

ARTICLE 21

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TEXT OF ARTICLE 21

The General Assembly shall adopt its own rules of procedure. It shall elect its President for each session.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. During the period under review, the General Assembly revised its rules of procedure. The alterations in the rules which changed the character of the Ad Hoc Political Committee and the composition of the General Committee, and those which increased the number of Vice-Presidents, are dealt with in the present study under heading II A 2, "Method and procedures employed in adopting and amending the rules".

2. In addition, certain points relating to the character of the rules were touched on in debates; they are referred to in the present study in section B of the Analytical Summary, under headings II B 1, "The agenda", which, as in the Repertory study, includes matters concerning the General Committee, and II B 2, "Organization of sessions".

3. Questions which arose during the period under review regarding the election of Vice-Presidents, in addition to the amendments to the rules of procedure referred to above, are dealt with in section II C, "Election of the President of the General Assembly". As in the earlier Repertory studies, certain other questions concerning the interpretation of the rules on such matters as voting and sessions, though relevant to the present study, are dealt with elsewhere under the appropriate Charter Articles.

I. GENERAL SURVEY

4. The General Assembly revised its rules of procedure 1/ at its eleventh session, when it changed the name of the Ad Hoc Political Committee to Special Political Committee and made the latter a standing Main Committee of the General Assembly; it also increased the number of Vice-Presidents. At the twelfth session, the rules were revised to alter the composition of the General Committee.

5. At its eleventh session, the General Assembly established an eighth vice-presidency, amending the rules of procedure accordingly. At its twelfth session, it decided to establish a ninth vice-presidency on an ad hoc basis for the duration of the session. Later in the session, it adopted resolution 1192 (XII), which increased the number of Vice-Presidents from eight to thirteen and established a pattern for their election.

6. Questions also arose during the period under review that related to the agenda of an emergency special session, the powers of the General Committee under rule 40 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and the functions and powers of the Main Committees of the General Assembly in connexion with plenary meetings.

II. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF PRACTICE

A. Adoption and amendment of the rules of procedure

*** 1. Question of the relationship of the rules to the functions and powers of the General Assembly under the Charter*

2. Method and procedures employed in adopting and amending the rules

7. In the three cases in which the General Assembly revised its rules of procedure during the period under review, it adopted three different procedures. In the first case, it amended the rules by decision in plenary meeting; in the second, it determined the principle in plenary meeting and referred the question of consequent changes in the rules to a Main Committee, later adopting the amended rules recommended by that Committee; in the third instance, it referred the relevant item on its agenda to a Main Committee and adopted the amended rules on the basis of that Committee's report.

8. The first case occurred during the eleventh session, when the General Assembly decided to establish an eighth vice-presidency; its decision was adopted 2/ in plenary

1/ A/4700 (United Nations Publication, Sales No.: 61.I.4).

2/ G A (XI), Plen., vol. I, 577th mtg., para. 9.

meeting on the report of the General Committee. The Committee had proposed, 3/ in a recommendation approved by 9 votes to 4, with 1 abstention, (a) that the General Assembly should decide to establish an eighth vice-presidency of the General Assembly; (b) that it should proceed at the earliest possible moment to the election of an eighth Vice-President for the eleventh regular session; and (c) that it should decide, in accordance with rule 164 4/ of the rules of procedure, "but notwithstanding the provision of that rule regarding reference to a Committee" that rules 31 and 38 should be amended to substitute the words "eight Vice-Presidents" for the words "seven Vice-Presidents". The General Assembly adopted the General Committee's report, and the President ruled 5/ that the adoption of the report by the General Assembly constituted a decision to amend rules 31 and 38 of the rules of procedure accordingly. One representative reserved 6/ his delegation's position on the ground that the General Committee had exceeded its terms of reference, as laid down in the rules of procedure, and that its third recommendation was at variance with rule 164 of the rules of procedure.

