

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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**Chairman: Mr. Djalal ABDOH (Iran).**

## AGENDA ITEM 58

**The Cyprus question (A/3616 and Add.1, A/C.1/803,  
A/C.1/L.197, A/C.1/L.199-201) (concluded)**

- Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) said that his delegation saw no objection to the first three of the amendments submitted by Canada, Chile, Denmark and Norway (A/C.1/L.199). However, in accordance with its view that the resolution should clearly state that the principle of self-determination was applicable to the people of Cyprus, his delegation would support the Greek sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200) to the operative paragraph. Self-determination was one of the basic principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter and if the sponsors of the four-Power amendments were willing to include a general reference to those principles there was no reason why one of the principles should not be mentioned specifically.
- His delegation's position on the Cyprus question was based on the same desire to uphold the right of self-determination as had guided it in the debates on the Hungarian and Algerian questions. In the case of Cyprus, too, it felt that the General Assembly should not close its debate with a resolution which contained no decision whatsoever.
- Mr. SLIM (Tunisia) said that any draft resolution adopted by the Committee should reflect the consensus of opinion in the Committee. None of the parties concerned in the question had clearly opposed the recognition of the right of the people of Cyprus to self-determination; his delegation would therefore vote for the Greek sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200), which included a clear affirmation of that right, although it would have preferred the original text of the Greek draft resolution (A/C.1/L.197), the moderate and flexible wording of which left room for negotiations between the parties to establish the safeguards necessary to dispel all legitimate apprehensions.
- A number of delegations had expressed such apprehensions regarding the Turkish minority in Cyprus. His delegation understood the anxiety of those delegations but considered that it was unfounded, especially in view of the clear and unambiguous statement by the Greek representative (932nd meeting) concerning the comprehensive safeguards which would be granted the Turkish minority.
- His delegation considered that recognition by the United Nations of the right to self-determination of a people which was struggling for its liberty was in no way an encouragement to rebellion. On the contrary, it was only when such recognition of their rights was denied to a people that the danger of bitterness and disorder was created.
- Mr. QUIROGA GALDO (Bolivia) considered that the four-Power amendments (A/C.1/L.199) were intended to leave the situation exactly as it had been at the end of the eleventh session of the General Assembly. His delegation regretted the Committee's tendency to resort to subterfuges and delaying tactics whenever a clear statement of the need to apply the principle of self-determination was called for. That tendency sowed fear and distrust in the small and medium countries, which regarded the principles of self-determination and of non-interference in the domestic affairs of States as very important. His delegation would vote for the Greek sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200) because it contained a clear affirmation of the first principle, the application of which in Cyprus had been recognized as imperative by an overwhelming majority of the Committee.
- Mr. DE LEQUERICA (Spain), formally introducing his delegation's sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.201), said that by adopting it the Committee would be expressing its almost unanimous view while making the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.197) more satisfactory to the Greek delegation.
- His delegation would vote in favour of the four-Power amendments (A/C.1/L.199), including the fourth amendment, the text of which it considered as effective as and more constructive than that of the original draft resolution. The principle of self-determination was accepted by all; nevertheless, it could not be applied to all the problems of countries in which legal relationships existed which were independent of the will of any outside organization, even the United Nations. That was the case with Cyprus, which was linked to the United Kingdom by treaty. The Committee should bear in mind the point made by the Argentine representative in the debate on the question of Algeria (921st meeting) that the words "self-determination of peoples" used in Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Charter referred only to the freedom of sovereign peoples to choose a government, and that neither that Article nor any other provision of the Charter justified rebellion on the part of non-self-governing peoples.
- Cyprus had already achieved many of its legitimate aspirations without application of the principle of self-determination, for many other principles and historical realities played a part in the development of the situation there. The General Assembly should take account of those other factors, as it had done in the case of Algeria, and adopt a resolution which would be acceptable to all. He appealed to the Greek representative

not to close the door to such a solution by insisting on any particular phraseology.

10. Mr. THORS (Iceland) said that the debate in the Committee had made it clear that progress was being made towards a solution of the Cyprus question. The statements of the United Kingdom and Greek representatives, in particular, showed that those countries were closer to mutual understanding and an eventual agreement than they had been at the end of the eleventh session.

