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TWENTY-SEVENTH YEAR

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MEETING: 20 JULY 1972

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NOTE

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SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SECOND MEETING

Held in New York on Thursday, 20 July 1972, at 5 p.m.

President: Mr. Carlos ORTIZ DE ROZAS (Argentina).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Argentina, Belgium, China, France, Guinea, India, Italy, Japan, Panama, Somalia, Sudan, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Yugoslavia.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1652)

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. The situation in the Middle East:
 - (a) Letter dated 5 July 1972 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/10730);
 - (b) Letter dated 5 July 1972 from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/10731).

The meeting was called to order at 5.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East:

- (a) Letter dated 5 July 1972 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/10730);
- (b) Letter dated 5 July 1972 from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/10731)

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): In accordance with the previous decision of the Council [*1651st meeting*], I propose, with the Council's consent, to invite the representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon to take places at the Council table in order to participate, without vote, in the Council's discussion of this item.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. G. J. Tomeh (Syrian Arab Republic) and Mr. E. Ghorra (Lebanon) took places at the Council table.

2. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): Similarly, in accordance with the previous decision of the Council, and with the consent of the Council, I propose to invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Mauritania and Morocco to take places at the side of the Council chamber, on the understanding that they will be invited to take places at the Council table when they wish to make statements.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. M. H. Aryubi (Afghanistan), Mr. M. El Hassen (Mauritania) and Mr. M. M. Zentar (Morocco) took the places reserved for them.

3. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Council has before it the draft resolution contained in document S/10742, dated 20 July 1972, which has been distributed in the respective working languages.

4. The first speaker is the representative of Somalia, on whom I now call.

5. Mr. FARAH (Somalia): On behalf of the delegations of Guinea, Sudan, Yugoslavia and my own delegation I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document S/10742.

6. We are now concluding a debate on a matter of which the Security Council was first seized almost three weeks ago—to be correct on 23 June. It will be recalled that, at the time, the discussion took three days and on the conclusion of that first part of the debate, on 26 June, the Council adopted resolution 316 (1972) by a significant vote of 13 votes in favour with just 2 abstentions. It is not the intention of my delegation to go into or reopen that debate. But it is important that we should now recall resolution 316 (1972) in so far as it relates to a request submitted by the delegations of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon relating to the abduction of a number of Syrian and Lebanese military and security personnel from Lebanon by Israeli armed forces.

7. Paragraphs 3 and 4 of resolution 316 (1972) are quite explicit on this particular aspect of the problem. In paragraph 3 the Council:

"Expresses the strong desire that appropriate steps will lead, as an immediate consequence, to the release in the shortest possible time of all Syrian and Lebanese military and security personnel abducted by Israeli armed forces on 21 June 1972 on Lebanese territory;"

In Paragraph 4 the Council:

"Declares that if the above-mentioned steps do not result in the release of the abducted personnel or if Israel fails to comply with the present resolution, the Council will reconvene at the earliest to consider further action."

8. It will be recalled that on 5 July the Council was seized of two communications submitted to it by the delegations of Lebanon [S/10731] and the Syrian Arab Republic [S/10730] recalling paragraphs 3 and 4 of resolution 316 (1972) and inquiring, quite rightly, what action the Council proposes to take. As a result of suggestions by well-meaning delegations and Governments concerned in the matter, and indeed also by the Secretary-General, certain efforts were made outside of the Council chamber in an effort to obtain redress. The delegations of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon were prevailed upon not to press for a Council meeting so that the wheels of quiet diplomacy might be able to function and perhaps achieve some measure of success. We know that, unfortunately, this has not been the case.

9. Two days ago, Mr. President, you relayed to this Council a message from the Secretary-General [see 1651st meeting, para. 142] on the results of his own efforts to secure the release of these personnel, and in that message the Secretary-General pointed out that, unfortunately, his efforts had not met with success. However, he did say that he would pursue his efforts with all parties concerned in this matter by any means available to him. Furthermore, we know that you yourself, Sir, both as President of the Security Council and in your capacity as the representative of Argentina, have also attempted to exercise your good offices in the question but, like the Secretary-General, you also have not had much success. However, since diplomacy always hinges upon the need to keep on trying when failure occurs, it does appear to the sponsors of this draft resolution that further efforts should be made in order to secure the release of these personnel without delay.

