



General Assembly

UNITED NATIONS
DEPARTMENT FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS
REFERENCE LIBRARY

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CN.10/PV.147
18 May 1990

DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 15 May 1990, at 10 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. SUTRESNA

(Indonesia)

- Statement by the Chairman
- Reports by Chairmen of subsidiary bodies

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: This year the Disarmament Commission, in the early days of its session, has smoothly disposed of all issues related to the organization of work, except one question regarding item 7. The Commission completed its general exchange of views on various agenda items on time. All subsidiary bodies began work on their respective agenda items from Monday 7 May, and each group has had several meetings so far. In this connection, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all delegations for their spirit of co-operation. Because of that, our proceedings have been conducted in a most effective and businesslike manner, and the available conference resources have been efficiently utilized in accordance with the weekly timetable.

As scheduled, today we shall receive the first round of oral progress reports from the Chairmen of various subsidiary bodies so as to assess the state of affairs on various subjects and to facilitate our programme of work for the next stage of our deliberations.

REPORTS BY CHAIRMEN OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Chairman of the Contact Group on item 4, regarding the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, Mr. Sergey Martynov of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Mr. MARTYNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The Contact Group on agenda item 4 has held four meetings so far. It decided to take as the basis of its work the compilation of proposals relating to the recommendations on item 4 contained in the Disarmament Commission's report (A/44/42) to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session.

(Mr. Martynov, Byelorussian SSR)

The Group also agreed on the organization and method of work, and then undertook a survey of recommendations that had not been agreed upon, as a result of which it identified some where there was thought to be a possibility of progress. A series of consultations concerning those recommendations was organized. The consultations are still going on. They will take some time, because of the complexity of some of the matters under review. As the consultations are concluded, the Contact Group will take a decision on the results.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all delegations for their readiness to take part in our work at an energetic pace, and I once again ask the delegations taking part in the consultations to ensure that the consultations are effective.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Chairman of Working Group II on item 6, regarding the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, Ambassador Roberto Garcia Moritan of Argentina.

Mr. GARCIA MORITAN (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The Working Group that it is my pleasure to chair has met five times in formal session. We have also had open-ended consultations. As a result of our work, we have completed a paragraph-by-paragraph first reading of the text contained in the Disarmament Commission's report to the General Assembly last year (A/44/42). That document has been enhanced with a significant number of additional ideas.

We have now begun final drafting of the document. Accordingly, I am now working on a preliminary text which will be considered on the basis of the open-ended consultations this afternoon. I intend at the next meeting of the Working Group tomorrow to begin a paragraph-by-paragraph consideration of this preliminary document. The document will reflect part of the discussions we held last week and this week.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Indonesia, Ambassador Nugroho Wisnumurti, as Co-ordinator of the Consultation Group on item 7 regarding naval armaments and disarmament.

Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia): The Consultation Group on item 7 regarding naval armaments and disarmament has had four meetings. The Group agreed to use the working paper of the Chairman of the Consultation Group on item 7 at the 1989 session of the Disarmament Commission (A/CN.10/134) as the basis for discussion. At the first two meetings the Consultation Group held a general discussion on the document. In the course of the discussion, the working paper submitted by Finland, Indonesia and Sweden (A/CN.10/139) was introduced. In addition, concrete proposals were made by the representatives of China, France, New Zealand, the Soviet Union and Sweden.

At the third meeting, the Co-ordinator of the Consultation Group introduced a draft Chairman's paper (A/CN.10/1990/Item 7/CRP.1) as his first attempt to reflect the views expressed and the proposals submitted at the plenary meeting and the meetings of the Consultation Group. At the fourth meeting yesterday the Consultation Group had a general discussion on document A/CN.10/1990/Item 7/CRP.1, which will be continued at its fifth meeting this afternoon.

The Co-ordinator of the Consultation Group hopes that by tomorrow he will be in a position to produce a revision of the draft Chairman's working paper to reflect the general trends of the discussion better. At this stage a paragraph-by-paragraph discussion on the revised draft will be held.

As to the nature of the document to be produced as a result of the work of the Consultation Group, it was agreed that the Consultation Group would make serious efforts to produce a consensus text of the Chairman's working paper.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

I wish to conclude by expressing my sincere appreciation to the representatives participating in the substantive and open-ended consultations for their views, proposals and contributions. Hard work remains to be done, and the Co-ordinator will continue to rely on the co-operation and goodwill of all delegations concerned so as to enable the consultation to bear fruitful results.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Chairman of Working Group III on item 8, regarding conventional disarmament, Ambassador Skjold Mellbin of Denmark.

Mr. MELLBIN (Denmark): Working Group III has held seven meetings. At the end of last year's session the Group, on the basis of a Chairman's draft, had registered tentative agreement on the structure of a report and on some of its substantive paragraphs. From this point of departure the Group this year has made some further progress in the course of the meetings it has had so far, and the work continues. It is too early to make a meaningful evaluation of the likely outcome of the Group's endeavours.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Chairman of Working Group IV on item 9, regarding the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade, Ambassador Emeka Ayo Azikiwe of Nigeria.

Mr. AZIKIWE (Nigeria): I wish first to express my sincere appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Commission for allowing me to preside over the work of Working Group IV on the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade.