11. His delegation was primarily concerned with the future and welfare of the people of Cyprus as a whole. Cyprus must be regarded as one country and one political and geographical unit, all the people of which should be allowed to exercise their right of self-determination. However, every guarantee that its rights would be safeguarded should be given to the Turkish minority in Cyprus, and the two groups must find a way to live together in peace and friendship.

12. His delegation considered that the four-Power amendments (A/C.1/L.199) represented an improvement over the original draft resolution (A/C.1/L.197) in some respects; however, since Greece had now submitted a sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200) emphasizing the principle of self-determination, his delegation felt bound by conviction and the history of its people to support that sub-amendment. If it should be rejected, his delegation would vote in favour of the four-Power amendments.

13. Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) said that although his delegation would vote against the Greek sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200), that negative vote should in no way be construed as a denial of the right of the people of Cyprus to self-determination. The phrase "in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations" implicitly recognized that right, while an explicit affirmation of the principle at the current juncture would only render negotiations more difficult. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of the four-Power amendments (A/C.1/L.199).

14. Mr. NESBITT (Canada) accepted the Spanish amendment (A/C.1/L.201) to the amendments submitted jointly by his delegation and those of Chile, Denmark and Norway (A/C.1/L.199).

15. Mr. SARPER (Turkey) said the Greek sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200), besides being admittedly a tactical move, would delete from the amendments to which it referred the words "between those concerned" and thus, in his delegation's view, would close the door to negotiations. Moreover, the phrase "the right of self-determination" used in the Greek sub-amendment was always preceded in the Charter by the words "equal rights and". Similarly, the Greek sub-amendment used the words "in the case of the people of Cyprus" regardless of the fact that the word "people" in the singular appeared nowhere in the Charter. That wording was also in contradiction with the provisions of Article 73 b, to which his delegation had already referred. The sub-amendment thus evaded or distorted the letter and the real spirit of the Charter. It was unacceptable to his delegation in its existing form or in any other form.

16. Mr. AVEROFF-TOSSIZZA (Greece) said that he had not intended to imply, as the Norwegian representative had suggested (933rd meeting), that the four-

Power amendments (A/C.1/L.199) had been submitted as a stratagem: their intention was undoubtedly to help in solving the problem, although the effect was to amend the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.197) to such an extent that it became a new draft resolution.

17. He denied the lack of realism imputed to him by the Turkish representative. The people of Cyprus, for whom he spoke, wanted to know whether in principle they would be able to determine their future, and until that issue was disposed of, no other could be solved. He agreed that the interests of Turkey must be safeguarded and that that could be done through negotiations, but those negotiations could take place only when the fundamental issue of self-determination had been disposed of. His draft resolution specified no procedures or time limit for the application of the principle of self-determination; he merely asked that that universal principle, recognized by the majority of the people of the United Kingdom, should be applied to Cyprus. He did not think that United Nations resolutions could be interpreted at any particular country's discretion, or that they could be devoid of meaning.

18. His amendment (A/C.1/L.200) to the four-Power amendment was a genuine one since he had accepted the three amendments to the preamble and part of the amendment to the operative paragraph, from which he had deleted some words and added others, as he was entitled to do under rule 131 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

19. His delegation would vote for its own sub-amendment and if that was adopted he would vote in favour of the draft resolution as a whole, thus amended. If his sub-amendment was rejected he would vote against the four-Power amendment; and if that amendment was adopted he would be obliged to vote against his own draft resolution.

20. He urged the Committee to demonstrate that United Nations principles could be universally applied without interfering with the relations between States, and to give the people of Cyprus an assurance that some day they would be able to exercise the right of self-determination. He did not accept the view expressed by the Turkish representative that the principle of self-determination was contrary to the Charter.

21. Mr. SARPER (Turkey) said he had not implied that he was against the principle of self-determination. He had merely pointed out that the phrase was always preceded in the Charter by the words "equal rights and". He again stressed the fact that the word "people" was never used in the Charter in the singular form and he recalled the deliberate change made in the drafting of Article 73 b, where the word "people" had been replaced by the word "peoples", while the singular form had been retained in the words "each territory".

