

Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea

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18th meeting of the Third Committee

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THIRD COMMITTEE

18th meeting

Wednesday, 19 March 1975, at 11.05 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. A. YANKOV (Bulgaria).

Organization of work

1. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee of two changes among the officers. Mr. Ospina Hernández (Colombia) would assume the vice-chairmanship occupied by his country. Mr. Hassan (Sudan), who had been elected Rapporteur at the first session, had received another assignment from his Government, and it would therefore be necessary to fill the resulting vacancy.

2. Mr. PEGAWAGNABA (Ivory Coast), speaking on behalf of the group of African States, nominated Mr. Manyang d'Awol (Sudan) for that vacancy.

Mr. Manyang d'Awol was elected unanimously.

3. The CHAIRMAN said that the methods of work adopted at the previous session had been satisfactory and efficient. The work of the Committee had been divided between informal meetings, at which proposals had been submitted and a general debate had been held, and informal meetings. As the general debate had been concluded, the Committee would take up its work where it had left off.

4. He suggested that the Committee should keep to the established practice of holding informal discussions alternately on item 12 (Preservation of the marine environment) and items 13 (Scientific research) and 14 (Development and transfer of technology). It might hold short formal meetings, when necessary, to enable any delegations which so wished to introduce official conference documents.

5. He suggested that, at least during the first weeks of the session, both formal and informal meetings should be held in the morning, leaving the afternoon free for unofficial discussions among regional or other groups, such as the land-locked countries, having common interests.

6. In order to harmonize its informal deliberations with those of other negotiating bodies, the Committee might refer certain basic issues, such as vessel-source pollution, to the informal group of heads of delegations, which would consider controversial aspects and embark upon important political negotiations. As members of the Committee were aware, that group was considering at afternoon meetings certain issues in connexion with items allocated to the Second Committee, and might deal with the matters referred to it by the Third Committee at morning meetings. In the meantime, the other issues concerning marine pollution could be discussed and draft articles could be submitted at informal meetings. The item on scientific research could also be discussed at informal meetings.

7. He was confident that mutual accommodation and co-operation would increase during the forthcoming discussions. The Committee had taken a step forward in elaborating the main elements of the relevant articles. Some fundamental problems were still outstanding, however. Generally, they concerned the scope of coastal State jurisdiction and the rights and duties of other States in respect of both marine pollution control and scientific research. The Committee should concentrate on those issues, using any procedural device that might be useful.

8. Mr. BRENNAN (Australia) said that the methods of work responsible for the progress made at the previous session should continue to be used. He supported the Chairman's suggestions on harmonizing the Committee's work with that of other Committees on related items.

9. The CHAIRMAN said he assumed that there was general agreement to continue work on the lines that he had suggested.

It was so decided.

Development and transfer of technology

[Agenda item 14]

10. Mr. ZULETA (Special Representative of the Secretary-General), introducing the report in document A/CONF.62/C.3/L.22, said that the Secretary-General had prepared the report in response to members' request at the second session for information concerning offshore oil and gas technology, deep-sea mining, offshore structures, the extraction of dissolved chemicals from sea water, undersea habitats, sand and gravel dredging, and related matters.

11. Part I of the report contained some notes on the process of marine technology transfer and pointed out that the technology considered had at least five important ingredients: "hardware", operating procedures, maintenance procedures, operating and maintenance skills, and management capacity. The technology transfer process was treated as a series of links in a very complex network of dynamic interrelationships. Large-scale technology transfer programmes were essentially long-term, difficult and costly. The report described technology as it was normally bought and sold in the world market in the form of information, capital goods or skilled manpower.

12. The question of costs was dealt with in several paragraphs of part I of the report. Both direct and indirect costs of transfer programmes were discussed.

13. Part II of the report contained a description of some marine activities, including the production of offshore oil and gas; sea-bed mining and dredging; offshore structures, cables and pipelines; submersibles and undersea habitats; extraction of dissolved chemicals from sea water; and desalination of sea water.

14. In conclusion, he said that a summary of existing arrangements and further information on advances in marine technology, and the transfer of such technology, would be annexed to a forthcoming report on the uses of the sea to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-ninth session.

15. Mr. HUMPHREY (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that the Commission had been established in 1960 as an autonomous body attached to the Natural Science sector of UNESCO. Although legally within UNESCO, the Commission had its own assembly of 84 member States, its own Executive Council and subsidiary bodies, and its own activities. Its main purpose was to bring together Governments that wished to co-operate in oceanographic research programmes.

16. The Commission's work was organized under three headings. First, ocean science, which embraced not only governmental research projects but also the basic science which had to be promoted so that the programmes required by member States could be brought to a successful conclusion; one such programme had been the International Indian Ocean Expedition, which had left in many countries of the region an infrastructure on which the countries themselves had successfully built programmes of their own. Secondly, the Commission was concerned with ocean

services, such as those involving routine collection of data on water temperature and marine pollution, and those supporting the transmission, storage and exchange of all types of scientific information on the sea. In that connexion, a marine oil pollution monitoring project was in operation. The third group of activities involved training, education and mutual assistance. The Commission had 15 years' experience of arranging and co-ordinating mutual assistance between developed and developing countries, and of facilitating the transfer of technology and the building up of the marine science infrastructures of those countries.

17. In all its activities the Commission worked in close co-operation with other members of the United Nations system. The focus for that co-operation was the Intersecretariat Committee on Scientific Programmes relating to Oceanography (ICSPO). Furthermore, through its advisory bodies, the Commission was in close contact with the scientific and engineering communities, particularly in applied fields such as fisheries and meteorology.

18. The Commission's extensive publication programme and the publications in the scientific literature directly arising from the Commission's activities were factual testimony to its success. There was no other intergovernmental body with the knowledge, experience and standing of the Commission. No similar body could be created and begin to function satisfactorily within the current decade. The Commission awaited explicit requests from the Conference for information, for data and for the development of scientific programmes without which the problems facing the Conference could not be solved.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.

19th meeting

Wednesday, 26 March 1975, at 10.55 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. A. YANKOV (Bulgaria).

Tribute to the memory of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia

1. The CHAIRMAN, on behalf of the Committee, expressed condolences to the delegation of Saudi Arabia on the death of King Faisal. He announced that the President of the Conference proposed to call a special plenary meeting on 27 March to pay tribute to the memory of King Faisal.

On the proposal of the Chairman, the representatives observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of King Faisal.

2. Mr. HAJJAR (Saudi Arabia) thanked the Chairman and the Committee for the condolences expressed to his delegation on the tragic death of King Faisal.

Preservation of the marine environment [Agenda item 12]

3. Sir Roger JACKLING (United Kingdom) introducing the draft articles on the prevention, reduction and control of marine pollution (A/CONF.62/C.3/L.24) on behalf of the

sponsors, said that one of his delegation's main objectives at the Conference was to secure a commitment to prevent and control pollution. The United Kingdom was particularly vulnerable since its coastline was exposed to the busiest shipping lane in the world. It had taken the initiative in the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) in formulating an 18-point programme to combat the dangers of accidental pollution, after the *Torrey Canyon* disaster in 1967 had made clear what was required with regard to tanker construction and operation in order to prevent it.

4. The United Kingdom was also exposed to intentional pollution from vessels; it had taken a leading part in securing the amendment or adoption of a number of conventions relating to that form of pollution. As a coastal State, the United Kingdom recognized that the threat was essentially international and that it could be effectively controlled only by the imposition through international channels of a uniform set of regulations which set high safety standards. Such a course would also ensure co-operation by shipowners because they would have equality of treatment.