



General Assembly

Seventy-second session

Official Records

Distr.: General
21 November 2017

Original: English

Sixth Committee

Summary record of the 29th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 6 November 2017, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Gafoor (Singapore)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 86: Effects of armed conflicts on treaties (continued) (A/C.6/72/L.15)

Draft resolution A/C.6/72/L.15: Effects of armed conflicts on treaties

1. *Draft resolution A/C.6/72/L.15 was adopted.*

Agenda item 175: Observer status for the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean in the General Assembly (continued) (A/C.6/72/L.16)

Draft resolution A/C.6/72/L.16: Observer status for the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and Caribbean in the General Assembly

2. *Draft resolution A/C.6/72/L.16 was adopted.*

3. **Mr. Oña-Garcés** (Ecuador), speaking in explanation of position, said that, as a sovereign, plurinational and intercultural State that recognized the existence of various cultures, each maintaining its own customs, traditions and language, Ecuador supported the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in United Nations meetings on matters of interest to them. The views, life experience and knowledge of indigenous peoples must be recognized and taken into account. Any advance in the interests of those peoples helped to ensure an improved regional balance that ensured the presence and participation of the indigenous peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Agenda item 121: Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

4. **Mr. Jaime Calderón** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that the General Assembly had an essential role to play in making the United Nations stronger, more effective and transparent; it served as the central forum for multilateral discussions and work; its competence and authority must be fully respected, together with its role in setting administrative and budgetary standards. The egalitarian, inclusive and democratic representation of Member States in the General Assembly demonstrated the universal character of the Organization and the sovereign equality of Member States.

5. CELAC remained convinced of the usefulness of organizing thematic debates to discuss specific issues of critical importance for the international community. While recognizing the improvements made in the scheduling of meetings, CELAC called on the General

Committee and the Secretariat to avoid scheduling conflicts between its plenary sessions and meetings of its subsidiary organs. The timing of important debates had a particular impact on permanent missions staffed by only a small number of officials, affecting not only their attendance but also the quality of the substantive discussions. Close cooperation and coordination must be ensured among all the principal organs, including on their agendas and programmes of work, in the interests of efficient relations, broad coherence, complementarity and mutual respect.

6. As in previous years, CELAC wished to stress that all six official languages of the Organization should be treated equally, without excuses related to budgetary constraints, and all relevant General Assembly resolutions on multilingualism should be fully and effectively implemented. CELAC also wished to highlight the usefulness of the electronic systems for sponsoring resolutions (eSponsorship) and for inscription on speakers' lists (eSpeakers), which had already been introduced in other Main Committees. The practice of sharing the provisional list of speakers through email before the plenary debate was also welcome. The eDelegate portal, however, while useful for uploading draft resolutions, needed to be made available to the coordinators of such draft resolutions to enable them to circulate messages to delegates.

7. CELAC encouraged discussion intersessionally on a possible request for the inclusion in the agenda of the seventy-third session of an item to review the regulations for the registration of treaties under Article 102 of the Charter; it was important to ensure that the regulations remained useful to Member States. CELAC welcomed General Assembly resolutions 69/321, 70/305 and 71/323, which sought to enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly and should be fully implemented. It continued to encourage the Secretary-General to take effective measures to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of posts throughout the Organization, including senior posts, and to achieve gender and geographic balance, while also maintaining the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

8. **Ms. Kalb** (Austria) said that the new possibility of cosponsoring draft resolutions online was a real improvement, as was advance notification of the speakers' list. Her delegation appreciated the efforts made to shorten the oral introductions of reports so as to allow more time for debate.

9. **Ms. Rolón Candia** (Paraguay) raised the possibility of setting aside one day for the adoption of

all the Committee's draft resolutions. That would make it easier for small delegations to organize their work.

10. **The Chair** said he would pass on the suggestion to the next Bureau but that, following discussion with members of the current Bureau, the view had been taken that, in the interests of efficiency and to give the Committee a sense of achievement as it went on to address more challenging issues, draft resolutions should be adopted as and when there was a consensus.

11. **Mr. Varankov** (Belarus) said that the practice of holding discussions on the International Law Commission's report during International Law Week, to coincide with the presence in New York of legal experts from Member States, sometimes created scheduling problems, largely because of very lengthy statements by some delegations. It would therefore be appreciated if discussions during International Law Week could focus on key points and if more active use were made of the paperSmart portal to upload statements in full, with highlighted passages as appropriate.

12. **The Chair** said that he had made that very point during the discussions on the Commission's report and that there was indeed room for improvement. Delegations might be encouraged to deliver a more succinct version of their prepared statements on the understanding that the full text would be uploaded in paperSmart. It would also be useful in future to issue guidelines to delegates in advance of International Law Week, as it might be difficult for them to summarize them on the spot.

13. Going on to introduce the provisional draft work programme of the Committee for the seventy-third session, he said that it had been prepared by the Bureau on the assumption that the Committee would commence its work on 1 October 2018, immediately after the high-level debate in the General Assembly, in order to minimize overlaps with other meetings that required the presence of Sixth Committee experts. The Bureau had also considered the possibility of 8 October as a starting date, but that did not seem to be the better option, as negotiations for the General Assembly resolution on fisheries usually began after the Sixth Committee's work had been completed and could not be postponed beyond the Thanksgiving holiday.

14. **Ms. Kalb** (Austria), **Ms. Kremžar** (Slovenia) and **Mr. Fintakpa Lamega** (Togo) said that the Committee's proposed starting date, just one week after the beginning of the high-level segment on 25 September, would cause difficulties for small delegations, since they would then have only a short time to prepare for the Committee's session.

15. **Mr. Waweru** (Kenya) said that the advance notification of the draft work programme would be useful for early planning of the Committee's work. On the question of the possible grouping together of actions on draft resolutions, he wondered whether the Bureau might wish to designate some Friday mornings for that purpose towards the end of the session, to facilitate planning by delegations.

16. **Mr. Varankov** (Belarus) said that his delegation welcomed the more pragmatic approach to planning the week when legal advisers from ministries would be present, but that small delegations would still find it difficult to ensure the participation of those experts in the discussions on at least two clusters of the International Law Commission's topics. If delegates could make their statements more concise, it might be possible to allocate one fewer day for each cluster.

17. **The Chair** said that, under the provisional draft work programme, all three clusters would be addressed in the space of one week, so that legal advisers would be able to speak on all three without staying in New York for a longer period. An additional two meetings on the third cluster had been provisionally scheduled for the following week, but only as a precaution, to give the Bureau some flexibility. Shorter statements would indeed mean that the debate on the Commission's report would not be extended beyond one week.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.