22. The CHAIRMAN, summarizing the procedural situation, pointed out that there was no need for a vote on the Spanish sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.201) since the sponsors of the four-Power amendments (A/C.1/L.199) had accepted it. On the other hand, while he considered that the Greek sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200) should be put to the vote first, he had had some doubts regarding the propriety of that procedure. He had been advised by jurists that it was in effect an attempt to revive the original Greek text (A/C.1/L.197) and that the Committee actually had before it two amendments (A/C.1/L.200 and A/C.1/L.199) to that original text,

one further removed than the other. If the Committee shared that view and objected to voting first on the Greek sub-amendment, it would have to decide the question of priority.

23. However, if there was no objection, he would follow established practice and put the Greek sub-amendment to the vote first. The Committee would then vote on the four-Power amendment, and finally on the Greek draft resolution.

24. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria), referring the Committee to rules 131 and 132 of the rules of procedure, asserted that the four-Power amendments (A/C.1/L.199) could not be considered to be amendments, as defined in the rules, because they had the effect of changing the nature of the original Greek proposal, as the mover of that proposal had stated. Moreover, the intentions of the respective sponsors were so much at variance that he could only conclude that the four Powers wished to foist their proposal on the Committee as an amendment in order to avoid application of rule 132 and to obtain priority for it in the vote.

25. In the circumstances, he moved that the Committee should vote first on the original Greek proposal (A/C.1/L.197) and next on the four-Power text (A/C.1/L.199), which actually constituted a new proposal.

26. Mr. HOOD (Australia) could not agree with the Syrian representative that the four-Power text did not constitute an amendment to the original Greek proposal. Indeed, it qualified as such under rule 131 in that it was a revision of a part of that proposal. On the other hand, the Greek sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200) was merely a rewriting of the original Greek proposal; the logical course for the Greek delegation would be to submit a new draft resolution incorporating the idea of the sub-amendment; the sub-amendment should not be put to the vote first.

27. Mr. ENGEN (Norway), while appreciating the misgivings of the Syrian representative, said that there had been many cases in United Nations practice where amendments of the nature of the four-Power text (A/C.1/L.199) had been introduced and never challenged as amendments. On the other hand, the Greek sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200), in substance and largely in form, merely reintroduced the original Greek proposal (A/C.1/L.197). It would not be in conformity with established procedure to accept it as an amendment. He would not, however, press the point: the Committee should decide the question of priority in the voting. He would oppose the Syrian proposal.

28. Mr. URQUIA (El Salvador) urged the Committee not to dwell on the question whether or not the four-Power text should be considered as an amendment. It should bear in mind that Greece, the author of the original proposal (A/C.1/L.197), had accepted three out of the four texts proposed by the four Powers as amendments before submitting its sub-amendment to the fourth. It should request the Syrian representative not to press his proposal.

29. Mr. RIZK (Lebanon) also expressed the hope that the Syrian representative would not press his proposal and would accept the procedure outlined by the Chairman.

30. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria) agreed to withdraw his proposal on the understanding that a vote would first be taken on the Greek sub-amendment, then on the four-Power text, and finally, on the original Greek draft resolution.

31. The CHAIRMAN, proceeding in that order, called for a vote on the Greek sub-amendment (A/C.1/L.200).

A vote was taken by roll-call.

China, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Lebanon, Morocco, Panama, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Against: Colombia, Denmark, France, Iran, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile.

Abstaining: China, Dominican Republic, Finland, Honduras, India, Israel, Japan, Laos, Liberia, Malaya (Federation of), Mexico, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Thailand, United States of America, Venezuela, Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon.

The sub-amendment was adopted by 33 votes to 18, with 27 abstentions.

32. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that by adopting the sub-amendment the Committee had disposed of the vote on the operative paragraph of the original Greek draft resolution (A/C.1/L.197). It now had to vote on the first paragraph of the preamble to that draft resolution, which had not been amended, and on the three paragraphs of the preamble submitted as amendments by the four Powers and accepted by Greece (A/C.1/L.199).

