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Agenda item 73

RATIONALIZATION OF THE WORK AND REFORM OF THE AGENDA OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Peter GOOSEN (South Africa)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Rationalization of the work and reform of the agenda of the First Committee" was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-ninth session in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/87 of 16 December 1993.
2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1994, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.
3. At its 2nd meeting, on 13 October, the First Committee decided to hold an exchange of views on agenda item 73. The exchange of views took place at the 17th and 18th meetings, on 10 November (see A/C.1/49/PV.17 and 18). Action on the draft resolution on the item took place at the 22nd meeting, on 17 November (see A/C.1/49/PV.22).
4. In connection with item 73, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the rationalization of the work and reform of the agenda of the First Committee (A/49/579).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/49/L.49 AND Rev.1

5. On 14 November, Austria, Ecuador, Japan and South Africa submitted a draft resolution entitled "Rationalization of the work and reform of the agenda of the First Committee" (A/C.1/49/L.49).

6. At the 22nd meeting, on 17 November, the Chairman of the Committee, on behalf of the same sponsors, introduced a revised draft resolution (A/C.1/49/L.49/Rev.1), which contained the following changes:

(a) A new operative paragraph 4 was added, which read:

"4. Requests the First Committee to keep under review the programme of work adopted under paragraph 1 of the present resolution";

(b) Former operative paragraph 4, which had read:

"4. Urges the Secretary-General to provide, taking into account existing resource constraints, the appropriate means, additional conference space and resources to permit the implementation of the work programme for the fiftieth session of the First Committee"

was renumbered as operative paragraph 5 and revised to read:

"5. Urges the Secretary-General, from within existing resources, to allocate appropriate support and a higher proportion of available conference space to the First Committee during the fiftieth session to enable it adequately to implement its work programme";

(c) Former operative paragraph 5 was renumbered as operative paragraph 6.

7. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee made a statement concerning the programme budget implications of the revised draft resolution.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.49/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 9).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

9. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Rationalization of the work and reform of the agenda of the First Committee

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 47/54 G of 8 April 1993 and 48/87 of 16 December 1993,

Recalling its decision 1/ of 14 September 1994,

1/ See A/48/688/Add.1, para. 7.

Desiring to enhance the effectiveness of its First Committee to fulfil its role and responsibility in the sphere of disarmament and international security,

Stressing the need to organize the work of the First Committee in the most rational and effective way possible,

Recognizing the need to allow adequate time during the annual sessions of the First Committee to conduct intensive and focused consultations on the items under consideration in the First Committee,

Encouraged by the thematic approach adopted by the First Committee in the second phase of its work during the forty-ninth session,

1. Decides to adopt for the proceedings of the First Committee and pursuant to the thematic approach set out in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 48/87 a phased approach with respect to the items on the agenda of the Committee, as follows:

(a) General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items;

(b) Informal thematic discussion of specific items under consideration in the First Committee;

(c) Consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items;

(d) Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items;

(e) General debate, consideration of and action on draft resolutions submitted under the item entitled "Question of Antarctica";

2. Decides also that the number of meetings of the First Committee during the regular session of the General Assembly shall be recommended by the members of the Bureau of the First Committee after consultations with delegations and the Secretariat;

3. Requests the incoming Chairman of the First Committee to continue consultations on the further rationalization of the work and effective functioning of the Committee;

4. Requests the First Committee to keep under review the programme of work adopted under paragraph 1 of the present resolution;

5. Urges the Secretary-General, from within existing resources, to allocate appropriate support and a higher proportion of available conference space to the First Committee during the fiftieth session to enable it adequately to implement its work programme;

6. Decides to review the question of further rationalization and improvement of the work of the First Committee at its fiftieth session.
