

Chapter IV

VOTING

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The present chapter contains material from the *Official Records* relating to the practice of the Security Council under Article 27 of the Charter. The arrangement of the material in the chapter basically follows that of the corresponding chapter in earlier volumes of the *Repertoire*; part IV has been retained in view of the continuing trend in the Council to adopt its decisions by consensus or without a vote.

Part I presents evidence relating to the distinction between procedural and non-procedural matters. During the period under review, there was no material requiring treatment in part II, relating to the practice of the Council in voting upon whether a matter was procedural within the meaning of Article 27, paragraph 2, of the Charter. Part III is concerned with the abstention, non-participation or absence of a Council member in relation to the requirements of Article 27, paragraph 3. Part IV deals with decisions adopted by consensus or without a vote.

Some of the material in this chapter represents parts of draft resolutions that were extracted and subjected to a separate vote. Such votes are listed here in so far as they provide evidence relating to Article 27 of the Charter. As this separate vote is taken under the auspices of rule 32 in the provisional rules of procedure, more detailed information concerning this material will be found in chapter I, part V.

Material relating to voting in connection with the election of judges under Article 10 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice is included in chapter VI, part I, section E. Chapter VII, part I, contains material on the voting procedure employed by the Council in connection with applications for admission to membership in the United Nations.

As noted in the preceding volumes of the *Repertoire*, most votes in the Council do not indicate whether the Council considers the matter voted upon as procedural or

non-procedural: this uncertainty exists when a proposal is adopted by a unanimous vote, when all permanent members vote in favour of the proposal or when the proposal fails to obtain the necessary nine votes in its favour.

Part I, section A,¹ comprises instances wherein the vote indicated the procedural character of the decision: the proposal obtained nine or more votes and was adopted despite the negative vote of one or more permanent members.

Part I, section B,² lists instances where the vote revealed the non-procedural nature of the decision: the proposal obtained nine or more votes in favour, but was rejected owing to the negative vote of one or more permanent members.

In part III, section A, there were no cases in which members abstained in accordance with the proviso of Article 27, paragraph 3.

Part III, section B,³ lists those occasions on which permanent members abstained voluntarily or did not participate in the vote. Had they voted against the proposal, no affirmative decision could have been taken.

Part IV, section A, lists cases in which the Council adopted resolutions by consensus.

Part IV, section B, concerns resolutions adopted without a vote. There were no decisions adopted without a vote during the period under review.

Part IV, section C, lists cases in which the Council's decisions were announced or issued after being agreed upon by members of the Council during consultations, including those decisions when some members dissociated themselves from matters under consideration.⁴

¹See the table in part I, sect. A, below.

²See the table in part I, sect. B, below.

³See the table in part III, sect. B, below.

⁴See the various tables in part IV below.

Part I

PROCEDURAL AND NON-PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A. CASES IN WHICH THE VOTE INDICATED THE PROCEDURAL CHARACTER OF THE MATTER

**1. Inclusion of items in the agenda

**2. Order of items on the agenda

**3. Deferment of consideration of items on the agenda

**4. Removal of an item from the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized

**5. Rulings of the President of the Security Council

**6. Suspension of a meeting

**7. Adjournment of a meeting

8. Invitations to participate in the proceedings

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Organization invited</i>	<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Permanent members casting a negative vote</i>
Situation in the Middle East	Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)	2572, 11 March 1985	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2582, 31 May 1985	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2783, 18 January 1988	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2813, 9 May 1988	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2604, 12 September 1985	10-1-4	1
Situation in the occupied Arab territories	PLO	2643, 21 January 1986	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2724, 5 December 1986	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2770, 11 December 1987	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2780, 5 January 1988	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2781, 14 January 1988	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2785, 27 January 1988	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2804, 30 March 1988	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2610, 2 October 1985	10-1-4	1
Letter dated 1 October 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations				
Middle East problem including the Palestinian question	PLO	2619, 10 October 1985	10-1-4	1
Letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations	PLO	2655, 6 February 1986	10-1-4	1
Situation between Iran and Iraq	PLO	2664, 19 February 1986	10-1-4	1
	PLO	2709, 3 October 1986	10-1-4	1
Letters dated 15 April 1986 from the Chargés d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Missions of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Burkina Faso and the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations and from the Permanent Representative of Oman to the United Nations	PLO	2680, 18 April 1986	10-1-4	1
Letter dated 19 April 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations	PLO	2807, 21 April 1988	10-1-4	1

