



# General Assembly

Fifty-fourth session

**43**<sup>rd</sup> plenary meeting  
Friday, 29 October 1999, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Gurirab . . . . . (Namibia)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.*

## Agenda item 15 (continued)

### Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

#### (b) Election of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council

**The President:** This afternoon the General Assembly will continue with sub-item (b) of agenda item 15 on the election of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 1999.

As members will recall, when the 42nd plenary meeting was adjourned earlier today, there still remained four seats to be filled. In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, we shall proceed now to the third round of balloting, by secret ballot, for the remaining four seats.

As was announced at this morning's meeting, the remaining four seats to be filled are: one from among the Asian States, one from among the Eastern European States, and two from among the Latin American and Caribbean States.

We shall therefore proceed to the second restricted ballot.

The third round of balloting shall be restricted to the two States from among the Asian States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely Fiji and Thailand; the two States from among the Eastern European States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely Croatia and Lithuania; and the four States from among the Latin American and Caribbean States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely Ecuador, Mexico, Suriname and Uruguay.

This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

I give the floor to the representative of Ecuador.

**Mr. Alemán** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The process that is taking place in the Assembly is a democratic one. As my country believes in and practices democracy, and given the results of the previous round of balloting, we have decided to withdraw our candidacy. I wish, however, to express our profound gratitude to all friendly countries that have been so committed to us up to this moment.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

**Mr. Jayanama** (Thailand): I wish to inform the Assembly that Thailand wishes to withdraw its candidacy.

We take this opportunity to thank all the delegations that have supported us. We hope that in future, when we again become a candidate for membership in the Economic and Social Council, we will receive sufficient support from the Assembly.

**The President:** I thank the representatives of Ecuador and Thailand for their cooperation.

Taking into account the statements made by the representatives of Ecuador and Thailand, we shall proceed to the current restricted ballot in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Ballot papers marked “B”, “C” and “D” will now be distributed. May I ask representatives to write on the ballot papers the names of the States for which they wish to vote.

Ballot papers marked “B” for the Asian States will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Fiji or Thailand, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

Ballot papers marked “C” for the Eastern European States will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Croatia or Lithuania, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

Ballot papers marked “D” for the Latin American and Caribbean States will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Ecuador, Mexico, Suriname or Uruguay, as well as if they contain the names of more than two States.

*At the invitation of the President, Ms. Ioseliani (Georgia), Mr. Sengmanothong (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Ms. Arias (Peru), Mr. Nyman (Sweden) and Mr. Ben Youssef (Tunisia) acted as tellers.*

*A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

*The meeting was suspended at 4.05 p.m. and resumed at 5 p.m.*

**The President:** The result of the voting is as follows:

#### Group B — Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	173
Number of invalid ballots:	4
Number of valid ballots:	169
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	167
Required two-third majority:	112
Number of votes obtained:	
Fiji	165
Thailand	2

#### Group C — Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	173
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	172
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	170
Required two-thirds majority:	114
Number of votes obtained:	
Croatia	93
Lithuania	77

#### Group D — Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	173
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	173
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	171
Required two-thirds majority:	114
Number of votes obtained:	
Suriname	115
Mexico	107
Uruguay	97
Ecuador	1

*Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, Fiji and Suriname were elected members of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2000.*

**The President:** There remain two seats to be filled: one seat from among the Eastern European States and one seat from among the Latin American and Caribbean States. We shall therefore proceed to a third restricted ballot.

This fourth round of balloting shall be restricted to the two States from among the Eastern European States that were not elected but that obtained the largest number

of votes in the previous ballot — namely, Croatia and Lithuania — and to the two States from among the Latin American and Caribbean States that were not elected but that obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot — namely, Mexico and Uruguay. This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

I call on the representative of Lithuania.