The first paragraph of the preamble was adopted by 72 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

The remainder of the preamble, as amended, was adopted by 75 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

33. The CHAIRMAN called for a vote on the Greek draft resolution as a whole (A/C.1/L.197), as amended.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Burma, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Lebanon, Morocco, Panama, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bolivia, Bulgaria.

Against: Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, France, Iran, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Australia, Belgium.

Abstaining: Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, China, Finland, Honduras, India, Israel, Japan, Laos, Liberia, Malaya (Federation of), Mexico, Nepal, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Spain, Thailand, United States of

America, Venezuela, Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Brazil.

The draft resolution as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 33 votes to 20, with 25 abstentions.

34. Mr. DE LA COLINA (Mexico) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on the operative part of the draft resolution because it had felt that the text could be slightly amended so as to make it acceptable to the great majority of the members of the Committee. His delegation's unshakable adherence to the principle of self-determination of peoples was unaffected.

35. He hoped that before the matter was brought to the General Assembly it would be possible to agree on a text acceptable to the great majority; nevertheless, if a single compromise text could not be found, his delegation reserved its right to change its vote at the plenary meeting.

36. Mr. Krishna MENON (India) said that his delegation had not participated in the discussion and had abstained in the vote because it had become clear that any decision taken by the Committee which did not receive an overwhelming majority was unlikely to fulfil the purposes of the Charter.

37. Greece and the United Kingdom had not been intolerant in their attitude; they had rather shown a desire for a solution. Nevertheless, it had not proved possible to bridge the gap between them.

38. In his delegation's opinion the question was a colonial one. The Cypriot people were entitled to their independence and to the status of a sovereign State eligible for United Nations membership. But all colonial questions had complications; legal sovereignty over Cyprus rested with the United Kingdom and political sovereignty with the Cypriot people, who would be nationals of a Cypriot State when they achieved their independence. Meanwhile, the fact that Cyprus was a crown colony did not mean that it should not become independent. A subject people could not choose; its independence had to be established first. He deplored the controversy as to whether the British, the Greeks or the Turks should have possession of the land and people of Cyprus, and hoped that the United Kingdom would speedily enable that people to attain their independence.

39. It was necessary, however, to deal with the claims of the three Powers. The Turkish claim rested in part on the Treaty of Lausanne,<sup>1/</sup> but that treaty provided, *inter alia*, that Turkish nationals who ordinarily resided in Cyprus on 5 November 1914 would acquire British nationality. Those who did not must return to Turkey. In consequence of that and other provisions of the instruments defining the status of Cyprus, his delegation took the view that the main parties in the matter were the people of Cyprus and the United Kingdom Government.

40. He recalled that Indian independence had been achieved by means which repudiated violence on either side; his Government therefore did not support any methods which went beyond what was required for the ordinary maintenance of law and order or which involved terrorism.

41. His delegation's silence during the discussion had

<sup>1/</sup> Treaty of Peace signed at Lausanne on 24 July 1923. League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XXVIII, 1924, p. 11.

not been due to any support of colonial rule. The question was undeniably one of liberation of a subject people and, as such, it could be successfully and speedily solved only by negotiations. If the United Nations wished to bring the parties to negotiate, it must help them both to do so. He shared the view of the Mexican representative that it might be possible to devise some method whereby the United Nations could speed the process of negotiation.

42. Mr. LODGE (United States of America) said that his delegation had abstained because the question involved three of its closest allies—Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom—and the people of Cyprus. His delegation maintained its view that the problem was not one which could be solved by United Nations deliberations in the absence of agreement among the parties.

43. Mr. DE LEQUERICA (Spain) said that his delegation had voted against the Greek sub-amendment because it had been in favour of the four-Power amendment, its own amendment to which had been accepted by the sponsors. It had abstained in the final vote in the hope that to do so might increase the chances of finding a solution and because it had doubted the wisdom of diminishing the chances of success by deleting part of the text proposed in the four-Power amendment. As the vote had shown, the result of that deletion had been to divide the Committee. His delegation's abstention would, he hoped, have the effect of contributing to the creation of an atmosphere of understanding which might enable the Assembly to take a more unified view.

