PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE CONFERENCE OF NON-NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 17 August 1967, at 3.50 p.m.

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67-36805/A
PRESENT:

Chairman:
Mr. NABWERA (Kenya)

Rapporteur:
Mr. LAI (Malaysia)

Members:
Mr. TULANDERS Chile
Mr. NYANJENIA Kenya
Mr. SHAMS Kuwait
Mr. ABUAM Malaysia
Mr. GAUCI Malta
Mr. MOHAMMED Nigeria
Mr. KIRZA Pakistan
Mr. ROZA Peru
Mr. ARIAS SALGADO Spain
Mr. de PIMIERS

Secretariat:
Mr. FOUCH United Republic of Tanzania
Mr. VELLODI Deputy Under-Secretary for Political and Security Council Affairs
Mrs. FORGUES Director, Translation Service, in charge of the Office of Conference Services
Mr. ORTEZ–TIMOCO Office of Public Information
Mr. FREY Secretary of the Committee

Venue and Time of the Conference

Mr. Mohamad (Nigeria) said that with regard to the dates of the Conference, the Preparatory Committee must take into account the time-limit fixed in General Assembly resolution 2153 (XXI), according to which the Conference was to meet not later than July 1968. The Committee also had to take a position on the travel costs of delegations, the size of delegations and travel costs in general, whether the Conference was held at Headquarters in New York or at the United Nations Office in Geneva. In connexion with the preparations for the Conference on Human Rights, the Secretariat had provided an estimate of the travel costs between various capitals and Geneva, on the one hand, and New York, on the other. It was also necessary to ascertain what services could be provided at New York and at Geneva. The dates of the Conference would also depend on the Organization's commitments under the calendar of international conferences. In his view, Geneva would be an excellent choice as the venue for the Conference; however, the employment of additional staff at Geneva would involve increased expenditure. The Secretariat should give some further information on that subject. The Committee had not yet taken up the question of the duration of the Conference, which was an important consideration when deciding the dates at which it would be held.

The Chairman said that in the Secretary-General's note giving tentative cost estimates for the Conference (A/CONF.35(PC/L.4), it was envisaged that the Conference would last four weeks. The estimates had been calculated on that basis.

Mr. Mohamad (Nigeria) pointed out that the duration of the Conference had not been discussed in the Committee. It would be unrealistic to consider cost estimates without knowing exactly how long the Conference would last.

Mr. Foum (United Republic of Tanzania) thought that if the Conference was to be successful, the Committee must exclude New York as its venue. The success of the Conference would depend on co-operation with the nuclear Powers or with a group of nuclear Powers. It was essential that representatives of the People's Republic of China should participate. If the Conference was held in New York,
(Mr. Fomu, Tanzania)

the usefulness of addressing an invitation to the Government of the People's Republic of China might be doubted. The question of cost was certainly important, but other considerations of vital concern such as the representation of the People's Republic of China must not be forgotten. With regard to the duration of the Conference, it was first necessary to decided on the agenda. If the agenda was short, the Conference could be short, but if it was long, the Conference would have to be longer.

Mr. MIRZA (Pakistan) said that although the agenda was not finally fixed, the Committee had some precise guidelines on the matter. Furthermore, the list of items in the working paper submitted by Pakistan (A/CONF.35/PC/L.6) was not exhaustive. Even if the list was shortened, it could not be guaranteed that the questions left out would not be raised during the debates. Again, if the list was lengthened, the main items would remain the same and only the number of sub-items would increase.

Like the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, he felt that the Conference might last longer than expected. It might prove necessary to hold consultations, draft conventions, or establish a working group or legal committee. Also, although the agenda was not final, it would be useful to fix the number of questions that the Conference would have to consider. The estimated duration of four weeks for the Conference seemed rather optimistic. It would be more realistic to plan for about another week, and it would be useful for the Secretariat to give the Committee an estimate of the costs for an approximate duration of five weeks.