**Mr. Jusys** (Lithuania): First of all I would like to thank all the friendly countries which supported our candidature during this election race. Taking into account that today is Friday and that I do not want to torture the membership at large with long rounds of elections, at this stage Lithuania would like to express thanks once again for the support its candidature received and would like to withdraw its candidature.

**The President:** Taking into account the statement made by the representative of Lithuania, we shall proceed to the current restricted ballot, in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

Ballots papers marked “C” and “D” will now be distributed. I request representatives to write on the ballot papers the names of the States for which they wish to vote.

Ballot papers marked “C”, for the Eastern European States, will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Croatia or Lithuania, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

Ballot papers marked “D”, for the Latin American and Caribbean States, will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Mexico or Uruguay, as well as if they contain the names of more than one State.

*At the invitation of the President, Ms. Ioseliani (Georgia), Mr. Sengmanothong (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Ms. Arias (Peru), Mr. Nyman (Sweden) and Mr. Ben Youssef (Tunisia) acted as tellers.*

*A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

*The meeting was suspended at 5.20 p.m. and resumed at 5.55 p.m.*

**The President:** The result of the voting is as follows:

#### Group C — Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	171
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	171
Abstentions:	5
Number of members voting:	166
Required two-thirds majority:	111
Number of votes obtained:	
Croatia	160
Lithuania	6

#### Group D — Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	171
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	171
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	170
Required two-thirds majority:	114
Number of votes obtained:	
Mexico	106
Uruguay	64

*Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, Croatia was elected a member of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2000.*

**The President:** There remains one seat to be filled from among the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. We must therefore proceed to the first unrestricted ballot. This fifth round of balloting is being held in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

May I remind the Assembly that any Member State from among the Latin American and Caribbean States may be a candidate except those that will remain members of the Economic and Social Council as of 1 January 2000 and those that have already been elected for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2000. To make this clear, I shall mention the names of those Members from among the Latin American and Caribbean States that cannot be voted for in the present balloting: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Honduras, Saint Lucia, Suriname and Venezuela.

I give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

**Mr. Benítez Sáenz** (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to thank those countries that have supported us in the election process. I should like to

announce officially that, given the results of the voting, we should like to withdraw our candidacy. We wish success to our sister country.

**The President:** Taking into account the statement made by the representative of Uruguay, we shall proceed to the first unrestricted ballot, in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

Ballot papers marked "D", for the Latin American and Caribbean States, will now be distributed. I request representatives to use only those ballot papers and to write on them the name of the one State for which they wish to vote. Ballot papers bearing more than one name will be declared invalid. Ballot papers bearing the name of a State from outside the relevant region will not be counted at all.

*At the invitation of the President, Ms. Ioseliani (Georgia), Mr. Sengmanothong (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Ms. Arias (Peru), Mr. Nyman (Sweden) and Mr. Ben Youssef (Tunisia) acted as tellers.*

*A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

*The meeting was suspended at 6.10 p.m. and resumed at 6.30 p.m.*

**The President:** The result of the voting is as follows:

Group D — Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	159
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	158
Abstentions:	7
Number of members voting:	151
Required two-thirds majority:	101
Number of votes obtained:	
Mexico	145
Uruguay	4
Ecuador	1
Guatemala	1

*Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, Mexico was elected a member of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2000.*

**The President:** The following 18 States have been elected to the Economic and Social Council: Angola, Austria, Bahrain, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa

Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Fiji, France, Germany, Greece, Japan, Mexico, Portugal, the Sudan and Suriname. I congratulate these States on their election.

We have thus concluded consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 15.

### Reports of the Fifth Committee

**The President:** The General Assembly will next consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 117, 118, 119, 123, 129, 130 (a), 151 (a) and 169.

I call on the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Jan Jaremczuk of Poland, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Fifth Committee.

**Mr. Jaremczuk (Rapporteur):** I have the honour today to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee on the agenda items dealt with at this stage of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

It should be noted that during the first three weeks of the main part of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Fifth Committee devoted its time to complete consideration of issues deferred from the fifty-third session.

