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INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL CONFERENCE ON THE CONSERVATION OF THE
LIVING RESOURCES OF THE SEA

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRD MEETING

held on Tuesday, 19 April 1955, at 4 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN: Mr. SUNNANAA (Norway)

55-21559

(7 p.)

1. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE (A/CONF.10/4, A/CONF.10/4/Corr.1) (concluded)

Mr. ARIAS-SCHREIBER (Peru) referred to the statement on the scope of the Conference's work made by the Chairman at the previous meeting and emphasized that the Conference was not competent to take any decision on the draft articles covering certain basic aspects of the international regulation of fisheries, submitted by the International Law Commission to the General Assembly. That was quite clear from General Assembly Resolution 900 (IX), which stated that the Conference's scientific and technical recommendations should not prejudice the related problems awaiting consideration by the General Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN said that he would come back to the statement made by the Peruvian representative at a later stage and asked if there were any comments on the provisional Rules of Procedure (A/CONF.10/4) and the amendments proposed by the Secretariat (A/CONF.10/4/Corr.1).

Chapter I - Representation and Credentials

Mr. FERNANDEZ (Paraguay) proposed an addition to rule 2 to permit accreditation of representatives by a letter from the head of their diplomatic mission in the country where the Conference was taking place.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY explained that no amendment was in fact needed since the rules as they stood permitted accreditation by letter from the head of a diplomatic mission in Rome, provided that he had the authority of his Government. The accreditation would, however, not be in order without authorization of the Government concerned.

Chapter I (Rules 1-4) was adopted

Chapter II - Officers

In reply to a question from Mr. PEDROSA (Spain), the CHAIRMAN explained that the Deputy Chairman's duty would be to take the Chair whenever he himself was unable to be present. The number of Vice-Chairmen would be decided when the Conference came to elect them, though he suggested that there might be seven. A Vice-Chairman would only take the Chair if the Deputy Chairman was also absent. The Conference might decide to elect other officers, but he personally had no proposals for additional officers.

Mr. KASK (Canada), supported by Mr. LIENESCH (Netherlands), moved the adoption of Chapter II as amended.

Chapter II (Rules 5-9), as amended, was adopted

Chapter III - Secretariat

Chapter III (Rule 10) was adopted

Chapter IV - Conduct of Business

Chapter IV (Rules 11-27) was adopted

Chapter V - Voting

Mr. BABAIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), supported by Mr. BETETA (Mexico) and Mrs. RATUSZNIAK (Poland), proposed an addition to rule 30 stipulating that a formal vote would be taken on any given question at the request of any delegation.

The CHAIRMAN explained that, if any delegation requested a formal vote, the request would be granted in accordance with the usual practice. It did not therefore seem necessary to amend rule 30.

Chapter V (Rules 28-35) was adopted

Chapter VI - Languages

Mr. BABAIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to Rule 36, proposed that the words: "and Russian" be added after the word "Spanish". Such an amendment should raise no objection as Russian was an official language of the United Nations and was used as a working language at many conferences of the specialized agencies.

Mr. BILINSKY (Poland) supported the proposal.

The CHAIRMAN, while agreeing with the proposal in principle, appealed to the representatives of the USSR and Poland to withdraw it, since the Conference was unfortunately not in a position to give effect to it.

Mr. BABAIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that since there could be no objection in principle to his proposal, and it was purely a question of overcoming a practical difficulty he hoped that it would be possible to reach a working agreement between the Executive Secretary of the Conference and his delegation.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY said that the Conference could adopt a formal resolution asking that Russian should be added to the list of working languages, but it would not be possible to put such a resolution into effect since there was no provision in the budget for the necessary services.

Mr. LIU (China) pointed out that Chinese was also one of the five official languages of the United Nations and proposed that it also should be added as a working language of the Conference.

Mr. HAN (Republic of Korea) regretted that the USSR representative had not withdrawn his proposal despite the Chairman's appeal. In the circumstances, he felt it was only fair to support the proposal that Chinese should also be added as a working language.

Mr. KASK (Canada) proposed as a solution of the difficulty that the following words should be added at the end of Rule 36: "Services will also be supplied in the Russian language so far as administrative circumstances will allow."

The Canadian amendment to Rule 36 was adopted.

Chapter VI (Rules 36-38), as amended, was adopted.

