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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON PROHIBITIONS OR RESTRICTIONS OF USE
OF CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS WHICH MAY BE DEEMED TO BE
EXCESSIVELY INJURIOUS OR TO HAVE INDISCRIMINATE EFFECTS

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8TH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 27 September 1979, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. VOUTOV (Bulgaria)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.25 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF PROHIBITIONS OR RESTRICTIONS OF USE OF CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS
WHICH MAY BE DEEMED TO BE EXCESSIVELY INJURIOUS OR TO HAVE INDISCRIMINATE EFFECTS
(agenda item 3) (continued)

Draft resolution on small calibre weapon systems (A/CONF.95/CW/L.2)

1. Mr. BRING (Sweden) drew attention to a number of changes to be made to the draft resolution. In the second preambular paragraph, the word "unnecessary" should qualify the word "increase", so that the paragraph would read: "Anxious to prevent an unnecessary increase of the injurious effects of such weapon systems,". Operative paragraph 5 should read: "Recommends that an international scientific symposium on wound ballistics be held in late 1980 or in 1981 under the auspices of this United Nations Conference;". He emphasized that the symposium would be aimed at improving international research into small calibre weapon systems and would in no way be conceived as a follow-up to the Conference. Finally, operative paragraph 7 would read: "Appeals to all governments to exercise restraint in such development of small calibre weapon systems as would cause an unnecessary escalation of the injurious effects of such systems.".
2. Mr. WOLFE (Canada), supported by Mr. CASTRO (Philippines), endorsed the draft resolution. However, he was in favour of using the word "care" rather than "restraint" in operative paragraph 7, since the present wording was ambiguous.
3. Mr. KALSHOVEN (Netherlands) considered that the words "in war" should be inserted after the words "to abstain" in the third preambular paragraph. He would also like to know the estimated cost of the proposed symposium.
4. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) said that, in the last line of operative paragraph 3 of the English text, it would be more correct grammatically to use the preposition "of" instead of "by". Furthermore, in the first line of operative paragraph 4 of the English text, the words "jointly and individually" appeared, wrongly, to qualify the verb "Invites"; he suggested that they should be inserted after the word "research" in the second line.
5. Mr. SADI (Jordan), referring to the Netherlands delegation's proposal to insert the words "in war" in the third preambular paragraph, said that he would prefer the expression "in armed conflicts". Although he understood the reason for the amendment to paragraph 7 proposed by the Canadian delegation, he thought that the word "care" watered down the text; a stronger term should be found.
6. Mr. VANDERPUYE (Ghana) agreed that, in the third preambular paragraph, it would be preferable to refer to armed conflict rather than to war.
7. Mr. KOBIALKA (Poland) said he found the draft resolution, and particularly paragraph 5, unsatisfactory. He failed to see why the proposed international symposium should be held under United Nations auspices. It would be preferable for the findings of the symposium to be transmitted directly to the Conference.

8. Mr. MATHANJUKI (Kenya) said he found the draft resolution under consideration generally satisfactory. However, it would perhaps be appropriate to include a new first preambular paragraph recalling General Assembly resolution 32/152.
9. Mr. MAREI (Egypt) proposed that operative paragraph 7 should have the following wording: "Appeals to all Governments, until the findings of the proposed symposium are available, to exercise due care in such development of small calibre weapon systems, so as to avoid the possible unnecessary injurious effects of such systems".
10. Mr. SKALA (Sweden) expressed his general satisfaction with the comments made. The word "care", proposed by the Canadian delegation for inclusion in paragraph 7, was perhaps somewhat weak and, as suggested by the representative of Egypt, could perhaps be strengthened by the addition of the adjective "due". On the other hand, he failed to see why the words "until the findings of the proposed symposium are available" should be inserted in that paragraph, since it was not sure that the results would be entirely conclusive. He therefore asked the representative of Egypt not to insist on that point. The comments made by the representative of Pakistan were most pertinent. Finally, "armed conflicts", appeared preferable to the word "war" in the third preambular paragraph, since it was a more modern concept.
11. The sponsors of the draft resolution were agreeable to the inclusion of a reference to General Assembly resolution 32/152 in a new first preambular paragraph, as suggested by the representative of Kenya. With regard to the question raised by the representative of the Netherlands concerning the financial implications of the proposed international symposium, Sweden was willing to meet all the costs without the United Nations or any Government having to bear any part of them; however, his country would be happy if a contribution to expenses were made. Replying to the remarks made by the representative of Poland, he emphasized that United Nations sponsorship could be useful; while in no way detracting from the scientific nature of the work, it would help to make that work better known. Furthermore, scientific meetings took place in many countries every year under United Nations auspices.
12. Mr. ISSRAELIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in general, his country supported all efforts to prohibit or restrict the use of cruel weapons. His delegation considered that the international symposium proposed in paragraph 5 would have that objective and endorsed the idea of holding it. The USSR had already participated in symposia of that kind, inter alia in Sweden, and it also organized such meetings itself. His delegation therefore viewed the proposal with favour. Nevertheless, it gave rise to certain problems.
13. The symposium could conceivably be held under the auspices of the United Nations, but the idea of holding it under the auspices of the Conference itself caused difficulties for a number of delegations, for while it was foreseeable that the work of the Conference would not have been completed by 28 September, it was questionable whether that work could still be in progress in 1980 or in 1981. If the Conference had concluded its work by that time, the symposium could no longer be held under its auspices. Moreover, there seemed to be little justification for the request made to the Secretary-General in paragraph 6, since Sweden was proposing to meet all the costs of the symposium. In paragraph 4, Governments were invited

to make the conclusions of their research available "to all interested parties". The meaning of that expression was not clear and it was permissible to ask whom it covered; the USSR could not enter into such a vague commitment.