With regard to agenda item 117, entitled "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/506. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/54/L.9, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 118, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", in particular the question of procurement reform, the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/511. In paragraph 9 of that report, the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/54/L.8 as orally amended, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 119 entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999", particularly as concerns the question of the Development Account, the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/508. In paragraph 12 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of

draft resolution A/C.5/54/L.11/Rev.1, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 123, entitled "Joint Inspection Unit", the report of the Committee is in document A/54/507. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/54/L.5, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 129, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission and the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola", the report of the Committee is in document A/54/504. In paragraph 6 of the report, the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/54/L.10, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to sub-item (a) of agenda item 130, entitled "Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991): United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/510. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/54/L.12, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning sub-item (a) agenda item 151, entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations", in particular the question of the reform procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment, the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/509, in paragraph 7 of which the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/54/L.6, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Finally, regarding agenda item 169, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission in East Timor", the report of the Committee is in document A/54/505. In paragraph 7 the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/54/L.4, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

That is all I wanted to report to the General Assembly today.

**The President:** If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General

Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before it today.

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the Assembly agreed that

"When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless notified otherwise.

### **Agenda item 117**

#### **Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors**

##### **Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/506)**

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

*The resolution was adopted [resolution 54/13].*

**The President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 117.

## Agenda item 118

### Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

#### Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/511)

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

The draft resolution entitled "Procurement reform" was adopted by the Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/14).*

**The President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 118.

## Agenda item 119

### Programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999

#### Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/508)

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 12 of its report.

The draft resolution entitled "Development Account" was adopted by the Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/15).*

**The President:** I now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote after the vote.

**Mr. Barnnell** (Guyana): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in explanation of vote on agenda item 119, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999".

The Group of 77 and China welcomes the conclusion of the deliberations on the issue of modalities and sustainability of the Development Account.

The Group of 77 and China welcomes the conclusion of negotiations on the issue after difficult and lengthy deliberations on the matter. In this process, the Group demonstrated a spirit of cooperation and understanding in

seeking consensus on this matter and looks forward to the continuation of this spirit in further negotiations in the Fifth Committee.

The Group's understanding of paragraph 2 of the resolution is that the cumulative savings achieved as a result of efficiency measures will be transferred to the Development Account section in the budget, with prior approval of the General Assembly, and will form the maintenance base of the budget section relating to the Development Account for subsequent bienniums.

The Group would once again like to reaffirm its position that the operation of the Development Account should be in accordance with the relevant regulations and rules of the Organization, since it is part of the regular budget. Further, it must neither be a budget- nor a staff-reduction exercise.

We would also like to stress that the correlation being sought between the Development Account and efficiency measures is not appropriate. Improved efficiency and effectiveness are essential to strengthen the Organization's capacity to fulfil its role and must not be trivialized. The Group is of the view that arbitrary proposals for savings during the formulation and implementation phases of the budget should be avoided, since they can have an adverse impact on programme delivery. Therefore, we would like to reaffirm that the exercise of improving efficiency in the Organization must ensure the full implementation of all mandated programmes and activities.

Finally, we would like to request the Secretary-General to submit proposals for the use of the funds during this session, as recommended by the Committee for Programme and Coordination. The projects approved should be fully implemented in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

**Mr. Sareva** (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association

(EFTA) country member of the European Economic Area (EEA) Norway align themselves with this statement.

I would first like to thank the representative of Uganda, Mr. Nester Odaga-Jalomayo, for his outstanding work as coordinator for this draft resolution. Our deep appreciation also goes to his predecessor, Mr. Humayun Kabir of Bangladesh.

The European Union is pleased that we have adopted by consensus the draft resolution in document A/54/508, dealing with the modalities for operating the Development Account. The preservation of consensus in the Fifth Committee on budgetary matters is of great importance to the European Union. It works to the advantage of all Member States and serves the common good of the United Nations. It means an approach of win-win and not zero-sum.