Chapter VII - Records

Mr. PEDROSA (Spain) suggested that the suppression of Rule 40 would deprive delegates of information on the progress of work in committees and working parties, which they might need later in the plenary meetings. In view of the fact that the arguments against Rule 40 were purely budgetary, he proposed that the Rules of Procedure should contain a clause authorizing all representatives to attend meetings of the committees and working parties.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY explained that as he did not know how many committees or sub-committees would be set up, he could not very easily suggest a formal rule about their records. He suggested that the Conference should rely on the Chairman and the Secretariat to provide the best possible record services within the limits of the budget, without adopting a formal rule which it might not be possible to apply.

Mr. PEDROSA (Spain) considered that it would be enough to recognize the right of all representatives to attend the committees and working parties, without explicitly mentioning it in the Rules of Procedure.

Mr. CASTAÑEDA (Mexico) also doubted the wisdom of suppressing Rule 40. Some of the most important debates of the Conference might take place in committees and working parties. The absence of summary records would oblige States wishing to record their views to bring them up again in plenary meetings, with consequent added expense and waste of time. He suggested that the question of records should be left to the committee or working party to decide, according to the importance of the subjects discussed, and that in any case full reports should be drawn up so as to include any statements delegations might wish to place on record.

The CHAIRMAN assured representatives that he and the Executive Secretary would try to satisfy all delegations as far as possible.

It was agreed that Rule 40 should be deleted, the remaining Rules to be renumbered accordingly.

Chapter VII (Rule 39), as amended, was adopted.

Chapter VIII - Publicity of Meetings (Rule 40) was adopted.

Chapter IX - Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties (Rules 41-45)

Mr. GRUBELIC (Yugoslavia) proposed that Rules 42-45 would be more in keeping with the spirit of Rule 41 if working parties were mentioned where appropriate. Rule 42 would thus read "Each committee, sub-committee and working party shall elect its own officers". The same addition would be made in Rules 43, 44 and 45.

The Yugoslav amendment was adopted.

Chapter IX (Rules 41-45), as amended, was adopted.

The Rules of Procedure, as amended, were adopted.

2. APPOINTMENT OF CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

The CHAIRMAN proposed that the following nine countries should each appoint a member of the Credentials Committee: Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland and the Union of South Africa. He also suggested that the Committee should elect its own Chairman, and that the Legal Adviser should act as its Secretary and call its first meeting.

It was so decided.

3. ADOPTION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA (A/CONF.10/1/Rev.2, A/CONF.10/2/Rev.1)

Mr. LIENESCH (Netherlands) referred to item 9 of the provisional agenda and to the annotation thereon in document A/CONF.10/2/Rev.1, and asked whether the Conference would be competent to discuss dangers to the living resources of the sea which arose from activities other than fishing, such as the pollution of water.

The CHAIRMAN replied that, under its terms of reference, the Conference could only discuss the influence of fishing activities on the stock of fish and other living resources of the sea. It was to be hoped that speakers would endeavour to keep within those terms of reference, although such matters as that referred to by the Netherlands representative might be mentioned incidentally.

The provisional agenda was adopted.

4. ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN invited nominations for the office of Deputy Chairman.

Mr. KASK (Canada) proposed the election of Mr. Garcia-Amador, representative of Cuba.

Mr. BILINSKI (Poland) nominated Mr. Babaian, representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Mr. CASTAÑEDA (Mexico), Mr. ARIAS-SCHREIBER (Peru), Mr. VILLA (Argentine) and Mr. PEDROSA (Spain) seconded the Canadian representative's proposal.

Mr. BABAIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Polish representative for nominating him, but wished to withdraw his candidature owing to pressure of work for his delegation.

Mr. OLAFSSON (Iceland) and Mr. PARRA (Chile) supported the Canadian proposal.

Mr. BILINSKI (Poland) said that, in view of the USSR representative's statement, he withdrew his proposal and supported the Canadian proposal.

Mr. Garcia-Amador (Cuba) was unanimously elected Deputy Chairman.

Mr. GARCIA-AMADOR (Cuba) thanked the Conference for the honour which it had conferred, on his country rather than on himself. He interpreted its decision as an expression of gratitude to Cuba for its constant efforts to promote the regulation of the resources of the sea, while taking the interests of other countries into account.

5. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMEN

The CHAIRMAN reminded the meeting that he had recommended the election of seven Vice-Chairmen, to be distributed according to the geographical areas represented, and suggested that representatives should consider the matter before the next meeting.

Replying to a question from Mr. Chopra (India), the CHAIRMAN said that there were six countries in the Far Eastern region which were represented at the Conference, viz. Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Korea.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.