9. In the second case - also at the eleventh session - the General Assembly decided 7/ in plenary meeting to change the name of the Ad Hoc Political Committee to "Special Political Committee" and to give it a permanent character; it referred consequent modification of the rules to the Sixth Committee for report. On the latter's recommendation, 8/ it adopted 9/ without objection a resolution 10/ amending rules 31, 38, 39 and 101 of the rules of procedure, to change the name of the Committee and to give it the status of a Main Committee of the General Assembly.

10. The General Committee had first recommended 11/ that "the name of the Ad Hoc Political Committee be changed to 'Special Political Committee', since it is generally regarded that the Committee has ceased to have the temporary character it seemed to have at earlier sessions". In plenary meeting, the General Assembly adopted a proposal 12/ to amend the relevant paragraph of the General Committee's report by replacing the words "Ad Hoc Political Committee" by the words "Special Political Committee" in rule 38 of the rules of procedure, and by deleting the words "when one is established" in rule 38, with a view to conferring a permanent character on the Committee. Following discussion, the General Assembly decided 13/ not to modify the rules of procedure by a summary procedure but to refer the proposed modification to a committee, in accordance with rule 164 of the rules of procedure. The matter was accordingly referred to the Sixth Committee. The Sixth Committee decided 14/ without vote to recommend the amendments for adoption by the General Assembly, in order to give effect to the General Assembly's decision.

3/ G A (XI), Annexes, vol. I, a.i. 5 and 6, A/3344, para. 2.

4/ This stated that the rules "may be amended by a decision of the General Assembly taken by a majority of the Members present and voting, after a Committee has reported on the proposed amendment".

5/ G A (XI), Plen., vol. I, 577th mtg., para. 23.

6/ G A (XI), Plen., vol. I, 577th mtg.: Guatemala, para. 7.

7/ Ibid., paras. 39-60.

8/ G A (XI), Annexes, vol. I, a.i. 5 and 6, p. 2, A/3404.

9/ G A (XI), Plen., vol. II, 623rd mtg., para. 92.

10/ G A resolution 1104 (XI).

11/ G A (XI), Annexes, vol. I, a.i. 8, p. 12, A/3349, para. 5.

12/ G A (XI), Plen., vol. I, 577th mtg., paras. 40-45.

13/ G A (XI), Plen., vol. I, 577th mtg., paras. 46-60.

14/ G A (XI), 6th Com., 480th mtg., para. 56.

11. In the Sixth Committee, some representatives expressed the view 15/ that in taking the decision involving a change in the rules of procedure, the General Assembly had not conformed to the procedure in rule 164; it should first have referred to a committee the question of changing the name of the Ad Hoc Political Committee and conferring permanent status on it. Other representatives considered 16/ that the decision taken by the General Assembly was one of substance and not of procedure, and it therefore did not come within the scope of rule 164; the Sixth Committee was merely called on to give effect to the General Assembly's decision. A discussion also arose as to whether the Sixth Committee was competent to recommend a change in a title adopted by the General Assembly. It was suggested 17/ that the Chairman of the Sixth Committee might be asked to inform the General Committee that the question of the proposed name had been raised in the Sixth Committee. The Chairman stated 18/ that if the Committee formally proposed another, different, change of name, it would be acting contrary to a decision already taken by the General Assembly, and its proposal might fail to obtain the two-thirds vote required in the General Assembly for the reversal of a decision.

12. The third instance occurred during the twelfth session, when the General Assembly again amended its rules regarding the number of Vice-Presidents. On this occasion, an additional item 19/ - item 68, "Question of the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly" - was placed on the agenda. This item was referred 20/ by the General Assembly to the Special Political Committee for consideration and report, and a draft resolution 21/ recommended by that Committee was, with some amendment, 22/ adopted 23/ by the General Assembly in plenary meeting. By this resolution, 24/ the General Assembly amended rules 31 and 38 of its rules of procedure, and adopted certain provisions regarding the geographic composition of the General Committee. 25/

B. Some significant features of the rules

1. The agenda

a. THE AGENDA OF EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSIONS

13. The question of what constituted the agenda for an emergency special session was raised at the first emergency special session of the General Assembly. Rule 17, the relevant rule of procedure, provided that the "provisional agenda for a special session shall consist only of those items proposed for consideration in the request for the holding of the session". The resolution adopted by the Security Council 26/ calling the first emergency special session stated that the Council,

15/ Ibid.: Czechoslovakia, paras. 53 and 54; Greece, para. 9; Romania, para. 38; USSR, paras. 3 and 4.