14. His delegation considered that symposia of the kind proposed deserved encouragement and hoped that they would command greater attention than in the past; in that connexion, the support of the Committee on Disarmament would be very useful. He therefore proposed that the following should be added as a last preambular paragraph:

"Noting the role that the Committee on Disarmament can play in the study of questions related to prohibitions or restrictions of use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects,".

15. Following upon the remarks he had made, he also proposed the following amendments: in operative paragraph 4, the last part of the sentence after the words "small calibre weapon systems" should be deleted; in paragraph 5, the last part of the sentence following "1981" should be replaced by the words "and that the results of that symposium should be made available to the Committee on Disarmament"; finally, paragraph 6 should be deleted.

16. Mr. LINDSTRØM (Norway) said he supported the proposal embodied in the draft resolution since the problem of small calibre weapons had not, in his view, been studied in sufficient detail at the Conference and the proposal was likely to give the discussion a broader scientific base. It was quite natural for the international symposium to be held under the auspices of the United Nations or of the Conference, to which it would be a follow-up.

17. Time was needed to ponder the amendments submitted by the representative of the Soviet Union before taking a position on them. The participation of the Committee on Disarmament, which that representative had proposed, raised a question that had not yet been resolved; it might be wise not to introduce that question into the draft resolution.

18. Mr. SADI (Jordan) said he had considered the draft resolution before the Committee to be a proposal which would allow the Conference to achieve something concrete and had been grateful to the sponsors for that. However, far-reaching amendments jeopardizing the modest aims of the text had been submitted by the representative of the USSR. It was to be hoped that the Soviet delegation would show flexibility and **would** not insist upon all its proposals being accepted; certain substantive amendments it had proposed created difficulties for various delegations. In particular, although the Committee on Disarmament played an important role and did an appreciable amount of work, its membership was limited, whereas the Conference, set up by the General Assembly, brought together all countries. That characteristic of the Conference was particularly important in the present case, since small calibre weapons were more relevant to smaller countries. Furthermore, the mandate of the Conference should extend until 1981 and beyond; even if it succeeded in concluding treaties on incendiary weapons and on landmines and booby-traps by that date, it would still have to deal with other types of weapon. The objection made by the representative of the USSR in that connexion was unfounded, for the Conference would have to continue its work until 1981 and beyond.

19. The wording of operative paragraph 7 still posed problems, since the word "Appeals" was not strong enough. His delegation therefore proposed the following text: "Appeals to all Governments to abstain from the development of small calibre weapon systems which would or could cause unnecessary injurious effects."
20. Mr. KALSHOVEN (Netherlands) said that his delegation could accept the Jordanian proposal to insert the words "in armed conflicts" in the third preambular paragraph. His delegation wished to know whether the provisions of operative paragraphs 5 and 6 would entail financial implications not only for Governments, but also for the United Nations.
21. Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary) said he supported the idea of holding an international scientific symposium, as proposed by Sweden. However, his delegation agreed with the Soviet delegation that the expertise of the Committee on Disarmament would be of great assistance in that connexion.
22. Mr. MARJER (Pakistan) said that his delegation also endorsed the provisions of the draft resolution, particularly those presented by Sweden. His delegation had no strong views concerning the possible involvement of the Committee on Disarmament in the activities proposed and it could agree to the Soviet amendment on that point. However, it found the Soviet amendment to operative paragraph 4 less satisfactory: to truncate the paragraph in the way proposed would deprive it of all meaning.
23. Mr. ISSRAELIYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that paragraph 4 undoubtedly served a useful purpose, since it provided that Governments should keep each other informed and should jointly carry out further research, but the second part of the paragraph should be deleted because it was somewhat ambiguous.
24. Mr. MIHAJLOVIĆ (Yugoslavia) said he supported the provisions proposed by Sweden. The additional preambular paragraph proposed by Kenya also seemed desirable. With regard to operative paragraph 4, it should be possible to reconcile the different points of view by wording the second part along the following lines: "... and to make those findings and conclusions available to the United Nations General Assembly;"
25. Mr. MORSE (Uruguay) said that the intention of the sponsors in calling for the proposed international scientific symposium to be held under United Nations auspices had been to underline the importance of the problem. They considered that such a provision would enable the medical effects of small calibre weapon systems to be studied before those systems were manufactured and used. The symposium would also provide countries with very important scientific and medical information, thus giving them a better knowledge of the new medical factors related to the types of injury caused by such systems.
26. Mr. THUN (German Democratic Republic) supported the proposals made by the Soviet Union concerning the addition of a further preambular paragraph and the deletion of the second part of operative paragraph 4. As for paragraph 5, the concern expressed by Norway could perhaps be reconciled with the Soviet amendment by the adoption of the following wording: "5. Recommends that an international scientific symposium on wound ballistics be held in late 1980 or in 1981, bearing in mind that the results of the symposium would be available to the Committee on Disarmament and to other Governments, if they so wish;"

27. Mr. LUO (China) said he feared that the establishment of a link between the work of the Committee on Disarmament and that of the Conference might jeopardize the adoption of the draft resolution. The Committee on Disarmament had other problems to resolve, in particular, those relating to large calibre weapons, and the question of small calibre weapon systems should be taken up within the framework of the Conference, as had been proposed by Sweden.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.