The Applicant contends that in the absence of rules governing the application of General Assembly resolution 31/193 B II the withholding of salary was arbitrary and that the abatement of 25 per cent had no rational basis.

The Tribunal realizes that there are difficulties in determining the duration of unauthorized absence in the event of a collective work stoppage, particularly when certain forms of authorized absence provided for by existing rules have to be taken into account. In the Applicant's case, however, the 25 per cent abatement exceeded what could legitimately be considered authorized absence. In these circumstances, the Tribunal, bearing in mind the fundamental considerations set out in paragraph III above, decides that the claim for reimbursement of the salary withheld is unfounded.

XII. The application is rejected.

(Signatures)

R. Venkataraman
President

Suzanne Bastid
Vice-President

Francis T. P. Plimpton
Vice-President

New York, 8 October 1979

Judgement No. 250

Case No. 238: Sforza-Chrzanowski

Against: The Secretary-General of the United Nations

Non-renewal of the fixed-term appointment of a technical assistance expert of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

Request that the Tribunal recognize that the Applicant's separation from service was not normal because of pressure brought to bear on him to leave his post in Seoul before the date of expiry of his appointment.—Administrative measure terminating not the contract of service of the Applicant but his assignment.—Discretionary power vested in the Secretary-General.—The Applicant has not substantiated his allegation that the reasons adduced to justify the measure taken in his case were not valid.—Letter addressed by the Applicant to the Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs of the Government of Korea.—The Administration could legitimately take it into consideration when it decided to terminate the Applicant's assignment.—Request rejected.—Request that the Tribunal recognize that the procedure leading to classification in the category of persons rejected permanently for future employment with the Organization was not applied in the Applicant's case.—The request does not arise and is rejected, the prescribed procedure eventually having been applied in his case.—Application rejected.
THE ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS,
Composed of Madame Paul Bastid, Vice-President, presiding; Mr. Francisco A. Forteza; Mr. T. Mutuale; Mr. Endre Ustor, alternate member;

Whereas at the request of Stanislaw Sforza-Chrzanowski, a former technical assistance expert of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, hereinafter called UNIDO, the President of the Tribunal, with the agreement of the Respondent, extended successively to 15 October 1978, 30 November 1978, 2 January 1979, 31 January 1979, 1 March 1979, 15 March 1979 and 31 March 1979 the time-limit for the filing of an application to the Tribunal;

Whereas, on 27 March 1979, the Applicant filed an application the pleas of which read:

"1. Applicant respectfully requests the Tribunal to rule that the letter of the Resident Representative dated 26 May 1975 ... pressing for the departure of the Applicant from his assignment in Korea prior to the expiration of his appointment constitutes a de facto dismissal (psychological and physical) of Applicant contravening the rights of the Applicant as an employee.

"2. Applicant also requests the Tribunal to rule that, contrary to the letter of the Assistant Secretary General for Personnel Services [dated 12 December 1975] ... which put forward that a normal expiration of a fixed-term appointment took place, such expiration is normal if it occurs normally and on the due date (art. 209.2 (a) (iii) of Staff Rules), but that in the case of the Applicant the termination was not normal because of pressures made on the Applicant to terminate his appointment which was allowed to expire on the due date after several attempts had been made to relieve him of his functions before the due date, and only because the Applicant was very seriously ill and therefore physically unable to leave Korea (as per doctor's orders)—to the great displeasure of the Resident Representative. . . .

"3. Applicant respectfully requests the Tribunal to rule that the phraseology ... certain unauthorized and improper actions' put forward by the Resident Representative ... is subjective and arbitrary and not based upon established facts. . . .

"4. Applicant did send a letter to the Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs, Korea; the letter was however a private and confidential one and the Assistant Minister has never complained about the letter. The Tribunal is requested to rule that the letter was a private business which the Applicant and the Assistant Minister had to sort between themselves and did not constitute official business of the United Nations, even though it referred to the United Nations. . . .

"5. Applicant requests Tribunal to uphold the fact that during his various assignments with the United Nations, the Applicant has acted at all time well in conformance with Staff Regulation 1.5 inter alia that 'Staff members shall exercise the utmost discretion in regard to all matters of official business to the United Nations'.