10. The draft resolution which I am introducing is straightforward. Operative paragraph 1 reaffirms resolution 316 (1972). Paragraph 2 deplors the fact—and this quite rightly—that efforts have not yet been able to secure the release of the Syrian and Lebanese military and security personnel who have been abducted. Paragraph 3 "Calls upon Israel for the return of the above-mentioned personnel without delay". Paragraph 4 requests that the President of the Council and the Secretary-General "make renewed efforts to secure the implementation of the present resolution".

11. As I said earlier, it is not my intention to reopen the debate. We feel that here we should concern ourselves primarily with the release of these kidnapped or abducted persons and that we should try to ensure that the decisions of the Council are respected; that the rule of international law must prevail; that no Member State of this Organization can expect to enjoy a privileged position whereby when it suits its purpose it can turn to the Council and when that is against its interests it can turn its back on the Council. We are an assembly of equals and we are all tied and bound to

the Charter which, on joining this Organization, we pledged to observe without conditions.

12. I do not wish to delay this matter further. I would simply urge, because of the urgency and the need for quick and effective diplomatic action and the need to secure the release of these personnel, that the Council vote this afternoon on the draft resolution. Certainly no member here can claim to be unfamiliar with the situation as it is. The matter has been debated in full and the draft resolution itself is not a departure from resolution 316 (1972). It is simply a reaffirmation. It is simply a call once again upon you, Sir, as President of the Security Council and on the Secretary-General to exercise your good offices in securing the immediate release of this personnel. The draft resolution also calls upon Israel to respect the decision of the Council and to facilitate the return of this personnel without conditions.

13. I trust that it will be possible for the Council to express itself urgently on the draft resolution before it.

14. Mr. SEN (India): Since this is the first time I am speaking this month before the Council on a substantive question, I should like to congratulate you most cordially, Mr. President, on your accession to the Presidency of the Council. The dynamism and skill with which you have been discharging your many responsibilities as President have already earned our admiration. We are confident that the work of the Council will benefit from your direction, and my delegation would like to assure you of our full support in carrying it out.

15. It was only recently, on 23 June 1972, that the Council had to meet to consider once again another aggravation of the situation in West Asia. I indicated during that debate [1649th meeting], the general principles and the comprehensive approach which inform the Government of India's policy towards this problem.

16. Today, however, we are not meeting for a general discussion. Today we are concerned with a clear-cut situation expressed in the letters addressed to the President of the Security Council on 5 July by Syria and Lebanon. It relates simply to the full implementation of the last resolution adopted by the Council. After resolution 316 (1972) was adopted on 26 June 1972, I said:

"... we most earnestly hope that the resolution will be fully implemented so that the present difficulties can be overcome. Such implementation will help the renewal of the Jarring mission for the application of resolution 242 (1967), which alone can contribute effectively towards a permanent solution of the problem of West Asia." [1650th meeting, para. 108]

17. Despite the efforts of both the President of the Security Council and the Secretary-General, as well as many others in the past days, paragraph 3 of that resolution has not yet been implemented by Israel. The representatives of Syria and Lebanon requested the Council to deal with this urgent and pressing question nearly two weeks ago. The patience and forbearance which they have shown in the

intervening period deserves to be noted. But it must have its limits. The Council also has its responsibility under paragraph 4 of the resolution. There is no doubt that this responsibility must now be discharged without any further delay.

18. It is in the context of the need for present action and the past record of Israel's persistent non-compliance with resolutions of the Council that we must view the straightforward issue of the return of the Syrian and Lebanese personnel abducted by Israel. No attempts should be permitted to confuse this issue with the other issue of the return of combatants captured by the different sides in the course of war. No amount of sophisticated and unnecessarily complicated argument can change such kidnapping to something else. We are, therefore, opposed to attempts to obscure this matter by linking it with issues which are not relevant to it.

19. We hope that this question will be faced squarely within the clearly defined parameters of the relevant provisions of resolution 316 (1972): that is, the non-compliance of Israel and the need for further action as specified in those provisions. It is on this basis that my delegation will support the draft resolution [S/10742] submitted by the representative of Somalia on behalf of his delegation as well as of the delegations of Guinea, the Sudan and Yugoslavia. Indeed, there are elements in this draft resolution which we would have liked to be strengthened, but we realize that the present wording has been arrived at as a result of negotiations. We would have indeed been ready to co-sponsor the draft resolution, but it is nearly 5.30 in the morning in New Delhi now and there simply has not been time to obtain formal approval of my Government for such co-sponsoring.

