DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 19 December 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. SILOVIC (Yugoslavia)

- Election of the Chairman and other Officers for 1991
- Statement by the Secretary

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The meeting was called to order at 12 noon.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND OTHER OFFICERS FOR 1991

The CHAIRMAN: Owing to his absence on an important mission abroad, the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission, Ambassador Nana Sutresna of Indonesia, has asked me to chair this meeting with a view to advancing the business of the current organizational session. As members may recall, at our last meeting, held on 4 December, we considered and took decisions on almost all matters related to the next substantive session of the Commission, to be held from 22 April to 13 May 1991, except for two issues: first, completion of the election of officers for 1991 and, secondly, the appointment of Chairmen of subsidiary bodies.

In that connection, I am pleased to announce that as a result of consultations the following regional groups have nominated their candidates for vice-chairmanships of the Commission for 1991:

The Group of African States has reached agreement on proposing Cameroon for one of the vice-chairmanships; consultations are still under way on a candidate for the second vice-chairmanship from the African group.

The Group of Eastern European States has endorsed the candidatures of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic and the Republic of Poland for vice-chairmanships of the Commission.

As there is no comment, I take it that the Commission wishes to elect the representatives of those countries as Vice-Chairmen of the Commission for 1991, by acclamation.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: One vice-chairmanship, from the African Group, remains to be filled.

I should like to express my warm congratulations to the Vice-Chairmen who have been elected to their important posts.
(The Chairman)

The next matter is the appointment of chairmen of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission. As a result of extensive consultations within and among the regional groups, I am pleased to announce the following:

The Group of Eastern European States has endorsed the candidature of Ambassador Andre Erdős of Hungary for the chairmanship of Working Group I on objective information on military matters.

The Group of African States has agreed to propose the candidature of a representative of Egypt to the chairmanship of Working Group II, on the process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons. The African Group will be in a position at a later stage to announce the name of the person who will chair that working group.

It is established practice that the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission should chair the Committee of the Whole to deal in an informal manner with all matters relating to the work of the Commission. The chairmanship for 1991 will fall to the Group of Western European and Other States.

As there is no objection to those arrangements, I take it that the Disarmament Commission wishes to make those appointments to the chairmanships of the Commission's subsidiary bodies for 1991.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that consultations are still under way among the regional groups concerned on the endorsement of candidates for the chairmanships of Working Groups III and IV of the Disarmament Commission in 1991. I therefore intend to convene another plenary meeting, on Friday, 21 December, to conclude this organizational session. As members are aware, in accordance with the
adopted "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission", the Commission must complete the appointment of chairmen of its subsidiary bodies for next year. I appeal to the regional groups concerned to expedite their nomination of candidates for the remaining chairmanships of subsidiary bodies.

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Disarmament Commission, who will make a statement on the question of meeting services.

Mr. LIN (Secretary of the Commission): I have been requested by the Secretariat's Department of Conference Services to provide members of the Disarmament Commission with the following statistical information regarding the utilization of the conference servicing resources available to the Commission at its 1990 substantive session.

The 1990 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission was held from 7 to 29 May, a period of three weeks plus one working day. A total of 61 meetings was planned; thus, 183 hours with full meeting services were made available to the Commission. Because of the adoption in advance of the Commission's programme of work, no meeting was cancelled during the entire period.
As to the utilization of services in terms of hours, the following facts should be noted. According to the statistical report provided by the Department of Conference Services, 48 hours and 10 minutes were not used owing to late starting of meetings and 36 hours and 40 minutes were not used owing to early ending of meetings. This makes a total of 84 hours and 50 minutes in which full meeting services were not utilized because of late starting and early ending of meetings.

In percentage terms, the rate of utilization of conference servicing resources available at the 1990 substantive session of the Commission was approximately 55 per cent. However, it should be pointed out that this rate did not reflect the long hours of extensive consultations in which seven subsidiary bodies were engaged on various subjects during the session.

As a high, politically oriented disarmament machinery, the Commission depends a great deal upon informal consultations for the solution of controversial issues before it. It seems to be evident that the successful conclusion of almost all substantive agenda items and the adoption of a number of concrete recommendations on four items by consensus at the 1990 substantive session may well overshadow the somewhat unfavourable rate of utilization of meeting services.

The CHAIRMAN: As I have already said, the next meeting of the organizational session will be held on Friday, 21 December, at 10.30 a.m. I again urge the regional groups to conclude their consultations, both inside the groups and between them, so that we may fill all the remaining empty posts.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.