

3. REPORT OF INTERIM COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly on 3 December, 1948, had adopted a resolution which re-established the Interim Committee for the period between the closing of the third and the opening of the fourth regular sessions and required it to report to the fourth regular session on any changes in its constitution, duration, or terms of reference which might be considered desirable.

One of the main functions of the Interim Committee, as re-established by this resolution, was that of studying and reporting on such matters as might be referred to the Committee by or under the authority of the General Assembly. The Committee, however, had not been called upon to undertake tasks in this field, mainly because of the fact that the second part of the Assembly's third session took place in April and May of 1949, and because no particularly urgent problems arose. The second main function of the Interim Committee was to make a systematic study of methods for the promotion of international co-operation in the political field. The Committee had adopted a long-term programme in this field during the year, and had established working groups to consider two categories of questions—namely, the organization and operation of United Nations missions and the settlement by the General Assembly of disputes and special political problems.

As to the re-establishment of the Interim Committee, considerable divergence of opinion had been apparent. Some members had considered that the Committee performed no functions which could not be more appropriately undertaken by special Committees established by the General Assembly to carry out specific tasks when need arose. Other representatives, however, considered that the Interim Committee should be established as a permanent Committee of the Assembly with the same competence, during the intervals between Assembly sessions, as the six main Committees of the Assembly. The majority of representatives felt, however, that the Committee could usefully be re-established for an indefinite period with its existing terms of reference. It was generally held still to be essential that a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly should be ready, when the Assembly is not sitting in regular session, and subject to the primary responsibility of the Security Council, immediately to undertake on behalf of the Assembly, as occasion arises, study of certain political questions likely to endanger the maintenance of peace. Furthermore, the programme of discussions undertaken with a view to promoting the development of international co-operation in the political field should be continued. Finally, it was stressed that the Interim Committee, as a plenary Committee of the Assembly, was the only forum where all members of the United Nations could express their views when the Assembly was not in session.