

United Nations

Nations Unies

ANALYST'S FILE
DECLASSIFIED

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

ASSEMBLEE
GENERALE

A/AC.13/SR.1
29 May 1947

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIRST MEETING (PRIVATE)

Held at Lake Success, Monday, 26 May 1947, at 3:50 p.m.

Present:

Acting Chairman: Mr. Trygve Lie

Mr. J. D. L. Hood	(Australia)
Mr. Leon Mayrand	(Canada)
Dr. Jan Papanek	(Czechoslovakia)
Dr. Jorge Garcia Granados	(Guatemala)
Mr. H. Dayal	(India)
Mr. Nasrollah Entezam	(Iran)
Mr. J. W. M. Snouck Hurgronje	(Netherlands)
Dr. Alberto Ulloa	(Peru)
Mr. Gunnar Hagglof	(Sweden)
Mr. Roberto Fontaina	(Uruguay)
Dr. Jose Brilej	(Yugoslavia)

Secretariat: Dr. Victor Hoo
Dr. A. Garcia Robles

1. Secretariat of the Committee

The SECRETARY-GENERAL, after calling the meeting to order, said that he wanted to introduce Dr. Victor Hoo, who would head the Secretariat of the Committee as representative of the Secretary-General, and Dr. Garcia Robles, who would be the Secretary of the Committee. The Secretary-General would instruct the Secretariat to give to the Committee the best technical service.

2. Rules of Procedure

The SECRETARY-GENERAL said that according to the resolution adopted by the Assembly, the Committee was master of its own procedure. The Committee could either work out a special set of rules of procedure, or adopt on a temporary basis the provisional rules of procedure of the General Assembly which applied to proceedings of Committees of the General Assembly.

/Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) said

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) said he was in favour of the second alternative. Modifications might be introduced later in the light of experience.

Mr. HOOD (Australia) thought that it was in fact the Australian Delegate in the Special Assembly which had urged insertion of the provision regarding procedure in the terms of reference of the Committee. There was some doubt whether the rules of procedure of the General Assembly which apply to its main Committees would in fact apply to this Special Committee. Mr. Hood recalled his own personal experience on the Commission of the Security Council in the Balkans. In the Council's resolution which created the Commission, there was no specific mention made of procedure. For that reason, the Commission was at times embarrassed and reference was made in cases of uncertainty to the rules of procedure of the Security Council. None the less, it proved to have been an advantage to have no set rules of procedure in that Commission. The Australian Delegate agreed with the suggestion that provisionally the Special Committee might carry on on the basis of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, without prejudice to a determination by the Committee, if it so wished later on, either to establish its own rules of procedure or to proceed without written rules of procedure. Personally, he would favour the latter course in a Committee of this sort.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL thought it would make a good impression if the Committee could decide upon rules of procedure within a short time.

3. Postponement of the Election of the Chairman of the Committee

In view of the fact that many principal or alternate representatives had not yet arrived, the COMMITTEE decided to postpone the election of its Chairman until Monday, 2 June, unless most of the main representatives or alternates had arrived in time to hold a meeting on Thursday, 29 May.

4. Travelling Arrangements

The SECRETARY-GENERAL informed the Committee that ten seats had been reserved in a plane leaving 2 June and that two planes had been reserved, one for 6 June, and one for 10 June, with a seating capacity of thirty-six seats in each plane. The reservations would be kept for the time being until the

Committee took its decision concerning their departure from New York.

5. Applications received from Organizations desiring to be heard by the Committee

The SECRETARY-GENERAL recalled that the First Committee of the General Assembly had invited representatives of the Arab Higher Committee and of the Jewish Agency and heard those representatives. It was left to the Special Committee to decide upon hearing some of the other organisations that had sent applications. If the Committee decided to start at the beginning of June, it would be difficult to grant such hearings and the Secretary-General suggested that the organizations in question might be told the Committee would be interested in having all the statements they wished to give in written form.

Mr. PAPANEK (Czechoslovakia) agreed. If the members of the Committee, after reading the statements, felt they needed supplementary explanations from some organizations, the Committee would ask for such explanations.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL said that the Secretary of the Committee would prepare a paper including the various communications which had been received.

6. Question of "Liaison Officers"

The SECRETARY-GENERAL said that a letter had been received from the Jewish Agency requesting that a permanent liaison officer should be attached to the Committee. The question of the presence of Arab and Jewish observers at meetings of the Committee had also to be settled.