20. May I conclude with a general observation. Even a cursory examination of the many statements of the representative of Israel—absent today—shows quite clearly that Israel has developed an acute persecution complex. Given the experience and achievement of the Jewish race over the years, this is understandable, but it seems to us that these are the very reasons why we can expect them, and the Israelis in particular, to demonstrate sympathy for and understanding and acceptance of the difficulties which the Arab countries face because of the Israeli action in 1967. Once Israel realizes that it has to live in peace and co-operation with the Arab world, this will make it possible for Israel, even at this late stage, to participate fully in the efforts of Mr. Jarring for the full implementation of resolution 242 (1967), including full withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Arab countries. This and this alone will reduce tension and bring about conditions in which they can all come to live in peace. Meanwhile, time is against us and we must do all we can to remove such temporary irritants as the abduction of Syrian and Lebanese officers and men—not officers only—from Lebanon on 21 June. The next step will then be the revival of the Jarring mission and, through this machinery, all the elements of resolution 242 (1967) can be negotiated and settled.

21. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I wish to thank the representative of India for the very kind words he addressed to me.

22. Mr. HUANG Hua (China) (*translation from Chinese*): At the Security Council meeting on 23 June [1648th meeting] the Chinese delegation already stated its position on the Israeli Zionists' invasion of Lebanon and abduction of Syrian and Lebanese personnel.

23. On 26 June the Council adopted resolution 316 (1972) condemning Israel for its aggression against Lebanon and demanding the release in the shortest possible time of all Syrian and Lebanese military and security personnel abducted by Israeli armed forces on Lebanese territory. This resolution obtained the support of the overwhelming majority of the States members of the Council. Immediately upon the adoption of that resolution by the Council, the Israeli representative slanderously described it as "immoral". Since then, the Israeli authorities have refused to implement it and refused to release the abducted personnel. The facts show that the Israeli Zionists had no desire at all to implement resolution 316 (1972). From the very beginning of the abduction, they have been propagating a so-called "general exchange of prisoners of war" in an attempt to use the abducted Syrian and Lebanese personnel as prisoners of war in exchange for the Israeli prisoners of war now in the hands of Syria, Egypt and other countries. This is a sheer arrogant and baseless demand with ulterior motives.

24. As is known to all, the Israeli troops' invasion of Lebanese territory and abduction of Syrian and Lebanese personnel are outright crimes of aggression and acts of piracy. The illegally abducted personnel are not prisoners of war at all. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 316 (1972), the Council has in effect confirmed that the Syrian and Lebanese personnel were abducted by Israeli invading forces on Lebanese territory, and has thus rejected the unreasonable demand of the Israeli authorities that they be exchanged as "prisoners of war".

25. In using the abducted personnel as "prisoners of war" for exchange, the Israeli authorities want the Security Council to accept their acts of piracy and to recognize them as lawful. The Chinese delegation maintains that the Council should uphold principle and categorically reject the arrogant claim of the Israeli representative. For it is quite obvious that the acceptance of Israel's claim would be tantamount to submitting to the Israeli authorities' international blackmail by means of abduction and to recognizing resolution 316 (1972) as "immoral"; it would be tantamount to recognizing that the Israeli Zionists are entitled to trample upon the principles of the United Nations Charter at will and to refuse to implement that resolution. That would be abetting and conniving at aggression, which no justice-upholding country can possibly permit.

26. The Chinese delegation holds that the Security Council must severely condemn the Israeli authorities for their refusal to implement the resolution of the Council and must firmly reject their using abduction as a means for blackmail; the Council must ask the Israeli authorities to return immediately and unconditionally the abducted Syrian and Lebanese personnel. Should the Israeli authorities continue their obdurate refusal to implement the

resolution, the Council must consider further and more effective action in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

27. Having stated its position, the Chinese delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted by Guinea and three other countries.

