

THE SITUATION IN HUNGARY

INITIAL PROCEEDINGS

By letter¹³³ dated 27 October 1956, addressed to the President of the Security Council, the permanent representatives of France, the United Kingdom and the United States referred to:

"... the situation created by the action of foreign military forces in Hungary in violently repressing the rights of the Hungarian people which are secured by the Treaty of Peace to which the Governments of Hungary and the Allied and Associated Powers are parties."

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 34 of the Charter, they requested the inclusion of an item in the agenda of the Security Council entitled: "The situation in Hungary", and an urgent meeting of the Council to consider it.

At the 746th meeting on 28 October 1956, during the discussion concerning the adoption of the provisional agenda, the representative of the USSR, referring to the provisions of Article 2 (7) of the Charter, objected to the question being placed on the Council's agenda. He also maintained that any situations arising inside a country and not affecting its relations with other States, as in the present instance, did not fall under Article 34.¹³⁴

The provisional agenda was adopted by 9 votes in favour and 1 against, with 1 abstention.¹³⁵

The Security Council considered the question at its 746th and 752nd-754th meetings, between 28 October and 4 November 1956. The representative of Hungary was invited to take part in the discussion.¹³⁶

By letter¹³⁷ dated 2 November 1956, the representatives of France, the United Kingdom and the United States requested the President of the Security Council to call an urgent meeting of the Council in view of the critical situation in Hungary, and noted that the Council was already seized of this matter under the item: "The situation in Hungary".

At the 752nd meeting on 2 November 1956, the representative of the United States referred to the cable-

representative of France at the meetings on 20 and 21 May 1957. By letter [S/3818/Add.1, O.R., 12th year, Suppl. for July-Sept. 1957, pp. 1-2] dated 18 July 1957, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt transmitted to the Secretary-General a declaration of the Government of Egypt accepting as compulsory *ipso facto* the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in all disputes that might arise under paragraph 9 (B) of the Declaration dated 24 April 1957 on "Suez Canal and the arrangements for its operation", with effect as from that date.

¹³³ S/3690, O.R., 11th year, Suppl. for Oct.-Dec. 1956, p. 100.

¹³⁴ 746th meeting: paras. 12-13, 24. For discussion in relation to Article 2 (4), see chapter XII, part I, Case 1; for discussion in relation to Article 2 (7), see chapter XII, part I, Case 2; in relation to Article 34, see chapter X, part II, Case 6.

¹³⁵ For consideration of the inclusion of the question in the agenda, see chapter II, part III, Case 7.

¹³⁶ 746th meeting: para. 35; see chapter III, part I, Case 13; for the subsequent discussion concerning the applicability of rules 14, 15 and 17 of the rules of procedure, see chapter I, part II, Case 4.

¹³⁷ S/3723, O.R., 11th year, Suppl. for Oct.-Dec. 1956, p. 117.

gram¹³⁸ dated 1 November 1956 from the President of the Council of Ministers of the Hungarian People's Republic addressed to the Secretary-General requesting that the question of Hungary's neutrality and the defence of that neutrality by the four Great Powers be put on the agenda of the forthcoming General Assembly, and stated that the Council's next step should be to "ascertain the facts".¹³⁹

The representative of Cuba¹⁴⁰ supported by the representative of Peru¹⁴¹ expressed the view that a draft resolution must be submitted as soon as possible and must embody at least three principles: (a) an immediate appeal to the Government of the USSR to withdraw its troops from Hungarian territory; (b) an express recognition of the right of the Hungarian people to determine by free election the system of government under which it chose to live; and (c) the establishment of a commission of the Security Council to supervise and ensure the carrying out of measures proposed by the Security Council which would ensure the political independence of Hungary.

The representative of China stated that he would like to see the following four points incorporated in the resolution which the Security Council should adopt: (a) expression of sympathy by the Council to the Hungarian people in this struggle for freedom; (b) a clear statement by the Council that it opposed the military intervention of the Soviet Union; (c) establishment of a United Nations Commission sent to observe the events on the spot and to report to the United Nations; and (d) issuance of an appeal to "all the free peoples of the world" to give to the Hungarian people such help as they could.¹⁴²

At the same meeting, the text of a note¹⁴³ dated 2 November 1956 from the permanent mission of the Hungarian People's Republic addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a letter of the same date from the President of the Council of Ministers and Acting Foreign Minister of the Hungarian People's Republic, was circulated. This asked the Security Council to instruct the Governments of Hungary and the USSR to start negotiations immediately looking to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary.

On 3 November 1956, the Chairman and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Council of Ministers of the Hungarian People's Republic, in a cablegram¹⁴⁴ addressed to the Secretary-General, stated that his Government confirmed that the communications sent to the Secretary-General expressed the official standpoint of the "whole Hungarian Government".

¹³⁸ A/3251, GA (ES II), Annexes a.i. 5, p. 1.

¹³⁹ 752nd meeting: paras. 59, 61.

¹⁴⁰ 752nd meeting: para. 68.

¹⁴¹ 752nd meeting: para. 96.

¹⁴² 752nd meeting: para. 131.

