



General Assembly

Forty-ninth session

Disarmament Commission

Official Records

191st Meeting

Thursday, 1 December 1994, 10.30 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Mongbe (Benin)

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Opening of the session

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I declare open the 1994 organizational session and the 191st meeting of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

As in past years, the Commission is convened today to deal with organizational matters, including the election of a new Bureau for 1995, the appointment of the chairmen of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission and its draft provisional agenda for the next substantive session, in accordance with its reform programme, entitled "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission", which was adopted in 1990.

Adoption of the agenda (A/CN.10/L.35)

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the agenda for this organizational session, as contained in document A/CN.10/L.35.

The agenda was adopted.

Election of the Chairman and other officers of the Bureau for 1995

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): In accordance with the established principle of rotation for the chairmanship of the Commission, the candidacy for the chairmanship for 1995 should come from the Group of Asian States. In that connection, I am pleased to inform

members of the Commission that the Group of Asian States has endorsed the candidacy of Ambassador Luvsangiin Erdenechuluun of Mongolia for election to the post of Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for the year 1995.

If I hear no comments, I shall take it that it is the wish of the Commission that Ambassador Erdenechuluun of Mongolia be elected Chairman by acclamation.

It was so decided.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I now declare Ambassador Luvsangiin Erdenechuluun of Mongolia elected Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for the year 1995.

Ambassador Erdenechuluun is a distinguished diplomat of his country, who has been well known in United Nations diplomatic circles for many years, particularly for his valuable experience in the field of disarmament. He is a personal friend of mine, with whom I have worked a great deal in other bodies, here in New York and elsewhere, particularly in Jakarta. He is currently the Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations in New York. During past years he has been very active in the sessions of the General Assembly and the First Committee, as well as other important disarmament conferences and sessions of the Disarmament Commission. In particular, he has served as Chairman of the Working Group dealing with the agenda item entitled "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields". With his broad experience of the United Nations and disarmament

questions, I am convinced that under the leadership of Ambassador Erdenechuluun the Disarmament Commission will have a fruitful substantive session in 1995. On behalf of the Commission, I extend to him the warmest congratulations and wish him every success.

Mr. Erdenechuluun (Mongolia): I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all the members of the Disarmament Commission for the honour they have bestowed upon me and indeed on my country, Mongolia, by electing me as their Chairman for 1995. My special thanks go to the Group of Asian States for nominating me as their candidate to this high and responsible post.

The important role played by the Disarmament Commission in the United Nations disarmament efforts was once again reaffirmed in the respective decisions of the First Committee, which recently concluded the main part of its work. The coming year, highlighted *inter alia* by the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference, as well as the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty, promises to be eventful for the international disarmament community. I would hope that the Disarmament Commission would not fail to make its own contribution to the success of the international disarmament agenda.

The task before the Commission in 1995 is a challenging one. The Disarmament Commission will be called upon to conclude its consideration of the item entitled "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons", continue its consideration of the item entitled "International arms transfers, with particular reference to resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991", and, subject to the decision to be taken at this organizational session, begin to consider the third new item on its agenda.

My delegation counts on the cooperation and support of the members of the Commission. For our part, I assure members that the Bureau will do its very best to secure the success of the 1995 session.

Last but not least, Mr. Chairman, may I offer you and the other members of your Bureau my heartfelt congratulations on your painstaking efforts to resolve the important issues before the Disarmament Commission this year, and on the skilful and dynamic manner in which you yourself, a distinguished son of friendly Benin, discharged your responsibilities. I look forward to working together closely with the Deputy Director of the Centre for

Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Kheradi, and with Mr. Lin, Secretary of the Disarmament Commission, and his staff. I am very much counting on their competent support and cooperation.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I thank Ambassador Erdenechuluun, Permanent Representative of Mongolia and new Chairman of the Commission, for the kind words he addressed to the members of the Bureau, which I chair, and also to the Deputy Director and to the Secretary of the Commission. I should also like to thank him for all his encouraging words about the work of the Commission. Once again I extend to him my warmest congratulations.

We shall now proceed to the election of other members of the Bureau, namely, eight Vice-Chairmen and a rapporteur for 1995. In this connection, I should like to announce the following:

The Group of Asian States has endorsed the candidacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran for one vice-chairmanship.

The Group of Western European and Other States has endorsed the candidacies of the Netherlands and Sweden for vice-chairmanship.

There are no other candidacies yet endorsed. We await endorsements from the Group of African States and the Group of Eastern European States.

Is the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States able to announce its endorsements?

