



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA, 1974

IMCO

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRD MEETING

held at IMCO Headquarters, 104 Piccadilly, London, W.1,  
on Friday 25 October 1974 at 11.30 a.m.

President: Rear-Admiral R.Y. EDWARDS (USA)  
Secretary-General: Mr. C.P. SRIVASTAVA (Secretary-General of IMCO)  
Executive Secretary: Captain A. SAVELIEV (IMCO)

A list of participants is given in SOLAS/CONF/INF.1/Rev.1 and Corr.1 thereto

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## CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE (SOLAS/CONF/9)

Mr. ROZENTAL (Mexico), Chairman of the Credentials Committee, said that the Committee, consisting of representatives of Japan, Mexico, Poland, Switzerland and the United Republic of Tanzania, had met on 22 and 24 October. During the discussion the representatives of Poland and the United Republic of Tanzania had made statements concerning the representation of South Viet-Nam (paragraphs 4 and 5). In paragraph 7, concerning the observer for Hong Kong, the Committee had drawn attention to the fact that neither Resolution A.304(VIII) nor the Rules of Procedure mentioned entities other than States or inter-governmental organizations or bodies, although no doubt attached to the validity of the credentials of the observer for Hong Kong, that lacuna should be filled in future so as to clarify the position of Associate Members of IMCO at plenipotentiary conferences. Finally, as indicated in paragraph 8, the Committee had found the full powers for signature of a convention submitted in respect of 25 delegations to be in good order and had decided to report to the Conference at a later date on the additional full powers submitted by 31 October 1974.

The PRESIDENT, referring to paragraph 7, said that the observer for Hong Kong had taken part in IMCO's work since 1967 and had helped to draw up at least two Conventions. His understanding was that the observer's credentials were beyond question. He hoped that the Secretary-General would take note of the comments on the subject, for future reference, and that the lacuna mentioned by the Committee would be filled.

Mr. MESA CRESPO (Cuba) wished to comply with the President's earlier recommendation to the Conference, which was a technical gathering, to limit political argument to a minimum. However, it was very difficult to dissociate political from technical considerations if certain ends were to be achieved. In order that the Organization should have the broadest possible legal basis, his delegation had suggested at the first meeting that certain governments should be invited to participate in IMCO's work, thus enabling the Organization to attain its objectives. He formally reiterated his proposal that the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Viet-Nam, which was the real representative of the people of South Viet-Nam, should be invited to participate in the Conference.

Mr. TING CHI-CHUNG (China) thanked the Credentials Committee and its Chairman for the Report. As far as South Viet-Nam was concerned, it would be recalled that the Paris Agreement had given de facto recognition to the existence of two administrations in South Viet-Nam, namely the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet-Nam and the Saigon Authorities. In those circumstances, the unilateral representation of the Saigon Authorities at the International Conference on the Safety of Life at Sea was inappropriate.

The PRESIDENT observed that the question of the representation of South Viet-Nam had been settled at the first meeting.

Mr. OZARAR (Turkey) said that the delegation claiming to represent Cyprus at the Conference had no authority to represent the Turkish Cypriot community. He wished to enter reservations concerning that representation and referred the Conference to the statement addressed by the Turkish delegation to the fifth extraordinary session of the IMCO Assembly (A/ES.V/WP.3).

Mr. DACH (Republic of Viet-Nam) said he wished to enter reservations concerning paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Committee's Report. He solemnly reaffirmed that the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam was the sole Government legitimately representing the people of South Viet-Nam. He rejected any statements which contended that.

Mr. ILIN (USSR) said that the President's concern for the Conference to avoid political discussion was understandable; but it must be stressed that from the legal point of view the Paris Conference had recognized the existence in South Viet-Nam of two zones and two separate administrations, the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the Administration of Saigon. It was therefore unacceptable to his delegation that the Saigon Administration should be deemed to represent the people of South Viet-Nam as a whole.

The PRESIDENT reminded the Conference that, at its second plenary meeting (SOLAS/CONF/SR.2), it had decided by 20 votes to 14, with 15 abstentions, to close the discussion on the question of the invitation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Viet-Nam. Consequently, at its present meeting, it was concerned with no more than the adoption of the Report of the Credentials Committee.