16/ Ibid.: Australia, paras. 34-37; Colombia, para. 52.

17/ Ibid.: Australia, para. 37; Canada, para. 44.

18/ G A (XI), 6th Com., 480th mtg., para. 55.

19/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 5, 6, 67 and 68, p. 2, A/3692.

20/ G A (XII), Plen., 705th mtg., paras. 1 and 2.

21/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 5, 6, 67 and 68, p. 3, A/3781, para. 10.

22/ Ibid., p. 4, A/L.242.

23/ G A (XII), Plen., 728th mtg., para. 149.

24/ G A resolution 1192 (XII).

25/ See paras. 22-24 below.

26/ S C, 11th yr., Suppl. For Oct.-Dec., p. 116, S/3721.

"Taking into account that the lack of unanimity of its permanent members at the 749th and 750th meetings of the Security Council has prevented it from exercising its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security,

"Decides to call an emergency special session of the General Assembly, as provided in General Assembly resolution 377 A (V) of 3 November 1950, in order to make appropriate recommendations."

14. The item on the provisional agenda of the first emergency special session of the General Assembly 27/ was "Question considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th meetings held on 30 October 1956". Reservations concerning this agenda item were advanced 28/ on the ground that the provisions of resolution 377 (V) did not apply, since the resolution that had failed because of the lack of unanimity in the Security Council fell within Chapter VI, not Chapter VII, of the Charter. The General Assembly decided 29/ by 62 votes to 2, with 7 abstentions, to include the item. A further reservation was expressed 30/ to the effect that a draft resolution before the General Assembly exceeded the scope of the item submitted. This resolution was adopted 31/ by the General Assembly by 64 votes to 5, with 6 abstentions.

15. Some doubts were also expressed at the first emergency special session concerning the competence of the General Assembly under rule 15 of the rules of procedure to transfer an item from the agenda of an emergency special session to the provisional agenda of a regular session. In this connexion, it was stated 32/ that an emergency special session was convened for the sole purpose of considering the item before it and was therefore, in a constitutional and legal sense, a body distinct from a regular session. The provision in the rules that the provisional agenda of a session should consist of items ordered by a previous session therefore referred only to items placed on the agenda by a regular session. 33/

16. A further point of discussion concerned provisions in a draft resolution 34/ before the General Assembly requesting it to give urgent consideration to certain documents at its eleventh session. It was stated 35/ that since the General Assembly would be master of its own agenda at its eleventh session, the action at the special emergency session should be limited to placing the item on the provisional agenda, without recommendations. These particular provisions of the draft resolution were withdrawn. The General Assembly adopted, 36/ by 66 votes to none, with 2 abstentions, the amended draft resolution to place the item on the provisional agenda of the eleventh session and to refer the relevant records to that session.

27/ A/3214 (mimeographed).

28/ G A (ES-I), Plen., 561st mtg.: France, paras. 18-22; United Kingdom, paras. 65 and 66.

29/ Ibid., para. 23.

30/ G A (ES-I), Plen., 562nd mtg.: France, para. 213.

31/ Ibid., para. 286. G A resolution 997 (ES-I).

32/ G A (ES-I), Plen., 572nd mtg.: Philippines, paras. 4-12.

33/ Ibid.: El Salvador, para. 62.

34/ G A (ES-I), Annexes, a.i. 5, p. 32, A/3329, operative para. 3.

35/ G A (ES-I), Plen., 572nd mtg.: Egypt, para. 15; India, paras. 31-38.

