

Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea

1973-1982

Concluded at Montego Bay, Jamaica on 10 December 1982

Document:-

A/CONF.62/SR.82

82nd Plenary meeting

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

PLENARY MEETINGS

82nd meeting

Tuesday, 28 March 1978, at 3.25 p.m.

President: Mr. H. S. AMERASINGHE.

Opening of the seventh session

1. The PRESIDENT declared open the seventh session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

Minute of silence for prayer or meditation

On the proposal of the President, the representatives observed a minute of silence.

Question of the presidency of the Conference

2. The PRESIDENT said he understood that the Conference wished first to discuss the question of the presidency. In accordance with rule 9 of the rules of procedure, he called

upon Mr. Yunus (Pakistan), Vice-President, to replace him during the consideration of that question.

Mr. Yunus (Pakistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

3. Mr. NANDAN (Fiji) requested that the Conference should consider that delicate matter in closed meeting.

It was so decided.

4. The PRESIDENT announced that the discussion would be continued in closed meeting.¹

The public meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.

¹The summary record of the second part (closed) of the meeting appears as document A/CONF.62/SR.82/Add.1, the distribution of which was restricted.

83th meeting*

Thursday, 6 April 1978, at 6.10 p.m.

President: Mr. H. S. AMERASINGHE.

Question of the presidency of the Conference (*continued*)

1. The PRESIDENT recalled that, at the 82nd meeting of the Conference on 28 March, he had said that he understood the Conference wished first to consider the question of the presidency, and he had felt it would be improper for him to remain in the Chair while that question was discussed. Acting under rule 9 of the rules of procedure, he had designated the Vice-President to act as President during the consideration of that question.

2. He himself remained attached to the principle of consensus, and had made it clear throughout that he wished the decision on the question of the presidency to be reached by consensus; but he had also said that it was for the Conference to determine the manner in which the decision was taken. Unfortunately, after many days spent in attempting to reach a consensus, it had been found necessary to resort to a vote. He was aware that many delegations had not wished a vote to be taken, so as not to establish a precedent; but the fact

that the matter had been decided by a vote would not affect his own attitude to the consensus principle, and he would try to ensure that, if possible, all decisions were taken by consensus. However, the Conference was governed by its own rules of procedure and must take its decisions in accordance with those rules.

3. He wished to thank the Vice-President, Mr. Yunus, for all his efforts to solve the problem, and he was also grateful to all the participants in the Conference for the patience they had shown. It was his fervent desire that the work of the Conference should now proceed in the same spirit of cordiality, mutual respect and tolerance which had been displayed over the preceding five years and which, he hoped, would continue to prevail. He believed that the interests of the Conference were paramount. He trusted that he had misled no one about his own position, but if he had unwittingly done so he expressed his regret. He now appealed for the co-operation of the Conference in closing a difficult chapter of its work.

4. Mr. ZELAYA UBEDA (Nicaragua) said that his delegation had supported the idea of seeking a political solution to the question of the Presidency by approaching the Government of Sri Lanka, or a legal solution, by arranging for Mr.

*The 83rd to 87th meetings, held on 30 and 31 March, and on 3, 5 and 6 April 1978, were closed meetings and the distribution of their summary records was restricted.