**9. Conduct of business

**10. Convocation of an emergency special session of the General Assembly

B. CASES IN WHICH THE VOTE INDICATED THE NON-PROCEDURAL CHARACTER OF THE MATTER

1. In connection with matters considered by the Security Council under its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Decisions (draft resolutions, etc.)</i>	<i>Submitted by</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Permanent members casting negative vote</i>
Situation in the Middle East	2573, 12 March 1985	S/17000	1-Power	11-1-3	1
	2642, 17 January 1986	S/17730/Rev.2	1-Power	11-1-3	1
	2784, 18 January 1986	S/19434	6-Power	13-1-1	1
	2814, 10 May 1988	S/19868	6-Power	14-1-0	1

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Decisions (draft resolutions, etc.)</i>	<i>Submitted by</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Permanent members casting negative vote</i>
Letter dated 6 May 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations	2832, 14 December 1988	S/20322	6-Power	14-1-0	1
	2580, 10 May 1985	S/17172 (eighth preambular para.)	1-Power	13-1-1	1
	2580, 10 May 1985	S/17172 (operative para. 1)	1-Power	11-1-3	1
Question of South Africa	2580, 10 May 1985	S/17172 (operative para. 2)	1-Power	13-1-1	1
	2602, 26 July 1985	Amendment S/17363 to draft resolution S/17354/Rev.1	6-Power	12-2-1	2
	2738, 20 February 1987	S/18705	5-Power	10-3-2	2
Situation in the occupied Arab territories	2797, 8 March 1988	S/19585	6-Power	10-2-3	2
	2605, 13 September 1985	S/17459	6-Power	10-1-4	1
	2650, 30 January 1986	S/17769/Rev.1	5-Power	13-1-1	1
Situation in Namibia	2790, 1 February 1988	S/19466	6-Power	14-1-0	1
	2806, 15 April 1988	S/19780	6-Power	14-1-0	1
	2629, 15 November 1985	S/17633	6-Power	12-2-1	2
Letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations	2747, 9 April 1987	S/18785	5-Power	9-3-3	2
	2655, 6 February 1986	S/17796/Rev.1	5-Power	10-1-4	1
Letters dated 15 April 1986 from the Chargés d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Missions of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Burkina Faso and the Syrian Arab Republic, and from the Permanent Representative of Oman to the United Nations	2682, 21 April 1986	S/18016/Rev.1	5-Power	9-5-1	3
Situation in southern Africa	2686, 23 May 1986	S/18087/Rev.1, as orally revised	5-Power	12-2-1	2
Complaint by Angola against South Africa	2693, 18 June 1986	S/18163	5-Power	12-2-1	2
Letter dated 22 July 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations	2704, 31 July 1986	S/18250	5-Power	11-1-3	1
Letter dated 17 October 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations	2718, 28 October 1986	S/18428	5-Power	11-1-3	1

****2. In connection with other matters considered by the Security Council**

Part II

****PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL REGARDING VOTING UPON THE QUESTION WHETHER THE MATTER WAS PROCEDURAL WITHIN THE MEANING OF ARTICLE 27, PARAGRAPH 2, OF THE CHARTER**

Part III

**ABSTENTION, NON-PARTICIPATION OR ABSENCE IN RELATION TO ARTICLE 27,
PARAGRAPH 3, OF THE CHARTER**

A. OBLIGATORY ABSTENTION

****1. Cases in which members abstained in accordance with the proviso of Article 27, paragraph 3**

2. Consideration of abstention in accordance with the proviso of Article 27, paragraph 3

CASE 1

At the 2580th meeting, on 10 May 1985, in connection with the letter dated 6 May 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Nicaragua, a draft resolution⁵ was voted on paragraph by paragraph at the request of a permanent

member. The representative of Nicaragua pointed out that one of the paragraphs put to a separate vote (operative paragraph 5) read:

Calls on States to refrain from carrying out, supporting or promoting political, economic or military actions of any kind against any State in the region which might impede the peace objectives of the Contadora Group.

The representative of Nicaragua then stated that he wondered if the economic, military and financial blockade, along with the acts of aggression "constantly perpetrated by the United States against my country", were not in contradiction with operative paragraph 5, concerning which the United States had voted in favour.⁶

⁵S/17172, adopted as resolution 562 (1985).

⁶S/PV.2580, pp. 132-135; for details, see also chap. I, part V, sect. B.

**B. VOLUNTARY ABSTENTION, NON-PARTICIPATION OR ABSENCE
IN RELATION TO ARTICLE 27, PARAGRAPH 3**

1. Certain cases in which permanent members abstained or did not participate otherwise than in accordance with the proviso of Article 27, paragraph 3

The sixth column of the table below ("Voluntary abstention") lists certain cases in which permanent members abstained otherwise than in accordance with the proviso of Article 27, paragraph 3.

There were no cases of non-participation or of votes taken in the absence of permanent members for the period under review.

For the details of voting, see the relevant sections of chapter VIII, part II.