Regarding the venue of the Conference, he felt that Geneva was preferable.

Mr. MOSAHEM (Nigeria) asked what United Nations conferences were planned for the time at which the Conference was to be held in 1968. As to the venue, there seemed to be political arguments in favour of Geneva and there was therefore no need for the Secretariat to draw up cost estimates for New York.

Mrs. FORGUES (Secretariat) said that the Office of Conference Services, following further consultations with the Geneva Office, was in a position to say that the Conference could be held at Geneva on the following dates: from 12 March
to 5 April with four meetings a day, or from 12 August to 6 September with two meetings a day.

Mr. MOKAL (Nigeria) said that that statement imposed a further limitation and that the Committee really had hardly any choice but to decide on the dates 12 March to 5 April. However, there was always the possibility that another country would offer to act as host to the Conference.

Mr. MIRZA (Pakistan) agreed with the representative of Nigeria that the choice was now very limited. On the basis of the General Assembly resolution and the information available to it, the Committee could only recommend that the Conference should meet from 12 March to 5 April. He would like to know, however, whether the suggestion he had made for a duration of five weeks, should it be adopted by the General Assembly, could be reconciled with the timetable proposed by the Office of Conference Services.

Mrs. FORGUES (Secretariat) said that the Office of Conference Services would have to consult the Geneva Office before it could reply. She asked whether, if the Conference lasted five or six weeks, it would hold four meetings a day during the additional weeks also.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Conference would have to hold four meetings a day throughout its duration.

Mr. MOHAMED (Nigeria) said that the consultations between the departments responsible for conferences at Headquarters and Geneva should be based on the assumption of a minimum duration of five weeks.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should decide that the Conference would be held at Geneva, for a period of about five weeks, beginning on 12 March 1969.

It was so agreed.

COST ESTIMATES

Mr. MOHAMED (Nigeria) observed that the Committee had fixed the dates of the Conference without establishing its cost. The cost would depend in the last resort on the decision to be taken by the General Assembly, but the Committee should first consider the cost estimates and, for that purpose, it must have estimates other than those now before it.
Mr. GAUCI (Malta) said that the figures in document A/CONF.35/PC/L.4/Add.1 for temporary conference staff seemed rather high. It was also somewhat surprising that the expenditure for salaries and freight should not be as high in New York as in Geneva. The Secretariat could perhaps have another look at those items.

Mrs. FORGUES (Secretariat) said that the figures might seem rather high, but that the Geneva Office did not have a large enough establishment to service all the meetings which were to be held during the period in question. It would therefore be necessary to take on temporary staff to the extent indicated, particularly as the Conference was to have four meetings a day and would need summary records and a certain number of documents. The figures in document A/CONF.35/PC/L.4/Add.1 were thus justified.

Mr. GAUCI (Malta) said that he could understand that additional staff would be necessary, but he doubted whether the figures needed to be so high. The figure of ninety-four shorthand-typists, in particular, seemed excessive.

Mrs. FORGUES (Secretariat) said that the Geneva Office could be asked to reconsider the figures for temporary staff. However, the estimates had been made very carefully and it was unlikely that they could be substantially reduced.

Mr. MOHANNED (Nigeria) wished for clarification concerning document A/CONF.35/PC/L.4/Add.1. He would like to have details regarding the cost of document reproduction and distribution (para. 2 (iii) (c)), and the printing of the booklet on the Conference in four languages (para. 2 (iii) (e) (iv)) - which would the four languages be? Lastly, what was meant by the terms "temporary staff and consultants" in paragraph 2 (ii) and "temporary conference and other staff" in paragraph 2 (iii) (b)?

