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## EXAMINATION OF DELEGATES' CREDENTIALS

### Report of the General Committee

1. At its thirty-first meeting on 5 December 1979 the General Committee examined the credentials of the South African delegation.
2. After some discussion it was decided not to examine at this stage the credentials of the other delegations, but to limit the discussion to the South African credentials only.
3. The delegate of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of African and several non-aligned Member States, expressed his abhorrence of South Africa's policy of apartheid and its efforts to produce nuclear weapons to be used against fraternal African countries and stated that his Government was not in a position to recognize the legality of the credentials of the racist regime in Pretoria.
4. The representatives of the USSR, Qatar, Tunisia, Malaysia and Czechoslovakia supported the proposal of Nigeria not to recognize the credentials of the South African delegate.
5. The Chairman stated that the Government of India and its people had always condemned South Africa's policy of apartheid and that he was, therefore, in favour of rejecting the credentials of the delegate of South Africa, and of not permitting the South African delegation to participate in the Conference.
6. The delegates of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Canada and Japan, while expressing their condemnation of the policy of apartheid as existing in South Africa, considered that political questions were irrelevant in the examination of credentials of delegates under Rule 27 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference and were opposed to rejecting any credentials of any delegates on political grounds.

7. The delegate from Ecuador, speaking on behalf of the Latin American countries, affirmed their rejection of the policy of apartheid. However, a majority of them had considered the legal aspects and had therefore decided to abstain from taking part in a vote on the credentials of the delegate from South Africa.

8. An extensive discussion followed, concerning the voting rights of the Chairman.

9. Some delegations took the position that the Chairman, according to Rules 51 and 82 of the Rules of Procedure, should not vote. At their request the Secretariat defined the meaning of Rules 51 and 82, which should be interpreted together with Rule 40.

10. The delegates of Tunisia and Nigeria did not agree with the interpretation provided by the Secretariat and pointed out that, according to Rule 51, the Chairman could vote.

11. In the light of this complicated situation, the Chairman expressed his willingness to appoint a member of his delegation to vote on his behalf in accordance with Rule 51. This proposal, however, was not accepted.

12. The Chairman then designated, in accordance with Rule 40, the delegate of the United States of America to preside during the voting in the capacity as Vice-President. The delegate of the United States of America thanked the Chairman for the confidence placed in him, but declined and stated that he was not in a position to accept this honour.

13. The delegate from Canada proposed to report to the General Conference that the General Committee, sitting as Credentials Committee, was divided on the proposal by the delegate from Nigeria by six delegates in favour, six delegates against, with two abstentions, and that the question of the voting rights of the Chairman remained open. This proposal was also not adopted.

14. In the course of the further discussions it became evident that a divergence of views prevailed and the Chairman therefore decided that he would report immediately to the Plenary Session that seven members of the Committee had supported the Nigerian proposal, whereas six members of the Committee were not in favour thereof, and that two delegations had abstained.

15. The Chairman then stated that the next meeting of the General Committee sitting as Credentials Committee would be arranged at a later stage.