28. Mr. IBRAHIM (Sudan): Mr. President, it gives my delegation great pleasure to see you presiding over the deliberations of the Security Council. Your qualities as an experienced diplomat have been amply demonstrated in the wisdom and patience with which you have so far guided the deliberations of the Council. We are sure that your guidance will enhance the prestige of the Council and bring its efforts success.

29. The Security Council is once again called upon to deal with another facet of the saga of Israeli aggression and intransigence. The Council, less than four weeks ago, adopted a resolution by an overwhelming majority calling for the immediate release of the abducted Syrian and Lebanese security and military personnel. We pointed out at that time, and we reiterate, that the Israeli action of 21 June was an act carried out in contravention of all norms of international law and decent behaviour of civilized people. The Israeli act stands legally invalid and morally condemned. It is a culmination of a position publicly declared at the beginning of June, following the incident at Lod airport. It was then stated by Israeli officials that retaliation would definitely follow, but they needed time for premeditation. It was then pointed out to the President of the Security Council and to the Secretary-General that Israel was making those threats contrary to the Charter of the United Nations; but, has Israel ever respected the Charter of the Organization to which it owes its own existence? We submit—and the Council is aware—that Israel boasts of trampling on it.

30. In an unabashed manner Israel tries to invoke the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War in regard to a situation which Israel engineered and created. Is it not an irony that Israel, which has recently been condemned by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 3 (XXVIII) of 22 March 1972,¹ for committing crimes of war contrary to the Geneva Convention, is trying to invoke this Convention here? Are we to be treated to the customary Israeli manner of selecting what suits it, even if that is out of context, and discarding the rest? Where does Israel stand in regard to the Geneva Conventions when every day it demolishes the houses and deports the inhabitants of the territories it occupies?

31. What is at stake today is not the release of the abducted Syrian and Lebanese personnel. What is at stake is the prestige and authority of the United Nations represented by the Security Council.

32. Time-worn traditions teach us a significant lesson which should be heeded in our day: that what brought an end to the prosperity and civilization of the Sabeans was

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 7, chap. XIII.*

the collapse of their life-giver, the great dam of Mariaba. That disaster started when a rat was permitted to penetrate the dike and, proliferating, pursued pernicious subterranean practices leading to the weakening and final destruction of the dam. Likewise, the Security Council, which is the hope of mankind for international peace and security, for the promotion of decent and civilized behaviour in international relations and for the supremacy of the world's common will and weal as embodied in the Charter and as realized by the democratic functioning of the different bodies of the United Nations, is greatly imperilled by an unabashed and assiduous policy directed towards its gradual sabotage and final destruction by the repeatedly contemptuous disregard for its resolutions, by the callous rejection of its pleas, by the adamant defiance of its rulings and good judgements and by the tarnishing of its image. By degrees Israel, this new pestilence afflicting the accepted norms of international behaviour and the law of nations, is slowly but surely undermining the authority of this body, in resolution after resolution, not caring if it makes the Council appear before the eyes of the whole world a baffled, shabby fool.

33. Israel called it, on a past occasion, morally and legally bankrupt. On that occasion Israel, in the paper distributed by it immediately after its refusal to come before the Council, on 18 July, describing Council resolution 316 (1972), had this to say: "The resolution brought reproof and censure from public opinion media in all parts of the world." What public opinion media and what parts of the world? It is a calculated, deliberate policy of slandering the Council which has never failed to unmask Israel's Nazi-like expansionism and arrogance of power before the whole world. The same paper from Mr. Tekoah continued in the same disdainful strain:

"Now Syria and Lebanon complain that this ill-conceived document has not earned Israel's respect. . . Syria and Lebanon are undoubtedly aware that one-sided resolutions disregarding Israel's rights under the Charter of the United Nations have never proved effective, whether adopted by the Security Council or by the General Assembly. The arithmetic of vote in itself is not enough to cloak a resolution in the mantle of judiciousness. Such resolutions have always remained powerless to weaken Israel's defence of its legitimate position."

Furthermore, the same paper stated the following about the terminology this important Council had correctly chosen to use: "Reference to the Syrian and Lebanese military personnel taken prisoner on 21 June as 'abducted' is an absurdity in fact and in law."