In General Assembly resolution 44/119 H of 15 December 1989, the Commission is requested to finalize the preparation of elements of a draft resolution to be entitled "Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade" and to submit them to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session for consideration and adoption.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

The Working Group has had four meetings. At the first it took a decision on how to proceed, by agreeing to use in principle working paper A/CN.10/135 as a working basis. In my view, commonly shared by members of the Working Group, that document accurately reflects the stage of work on the subject of the Decade at the end of last year's substantive session of the Commission.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

At its past three meetings the Working Group engaged in a first reading of the paper in order to identify the areas of agreement and some wording that might require modification in view of the changing positive developments in the international situation. The result of that exercise has given me the impression that there seems to be a general wish among delegations to prepare a concise and forward-looking document that could command consensus. It is my intention to submit to the Working Group this afternoon, for its consideration, a working document reflecting the results of the first-reading exercise. I am confident that the general wish expressed by delegations to adopt a consensus text on the decade, in the spirit of co-operation demonstrated so far, will enable us to carry on our successful work.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Chairman of the Consultation Group on agenda item 10, regarding objective information on military matters, Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner of Austria.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): The Consultation Group on agenda item 10, objective information on military matters, has so far held four meetings - two on 10 May and two on 14 May.

The first two meetings of the Consultation Group were devoted to a debate in principle on the agenda item; the third, to the significance of objective information as related to security and disarmament; and the fourth, to the clarification of terminology and the definition of the terms used in resolution 44/116 E.

In this context, I wish to draw the attention of the participants in the United Nations Disarmament Commission to the fact that, in accordance with the compromise reached under your able chairmanship, Sir, it is understood that consideration of agenda item 10 will be at a preliminary stage during the 1990

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

substantive session, and that we shall not engage in any negotiations on a text on the subject. I have the impression, however, that so far we have had a very important and useful debate on the issue. We are continuing that debate. We shall have three more substantive meetings - one today and two tomorrow. That is actually within the time-frame of the compromise proposal worked out under your able chairmanship, Sir.

Finally, I express my deep gratitude to all the participants in the Consultation Group.

The CHAIRMAN: We have heard the oral progress reports on all the agenda items under consideration by the United Nations Disarmament Commission except the item regarding the South African nuclear capability. The Chairman of the Working Group on that item, Ambassador Rana of Nepal, is on his way to this meeting.

While awaiting his arrival, I would say this: As members may recall, at its first plenary meeting, on 7 May, the Commission adopted the text - contained in document A/CN.10/137 - of "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission". Among other things in the document, there is a question of universal concern - namely, the working agenda for our next substantive session, in 1991, since the Commission decided to conclude at the current session all substantive agenda items except item 10, regarding objective information on military matters.

A number of delegations have approached me and expressed their preliminary views on this question. Therefore, today I simply wish to draw members' attention to the issue, on which they may wish to start informal consultations directly or through their respective groups. If, as we hope, some results are achieved by next week from the informal consultations on the matter, members may wish to air their opinions, however preliminary, on it, with a view simply to facilitating our handling of the agenda for the next session of the Commission.

(The Chairman)

Although perhaps it is premature at this stage, we could start consultations on what should be included in the agenda of the next session. It might be useful to direct the consultations towards finding some kind of general criteria on the basis of which the agenda for the next session of the Commission could be considered.

I now call on Ambassador Rana of Nepal, Chairman of the Working Group on the South African nuclear capability, to make an oral report.

Mr. RANA (Nepal): Working Group I, on the nuclear capability of South Africa, held three meetings. One was a formal meeting, at which we exchanged views, and there were two informal consultations.

On the basis of the informal consultations, I have been asked by the Group to prepare a document that would reflect the various points of view but that would possibly command consensus. I am at the point of preparing that document. We shall be having a meeting this afternoon for further exchanges of view. Perhaps by next week we shall be in a better position to report to the Commission on our progress.

The CHAIRMAN: Does any representative wish to comment on the reports of the subsidiary groups that have been made today?

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): With respect to the report just presented by Ambassador Wisnumurti of Indonesia, who is acting as a friend of the Chair, my delegation finds it necessary to recall that, as stated by you, Mr. Chairman, at the opening meeting of this session of the Disarmament Commission on 7 May, consultations on agenda item 7 are held under your own responsibility. Consequently, those consultations are not taking place in a subsidiary body established by this Commission.

The CHAIRMAN: I take note of the remarks of the representative of the United States. Ambassador Wisnumurti was conducting consultations on behalf of the Chairman.

It is my intention to hold a meeting of the Committee of the Whole on Monday, 21 May, immediately after our plenary meeting in the morning. As I stated earlier, at that meeting we may hear some preliminary views on the results of the informal consultations regarding how we should proceed on the question of agenda items for 1991. As I stated, perhaps it would be useful in the consultations to start consideration of the criteria on the basis of which the agenda items for the next session could be considered. I hope that at that meeting on 21 May we shall be able to hear some views on how we should address that question. There will be ample time for us to consider this question, but I hope that an exchange of views will take place at the next plenary meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

As there are no comments, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to proceed accordingly.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.