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Decision, resolution, amendment, etc.</i>	<i>Submitted by</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Voluntary abstention</i>	<i>Non-participation</i>
Situation in the Middle East	2575, 17 April 1985	S/17100 (res. 561 (1985))	—	13-0-2	1	—
	2623, 17 October 1985	S/17567 (res. 575 (1985))	—	13-0-2	1	—
	2708, 23 September 1986	S/18356 (res. 587 (1986))	1-Power	14-0-1	1	—
Situation in southern Africa	2662, 13 February 1986	S/17817/Rev.1 (res. 581 (1986))	5-Power	13-0-2	2	—
Situation in the occupied Arab territories	2727, 8 December 1986	S/18506/Rev.1, as orally revised (res. 592 (1986))	5-Power	14-0-1	1	—
	2777, 22 December 1987	S/19352/Rev.1 (res. 605 (1987))	5-Power	14-0-1	1	—
	2781, 14 January 1988	S/19429 (res. 608 (1988))	6-Power	14-0-1	1	—
Letter dated 6 May 1985 from the representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations	2580, 10 May 1985	S/17172 (sixth preambular para.)	1-Power	14-0-1	1	—
	2580, 10 May 1985	S/17172 (operative para. 3)	1-Power	14-0-1	1	—
	2580, 10 May 1985	S/17172 (operative para. 6)	1-Power	13-0-2	2	—

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Decision, resolution, amendment, etc.</i>	<i>Submitted by</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Voluntary abstention</i>	<i>Non-participation</i>
Situation in Namibia	2595, 19 June 1985	S/17284/Rev.2 (res. 566 (1985))	6-Power	13-0-2	2	—
	2759, 30 October 1987	S/19242 (res. 601 (1987))	5-Power	14-0-1	1	—
Question of South Africa	2602, 26 July 1985	S/17354/Rev.1 (res. 569 (1985))	2-Power	13-0-2	2	—
	2830, 23 November 1988	S/20290 (res. 623 (1988))	2-Power	13-0-2	2	—
Complaint by Angola against South Africa*	2607, 20 September 1985	S/17481 (operative para. 5, as orally revised)	6-Power	14-0-1	1	—
Complaint by Angola against South Africa*	2617, 7 October 1985	S/17531 (operative para. 6)	6-Power	14-0-1	1	—
Complaint by Angola against South Africa*	2631, 6 December 1985	S/17667 (operative para. 6)	6-Power	14-0-1	1	—
Letter dated 1 October 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations	2615, 4 October 1985	S/17535 (res. 573 (1985))	6-Power	14-0-1	1	—
Letter dated 19 April 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations	2810, 25 April 1988	S/19819 (res. 611 (1988))	6-Power	14-0-1	1	—

*In these three cases a permanent member requested, then abstained from, a separate vote on the operative paragraphs specified in the table. However, after each of the operative paragraphs in question were adopted and included in the main body of the corresponding draft resolutions, the entire resolutions were unanimously adopted in all three cases. For further information concerning these separate votes, see chap. I, part V, under "Rule 32".

2. Consideration of the practice of voluntary abstention, non-participation or absence of permanent members in relation to Article 27, paragraph 3

CASE 2

At the 2595th meeting, on 19 June 1985, in connection with the situation in Namibia, the representative of the South West Africa People's Organization, who had been invited by the President to take a place at the Security Council table, remarked, with regard to abstentions by two permanent members in the adoption of resolution 566 (1985):⁷

When the going got serious and demanded prompt and decisive action, two of the Western permanent members skirted their responsibilities and instead abstained in the vote . . . Let it also be said that abstention means a polite no . . .

CASE 3

On 26 September 1985, at the commemorative meeting concerning the United Nations for a better world and the responsibility of the Security Council in maintaining peace and security, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics stated:⁸

A better world cannot be built by taking into account the interests and views of one State only, however powerful and economically developed that State might be. Nor can it be built for a limited group of States. A better world means peace for all, which can be achieved only through the efforts of all. I wish to stress this here in the Security

Council, whose work is based on the principle of the unanimity of its permanent members.

These remarks were reinforced by the representative of Denmark, who stated that in order for the Security Council to enhance its authority and real influence on world events it was essential for the Council to speak with one voice. He said: "It is therefore a constant endeavour for Denmark to promote agreement in the Council", and added that unanimity was required for a clear and unequivocal signal to be sent from the Council to the parties to a conflict and to ensure that the Council's decisions were implemented.

CASE 4

At the 2810th meeting on 25 April 1988, in connection with the letter dated 19 April 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations, the representative of the United States of America stated:⁹

Despite the strong views the United States holds on political assassination and despite our strong support for Tunisia's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, the United States has decided to abstain in the vote on the draft resolution today because it disproportionately places all blame for this latest round in the rising spiral of violence in the Middle East on one event only, while failing to mention other actions that preceded it. It also includes language that is suggestive of chapter VII sanctions.