34. One may justifiably inquire what this august body is going to do with this incorrigible defiant outlaw of our time: give him more freedom of speech to display more contempt and defiance; lavish him with the thankless tolerance of a spoiled mischievous child—the same indulgence bestowed in a similar historical context on the conceited conqueror of Ethiopia or on the conqueror of Czechoslovakia and Poland; or just allow him to go on gnawing his way like that rat which started it once upon a time in the dike of Mariaba?

35. The Council, in the humble opinion of my delegation—indeed, in the opinion of all conscientious humanity—should not tolerate the insult of being made by some international bandit backed by potent supporters into the biggest impotent body-politic of our time and of being transfigured into another League of Nations.

36. The implementation of many a resolution of the Council is long overdue, and resolution 316 (1972) is the last in a long series. It is up to this Council to restore its credibility and self-respect and act significantly and resolutely now, before it is too late.

37. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Sudan for the friendly words he so kindly addressed to me.

38. I have no more names on my list of speakers, for the time being. The representative of Somalia, on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution [S/10742]—namely the delegations of Guinea, Somalia, the Sudan and Yugoslavia—has requested that the vote on that draft be taken at this afternoon's meeting. Unless there are any objections, we shall proceed to the vote and then explanations of vote will be heard after the vote.

39. Mr. RIOS (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to make a brief statement which could, at the same time, be an explanation of vote.

40. The matters being dealt with by the Security Council are, in fact, very important. Every word uttered here, whether approved of or not, must be the result of mature reflection and of consultations with our foreign ministries. We have just received a draft resolution which was introduced by the representative of Somalia with arguments that are worthy of full respect. Nevertheless, my delegation deeply regrets that it is not able to vote on this draft, since we must consult with our Foreign Ministry. That being so, may I respectfully request that, if possible, we do not proceed to the vote this afternoon. Should there be a vote today, my delegation would have to abstain. It is a fact that the draft now before us reaffirms resolution 316 (1972) and, as everybody knows, Panama abstained when that resolution was voted on, for reasons explained by Ambassador Boyd at the time. A vote in favour or a vote against at this time would mean a change in the vote we cast on 26 June, which is something that cannot be done without authorization from our Foreign Ministry.

41. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the representative of Belgium, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

42. Mr. Van USSEL (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*): I also would take the liberty, like the representative of Panama, of requesting the Council to be kind enough to adjourn this meeting until, for example, tomorrow morning at 10.30. In point of fact, I find myself in a special situation as this is the national holiday of Belgium and, for understandable reasons, it is difficult for me to get in touch with my Foreign Minister or with the Director-General of the Political Department. I think I may reasonably appeal to the kindness and courtesy of all the

members of the Council, asking them to accede to my request for an adjournment.

43. Belgium enjoys extremely friendly and harmonious relations with all members of the Council, and, as the draft resolution contained in document S/10742 has only just been submitted to us and contains a number of principles and provisions which are of considerable importance, I hope that my request for adjournment will be accepted since it is amply justified. For example, operative paragraph 4 is a very important one, as we see it, and although we hope, of course, that the efforts of the President of the Council will lead to positive results in ten days' time—because we have great confidence in his exceptional qualities as a diplomat and as President—at the same time we cannot exclude the possibility that the President of the Council for the month of August may have to continue these efforts. And in August that task would fall to the delegation of Belgium.

44. That is why I should like to appeal to you, Sir, as President of the Council, to be kind enough to ask the Council to accede to my request for adjournment, taking into account particularly that because of our national holiday today it has been impossible for me to get in touch with my Foreign Minister. If the Council does not find it possible to accede to this request, I shall be obliged to make a motion on the basis of rule 33, paragraph 3, of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, which relates to the adjournment of a meeting, until tomorrow morning at 10.30 or 11 o'clock, for example.

45. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): For more or less the same reasons, two delegations, those of Panama and Belgium, have requested the Council to accede to their appeal that the Council adjourn—until tomorrow morning, in the case of one of them—so as to enable them to get in touch with their respective Governments and request the relevant instructions. I should like to consult the sponsors of the draft resolution as to whether they would have any objection to following the procedure requested by the delegations of Panama and Belgium.

46. Mr. FARAH (Somalia): My delegation had, in company with the other sponsors of the draft resolution, anticipated that one or two delegations here would not find it possible to vote openly in favour of the draft this afternoon, owing to lack of instructions, and that they might wish to seek an adjournment until tomorrow.