36/ Ibid., para. 74.

b. THE POWERS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO THE AGENDA

17. At the General Assembly's eleventh session, the General Committee recommended 37/ the adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution regarding the request 38/ by India for the inclusion on the agenda of an item entitled "Representation of China in the United Nations"; under the recommendation of the General Committee, the General Assembly would decide: (a) not to include the item in the agenda of its eleventh session, and (b) not to consider at its eleventh session any proposals to exclude the representatives of the Government of the Republic of China or to seat representatives of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China. The representative of India proposed amendments: 39/ (a) to delete the word "not" in the first paragraph, and (b) to delete the second paragraph.

18. In the discussions in plenary meetings of the General Assembly, the view was expressed 40/ that in paragraph 2 of its draft resolution, the General Committee had exceeded its functions under the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which provided only that the General Committee might make recommendations regarding the inclusion of an item, the rejection of the request for inclusion or the inclusion of the item in the provisional agenda of a future session. On the other hand, it was held 41/ that the General Committee had acted in accordance with rule 40 of the rules of procedure, which empowered the General Committee to examine requests for the inclusion of additional items in the agenda and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly. The action of the General Committee, it was held, amounted to a recommendation for non-inclusion of the item. The President expressed the view 42/ that the draft resolution was within rule 40 of the rules of procedure, since the two paragraphs of the draft resolution, in his opinion, amounted to a recommendation to reject the inclusion of the item in the agenda. The amendments submitted by India were rejected; 43/ the first, by 45 votes to 25, with 9 abstentions, and the second, by 47 votes to 24, with 8 abstentions. The draft resolution recommended by the General Committee was adopted 44/ by 47 votes to 24, with 8 abstentions.

19. Similar action was taken and similar views were expressed at both the twelfth 45/ and the thirteenth 46/ sessions.

37/ G A (XI), Annexes, vol. I, a.i. 8, p. 13, A/3350, para. 7.

38/ G A (XI), Annexes, vol. I, a.i. 8, p. 4, A/3358.

39/ G A (XI), Plen., vol. I, 580th mtg., paras. 134 and 135 (A/L.210).

40/ Ibid., 578th mtg.: India, paras. 109 and 110; Yugoslavia, para. 176; 579th mtg.: El Salvador, paras. 25-31; 580th mtg.: India, paras. 40 and 41; Iran, paras. 10-15; Mexico, paras. 138-140.

41/ Ibid., 578th mtg.: United States, para. 149; 579th mtg.: Philippines, para. 39; 580th mtg.: Peru, paras. 114-117.

42/ Ibid., 580th mtg., paras. 35 and 36.

43/ G A (XI), Plen., vol. I, 580th mtg., paras. 134 and 135.

44/ Ibid., para. 136; G A resolution 1108 (XI).

45/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 8, p. 3, A/3663; p. 9, A/3670, paras. 7-10. G A (XII), Plen., 684th mtg.: para. 63; Ceylon, paras. 176 and 177; India, paras. 71-74; Romania, para. 165; United States, para. 149; 686th mtg.: Bulgaria, paras. 128 and 129; Guatemala, para. 119; Mexico, paras. 196-201. G A resolution 1135 (XII).

46/ G A (XIII), Annexes, a.i. 8, p. 4, A/3851; p. 11, A/3926, paras. 11-15; G A (XIII), Plen., 755th mtg., paras. 89-96; 753rd mtg.: Czechoslovakia, para. 185; India, paras. 36-40; Indonesia, para. 263; United States, paras. 52-54; 754th mtg.: United Arab Republic, para. 90; 755th mtg.: Mexico, paras. 37-40; Ukrainian SSR, paras. 27 and 28. G A resolution 1239 (XIII).

C. COMPOSITION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

20. At the eleventh and twelfth sessions, the General Assembly increased the membership of the General Committee. At the eleventh session, it increased the number of Vice-Presidents from seven to eight (see paragraph 8 above) and at the twelfth session, it established a ninth vice-presidency for the duration of the session (see paragraph 31 below) and then revised the rules of procedure to provide for thirteen Vice-Presidents.