"6. Applicant requests Tribunal to rule that as a result of the pressures exercised on him to leave his assignment before completion of same, he suffered from
psychological and physical inconveniences, the psychological inconvenience entail-
ing damage to his professional reputation, in and outside of the United Nations,
particularly because of the arbitrary decision to classify his status as 'RP' indicating
that the Applicant had been rejected permanently for future employment with the
Organization; the Tribunal should also uphold the finding of the JAB that whereas
a procedure does exist leading to such classification, the procedure was not applied
in the case of Applicant; the physical inconvenience in question is the service-incurred
illness that resulted from the shock as a consequence direct of the pressures exerted
on him.

"7. Applicant requests ruling that over-all the case of the Applicant was dealt
with expeditiously leading to several arbitrary decisions which caused him psycho-
logical and physical damage because of which a compensation equivalent to the
statutory twenty four months of salary be made to him and that his official status
file be rectified and the Secretary-General should issue a statement to the Applicant
clearing up the misunderstanding.";

Whereas the Applicant submitted an additional statement on 24 April 1979;
Whereas the Respondent filed his answer on 21 May 1979;
Whereas, on 25 July 1979, the Applicant filed written observations in which he
stated *inter alia*:

"... since the events of May 1975 in Korea and his subsequent repatriation,
the situation of the Applicant has steadily deteriorated. ... Applicant therefore feels
compelled to ask for a higher compensation, representing 24 months of gross salaries.

Whereas the Applicant requested oral proceedings on 2 July 1979;
Whereas the presiding member rejected that request on 4 September 1979;
Whereas the Respondent submitted an additional written statement at the request of
the Tribunal on 14 September 1979;
Whereas the Applicant submitted comments on that statement on 18 September 1979;
Whereas the facts in the case are as follows:

The Applicant was serving as a UNIDO Marketing Expert in the Republic of Korea
under an intermediate-term appointment of one year effective 24 April 1973 which had
been successively extended for one year and for four months and was therefore due to
expire on 23 August 1975. He had been assigned to the Medium Industry Bank in Seoul
as a consultant.

On 14 April 1975 the Applicant addressed the following letter to the Assistant
Minister for Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of the Government of Korea:

"Count Dr. S. Sforza
Economic Advisor of the Government of Korea
UNDP CPOBOX 143 Seoul Korea

"His Excellency Mr. Kim Dong Whie
Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

"Seoul

"Your Excellency,
"I am a friend of Mr. Rasmusen the Chargé d'affaires of Argentina. I am also a cousin of Mr. Giscard d'Estaing President of France.

"As you remember we have met at Mr. Rasmusen's where you have kindly told me to inform you if I have any problems in Korea. As a matter of fact I want to ask you for your kind help in the following matter.

"My friend Mr. Barry Coulson (F.A.O.) has come here in May for a project of great importance for the economy of Korea. One month after coming he has ordered some partitions in India which were to be sent immediately here for reasons quite independent from Mr. Coulson (shortage of the special wood in India and difficulties in finding shipping space to Korea) the partitions have only been shipped in January. Now the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Protocol Department of Exemptions) is refusing Mr. Coulson the admission of the partitions (which have no great commercial value but are objects of art) . . . because he is in Korea more than 6 months . . . even if the delay in the arrival here of the partitions was caused only by the sellers (a Governmental Indian Organization) the goods have been ordered and paid for (he has all the proofs) immediately after his arrival here.

"I think that the decision of the Department of Protocol is against the spirit and letter of the regulations, and does not take into consideration whatever was done by the United Nations for the cause of Korea (all the blood, money, technical assistance and help rendered and still being rendered) The Food and Agricultural Organization being so vital to Korea.

"I am certain that you understand the situation and you will give the necessary instructions to the relevant department of the Ministry to have the goods released to Mr. Coulson. The customs in Pusan asking a ridiculous duty of more than 1,000 per cent when Mr. Coulson should not pay at all."

On 16 April 1975, the Assistant Resident Representative of UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) had with the Korean authorities a conversation which he described as follows in a confidential note for the file dated 8 May 1975:

"On 16 April 1975, I was asked to call on Mr. Huh, Seung, Chief Privileges and Immunities at his office in MOFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs]. There I was shown the bottom part of the letter written by Mr. Sforza-Chrzanowski to the Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs (copy of the letter in question is now on file).