44. Mr. GUNWARDENE (Ceylon) said that his delegation's vote had been an expression of confidence that the United Kingdom Government would rise to its responsibility in the same spirit and with the same understanding as it had done in the case of other countries having colonial status. He upheld the principle of self-determination and was confident that in due course that principle could be applied to Cyprus too.

45. He affirmed his delegation's view that, as Cyprus was a crown colony, the only two parties to the dispute were the United Kingdom and the people of Cyprus as a whole. His Government strenuously opposed the partition of Cyprus and hoped that the appointment of Sir Hugh Foot as Governor would mark a new and auspicious chapter in the history of Cyprus.

46. He urged the United Kingdom Government to consider the desirability of sending a royal commission that would carry out on-the-spot investigations with a view to hearing evidence from all Cypriots, and to recommend a constitution ensuring full self-government for Cyprus with adequate constitutional guarantees and safeguards for the protection of the Turkish minority.

47. He was certain that the United Kingdom would take a definite step forward in the very near future to ensure the independence of Cyprus.

48. Mr. JAWAD (Iraq) said that his delegation had not participated in the general discussion of the Cyprus question, the purpose of which had been to re-assess the progress made. It had been anxious to hear the views of the parties concerned in order to reach a decision regarding future action to expedite the settlement of the dispute.

49. In the light of the discussion, his delegation had examined the Greek draft resolution and had concluded that that draft as a whole did not completely reflect the real and objective facts of the situation. It had been satisfied that the texts proposed in the four-Power amendments improved the preamble but the text proposed for the operative part was further removed from the principle which it considered to be an integral part of the case. Accordingly it had supported the Greek sub-amendment.

50. His Government had the highest respect for the principle of self-determination, one of the pillars of the Charter and of the peace of the world. It recognized the legitimate right of people to the exercise of the right of self-determination and believed that the Cypriots as a whole were entitled to a politically independent status in accordance with the principles of the Charter. It also believed that the United Nations should take action to facilitate the solution of the existing conflict and create conditions conducive to a final settlement which should guarantee the freedom of the people of Cyprus and provide for a State constituted on democratic bases. It was, however, essential for the parties concerned to provide all the constitutional and international guarantees to safeguard the rights and liberties of the Turkish minority.

51. His delegation's vote had been cast in the spirit of the Charter and, above all, in support of the peoples struggling for independence and liberty.

52. Mr. NOBLE (United Kingdom) said, in explanation of his vote, that the United Kingdom Government bore the responsibility for the maintenance of law and order in Cyprus and was also vitally interested in the preservation of good relations between Greece and Turkey. It had voted against the Greek sub-amendment because in its view it would not only create a serious situation in Cyprus and elsewhere but also increase the difficulty of finding a solution to the problem that would be acceptable to all concerned.

53. Inasmuch as his delegation had been obliged to vote against the operative paragraph of the draft resolution as amended, it had been unable to support the paragraphs of the preamble. Although the United Kingdom Government supported the principle of self-determination, it thought that, in applying that principle, the special circumstances of each individual case must be taken fully into account. The principle should not create greater problems than it solved. In the case of Cyprus there were a large number of special circumstances and considerations of a particularly grave nature. He did not believe that the draft resolution which had just been adopted by a very small majority and which would be recommended to the General Assembly for adoption disposed of those difficulties.

54. Mr. AVEROFF-TOSSIZZA (Greece) expressed appreciation of the impartial and objective manner in which the Chairman had conducted the very difficult debate, even though the delegation of his country had voted against the Greek draft resolution.

55. The CHAIRMAN said that the examination of the Cyprus question was concluded and that the Rapporteur would submit a report to the General Assembly.

#### Organization of work

56. The CHAIRMAN noted that the Committee had only one further item to consider: "Declaration concerning the peaceful coexistence of States".

57. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that in view of the importance of the remaining item, adequate time should be allowed for a full expression of views. The pressure of time must not be allowed to curtail the debate.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.