21. During the discussions on the election of a ninth Vice-President, the consensus was that the membership of the General Committee should be reviewed in order to make it more representative of all Members; some representatives thought 47/ that this matter should be considered separately, rather than in the ad hoc context of the election of the ninth Vice-President. Czechoslovakia accordingly proposed 48/ the inclusion in the General Assembly's agenda of an additional item, entitled "Question of the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly". The item was referred to the Special Political Committee, which considered it at its seventy-ninth to eighty-third meetings.

22. In the explanatory memorandum accompanying its request for the additional item, Czechoslovakia proposed a draft resolution by which the General Assembly, considering "that the General Committee should have a representative character reflecting the membership of the United Nations and providing for fair geographical distribution", would decide to establish additional vice-presidencies. After the item was allocated to the Special Political Committee for consideration, Czechoslovakia joined twelve other delegations in sponsoring a draft resolution 49/ in which a preambular paragraph would take into account "that the General Committee should be so constituted as to ensure its representative character on the basis of a balanced geographical distribution among its members as provided in rule 38 of the rules of procedure". The operative paragraphs of the draft resolution would amend rules 31 and 38 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to increase the number of vice-presidencies to thirteen, and would decide that they should be elected according to a specified geographic pattern. The draft resolution 50/ was later revised by the addition of operative paragraph 3, which would confirm "the practice established with regard to the geographical distribution of chairmanships of the Main Committees, namely, two from Latin America, two from Asia-Africa, two from Western Europe and other countries, and one from Eastern Europe". An additional revision 51/ by the Special Political Committee omitted reference to rule 38 in the preamble, to meet the objections of those who pointed out that the rule contained no specific reference to geographic distribution, and substituted an annex containing the proposed geographic pattern. The

47/ G A (XII), Plen., 702nd mtg.: Czechoslovakia, paras. 141-144; USSR, paras. 124-133.

48/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 5, 6, 67 and 68, p. 2, A/3692.

49/ A/SPC/L.22; see G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 5, 6, 67 and 68, p. 2, A/SPC/L.22/Rev.1, foot-note 2.

50/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 5, 6, 67 and 68, p. 2, A/SPC/L.22/Rev.1; amended by A/SPC/L.23, which was sponsored by six Powers and accepted by the thirteen sponsors of A/SPC/L.22 (*ibid.*, p. 3, A/3781, paras. 5 and 6).

51/ A/SPC/L.22/Rev.2 (G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 5, 6, 67 and 68, p. 3, A/3781, para. 7); see also G A (XII), Spec. Pol. Com., 82nd mtg., paras. 49 and 63.

revised draft resolution was approved 52/ by the Special Political Committee by 48 votes to 17, with 10 abstentions. A further amendment 53/ regarding the areas from which the Vice-Presidents were to be elected was adopted 54/ by the General Assembly, which then adopted 55/ resolution 1192 (XII) by 49 votes to 1, with 27 abstentions.

23. One of the principal questions which arose in the discussions was the interpretation to be given to the "representative" character of the General Committee, provided for in rule 38 of the rules of procedure, as well as the means for giving effect to this interpretation. The majority of Members thought 56/ that the General Committee should be representative of the Members on a geographical basis, and that the practice of distributing the vice-presidencies according to the principal geographic groupings should be given formal recognition. On the other hand, it was pointed out 57/ that neither the Charter nor the rules of procedure referred to a geographical distribution for the General Committee; the view was expressed that the groupings proposed were not strictly geographical and that to give formal recognition to informal political-geographic groupings would be unwise because it would crystallize groupings and would prevent flexibility.

24. A question was raised 58/ as to the juridical implications of the proposed pattern of election: how far was it legally binding on Members; and did an annex which did not appear in the rules but which amended certain of the rules have any legal validity? The view was expressed 59/ that the provisions were "in the nature of a directive by which Member States should be guided in taking decisions affecting the composition of the General Committee". It was stated, 60/ however, that the General Assembly could not decide on a pattern of elections, since delegations would retain their freedom of action.