"Mr. Huh described the language used in the letter as intimidating and therefore considered it completely unacceptable. He went on to say that the Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs and the Chief of Protocol were extremely displeased with the content of the letter and Mr. Sforza's lack of manners. Mr. Huh then asked me about the exact title of Mr. Sforza and whether the title of Economic Adviser to the Government of Korea would be correct. I gave Mr. Huh the correct title and expressed my deep apologies for all the harsh and awkward words used in Mr. Sforza's letter and for the false information given by him. Mr. Huh then inquired with me about the status of Mr. Sforza's appointment with direct reference to expiry date. Mr. Huh also asked what action would I take in the circumstances. I said that Mr. Sforza's contract expires in August/September 1975 but that I would recommend to my superiors that Mr. Sforza's departure be precipitated provided I get a copy of the letter. Mr. Huh then said that in the light of our candid discussion he would like to
clear the release of the letter with his superiors, and will let me know. . . ."

On 25 April 1975 the Chief of the Privileges and Immunities Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave a copy of the letter to the Assistant Resident Representative and, according to the latter, "reiterated the displeasure of all concerned in the Ministry at the language used in the letter". On 5 May 1975 the Chief of the Personnel Administration Section and the Chief of the Financial Services of UNIDO sent to the Resident Representative a cable reading in part:

". . . aaa recognizing impossibility expert remaining Korea therefore grateful discuss issue with expert and arrange departure from Seoul to Paris via Vienna. . . .

bbb as his present appointment expiring 23 August 1975 and considering his leave balance of fifty-six and half working days as of 23 May 1975 and furthermore as he is required to come to Vienna for three days debriefing suggest he report Vienna on Monday 26 May 1975 upon which he will be repatriated home where he could exhaust his accumulated leave . . . ."

On 8 May 1975 the Resident Representative, according to a note for the confidential file he wrote on that day, met with the Applicant and advised him that he was to leave the country by 23 May in view of the embarrassment which his letter had created to both the Government and the United Nations. On 9 May 1975, in two letters addressed to the Chief of the Section for Asia and the Far East of UNIDO and to the Resident Representative respectively, the Applicant requested that he be permitted to remain in Korea until 15 June so that his children might complete their school examinations. On the same day the Resident Representative transmitted this request, which he found acceptable, by cable to UNIDO. On 13 May 1975 the Applicant wrote to the Resident Representative that he had presented a letter of apology to the Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs and that both the Government of Korea and the Medium Industry Bank wished him to remain in Korea; he sent a copy of his communication to the Chief of the Section for Asia and the Far East, suggesting three new alternative dates for his departure from Korea, namely 31 July, for completion of his marketing training classes, 22 August, for completion of his contract, or mid-November, for completion of his full schedule of classes and seminars. On 22 May 1975 the Applicant again wrote to the Resident Representative requesting permission to remain in Korea until 31 July 1975 in order to fulfill his professional obligations to the Bank and to enable his wife to continue some medical treatment: in a statement attached to his communication he wrote inter alia:

"For personal reasons it is impossible for me to stay in Korea until the end of my contract or accept the extension of my stay here mentioned by our client the MIB."

On the same day he addressed a similar request to the Chief of the Section for Asia and the Far East, adding that the incident has caused him a heart failure and that it would be impossible for him to remain in Seoul beyond the end of July although the Bank had requested his extension until December. On 26 May 1975 the Resident Representative cabled the Chief of the Personnel Administration Section as follows:

". . . SFORZA-CHRZANOWSKI HAS INFORMED ME IN WRITING HE NOW INTENDS REMAIN KOREA UNTIL 31 JULY. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES RECOMMEND UNIDO INSTRUCT HIM REPORT VIENNA FOR debriefing IMMEDIATELY AFTER 15 JUNE. . . ."
and he sent him a letter in which he wrote:

"... I am attaching copies of the latest communications received from the . . . expert. Under the circumstances I believe you will agree that the action I have recommended is the only course possible. . . ."

