negotiating groups would continue until the evening of 28 March, by which time the Second and Third Committees would have met. The first stage would end on 31 March with meetings of the regional groups, the Group of 77 and the First Committee. Any other interest groups wishing to meet that day would be serviced wherever possible. The second stage of the programme of work would begin on 1 April with a general discussion, which would end the following day to enable the Conference to achieve its main objective for the current session, namely, a second revision of the informal composite negotiating text. Delegations wishing to comment on the revisions must do so in accordance with the criteria set forth in paragraph 10 of document A/CONF.62/62.¹ The General Committee also recommended that statements in the general discussion should be limited to 10 minutes each. If the proposed time-table could not be adhered to, the General Committee would have to meet again on 31 March. The General Committee has also agreed that, when the session resumed in Geneva, the first item to be dealt with would be the general debate.
2. Finally, one delegation had asked whether delegations could present written statements. Although such statements had been envisaged as supplements to oral statements, the General Committee had decided to raise no objection to such a procedure provided that the statements dealt only with the present stage of the programme of work.
3. Mr. DREHER (Federal Republic of Germany) said it was his understanding that, while written statements would be expected to relate to the present stage of the programme of work,

that did not exclude the possibility that delegations might raise matters of a rather broader nature.

4. The PRESIDENT said that it was up to delegations to decide what they included in their statements.
5. Mr. ARIAS SCHREIBER (Peru) asked whether the second revision of the negotiating text was expected to be ready before delegations left New York or whether it would be mailed to them.
6. The PRESIDENT said that the collegium was scheduled to meet the following Thursday, and delegations would be able to take the revised text with them when they left.
7. Mr. BRECKENRIDGE (Sri Lanka), supported by Mr. ENGO (United Republic of Cameroon), Mr. WARIOBA (United Republic of Tanzania), Mr. TUBMAN (Liberia), Mr. ADIO (Nigeria), and Mr. GHELLALI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), expressed slight concern that the time-table outlined by the President might be a little too tight. Delegations should be given time to study the documents reflecting the results of the negotiations before the discussion in plenary meeting. He suggested that the meeting of the First Committee might be held the following Tuesday.
8. Mr. ZULETA (Special Representative of the Secretary-General) said that a substantial number of the documents were already being processed. It was his understanding that the documents prepared by the First Committee would be ready for processing later in the day; the Secretariat hoped to issue them on 28 or 29 March.
9. Mr. ZEGERS (Chile), supported by Mr. de LACHARRIÈRE (France) and Mr. RICHARDSON (United States of America), drew attention to the need to ensure that sufficient time was left after the discussions in plenary meeting to produce a second revision of the negotiating text.
10. After a procedural discussion, the PRESIDENT suggested that the Conference should decide to allow negotiations in the groups to continue on Monday, that the First Committee should meet on Tuesday morning and that the plenary Conference should meet either on Tuesday afternoon or on Wed-

¹See *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. X (United Nations publication, Sales No. E. 79.V. 4).