

Security Council Faces Obstacles With Tabling and Vetoes

By: Security Council Press Representative

Upon entering the meeting room of the Security Council, the "T" word (tabling) could be heard instantly. The debate was deadlocked; the opposing sides tried to determine how harsh the United Nations should be on Syria.

"Mostly [debate is on] just whether or not to, on how harsh the language should be," the Security Council chair said while summing up the proceedings of the Security Council since last night.

The committee tried to find a "common ground" but experienced trouble while trying to find it.

"The goal of this committee is always to find common ground. On this resolution, the only common ground seems to be in the middle of the road, and the only thing in the middle of the road is road kill," the delegate from Mexico said during a committee of the whole.

The possibility of a veto was very much alive with the state of the committee.

"The United States feels that, especially right now as stated multiple times, this resolution cannot be passed. The United States would most likely veto it although it does not do any harm," the delegate from the United States said during the same committee of the whole.

The time committed to the resolution was one of the main arguments in favor discussing the resolution further. The United States also addressed this.

"Even though we have spent a large amount of time on it, that is not a reason to pass a resolution that is weak," the delegate said.

After a rise and report, both the resolution and topic were immediately tabled with votes of 10/4 and 13/1, respectively.

With these motions passed, the committee returned to the procedural matter of trying to settle on a topic. The delegate from Turkey motioned to discuss topic two, Palestinian Statehood.

After brief debate, the motion passed with a vote of 11/3/0 and the United States motioned to consider Resolution 2-2, a motion that passed 10/4, putting the Security Council back on track.

After a few brief speeches, the committee moved into an unmoderated caucus. Discussion had two foci. The first focus was a matter of strategy.

"Basically, what they're debating on is whether or not, what we should do with our operative clauses. Whether or not we should strike them all or just strike a couple here and there," the delegate from Austria said.

In addition to this strategy debate, there was also debate about borders.

"But then they also brought up the facts about the borders of Israel/Palestine going back to 1967, and whether or not we should go back to having them go to them or to stay with the borders we have now," the delegate from Austria said.

After the unmoderated caucus, there were motions to bring in both a delegate from Israel and a delegate from Palestine. Neither motion passed with an 8/3/3 vote against an Israeli delegate and a 6/5/3 vote against a Palestinian delegate. Both motions were also vetoed.

The delegate from the United Kingdom, the resolution's sponsoring nation, was willing to work with other nations to amend the resolution.

"I think the base of the resolution is good, but we feel that we know that amendments are going to be added on to make it stronger," the delegate from the United Kingdom said.

Amendments were added that condemned Israel for building in West Bank and demanded that they halt construction immediately. In a slightly unconventional procedural method, the chair merged the wording of two amendments that had been proposed consecutively by the delegates from Bosnia and Nigeria because the amendment sponsored by Nigeria restated part of the amendment sponsored by Bosnia, but with what the delegate from Mexico described as better wording. The hybrid amendment was passed with a vote of 13/1/0, with only Japan voting against it.

The delegate from the United Kingdom stepped forward with an amendment that endorsed a two-state solution with borders based on pre-1967 borders.

The United States spoke against the amendment.

"The United States obviously is going to veto this amendment simply because Israel, though they have previously stated that they are semi-okay with considering going back to the pre-1967 borders, they are not ready to move back to them quite yet," the delegate said in her con speech.

The amendment went to a vote and failed with an 11/2/1 vote against it; had the United States not vetoed it, it would have passed.

With the failing of the amendment, the committee went to an unmoderated caucus. The committee is still working towards a solution to the issue of Palestinian statehood.