On the same day the Resident Representative advised the Applicant that the decision on the timing of his departure on completion of assignment in Korea had been based on certain unauthorized and improper actions he had taken during the latter part of his assignment and that, while he (the Resident Representative) had supported the Applicant's request to UNIDO to delay his departure until 15 June 1975 in order that his children would be able to complete their school examinations, he was not prepared to support any further delay in the Applicant's departure beyond 15 June 1975; he added that in view of the Applicant's intention not to leave Korea on 15 June 1975, he intended to withdraw his support to the Applicant's request for annual leave in Australia and would recommend that UNIDO require him to report for debriefing in Vienna immediately after 15 June 1975. In a reply of 27 May 1975 the Applicant took objection both to the decision on his departure and to the reasons given for it and he asked that because of his heart failure and his wife's medical treatment he be permitted to remain in Korea beyond 15 June 1975. On the same day the Applicant wrote to the Chief of the Section for Asia and the Far East requesting permission to remain in Korea until 31 July 1975, then to go to Australia and to report for debriefing at a later time. On 12 June 1975 he again wrote to the Chief of the Section for Asia and the Far East stating that in view of his wife's medical treatment and his own poor health, which he attested by an enclosed medical certificate, it was impossible for him to report for debriefing in Vienna on 16 June 1975. On 7 July 1975 a Personnel Officer of the Personnel Administration Section cabled the Resident Representative, with whom he had discussed the Applicant's case in Vienna, that on the basis of the medical information received the UNIDO Medical Director was unable to determine whether the Applicant was able to travel; he suggested that the decision be taken by the treating physician or that more detailed medical information be submitted. On 13 July 1975 the Applicant informed the Chief of the Section for Asia and the Far East that he had been authorized by his doctors to leave Seoul in mid-July; letters of appreciation from the Bank were attached to his communication. On 14 July 1975 the Applicant again wrote to the Chief of the Section for Asia and the Far East forwarding a copy of a letter dated 10 July 1975 in which the Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, expressed regret that the Applicant was about to leave Korea and offered praise for his work. The Applicant left Korea on 15 July 1975 and was subsequently granted sick leave for the period from 30 May to 23 August 1975. On 16 November 1975 he wrote to the Secretary-General requesting reconsideration of the decision to terminate his assignment. On 12 December 1975 the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services sent him the following reply:

"This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter to the Secretary-General dated 16 November 1975 in which you requested that a decision described by you as 'dismissal before the end of your contract' be reviewed.

"Your case has been thoroughly examined. It has been observed that your latest appointment with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization was of intermediate-term with an expiry date of 23 August 1975. It has been further observed that on 22 May 1975 you wrote to the Resident Representative in Seoul, Korea, stating that for personal reasons it was impossible for you to stay at the duty station
until the end of your contract or to accept an extension of it. You, therefore, requested
in writing to be authorized to take your terminal leave on 31 July 1975.

"It is, therefore, obvious that no termination action was taken in your case and
that your fixed-term appointment expired normally at the pre-determined expiry date.
As you are well aware, fixed term appointments do not carry, under the United
Nations Staff Rules, any expectancy of renewal or of conversion to any other type
of appointment.

"Your complaint of not having received 'written dismissal' is unfounded since
in your case there was no dismissal but a normal expiration of a fixed-term appoint-
ment which expires automatically at the pre-determined expiry date and therefore
calls neither for a period of notice nor for a written notification.

"In view of this, the Secretary-General has decided not to take any action
regarding your above-mentioned letter."

On 17 January 1976 the Applicant lodged an appeal with the Joint Appeals Board, which
submitted its report on 16 December 1977. The Board’s conclusions and recommendations
read as follows:

"Conclusions and recommendation

"105. The Board agrees to waive the time limits specified in Staff Rule III.3
(a) for the filing of appeals, in view of the appellant’s illness at the time for filing
and the lack of any challenge to the appeal on this basis. The Board therefore
concludes that the appeal is receivable.

"106. The Board finds, however, that it is not competent to consider the
appellant’s pleas relating to compensation for an alleged service-incurred illness.

