

Mr. Chairman, the Canadian delegation has followed this general debate closely and we have observed, as some delegations have already pointed out, that our present debate is pretty well a repetition of the debate in this Committee on this item during the seventh session. We are pleased to note, however, that some concrete progress has been made since our last session. We now have the report of the Special Committee, which met earlier this year to give further study to this problem and report back to the assembly at this session. We have carefully studied that report (Document A/2402) and I want to say that my delegation is in general agreement with the observations and conclusions contained in it. We were particularly impressed with the moderate and restrained suggestions for improvement which the Special Committee has made. This report will be a very useful and valuable document for future reference and guidance. We hope that it will not be buried or lost sight of in the future conduct of the business of the United Nations, but will be kept readily available and accessible for the use of all delegations and committees in the future. At this point, my delegation wishes to record its appreciation of the initiative and effort of the distinguished delegate from Norway in preparing his draft resolution and annex for our consideration. His annex is an excellent resume of the suggestions contained in the report of the Special Committee. We do not think, however, that any consolidation or outline of the Special Committee's report should be added to the rules of procedure as an annex. All delegations seem to be agreed that such an annex would have no legal validity and consequently would not be binding or enforceable in the sense that the rules of procedure themselves are. This is certainly the view of my delegation. At best, it would simply serve as a guide for delegations, the President of the General Assembly, and the chairmen of the various committees and, as such, they would be free to comply with or ignore the suggestions in such an annex. Apart from the fact that it has no legal validity, we fear that, instead of providing a means of limiting the duration of debates, such an annex might instead give rise to unnecessary doubt and ambiguity and consequently be the cause of longer debates and unnecessary delays in the work of the United Nations in the future. We consider that the rules of procedure of an organization such as the United Nations are an extremely important factor in the orderly and efficient conduct of the work of the United Nations. Consequently, they must be most definite, clear unequivocal, and binding on all members of the United Nations. As we acquire more experience in the debates and the work of the United Nations, we may be able to eventually incorporate in our rules of procedure some or all of the suggestions in the annex proposed by the distinguished delegate from Norway in his revised draft resolution.

For these reasons, Mr. Chairman, the Canadian delegation will support the amendment to the Norwegian resolution which has been proposed by Brazil and France. The proposed resolution as thus amended will provide for only two minor, but appropriate and desirable amendments to the existing rules of procedure.

The first will make a light change to Rule 38 of the rules of procedure. We have observed that no delegation