Mr. ARCHER (UK) proposed the adoption of the Report, although his Government entered a reservation with regard to paragraphs 4 and 5, which it could not accept because it did not recognize the existence of a third government in Viet-Nam.

Mr. PESHKOV (Byelorussian SSR) supported paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Report, since his delegation took the view that the representative of the Saigon Administration should not claim to represent the whole of South Viet-Nam.

Mr. MESA CRESPO (Cuba) stressed that the legal aspect of the matter could not be separated from its political aspect, because the credentials of the representative of South Viet-Nam emanated from a Government which did not represent the people of that country.

Mr. MAUL (German Democratic Republic) endorsed the statement of the Polish representative referred to in paragraph 4 of the Committee's Report.

Mr. DAYONNE (Congo) supported the statement of the Tanzanian representative mentioned in paragraph 5 of the Report, and asked that note be taken of his delegation's reservations concerning the representation of South Viet-Nam at the Conference.

Mr. SIMEONOV (Bulgaria) drew attention to the statement made by the head of his delegation at the first meeting (SOLAS/CONF/SR.1) and supported paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Committee's Report.

Mr. DELOUSOV (Ukrainian SSR) said that he had been unable to express his opinion at the first meeting. He wished to stress that the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Viet-Nam should be invited to take part in the Conference, as the Saigon Administration did not represent the people of that country.

Mr. JACQUIER (France) recognized the validity of the credentials of the Republic of Viet-Nam and supported the United Kingdom proposal for the adoption of the Report.

Mr. MESA CRESPO (Cuba) asked that his delegation's reservations concerning the representation of South Viet-Nam be recorded in the minutes.

Mr. OZAKAR (Turkey) entered a reservation concerning the representation of Cyprus, which did not take account of the Turkish Cypriot community.

The PRESIDENT proposed that the Conference adopt the Report of the Credentials Committee noting the reservations entered by certain delegations.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 7 - CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA, 1974 (Article XV) (SOLAS/CONF/C.1/WP.13)

The PRESIDENT said that Committee I had referred draft Article XV to the plenary meeting (SOLAS/CONF/C.1/WP.13) and had asked it to take a decision concerning the languages in which the text of the Convention would be established and the languages into which it would be officially translated. The 1960 Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea had been established in English and French only, whereas the 1973 Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships had been established in four languages, all equally authentic. In the case of the 1974 Convention, several delegations had proposed that Chinese should be added. He therefore suggested that the Convention might be established in a single copy in the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish languages, as proposed in SOLAS/CONF/C.1/WP.13.

It was so decided.

Mr. LAMPE (Federal Republic of Germany) asked for German to be one of the languages in which an official translation of the Convention would be prepared, following the pattern set in Article 20 of the 1973 Convention on the Prevention of Pollution from Ships.

Mr. EL-SAMMAK (Egypt), supported by Mr. YAFAI (Democratic Yemen), asked that the Convention be translated into Arabic. The translation would be done by the Arab League and be transmitted to IMCO.

Mr. DELARDINELLI (Italy) requested that Article XV prescribe the official translation of the Convention into Italian.

Mr. MAUL (German Democratic Republic) said his delegation favoured official translation into languages other than the official languages (as did the UN itself), thereby encouraging more effective co-operation and greater understanding. Any resultant problems should be carefully studied by governments.

Mr. UCHIDA (Japan) said that his delegation had no intention of asking for an official translation of the 1974 Convention into Japanese.

Mr. QUARTEY (Ghana) wished to know the financial implications of the official translations requested by various delegations.

Mr. SRIVASTAVA (Secretary-General) replied that the cost of translating conventions into certain languages was borne entirely by governments; IMCO simply paid the postal charges for despatching official translations which were sent to it by governments. He wished to point out that governments which made those translations were entirely responsible for their accuracy.

The PRESIDENT suggested that Article XV might prescribe that official translations of the Convention be prepared in Arabic, German and Italian.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that the Final Act of the Conference would be prepared by the Secretariat in the five authentic languages with the assistance of the Chinese, Soviet and Spanish-speaking delegations. However, the text of the Convention itself would not be ready in other than English and French before the end of the Conference; the remaining versions would be prepared later, probably by the end of March 1975. He therefore suggested that, for the closing ceremony, the Final Act be prepared in all five languages, and the Convention itself in English and French only.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.