"107. With regard to the appellant’s plea regarding non-extension of his
appointment, the Board concludes that there was no legitimate expectancy of con-
tinued employment and that therefore the appellant’s terms of appointment were not
violated by the non-extension of his appointment.

"108. With regard to the appellant’s allegation that his appointment had been
prematurely terminated, the Board concludes that there had been no termination.
but a decision to relieve him of his functions, pursuant to the discretionary power
of the Secretary-General under Staff Regulation 1.2. Consequently, the Board con-
cludes, it was not necessary to give the appellant notice of termination.

"109. The Board finds further that the initial decision to relieve the appellant
of his functions did not constitute a disciplinary action and would therefore not give
rise to the proceedings described in Article X of the Staff Regulations. The Board
agrees also that the Administration acted within its discretion in permitting the
appellant’s appointment to expire rather than instituting disciplinary proceedings
against him.

"110. The Board determines further that since the appellant was paid for the
full term of his contract he suffered no financial losses as a result of the initial
decision.

"111. The Board finds also that there is no evidence to support the appellant’s
allegations that the Resident Representative took the initial decision against the
appellant because of personal animosity or made libelous statements about the ap-
pellant’s departure from Korea, and that as a consequence the appellant’s personal
and professional reputation were injured.

"112. For these reasons the Board decides to make no recommendation in support of the appeal."

The Board’s report also contained the following observations:

"Additional observations

"103. The Board did observe, in reviewing the appellant’s official status file, that it had been marked ‘RP’, indicating that the appellant had been rejected permanently for future employment within the Organization. While recognizing that the area of recruitment for future employment within the Organization did not come within the purview of the Board, the members of the Board agreed that if such action had been taken as a direct result of the appellant’s conduct while serving with the Organization, appropriate procedures should have been followed as would have best protected the appellant from an arbitrary assessment of his conduct in a contested fact situation.

"104. The Board felt that since the appellant had been considered a suitable candidate for appointment and for extension of appointment until just several months before he sent the disputed letter to Mr. Kim, there appeared to be some relationship between the incident and the marking of the appellant’s file as ‘RP’. In view of this apparent relationship the Board agreed that the Organization should have been guided by an appropriate procedure for marking his file ‘RP’. The Board noted that such a procedure does exist in the TARS Procedures but it could find no indication that it was applied in this case. If such procedure has not been followed the ‘RP’ notation should be removed from the appellant’s file until such time as the proper procedure has been applied."

On 21 March 1978 the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services advised the Applicant that the Secretary-General had taken note of the Board’s conclusions and of its decision to make no recommendation in support of his appeal. On 27 March 1979 the Applicant filed the application referred to earlier.

Whereas the Applicant’s principal contentions are:

1. The contested letter was private and confidential. The Korean Government did not treat it as official United Nations correspondence. The United Nations responded to the situation by subjecting the Applicant to arbitrary and unjustified pressures—which led to psychological shock and heart failure—to make him leave the country before the expiration of his appointment. The fact that no disciplinary action was taken shows that there was no need for such action.

2. There is no basis for the argument that the Administration rescinded by implication the initial decision that the Applicant be relieved of his functions by 23 May or 15 June 1975.

3. The classification of the Applicant as ‘RP’ is damaging to his professional reputation and is unjustified since no appropriate procedures were followed to protect him from an arbitrary assessment of his conduct in a contested fact situation.

4. Staff Regulation 1.2 does not purport to give the Secretary-General authority to relieve an officer of his functions prior to the expiration of his contract, as this is tantamount to suspension which requires quite an elaborate procedure.

5. Had there not been the harassment for him to leave, the Applicant would have
kept on working satisfactorily and he could legitimately expect to have continued his assignment in Korea or elsewhere in the United Nations where he had been favourably evaluated for other assignments.

Whereas the Respondent’s principal contentions are:

1. The Applicant had no entitlement to remain on assignment in Korea; his re-assignment during the period of his appointment was a matter entirely in the area of administrative discretion.

2. The nature and effect of the Applicant’s letter which was the subject of complaint by the Korean authorities were legitimate considerations affecting the exercise of administrative discretion on his assignment.

