



General Assembly

UNITED NATIONS
DEPARTMENT FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS
REFERENCE LIBRARY

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CN.10/PV.79
25 May 1984

ENGLISH

DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 25 May 1984 at 10 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. GBEHO

(Ghana)

- Reports by Chairmen of Working Groups
- Programme of work

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages, preferably in the same language as the text to which they refer. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also, if possible, incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-0750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

REPORTS BY CHAIRMEN OF WORKING GROUPS

The CHAIRMAN: As decided earlier, this plenary meeting of the Disarmament Commission is being held in order to hear the Chairmen of the Working Groups, who will inform us of the progress that has been made in their respective Groups, and to hear any statements delegations may wish to make in relation to the Commission's work.

These will, I believe, be the last progress reports to be expected from the Chairmen of the Working Groups. Therefore, it might be useful if they provided us with more details of the activities of their respective Groups than were provided at our last plenary meeting, so that we can have a more or less clear idea about the state of the Commission's work before we begin the fourth and last meeting of this session, on Tuesday.

As in the past, I shall call on the Chairmen of the Working Groups in the numerical order of those Groups.

I call first on the representative of Romania, the Chairman of Working Group I, dealing with the item on the reduction of military budgets.

Mr. DIACONU (Romania), Chairman of Working Group I (interpretation from French): Unfortunately, the report that I can submit this morning is not very different from the one I submitted a week ago.

The Working Group continued its consideration of the guidelines for the future action of States, on the question of the reduction of military budgets, on the basis of well-known documents. We considered all the suggestions and proposals submitted by various delegations. Some of those proposals and suggestions have been included in a text that I would describe as a consolidated or synoptic text.

Nevertheless, I must say that the deep differences on some of the proposals and suggestions persist and that the Working Group has not so far been able to overcome them.

Yesterday I submitted to the Working Group a report taking note of the stage we had reached in the consideration of the proposals and suggestions on the guidelines for the reduction of military budgets. We shall certainly continue in our remaining meetings to make progress and to improve the consolidated text that we now have before us. That applies also to our consideration of the report that we must submit to the Committee of the Whole and the Disarmament Commission.

(Mr. Diaconu, Chairman,
Working Group I)

Working Group I is having another meeting this afternoon, but I hope that the Secretariat and delegations will make every effort to ensure that we can hold another meeting at the beginning of next week as I am not sure that we shall be able to finish our report today.

That is the interim report that I am able to make at this stage of our work.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Chairman of Working Group II, on the nuclear capability of South Africa, Ambassador Hepburn.

Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas), Chairman of Working Group II: After eight meetings, Working Group II has made significant progress in reaching agreement on the subject of the nuclear capability of South Africa.

Of the 11 paragraphs and seven sub-paragraphs, the Group has been able, after extensive discussions and informal consultations, to agree on all but four, which still present difficulties. There are three other paragraphs on which I am confident agreement could be reached through further informal consultations.

It is heartening to be able to report that the representatives who participated in the deliberations have performed their tasks in a very co-operative manner. While a solution to efforts extended still seems elusive, there is also a feeling of optimism that a consensus text will emerge for presentation in due time.

In this vein, delegations are urged to continue directing their negotiations towards the concepts of interdependence and political will, which are the necessary ingredients for concrete progress.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Chairman of Working Group III, on confidence-building measures, Ambassador Wegener.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany), Chairman of Working Group III: I am pleased to present a brief progress report on the work of Working Group III. Happily, in this instance there is a good deal of truth in the word "progress", because the Group has indeed made notable progress.

In the four meetings accorded to the Working Group this week, delegations succeeded in covering practically all of the subheadings contained in the work schedule that was agreed on at the outset. There are now relatively detailed texts on the entire range of problems which the Group is to cover and a set of guidelines is beginning to take shape.

(Mr. Wegener, Chairman,
Working Group III)

The Working Group has so far failed to address a final part of its work: a more detailed catalogue or typology of confidence-building measures. One reason for this has been doubts on the part of some delegations as to whether such a catalogue could or should be elaborated at the present session.

In the course of the drafting work, wide use was made of the available documents and further conceptual progress was made. While the Working Group agreed that no part of the text could be considered adopted until delegations had had an opportunity to see the guidelines in their entirety, there was no opposition to a good number of the texts proposed and only small divergences existed on a number of other texts.

I do not wish to sound over-optimistic. A good number of texts have, of course, not yet achieved consensus and these relate to some of the most delicate problems. The remaining divergences of view are particularly regrettable since, obviously, the time available to the Working Group has become very limited indeed.

You, Sir, have kindly consented to allow additional meetings to be scheduled at the beginning of next week. One full meeting of the Working Group will take place on the morning of Tuesday, 29 May. An additional meeting will be held on the morning of Wednesday, 30 May. I reserve the possibility of scheduling an evening meeting in addition to that on Tuesday evening and will seek the concurrence of the Group if such an additional meeting proves necessary.

I am grateful for these additional opportunities to pursue and, if possible, conclude our work. As Chairman of the Working Group, I am determined to use the available time as fully as possible in an attempt to attain our goal: the adoption by consensus of a complete set of guidelines for confidence-building measures.