2. Organization of sessions

a. POWERS OF COMMITTEES

25. During the twelfth session of the General Assembly, a question was raised in the the Fourth Committee concerning the majority required for the adoption by the General

52/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 5, 6, 67 and 68, p. 3, A/3781, paras. 8 and 10.

53/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 5, 6, 67 and 68, p. 4, A/L.242.

54/ G A (XII), Plen., 728th mtg., para. 148.

55/ Ibid., para. 149.

56/ G A (XII), Spec. Pol. Com., 79th mtg.: Ceylon, paras. 39-42; Czechoslovakia, paras. 26-33; India, paras. 34-38; 80th mtg.: Afghanistan, paras. 7 and 8; Albania, paras. 32 and 33; Iraq, para. 59; Nepal, paras. 13-15; Poland, paras. 45-51; Romania, paras. 9-12; Syria, paras. 3-5; USSR, paras. 16 and 17; 82nd mtg.: Bulgaria, para. 37; Ghana, paras. 42-44; Guatemala, paras. 30-33; Mexico, paras. 4-9; 83rd mtg.: El Salvador, paras. 1-3.

57/ G A (XII), Spec. Pol. Com., 79th mtg.: Belgium, paras. 47-49; 80th mtg.: Australia, para. 37; France, paras. 38-44; Ireland, paras. 52-58; Italy, paras. 26-31; Netherlands, paras. 20-24; 81st mtg.: Greece, paras. 18 and 19; 82nd mtg.: Israel, paras. 21-29; Spain, para. 73; United Kingdom, paras. 69-72.

58/ G A (XII), Spec. Pol. Com., 80th mtg.: Sweden, paras. 1 and 2; 83rd mtg.: Philippines, paras. 18 and 19.

59/ Ibid., 80th mtg.: Poland, para. 50.

60/ G A (XII), Plen., 728th mtg.: Australia, para. 115.

Assembly of resolutions concerning the Non-Self-Governing Territories referred to in Chapter XI of the Charter. 61/ The Fourth Committee, by 32 votes to 29, with 12 abstentions, approved a draft resolution 62/ requesting an opinion from the Sixth Committee on the question.

26. Doubts were expressed as to the legality of this action in both the Fourth Committee and the Sixth Committee, when they considered the matter. It was stated 63/ that under the Charter it was the General Assembly itself which should decide in plenary meeting on its own voting procedure; it was anomalous for one committee to ask an opinion of another regarding that procedure. It was observed that the matter raised was not a proposed amendment to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, nor did it concern the legal aspect of a question; on such questions annex II to the rules of procedure recommended reference to the Sixth Committee. In effect, this was a new item since it did not concern the legal aspects of a question referred to the Fourth Committee, and committees could not introduce new items in the agenda. The request for an opinion was in general terms, and it called for an interpretation concerning provisions of the Charter; it was therefore outside the competence of the Sixth Committee.

27. On the other hand, the view was expressed 64/ that it was a matter raising legal and procedural questions, on which it was proper for the Sixth Committee's advice to be sought. Annex II of the rules of procedure merely confirmed current practice, under which the Sixth Committee's advice could be sought on legal matters, as the Fifth Committee's was sought on financial matters. The current question concerned Non-Self-Governing Territories and was therefore a matter which was before the Fourth Committee.

28. While the matter was being considered by the Sixth Committee, the General Assembly itself decided 65/ in plenary meeting on the type of majority required for the adoption of the draft resolution under discussion. 66/ The question was raised in the Sixth Committee as to whether this decision closed the matter or whether the Sixth Committee

61/ In so far as the question concerned voting, see this Supplement, under Article 18.
62/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 35, p. 28, A/3735, paras. 13 and 14. In the operative part of the draft resolution, the Fourth Committee:

"Requests the Sixth Committee to consider the following points and to give an opinion thereon to the Committee;

"(a) Which is the voting majority that is applicable to resolutions of the General Assembly on matters concerning Non-Self-Governing Territories in accordance with Chapter XI of the Charter of the United Nations?