⁷S/PV.2595, p. 26.

⁸S/PV.2608, p. 19.

⁹S/PV.2810, p. 26.

Part IV

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS BY CONSENSUS OR WITHOUT A VOTE

A. CASES IN WHICH THE SECURITY COUNCIL ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS
BY CONSENSUS

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Resolution number</i>
Question of South Africa	2723, 28 November 1986	591 (1986)

**B. CASES IN WHICH THE SECURITY COUNCIL ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS
WITHOUT A VOTEC. CASES IN WHICH SECURITY COUNCIL DECISIONS WERE ANNOUNCED IN
PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENTS ISSUED AFTER BEING AGREED UPON BY THE
MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL AT CONSULTATIONS

1. Statements agreed upon by all members of the Security Council

(a) STATEMENTS PLACED ON RECORD AT MEETINGS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Document and or meeting number</i>
Situation between Iran and Iraq	2576, 25 April 1985	S/17130, incorporated in the record of the 2576th meeting
	2667, 21 March 1986	S/17932, incorporated in the record of the 2667th meeting
	2730, 22 December 1986	S/18538, incorporated in the record of the 2730th meeting
	2779, 24 December 1987	S/19382, incorporated in the record of the 2779th meeting
	2798, 16 March 1988	S/19626, incorporated in the record of the 2798th meeting
Situation in the Middle East	2823, 8 August 1988	S/20096, incorporated in the record of the 2823rd meeting
	2581, 21 May 1985	S/17206, incorporated in the record of the 2581st meeting
	2630, 21 November 1985	S/17653, incorporated in the record of the 2630th meeting
	2687, 29 May 1986	S/18111, incorporated in the record of the 2687th meeting
	2705, 5 September 1986	S/18320, incorporated in the record of the 2705th meeting
	2719, 31 October 1986	S/18439, incorporated in the record of the 2719th meeting
	2722, 26 November 1986	S/18487, incorporated in the record of the 2722nd meeting
	2769, 25 November 1987	S/19301, incorporated in the record of the 2769th meeting
	2815, 31 May 1988	S/19912, incorporated in the record of the 2815th meeting
	2831, 30 November 1988	S/20300, incorporated in the record of the 2831st meeting
Question of South Africa	2603, 21 August 1985	S/17413, incorporated in the record of the 2603rd meeting
	2623, 17 October 1985	S/17575, incorporated in the record of the 2623rd meeting
	2690, 13 June 1986	S/18157, incorporated in the record of the 2690th meeting
Situation in Cyprus	2607, 20 September 1985	S/17486, incorporated in the record of the 2607th meeting
	2833, 15 December 1988	S/20330, incorporated in the record of the 2833rd meeting
United Nations for a better world and the responsibility of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security	2608, 26 September 1985	S/17501, incorporated in the record of the 2608th meeting

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Document and/or meeting number</i>
Statement by the President of the Security Council (in connection with the <i>Achille Lauro</i> incident)	2618, 9 October 1985	S/17554, incorporated in the record of the 2618th meeting
Statement by the President of the Security Council (in connection with the incidents at the Rome and Vienna airports)	2639, 30 December 1985	S/17702, incorporated in the record of the 2639th meeting
Statement by the President of the Security Council (fortieth anniversary of the first meeting of the Security Council and the inauguration of the International Year of Peace)	2642, 17 January 1986	S/17745, incorporated in the record of the 2642nd meeting
Situation in Namibia	2827, 29 September 1988	S/20208, incorporated in the record of the 2827th meeting

(b) STATEMENTS ISSUED ONLY AS SECURITY COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Document number</i>
Situation between Iran and Iraq	5 March 1985	S/17004
	15 March 1985	S/17036
	16 January 1987	S/18610
Question of South Africa	14 May 1987	S/18863
	22 March 1985	S/17050
	20 August 1985	S/17408
Situation in Namibia	16 April 1987	S/18808
	3 May 1985	S/17151
	21 August 1987	S/19068
Situation in the Middle East	24 May 1985	S/17215
	6 June 1986	S/18138
	2 December 1986	S/18492
United Nations for a better world and the responsibility of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security	13 February 1987	S/18691
	19 March 1987	S/18756
	29 August 1985	S/17424
Statement by the President of the Security Council (in connection with hostage-taking and abduction)	28 January 1987	S/18641
Statement by the President of the Security Council (in connection with the incident of 20 June 1988)	24 June 1988	S/19959
Situation in the occupied Arab territories	26 August 1988	S/20156

****2. Statements agreed upon by the Security Council with some members dissociating themselves from the matter**