47. Now, if the sponsors were assured that a delay of 24 hours would also bring about, say, in the case of Panama, a change of attitude—since Panama abstained on resolution 316 (1972)—we would find no difficulty in adjourning discussion of the matter until tomorrow. But since we have not had any indication to that effect from Panama, it certainly would not alter the situation if we adjourned for 24 or 48 hours, since the position of Panama, if it is predicated on resolution 316 (1972), is already known.

48. With regard to the request of the representative of Belgium, my delegation appreciates that there is a national holiday in Belgium and would have hoped that he would have awaited the response of the sponsors before jumping

the gun and asking for an adjournment under the provisional rules of procedure, because I think it is only by the exchange of views that we can perhaps come to a satisfactory settlement. However, since Belgium itself has shown a great interest in this matter, and since the sponsors want to maintain the unanimity of the Council on this important and delicate question, and knowing that resolution 316 (1972) received the favourable support of Belgium, and since this draft resolution is no departure from resolution 316 (1972) whatsoever in any way, I think the sponsors would, after having had time to consult, be favourably disposed towards accommodating Belgium, provided and always in the hope that Belgium would maintain the position it expressed on resolution 316 (1972).

49. However, as I have said, this is a matter on which the four sponsors would have to consult, and I would ask that the meeting be suspended for a few minutes so as to enable consultations to take place, because what is uppermost in our minds is the release of these personnel. They have been held unjustly, illegally and against all norms of international law, for over 24 days. The Council must act.

50. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): First of all, I think it is in order for me on behalf of the Council to transmit to the representative of Belgium our congratulations on the national holiday his country is celebrating.

51. Secondly, as regards the suspension for a few minutes requested by the representative of Somalia, I think it might be very useful for the sponsors to consult in regard to the requests of the delegations of Panama and Belgium. I hope that perhaps 15 minutes will be enough, and unless I hear any objections the meeting will be suspended for fifteen minutes.

The meeting was suspended at 5.55 p.m. and resumed at 6.10 p.m.

52. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I believe that the consultations among the sponsors have now ended, and I call on the representative of Somalia to report on the results.

53. Mr. FARAH (Somalia): The sponsors have met, and in view of the two requests made to them for a postponement of the voting until tomorrow, they have agreed to such a postponement. They feel that this is a matter on which they would like to get the full support of all delegations, and if a delay is likely to bring about a greater number of votes in favour of the draft resolution, then certainly they do not wish to do anything to impede such a development. At

the same time the sponsors feel that if any delegation has a statement to make on the draft resolution or on the subject before the vote we should avail ourselves of this period now so that tomorrow morning when we meet at 10.30, which is the time suggested by the sponsors, the very first item of business would be a vote on the draft.

54. Before concluding, I should like to extend to the delegation of Belgium the rather belated expression of the congratulations of my delegation on this their National day.

55. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the sponsors of the draft resolution for their kind co-operation with regard to the request submitted by the delegations of Panama and Belgium. At the same time, taking note of the second part of the representative of Somalia's statement, I should like to associate myself with what he said, and that is that we might save time if any delegation wishing to speak now with regard to the draft resolution were to do so, so that when we meet tomorrow we can proceed directly to the vote.

56. Mr. RIOS (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In the first place, I should like to tell our good friend, Ambassador Farah of Somalia, how grateful we are for the kind manner in which the sponsors have acceded to our request. At the same time I wish to make it perfectly clear that of course I, as the representative of my Government here, will not venture to prejudge what decision will be adopted when I proceed to my consultations.

57. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): Does any representative wish to speak on the agenda item or to explain his vote before the vote? If not, we shall meet tomorrow at 10.30 a.m. to continue consideration of the item on the agenda. The first order of business, unless there is any objection, will be the vote on the draft resolution contained in document S/10742 and, as is customary always, that will be followed by the explanations of vote of delegations wishing to give such explanations after the vote.

58. Mr. VAN USSEL (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, I should simply like to express my very deep gratitude for the particularly kind words which you yourself, as well as a number of members of the Council, have uttered in connexion with the national holiday of Belgium. I was also very touched by the display of courtesy which was shown by the sponsors in granting this amount of time for our delegation to seek instructions from Brussels in connexion with this draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.