"(b) Considering that matters concerning Non-Self-Governing Territories are not enumerated in Article 18 (2), would it be in accordance with the terms of the Charter to submit a resolution on Non-Self-Governing Territories to a two-thirds vote if an additional category to that effect has not been established beforehand for the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the terms of Article 18 (3)?"

63/ G A (XII), 4th Com., 679th mtg.: Belgium, paras. 36 and 37; Brazil, paras. 47-49; Portugal, paras. 50-54; 680th mtg.: United Kingdom, paras. 14 and 15; 681st mtg.: Belgium, paras. 30 and 31; China, para. 46; Ecuador, para. 57; Italy, para. 44; Philippines, paras. 53-56; United Kingdom, paras. 8 and 39-43; G A (XII), 6th Com., 540th mtg.: Spain, paras. 27-30.

64/ G A (XII), 4th Com., 681st mtg.: India, paras. 20-24; G A (XII), 6th Com., 539th mtg.: Peru, paras. 13-15; Poland, paras. 2-8; Syria, paras. 18 and 19; 540th mtg.: Cuba, paras. 23-26.

65/ G A (XII), Plen., 722nd mtg., para. 28.

66/ See this Supplement, under Article 18.

could still discuss the question. Draft resolutions 67/ submitted to the Committee would have stated that the question should be handled as a separate item by the General Assembly. The resolution finally approved by the Committee, 68/ however, merely took note of the General Assembly's action and stated that it was not opportune at the current session for the Sixth Committee to reply to the Fourth Committee's request.

b. CREDENTIALS

29. Rule 28 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly 69/ provided that a Credentials Committee should be appointed at the beginning of each session. At the first emergency special session, however, it was decided 70/ on the proposal of the President that, "in accordance with the spirit of the rules of procedure", the Credentials Committee for that session should have the same membership as the Credentials Committee for the preceding session; the same Credentials Committee acted for the second emergency special session. 71/ Similarly, the Credentials Committee for the third emergency special session had the same membership as that for the previous (twelfth) regular session. 72/

C. Election of the President of the General Assembly

** 1. Question of nominations

2. Election of Vice-Presidents

30. At the eleventh session, the General Assembly adopted a report 73/ of the General Committee which recommended that it should establish an eighth vice-presidency and also that it should "proceed at the earliest possible moment to the election of an eighth Vice-President for the eleventh regular session". Following the adoption of the report, the General Assembly proceeded forthwith to elect 74/ an eighth Vice-President by secret ballot. 75/

31. At the twelfth session, on the recommendation of the General Committee, the General Assembly placed 76/ the item "Question of the establishment on an ad hoc basis of a ninth vice-presidency for the twelfth session of the General Assembly" on the agenda. Following discussion, the General Assembly decided, 77/ by 43 votes to 6, with 20 abstentions, to proceed to the election on the following day. The action was criticized 78/ by certain representatives as contrary to the rules of procedure.

67/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 35, p. 26, A/C.6/L.410; p. 27, A/C.6/L.412.

68/ G A (XII), Annexes, a.i. 35, p. 28, A/C.6/L.417.

69/ A/4700 (United Nations Publication, Sales No.: 61.I.4).

70/ G A (ES-I), Plen., 561st mtg., paras. 11-13.

71/ G A (ES-II), Plen., 564th mtg., para. 4.

72/ G A (ES-III), Plen., 732nd mtg., paras. 16 and 17.

73/ G A (XI), Annexes, vol. I, a.i. 5 and 6, A/5344; G A (XI), Plen., vol. I, 577th mtg., paras. 2-4.

74/ G A (XI), Plen., vol. I, 577th mtg., para. 29.

75/ See also para. 8 above.

76/ G A (XII), Plen., 702nd mtg., para. 140.

77/ Ibid., para. 157.

78/ Ibid.: Greece, paras. 165-169; Guatemala, paras. 148-150; Syria, para. 164.

32. The additional Vice-Presidents provided for in the rules of procedure, as altered by the General Assembly at its twelfth session, were elected 79/ for the first time, in the usual way, by the General Assembly at its thirteenth session.

79/ G A (XIII), Plen., 748th mtg., para. 2.