The course of action I adopt must take account of the time constraints. I have therefore informed the Working Group that I shall use the forthcoming long weekend to elaborate a complete, composite draft of the guidelines under my own responsibility. This paper will attempt to reflect any consensus that has already been achieved and to translate as faithfully as possible any consensus on substance into appropriate language. The paper will also indicate those paragraphs on which there has been no meeting of minds and will, in those instances, fully reflect, in the wording provided by delegations, those amendments that still await further consideration.

(Mr. Wegener, Chairman,
Working Group III)

I will undertake that drafting effort in order to advance our work and, specifically, to maintain the welcome momentum that has so far characterized the work of the Group. It is my hope that the draft will find wide acceptance, at least as regards those portions on which detailed additional amendments have not been submitted.

My text will be available on Monday, and I would suggest to those delegations that wish to have it before our Tuesday meeting that they keep in touch with my delegation.

I intend to devote Tuesday and Wednesday to an attempt to clear up any remaining difficulties. I am confident that I will be able to count on the same excellent spirit of co-operation that has marked the deliberations of the Working Group during the past week and this week.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Chairman of Working Group IV, on the relationship between disarmament and development, Ambassador Bhatt.

Mr. BHATT (Nepal), Chairman of Working Group IV: The working group on the relationship between disarmament and development has held several formal and informal meetings since I reported last. As I said at that time, France, India and Norway presented a draft report on the item under consideration. Since then, Mongolia has also presented a draft report on behalf of some other socialist countries.

These two draft reports were discussed in the Working Group and I was asked to prepare a draft based upon their discussions. Before preparing that draft report, I met with delegations that had presented those two drafts in a contact group.

In the light of those discussions and of consultations with other delegations, I have prepared a draft report, which will be put before the Working Group today. The Group will meet again on Wednesday if necessary.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now report on the work of the informal working group on item 4, which is under my chairmanship. Since last Friday when I presented to the Commission a report on the work of that group, the group has continued the first reading of annex VIII to the report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, together with all the other proposals submitted at the present session.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: As members know, the next group meetings after today will take place on Tuesday to enable the members to adopt their reports in final form. If the groups can complete their work today, Friday, so much the better for the Commission; if not, I propose that they meet next Tuesday and endeavour to conclude their work.

Once the Working Groups have concluded their work and adopted their reports, the Committee of the Whole should be able to consider those reports and adopt them on Thursday. By then delegations will have received the procedural part of the Commission's report, which together with the reports of the Working Groups will constitute the draft report of the Commission. That draft text will be considered and adopted on Friday, following which we shall proceed to the final phase of our work, which is to hear the concluding statements by delegations.

The list of speakers for our concluding meeting will be opened on Tuesday, 29 May and closed at noon on Thursday, 31 May.

That in brief is the outline of our programme for the next and final week. I hope I have been clear, in particular with regard to the dates and the need to submit the reports of the Working Groups beginning this evening, Friday, but not later than noon on Wednesday. The Secretariat will need time to prepare the documents and to have them distributed in all the working languages to enable us to conclude our work on Friday. Therefore, I should be grateful if all the Working Groups would endeavour to meet the deadlines.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We agree with the work timetable for next week that has been distributed, but we have a question. It is proposed to hold meetings of Working Group IV, on the relationship between disarmament and development, on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. As I understand it, today we shall be beginning discussion of the report prepared under the guidance of the Chairman of that Group and might even be able to adopt it. In any case, I see no need to plan two meetings of Working Group IV next week. On the other hand, it seems to me that Working Group III, on confidence-building measures, which - as its Chairman mentioned today - is engaged in a very intensive and active debate, will probably need more time. I am in favour of allocating an additional meeting to Working Group III since, as its Chairman noted, it has not yet begun considering the list of measures and many delegations, including my own, have stated that they will define their position on the overall work of that Group in the light of the discussion on confidence-

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Hence I ask that we consider whether it is really necessary to schedule two additional meetings for Working Group IV and if we could allocate the free time to Working Group III.

Mr. STEPHANOU (Greece): I wish to support the proposal made by the Chairman of Working Group I that, if necessary, there should be an additional meeting of the Working Group on Tuesday or Wednesday of next week, whichever is more convenient to the Secretariat.

Mr. BHATT (Nepal), Chairman of Working Group IV: I share the hope of the representative of the Soviet Union that we shall be able to finish the work of Working Group IV today. In my report to the Commission, I said that, if necessary, we could hold an additional meeting on Tuesday or Wednesday. We do not need to hold two additional meetings.

The CHAIRMAN: The timetable now before the Commission was prepared yesterday, when it was anticipated that one of the Working Groups would conclude its work today. As it has turned out, that is not going to be the case, therefore there will have to be some amendments to the programme. We remain flexible on that, and the Secretariat will be holding consultations with all the Chairmen of Working Groups in order to amend next week's programme accordingly.

I take in good faith the proposal just made by the representative of the Soviet Union, supported by the Chairman of Working Group IV. The Secretariat will take that into account in amending the programme.

I have also asked the Secretariat to make arrangements for the holding of night meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday, if possible. It is now evident that we are all slightly behind schedule in our work, and the time available to the Commission, if it is equitably shared among the various groups, will not be sufficient to conclude our work. Therefore, I ask members to be prepared for night meetings next week, or at least a night meeting on Tuesday, in order to help us to conclude our work on time. I advise members to consult the Journal next Tuesday morning to see what meetings are scheduled.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.