The European Union has from the outset supported the concept of the Development Account, as launched by the Secretary-General as part of his Track II reform package. We have also consistently supported the Secretary-General's proposals on the modalities and sustainability of the Account. The resolution adequately reflects these proposals. The Account is of a multi-year character, which provides for increased flexibility in the use of funds. It does not amount to a budget- or staff-reduction exercise. It excludes an *ex ante* approval of the efficiency measures.

The adoption of this resolution will now enable the Secretary-General to come up with detailed proposals for the projects to be funded from the Account during the next biennium. We look forward to the submission of these proposals and expect that they will have succinct objectives, measurable outcomes and clear performance indicators and that they will complement existing programmes.

**The President:** I now call on the representative of Cuba.

**Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): As it has indicated on numerous occasions, my delegation fully supports the establishment of the Development Account. We are therefore very pleased that this afternoon the General Assembly has been able to adopt a definitive decision on the modalities of the functioning of the Account.

We fully associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Guyana on behalf of the Group of

77 and China, in which he expressed the positions held by my delegation.

However, we would like to reiterate in particular our delegation's understanding that all savings accumulated as a result of any efficiency measures shall be transferred to the appropriate Development Account section with the prior approval of the General Assembly, and that those savings shall form the maintenance base for that section in future proposed programme budgets.

We also consider that the resources allocated to this section should not be utilized to fund activities that are normally funded through extrabudgetary sources. We await with interest the proposals to be made soon by the Secretary-General regarding the future use of already existing funds for this section.

Finally, allow us to reaffirm that the implementation of the Development Account should not lead to any overall reduction in the budget of the Organization.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 119.

### **Agenda item 123**

#### **Joint Inspection Unit**

##### **Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/507)**

**The President:** The General Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/16).*

**The President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 123.

**Agenda item 129**

**Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission and the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/504)**

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/17).*

**The President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 129.

**Agenda item 130**

**Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991)**

**(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/510)**

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/18).*

**The President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 130.

**Agenda item 151**

**Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations**

**(a) Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/509)**

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/19).*

**The President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 151.

**Agenda item 169**

**Financing of the United Nations Mission in East Timor**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/505)**

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/20).*

**The President:** I now call on the representative of Indonesia, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

**Mr. Oratmangun** (Indonesia): My delegation fully welcomes the adoption of the resolution on the financing of the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET). Its adoption is critical for enabling the Mission to conduct its mandated activities in a timely fashion and fully reflects the international character of the Organization, in

accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, as well as the rules and regulations that govern such missions.

We firmly believe that it is the obligation of all Member States to safeguard the good name, credibility and capability of the United Nations so as to maintain the international community's trust in the Organization. It is critically important that the United Nations, in keeping with its central characteristic of being representative of all Member States, is enabled to effectively conduct its activities at the field level.

It is our view that the success or failure of the Mission will very much depend on the staff of the Mission itself, and they will represent the Organization itself. Obviously, if the staff of the Mission conduct their mandated activities in a neutral and impartial manner, this would be a key element in maintaining the character of the Organization. This is even more urgent since most of the activities of the United Nations in the region are in the conflict area.

In this regard, I would like to stress that in order for the Mission to be successful, it is important that it be well prepared and well organized, both at Headquarters and in the field.

As host country for the United Nations Mission in East Timor, we are fully committed to the success of the Mission and have not failed to show our cooperation in this regard. Thus my delegation welcomes the assurances of the Secretariat that the host country's contribution in providing the necessary facilities and premises to the Mission, thereby enabling it to avail itself of significant savings, will be reflected in the next performance report.

Finally, my delegation would like to end by expressing our sincere appreciation to Mr. Ahmed Darwish of Egypt, in his capacity as coordinator, for his remarkable efforts in forging a consensus resolution on this issue.

**The President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 169.

*The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.*