



General Assembly

Sixty-seventh session

Official Records

Distr.: General
23 September 2013

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 24th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 11 September 2013, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Messone (Gabon)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 54: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (*continued*) (A/67/19; A/C.4/67/L.20)

1. **The Chair** recalled that the Committee had held a general debate under agenda item 54 in October 2012. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had held its regular session in February and March 2013 and, at a concluding meeting held on 6 September 2013, had adopted the report on that session (A/67/19). The attention of the Committee was drawn to the draft resolution submitted under item 54 (A/C.4/67/L.20).

2. **Mr. Mohamed Selim** (Egypt), speaking as Rapporteur of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, introduced the report. The Special Committee had held its 2013 substantive session from 19 February to 15 March and had also held plenary meetings on 27 March and 6 September.

3. The Working Group of the Special Committee had met in March 2013 to discuss draft recommendations, but had not reached agreement on a substantive part of the report. Consequently, the Special Committee had decided that its Chair should convene an open-ended intersessional group of “friends of the Chair” to consider its working methods, with the aim of recommending an agreed-upon format for its report prior to the commencement of its 2014 session.

4. At the Special Committee’s 2013 session, its membership had increased to 148 member States, with the addition of Papua New Guinea as a new member, and 13 States and organizations had participated as observers.

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.20: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

5. **Mr. Mohamed Selim** (Egypt), speaking as Rapporteur of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, introduced the draft resolution, which was based on those adopted in recent years. Revisions had been made to take account of the fact that the report of the 2013 session was procedural and did not contain recommendations.

6. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.20 was adopted.*

7. **Ms. Eteläpää** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries

Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that her delegation regretted that a substantive report had not been finalized, but was satisfied to note that the item would be on the agenda at the next session.

8. In the light of new challenges that required the attention of Member States and of the sacrifices made by peacekeepers, a solid basis was needed for the work of missions in the field. The Special Committee must remain functional and produce relevant guidance based on consensus and within a time frame that would allow for implementation by the Secretariat.

9. Her delegation supported the establishment of the open-ended intersessional group of “friends of the Chair” and believed that it should start work as soon as possible.

10. **Mr. Mohamed Selim** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that given the fact that there were peacekeepers on the ground, it was unfortunate that, in a break from the practice in previous years and decades, no substantive report had been produced. The Movement was willing to work in good faith with the Working Group and believed that it was time for action, not rhetoric.

11. **Ms. Sutikno** (Indonesia) expressed her very deep concern over the lack of agreement surrounding the report and stated that her delegation, together with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and various partners, had worked diligently to produce the results obtained. Her Government was pleased that the Special Committee had been safeguarded and was committed to the open-ended intersessional group of “friends of the Chair”.

12. **Mr. Dimri** (India) said that it was significant that the Special Committee had struggled to catch up while peacekeeping in the field had moved on. Important decisions had been adopted and finalized, such as those related to the neutral intervention brigade in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Information technologies had also advanced, in both the military and civilian spheres.

13. The problems that had beset the Special Committee had not contributed to the partnership between the Secretariat and Member States. It should

be remembered that peacekeeping was a joint endeavour between States, and that the Special Committee was its legislative forum. All members must relearn the old habits of working with each other.

14. **Mr. Borje** (Philippines) said that his Government greatly regretted that a substantive report had not been produced, when developments on the ground indicated that substantive issues must be addressed. The year had taken a heavy toll among his country's peacekeepers.

15. The open-ended intersessional group of "friends of the Chair" constituted a concrete way forward and the Philippines would support it to further improve the Special Committee's working methods, which would undoubtedly improve in 2014.

16. **Mr. Rizzo** (Brazil) said that as peacekeeping faced historic changes and challenges, the guidance provided was ever more necessary. Situations were evolving quickly and much was at stake for troop-contributing countries and their host countries and peoples. Under the guidance of the Chair of the Special Committee, whose efforts had helped to close the session with brighter prospects for 2014, his delegation would engage actively and constructively in the group of "friends of the Chair".

17. His delegation hoped that the intersessional briefings would allow for interactive and constructive discussions of pressing topics in order to bridge gaps, identify common ground and highlight common concerns.

Agenda item 5: Election of the officers of the Main Committees

18. **The Chair** said that since the Committee's preceding meeting, the secretariat had received notification that two of the Committee's Vice-Chairs, Ms. Ayesha Borland (Belize) and Ms. Maratee Nalita Andamo (Thailand), had left New York and would be replaced as Vice-Chairs by Ms. Lois Young (Belize) and Mr. Vachara Pawutiyapong (Thailand), respectively. He took it that the Committee wished to elect those two individuals as Vice-Chairs for the remainder of the sixty-seventh session.

19. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.