Mrs. FORGUES (Secretariat) said that the term "temporary staff and consultants" in paragraph 2 (ii) referred to substantive staff. The languages of the booklet on the Conference would probably be English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Mr. FERRY (Secretary of the Committee) said that when, in June 1967, the Office of Conference Services had made an initial estimate of the cost of the Conference, it had had to act on certain tentative assumptions. That was why the item "temporary staff and consultants" was included pro memoria. There had been the same uncertainty about the amount of pre-conference and conference
documentation. All those assumptions, which were merely intended to provide a point of departure, were subject to revision. Exact figures could only be arrived at when such details as the amount of documentation required or the number of committees to be set up were known. That would be possible when the agenda for the Conference had been decided on. In the meantime no more than tentative estimates could be provided.

Mr. BACHAHED (Nigerie) said that he had not got all the clarification he needed. As regards the booklet on the Conference, what purpose was it intended to serve? If it was meant for the Press, it was strange that it should be printed in four languages when according to normal practice two languages — English and French — were used for the Press in Geneva and only one — English — in New York. That being so, he wondered if it might be possible to reduce the cost of printing the booklet.

Mrs. FONQUEZ (Secretariat) explained that the idea of the booklet had come from the Office of Public Information and not the Office of Conference Services. The Office of Public Information prepared similar booklets for other conferences and was planning to publish one for the Conference on Human Rights. The booklets listed the topics discussed at the conference and described the results. The Office of Public Information had suggested that the booklet should be printed in four languages and the Office of Conference Services would, at most, be required to provide translations. As for the distinction made in document A/CONF.35/PC/L.4/Add.1 between the two types of temporary staff, the temporary staff and consultants referred to in paragraph 2 (ii) would be recruited for substantive work while the temporary staff mentioned in paragraph 2 (iii) (b) would come under conference services.

Mr. HAWWA (Nigeria) said that he would like a representative of the Office of Public Information to provide some clarification concerning the booklet.

Mr. de RIVERA (Spain) thought that the cost of the Conference should be kept to a minimum but not so low as to jeopardize its success. Document A/CONF.35/PC/L.4/Add.2 showed clearly the financial implications of using Chinese at the Conference. Those in the Committee of Assembly, at its twenty-first session, which had already sent the Chinese text to the Registrar, until the Conference adopted its rules of procedure all proposals concerning procedure should be in accordance
with rule 51 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. Therefore, although English, French and Spanish were the working languages, interpreters would also have to be provided for Chinese.

Mr. KHAN (Pakistan) wished to state his delegation’s position on some of the assumptions made by the Secretariat. For example, the assumption that pre-conference documentation would not exceed fifty pages now seemed somewhat unrealistic. There was little doubt that the agenda for the Conference would be very heavy and that a considerable amount of technical and legal documentation would be needed. Outside consultants (numbering between six and ten) would have to be called in. It was therefore reasonable to suppose that the pre-conference documentation would amount to not fifty but to between 200 and 300 pages. However, that was only a guess, and exact estimates could only be made when the agenda for the Conference had been decided.

Mr. FREY (Secretary of the Committee) pointed out that many items of expenditure were included pro memoria in the documents prepared by the Secretariat. The figure of fifty pages, for example, was not an estimate. Only now could the Secretariat begin to make proper estimates.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the debate should proceed on the assumption that the estimates would be modified.

Mr. ORTIZ-TIRADO (Secretariat) explained that the proposed booklet on the Conference would outline the main conclusions of the Conference and briefly indicate the views of the various delegations. The participants at most previous international conferences had concluded - usually too late to put the scheme into practice - that it would be a good idea to provide a small pamphlet of that kind for the general public. Item (c) (iv) had therefore been included in the cost estimates as a precautionary measure. The amount given was approximate and the number of languages was merely a working assumption. The Office of Public Information would not object to the deletion of that item if the Committee thought that sufficient publicity for the Conference could be achieved by the means normally available to OPI.

Mr. FOMI (United Republic of Tanzania) pointed out, in connexion with paragraph 2 (c) of document A/CONF.35/PC/L.4/Add.1, that document reproduction and distribution would cost $6,000 less in Geneva than in New York. However, the cost
of printing the booklet would be the same in both places. Why was there a
difference in the first case and not in the second? How had the cost of printing
the booklet been estimated? How many pages would the booklet contain? Those
points would need to be clarified, as the Fifth Committee would be sure to ask for
explanations.

