

Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea

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147th Plenary meeting

Extract from the *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, Volume XV (Summary Records, Plenary, General Committee and First Committee, as well as Documents of the Conference, Tenth and Resumed Tenth Sessions)*

147th meeting

Friday, 10 April 1981, at 4.30 p.m.

President: Mr. T. T. B. KOH (Singapore)

Organization of the future work of the Conference

1. The PRESIDENT informed the Conference that, with regard to the date of adjournment or suspension of the tenth session, he wished to recommend on behalf of the General Committee that the session should be extended to 24 April 1981, on the understanding that all substantive work would end by 16 April and that the last week would be devoted to meetings of the Drafting Committee and its constituent bodies. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Conference approved the recommendation.

It was so decided.

2. The PRESIDENT said that he wished to make a number of points regarding the programme of work for the remainder of the session. Firstly, during the first of the two remaining weeks, as much time as possible would be devoted to the work of the Drafting Committee, bearing in mind the need to avoid creating problems for representatives who attended both Drafting Committee meetings and the consultations on the question of the Preparatory Commission. Secondly, certain consultations already under way would continue, notably those on the Preparatory Commission conducted jointly by the Chairman of the First Committee and himself, and those between the two interest groups on delimitation. Thirdly, it would be necessary for the Conference to hold at least one and perhaps two informal meetings to process the recommendations of the Drafting Committee on certain pending matters. Fourthly, the Conference would hold at least two formal sessions to hear reports from the Chairmen of the Committees and from himself if he had anything to report as Chairman of the informal plenary meetings. Finally, the Chairman of the First Committee would undertake consultations regarding the request by the representatives of Zambia and Zaire that the subject of the limitation of production should be pursued.

3. Mr. MAZILU (Romania) said that he fully endorsed the view that it would be necessary to ensure every facility for the plenary Conference to analyse the results achieved, on the basis of reports from the Chairmen of the Committees and from the President as Chairman of informal plenary meetings

on Draft Committee matters. He hoped for comprehensive and precise reports on the views expressed and the stage reached in the work. He believed that every delegation would have ample opportunity to air its views on the work of the Committees.

4. Mr. HAYES (Ireland) said he welcomed the provision of facilities for consultations between the interest groups and shared the hope that they would lead to a resolution of the problem of delimitation, the only key issue identified by the Conference which had not yet been negotiated to a conclusion.

5. Mr. MUKUNA KABONGO (Zaire) expressed the hope that information would be provided at the earliest opportunity on the work programme for the consultations on production limitation.

6. Mr. CHINHENGO (Zimbabwe) expressed the hope that following the planned consultations his delegation would be able to report some progress concerning article 151, paragraph 2 (b) and paragraph 4, of the draft convention, which were of vital concern to his Government.

7. The PRESIDENT informed the Conference that the General Committee had decided to defer until its next meeting consideration of the agenda items relating to the future programme of work of the Conference and the recommendation to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly on that programme.

8. He also informed the Conference that in recent weeks he had met frequently with the representatives of the three countries which were candidates to become the seat of the international sea-bed Authority and of the three countries which were candidates to become the seat of the international law of the sea Tribunal. He had also consulted the Chairmen of the regional groups on those two issues. The six candidates had now agreed that the two issues would be taken up for decision by the Conference during the third week of the resumed session. Delegations would thus have sufficient time to consult their Governments and obtain the necessary instructions.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.

148th meeting

Wednesday, 15 April 1981, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. T. T. B. KOH (Singapore)

Organization of work

1. The PRESIDENT announced that, following several meetings of the Chairmen of the three regional groups and the representative of the United States, agreement had been reached on the future programme of work.

Report of the Chairman of the Second Committee

2. Mr. AQUILAR (Venezuela), speaking in his capacity as Chairman of the Second Committee, reported on that Committee's work during the current session.

3. He said that, at the first part of the session, the Second Committee had held four informal meetings which had provided a large number of delegations with the opportunity to

refer to certain questions relating to Parts II to X of the draft convention on the law of the sea (informal text) (A/CONF.62/WP.10/Rev.3 and Corr.1 and 3).

4. Those meetings had been held without an agenda, so that delegations had been free to express their views and to make or reiterate informal suggestions for amendments on all matters within the Committee's competence, with the exception of the problem of the delimitation of the maritime space between States with opposite or adjacent coasts, which was being dealt with by the two groups of countries directly concerned.

5. At the first meeting, it had been clearly established that the aim of the Committee's work was to supplement or improve the draft convention and not to reopen discussion on the basic elements of the agreements already reached. Almost all the informal suggestions which had been considered had already