¹⁴³ S/3726, O.R., 11th year, Suppl. for Oct.-Dec. 1956, pp. 119-120.

¹⁴⁴ S/3731, O.R., 11th year, Suppl. for Oct.-Dec. 1956, pp. 126-127.

Decision of 4 November 1956 (754th meeting): Rejecting the revised draft resolution submitted by the representative of the United States

At the 753rd meeting on 3 November 1956, the representative of the United States submitted a draft resolution,¹⁴⁵ according to which the Security Council would: (1) call upon the Government of the USSR to desist forthwith from any form of intervention, particularly armed intervention, in the internal affairs of Hungary; (2) express the earnest hope that the USSR would withdraw all Soviet forces from Hungary without delay; (3) affirm the right of the Hungarian people to a government responsive to its national aspirations and dedicated to its independence and well-being; (4) request the Secretary-General in consultation with the heads of appropriate specialized agencies to explore on an urgent basis the need of the Hungarian people for food, medicine and other similar supplies, and to report to the Security Council as soon as possible; and (5) request all Members of the United Nations and invite national and international humanitarian organizations to co-operate in making available such supplies as might be required by the Hungarian people.

The representative of Peru suggested the following amendments¹⁴⁶ to the United States draft resolution: in paragraph 2 replace the words "expresses the earnest hope" by the word "understands"; in paragraph 3 add, following the words "Hungarian people", the words "to secure, through free elections."

After a discussion, the Security Council decided that the next meeting would be held on Monday, 5 November.¹⁴⁷

At the urgently summoned 754th meeting held on Sunday, 4 November 1956, at 3.00 a.m., the representative of the United States submitted a revision of his draft resolution,¹⁴⁸ operative paragraph 2 of which would have called upon the USSR to cease the introduction of additional armed forces into Hungary and to withdraw all of its forces without delay from Hungarian territory.

The representative of China submitted an amendment¹⁴⁹ to operative paragraph 1 of the revised draft resolution to call upon the Government of the USSR to desist forthwith from making war on the Government and people of Hungary, and from any form of intervention in the internal affairs of Hungary.

At the request of the representative of the United States,¹⁵⁰ the representative of China agreed not to press

for a vote on his amendment to the revised draft resolution.¹⁵¹

At the 754th meeting on 4 November 1956, the United States revised draft resolution was not adopted. There were 9 votes in favour and 1 against, the negative vote being that of a permanent member of the Council.¹⁵² The representative of Yugoslavia did not participate in the voting;¹⁵³ at the 755th meeting on 5 November 1956, he requested that his vote be recorded as an abstention.¹⁵⁴

Decision of 4 November 1956 (754th meeting): Deciding to call an emergency special session of the General Assembly

At the 754th meeting on 4 November 1956, after the voting on the United States revised draft resolution, the representative of the United States submitted a draft resolution¹⁵⁵ according to which the Security Council would decide to call an emergency special session of the General Assembly, as provided in General Assembly resolution 377 (V), in order to make appropriate recommendations concerning the situation in Hungary.

At the same meeting, the draft resolution submitted by the United States was adopted by 10 votes in favour and 1 against.¹⁵⁶

The resolution¹⁵⁷ read:

"The Security Council,

"Considering that a grave situation has been created by the use of Soviet military forces to suppress the efforts of the Hungarian people to reassert their rights,

"Taking into account that because of a lack of unanimity among its permanent members the Security Council has been unable to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security,

"Decides to call an emergency special session of the General Assembly, as provided in General Assembly resolution 377 A (V) of 3 November 1950, in order to make appropriate recommendations concerning the situation in Hungary."

The Secretary-General then stated that at the 751st meeting on 31 October 1956 he had made a declaration concerning the views he held on the duties of the Secretary-General and his understanding of the stands that he had to take. He wished to put on record that the observations he had made on that occasion obviously applied also to the present situation.¹⁵⁸

The question remains on the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized.

¹⁴⁵ S/3730, S/3730/Rev.1, O.R., 11th year, Suppl. for Oct.-Dec. 1956, pp. 125-126.

¹⁴⁶ 753rd meeting: paras. 118-119.

¹⁴⁷ 753rd meeting: para. 50. For the consideration of the proposal for the adjournment of the meeting, see chapter I, part V, Case 33.

¹⁴⁸ S/3730/Rev.1, O.R., 11th year, Suppl. for Oct.-Dec. 1956, pp. 125-126.

¹⁴⁹ 754th meeting: para. 32.

¹⁵⁰ 754th meeting: para. 57.

¹⁵¹ 754th meeting: para. 58.

¹⁵² 754th meeting: para. 68.

¹⁵³ 754th meeting: para. 63.

¹⁵⁴ 755th meeting: para. 84.

¹⁵⁵ 754th meeting: para. 70.

¹⁵⁶ 754th meeting: para. 75.

¹⁵⁷ S/3733, O.R., 11th year, Suppl. for Oct.-Dec. 1956, p. 127.

¹⁵⁸ 754th meeting: para. 76. For the declaration of the Secretary-General, see chapter I, part IV, Case 13.