3. The delay in the Applicant’s actual re-assignment from Korea did not affect his contract rights.

4. The Applicant had no entitlement to continued employment beyond 23 August 1975, the expiry date of his fixed-term appointment.

5. The decision to reject the Applicant for future employment was a proper exercise of administrative discretion.

6. The Applicant’s appeal from denial of compensation claim is premature.

The Tribunal, having deliberated from 25 September to 9 October 1979, now pronounces the following judgement:

I. The main purpose of the application is to secure the Tribunal’s recognition, first, that the Applicant’s separation from service was not normal because of pressure brought to bear on him to leave his post in Seoul before the date of expiry of his appointment and, secondly, that although there does exist a procedure leading to classification in the category of persons rejected permanently for future employment with the Organization, this procedure was not applied in his case.

Further to these pleas, the Applicant requests the Tribunal to recognize that he has suffered physical and psychological damage due respectively to the said pressure and the said classification and accordingly to order payment of compensation equivalent to 24 months’ salary increased by four steps, rectification of his official status file and a written statement from the Secretary-General “clearing up the misunderstanding”.

II. In regard to the first plea, it should be noted that according to the Applicant the pressure in question took the form of several attempts to make him leave his post. In order to rule on this plea, the Tribunal must therefore consider whether the Administration was entitled to require the Applicant to leave his post in Seoul before the expiry of his appointment.

At the same time as it requested the Applicant to leave Seoul, the Administration decided on measures to enable him to complete his term of appointment, which was due to expire on 23 August 1975 and which did in fact run until that date. It was therefore quite clearly an administrative measure which terminated not the contract of service of the Applicant but his assignment to Seoul. As the Tribunal has held in an earlier judgement (Judgement No. 165, Kahale, para. XIII), such a measure falls within the discretionary power vested in the Secretary-General by Staff Regulation 1.2 whereby:

“Staff members are subject to the authority of the Secretary-General and to assignment by him to any of the activities or offices of the United Nations . . . ”.

Consequently, the Administration does not have to justify the merits of the reasons for
which it took this measure; it is for the Applicant to substantiate his allegation that the reasons adduced to justify the measure taken in his case were not valid, which he has not done.

In this connexion, the Tribunal notes that this measure has its origin in an incident caused by the letter which the Applicant addressed on 14 April 1975 to the Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs of the Government of Korea; there is no need to consider the private and confidential nature of this letter seeing that it gave rise to reactions of an official nature. Having regard to all the circumstances, the Tribunal finds that the Administration could legitimately take it into consideration when it decided to terminate the Applicant’s assignment to Seoul.

Further, the Applicant has not established that the measure decided upon in his case has otherwise prejudiced the rights which he could legitimately assert.

III. In conclusion, the Tribunal finds that, in deciding to terminate the Applicant’s assignment, the Administration did not abuse its discretionary power and that consequently the allegation that the attempts to remove the Applicant from his post amounted to a form of pressure is unfounded. In the Tribunal’s view, the Applicant’s separation from service, which in any event occurred on the expiry of his fixed-term appointment, was in no way abnormal.

IV. With regard to the Applicant’s plea concerning his classification in the category of persons rejected permanently for future employment with the Organization (category RP), the Tribunal notes that at the time of the Applicant’s separation from service the applicable procedure was the subject of Administrative Instruction No. 57, amendment 2, of 15 April 1970. This procedure consists of a series of measures of an internal nature which the Administration must take: written recommendation from a recruitment officer, preparation of a “note to file” giving the different reasons for classification in the “RP” category, circulation of a copy of this note to the various recruitment services.

The Joint Appeals Board stated in its report that it had been unable to find any indication that the prescribed procedure had been applied in this case. The Tribunal notes that the procedure involved the preparation of a “note to file”. According to information provided by the Respondent, such a note, which had been placed in the confidential file, was placed in the Applicant’s official status file as a result of the report of the Joint Appeals Board.

Thus the prescribed procedure was eventually applied in the Applicant’s case. This being so, the Applicant’s plea does not arise.

V. For the foregoing reasons, all the Applicant’s pleas are rejected.

(Signatures)

Suzanne Bastid
Vice-President, presiding

Francisco A. Forteza
Member

T. Mutuale
Member

New York, 9 October 1979