Mr. FONTAINA (Uruguay) pointed out that it might be useful for the Committee to know in advance the names of the representatives of the Jewish Agency, of the Arab Higher Committee and from the Mandatory with whom the Special Committee might get in contact if necessary.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL said that he would ask for the names of such representatives.

Mr. HOOD (Australia) thought that several points were involved. One of them was that for practical purposes some sort of representative of the Mandatory authority in Palestine would have to assist the Committee with

/practical

practical arrangements. If such was the case, representatives of the Jewish Agency and of the Arab Higher Committee would have to be on the same footing. There were, however, various possibilities. As had been suggested by the Uruguayan representative, representatives might be designated on whom the Committee would call. The Committee could also have accredited liaison representatives who could accompany it on visits and assist it with practical arrangements, particularly in the calling and examination of witnesses. The Committee would not be in a position always to pick out and arrange to get before it the particular witnesses it might want. It was much better to have the witnesses proffered by the parties concerned and the Committee would then make its own choice among them. Thirdly, the Committee would have representatives of the three parties present at all of its meetings acting as observers and indeed taking part in the discussion.

Mr. HOOD was opposed to that. There ought to be no observers taking part in private meetings. As regards public meetings, the persons designated might be accredited as liaison representatives for practical purposes, to help the Committee in its work and be available for questioning, for the checking of witnesses, and for assisting in their interrogation. He would strongly advocate such a cause.

7. Records of the Committee

The SECRETARY-GENERAL raised the question of the records of the Committee. He had to think about expenses. The Committee would help him in his effort to reduce the staff if it agreed to have as a rule summary records and verbatim records only in special cases and for hearings.

8. Languages

The SECRETARY-GENERAL said that the two working languages of the United Nations were English and French. The Committee would see to what extent it could in practice dispense with interpretation into French.

Mr. FONTAINA (Uruguay) said he did not know yet which language the Uruguayan representative would speak. He raised the question of

interpretation from other languages (Arabic for instance) and of the assistance of specialists such as cartographers and statisticians.

Dr. Victor HOO said that in case any witnesses should like to speak in Arabic, Yiddish or new Hebrew, they would have to provide their own interpretations and someone in the Secretariat would check the accuracy of the interpretation.

9. Press Communiques

The SECRETARY-GENERAL raised the question of press communiques to be issued after private meetings. He suggested that no Member of the Committee should give the press any information regarding such meetings. All information should go through the Chairman. The communiques to the press would be prepared by a member of the Department of Public Information who will travel with the Committee but they would have to be approved by the Chairman.

Mr. FONTAINA (Uruguay) agreed and added that a rule to that effect should be added to the Rules of Procedure of the Special Committee.

10. Creation of a Preparatory Working Group

The SECRETARY-GENERAL reviewed the various questions: Rules of Procedure; verbatim or summary records; languages; press communiques for private meetings; admission of representatives of the Mandatory Power, of the Jewish Agency, and of the Arab Higher Committee at meetings; the question of Liaison Officers raised by the letter of the Jewish Agency; the question of hearing Organisations which have sent applications during or after the General Assembly; date of departure from New York; and programme before the departure.

He suggested that a sub-committee should be created to produce proposals about these various items. The sub-committee might consist of the main representatives present at the meeting: The Representatives of Australia, Guatemala, Iran, Yugoslavia, and Peru.

Mr. HOOD (Australia) assumed that such a sub-committee would be purely temporary.

Mr. PAPANEK (Czechoslovakia) suggested that the sub-committee should also comprise such principal representatives as should arrive in time to join in the work.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala) thought that a sub-committee was necessary to prepare proposals for the consideration of the full committee. He referred in particular to the question of the status of representatives of the Mandatory Power, the Jewish Agency, and the Arab Higher Committee and to the question of hearings.

Mr. HOOD (Australia) did not very much like the idea of having a formal sub-committee. It was not a proposition which would commend itself to the absent members of the Committee who would find on their arrival that a formal sub-committee was in existence. He suggested not a sub-committee but a Preparatory Working Group.

The Committee adopted the suggestion of the Representative of Australia.

It was decided that the Preparatory Working Group would meet on the following day at 3:00 p.m.

The Committee adjourned at 5:45 p.m.