Mr. ORTIZ-TILCOO (Secretariat) said that in estimating the figure of
$10,000 the Secretariat had had in mind a booklet of forty pages, of which 20,000
copies would be printed in English, 10,000 in both French and Spanish and 10,000 in
a fourth language to be selected by the Committee. It would be a printed text,
and the job of printing would be given to an outside printer. Since the rates were
approximately the same for printing in Geneva and New York, no savings would be
made by having the booklet printed in Geneva.

Mr. MOHAMED (Nigeria) doubted if it was really necessary for the booklet
to be printed in four languages. The representative of the Office of Public
Information had, in fact, said that the number of languages was merely a working
assumption. He had not pressed for the publication of the booklet. As it would
mainly be intended for news agencies, it would suffice if it were printed in
English and French.

Mr. de PINIES (Spain) said that, although he shared the Nigerian
representative's concern for economy, he could not endorse such a suggestion, since
Spanish was the language of many States Members of the United Nations and of more
than 200 million human beings.

Mr. KUHANAH (Nigeria) observed that millions of people spoke Swahili,
Urdu, Hindi and other languages and that the question of languages was really
secondary. What was important was to decide whether it would be desirable to give
wide circulation to the publication. He thought not.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Committee had to decide whether or not
the cost estimates were too high. If they were reasonable, they should be approved.
If the Secretariat thought that a booklet could be printed in four languages for
$10,000, a booklet in four languages should be the choice.
Mr. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) said that the cost of the Conference should be the Committee's main concern, and whenever the members had been asked to take a decision they had been reminded of that obligation. He had proposed economies in the printing of the booklet in order not to overburden the United Nations budget. What he was mainly concerned about, moreover, was the impact of the booklet in relation to its cost.

Mr. de PINTES (Spain) said that the Committee had shown understanding in adopting Chinese as an official language of the Conference. If the Conference fulfilled the hopes placed in it, there would be no reason to limit the cost of publicizing its results.

Mr. MILFA (Pakistan) thought that the Nigerian representative's concern for economy was justified. However, the Conference would be dealing with vital questions, as the representative of Spain had rightly mentioned, and it should therefore be given the widest possible publicity.

Mr. ILLANES (Chile) said that he entirely agreed with the representative of Spain. If the Conference was held in New York, it would cost one half as much as at Geneva; yet the Committee had not hesitated to choose Geneva, being more concerned for the success of the Conference than for its financial implications. The Committee should continue to adopt that approach and should try in every way to ensure success, whatever the cost.

Mr. GAUCI (Malta) supported the observations made by the representative of Spain. With regard to the languages in which the booklet should be published, the rules of procedure of the General Assembly should be followed. Moreover, it was not so much the translation expenses which would determine the cost of the booklet, but the number of copies printed.

Mr. FOMU (United Republic of Tanzania) whole-heartedly supported the observations made by the representatives of Chile and Spain and said he hoped that the booklet would be published in English, Spanish, French, Russian and Chinese. Since the Committee's main task was to ensure the success of the Conference, it should welcome any action designed to give the widest possible publicity to the work of the Conference. However, the cost estimates in paragraph 2 (iii) (e) (ii)
could be reduced, since it was doubtful whether the proposed photographs and film would be of any use. He had never seen any photograph which had been taken during the debates in any of the committees on which he had served, nor any film, however short, devoted to their work. Moreover, since the United Nations had its own film-making teams, he did not see why file-makers would have to be recruited for the Conference.

Mr. OHTIZ-TIKOCO (Secretariat) said that the Office of Public Information had been criticized by the General Assembly in the past for working in English and French, and sometimes in English only, and it was on account of those criticisms that all its work was now done in four languages.

There were no film-making teams at Geneva, and a computation of the costs of transporting the New York team to Geneva had shown that it would be cheaper to employ Geneva services. The films made during the Conference would be intended primarily for television networks throughout the world, which would use them in preparing their news programmes. It was in response to requests from those networks that the Office of Public Information produced its films, which it rented for a modest sum.

The expenses for telecommunications represented the cost of installing special lines and renting the necessary equipment for journalists to send dispatches or make radio commentaries from the Palais des Nations at Geneva.

The CHAIRMAN said that, in view of the explanations which had just been given, he believed the Committee should provide the Office of Public Information with the facilities it needed to give the widest possible publicity to the Conference. He therefore suggested that the cost estimates submitted by the Office should be allowed to stand.

It was so decided.

RULES OF PROCEDURE AND DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE CONFERENCE

Mr. Mirza (Pakistan) recalled the Chairman's suggestion that the officers of the Committee, in co-operation with the Secretariat, should prepare documentation which would enable the Committee to decide on the agenda of the Conference; that was the most important question, and he thanked the officers
of the Committee for their efforts. With regard to the rules of procedure of the Conference, committee secretaries generally submitted draft rules of procedure based on the rules adopted by conferences in the past; the same could be done in the present case, subject, however, to a provision that the nuclear Powers would not have the right to vote. He proposed, therefore, that the Committee should request its Secretary to submit a working paper or a draft which would take into account the observations made at the previous meeting on the subject of the participation of the nuclear Powers.

Mr. FEYY (Secretary of the Committee) said he believed that it would be easy to prepare and circulate the document which had been requested. Where the right of the nuclear Powers to vote and the participation of the specialized agencies were concerned, he would have to draw up the text of the relevant provisions in co-operation with the Chairman.

Mr. MOHAMMED (Nigeria) supported the proposal made by the representative of Pakistan and thought that the Committee should decide on the number of members of each delegation and on the number of Vice-Presidents if it was thought that any were needed.

Mr. LAI (Malaysia), Rapporteur, said that he could inform the representative of Pakistan that the Secretariat was preparing two working papers which would be circulated shortly; the first dealt with guarantees of security in the context of non-proliferation and the second with the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mr. MIRZA (Pakistan) suggested that further consideration of the provisional draft agenda should be postponed until the Committee had the two working papers before it.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that it was of prime importance that the Committee should take a decision on item 7 of its agenda.

Mr. ILLANES (Chile) said that the discussion on items 5 and 7 of the Committee's agenda had made it possible to clarify some useful points. Nevertheless, the Committee had only reached provisional conclusions which would have to be reviewed in the light of the agenda finally drawn up for the Conference.
For instance, with respect to the venue and time of the Conference, the Committee appeared to have given preference to Geneva and to the period from 12 March to 5 April, but it still planned to take into account any invitation from a State to hold the Conference in its territory. Again, the cost estimates for the Conference were by no means final. The rules of procedure should not be discussed until the draft rules to be prepared by the Secretariat had been circulated.

The CHAIRMAN said he thought that it would be easy to make adjustments in the cost estimates once the agenda had been finalized. He believed that, as the representative of Chile had proposed, the Committee could consider item 7 of its agenda once it had before it the draft rules of procedure prepared by the Secretariat.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the working group to prepare the draft provisional agenda for the Conference on the basis of the working paper submitted by Pakistan and the documents prepared by the officers of the Committee should be composed of the representatives of Chile, Nigeria and Pakistan.

It was so decided.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. YOHANNES (Nigeria) said that he wished to ensure the widest possible publicity for the results of the Conference and suggested that representatives of specialized agencies and of interested inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations should be invited to participate in the Conference as observers. He asked the Committee to bear that suggestion in mind when drawing up the draft rules of procedure of the Conference.

Mr. MIRZA (Pakistan) said that he whole-heartedly supported the valuable suggestion made by the representative of Nigeria. In adopting it, the Committee would be following the practice of other international conferences.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 22 August.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.