Mr. Ocampo (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Peru wishes to report that while it was Chairman of the Group, in November, three candidacies were received: Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay. Since there are two vice-chairmanships to be filled, it is not yet possible to present the respective candidacies. We hope that in a few days the new Chairman of the Latin American and Caribbean Group will be able to submit the Group's candidacies.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): To summarize, the Asian Group has endorsed the candidacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Group of Western European and Other States has endorsed the candidacies of the Netherlands and Sweden.

If I hear no comment, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to elect the representatives of the

forementioned countries as Vice-Chairmen of the Commission for 1995.

It was so decided.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): On behalf of all the members of the Commission, I wish to congratulate the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Netherlands and Sweden on their election to vice-chairmanship of the Commission. I appeal to the other Groups — the Group of African States, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Group of Eastern European States — to try to accelerate their efforts so that they may submit as soon as possible the names of their candidates for the vacant posts.

I wish to inform the Commission that the Group of African States was to endorse a candidate for the post of Rapporteur. Since that Group is not yet ready to do so, the appeal I have just made to it concerning the vice-chairmanship also applies to the post of Rapporteur.

Review of the draft resolutions adopted by the First Committee at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly relating to the Disarmament Commission

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As members of the Commission are aware, the First Committee of the General Assembly has adopted three draft resolutions which have specific requests in connection with the work of our Commission. To clarify matters for the members of the Commission, I should like to sum up those draft resolutions, which are expected soon to be adopted by the General Assembly.

The first draft resolution is A/C.1/49/L.5/Rev.1, which was adopted by the First Committee under agenda item 64 (a), entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission". The relevant paragraphs of the draft resolution — the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 9, 10 and 11 — read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Noting the various suggestions for possible consideration by the Disarmament Commission, at an appropriate future date, including in particular the one for reconsideration of the subject entitled 'The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields',

"2. Notes with regret that the Disarmament Commission was unable to achieve agreement on guidelines and recommendations on the agenda item entitled 'The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields', which was concluded in 1994;

"3. Notes the continuing consideration by the Disarmament Commission of its agenda item entitled 'Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons', which is to be concluded in 1995;

"4. Notes also that the Disarmament Commission held a preliminary exchange of views on its agenda item entitled 'International arms transfers, with particular reference to resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991';

"9. Recommends that the Disarmament Commission, at its 1994 organizational session, adopt the following items for consideration at its 1995 substantive session:

(a) Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons;

(b) International arms transfers, with particular reference to resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991;

*"10. Recommends also that, pursuant to the adopted three-item phased approach, the Disarmament Commission, at its 1994 organizational session, consider including in the agenda of its 1995 substantive session a new third item and, in this context, notes, *inter alia*, the following proposals: 'General guidelines for non-proliferation, with special emphasis on weapons of mass destruction' and 'Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade';*

"11. Requests the Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding four weeks during 1995 and to submit a substantive report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session".

The second draft resolution, A/C.1/49/L.4, which was adopted by the First Committee under agenda item 62, is entitled "Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the

Third Disarmament Decade". Operative paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the draft resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"1. *Decides* to undertake, at its fiftieth session, the middle of the Decade, a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade;

"2. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission, at its 1995 session, to make a preliminary assessment of the implementation of the Declaration as well as suggestions that may be put forward to ensure appropriate progress, and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session;

"3. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission to include in the agenda of its 1995 substantive session an item entitled 'Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade';

"4. *Calls upon* the Disarmament Commission to include in its assessment relevant matters which, in the view of Member States, require such review".

The third draft resolution is A/C.1/49/L.40/Rev.1, which was adopted by the First Committee under agenda item 62 (h), entitled "Measures to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional arms". Operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution reads as follows:

"1. *Invites* the Disarmament Commission to

"(a) Expedite its consideration of the agenda item on international arms transfers, with special emphasis on the adverse consequences of the illicit transfer of arms and ammunition;

"(b) Study measures to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional arms".

I have just outlined the draft resolutions which have direct relevance to the work of the Disarmament Commission.

Draft provisional agenda for the 1995 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): In the preparation of the draft provisional agenda for the substantive session to be held in May 1995, account has

been taken of the relevant draft resolutions adopted by the First Committee, which I have just mentioned a moment ago. For the convenience of the members of the Commission, the contents of the draft provisional agenda have been published in document A/CN.10/1994/CRP.6, which has been distributed to all members.

I wish to point out that items 4 and 5, which are substantive items, were taken up at the 1994 substantive session. As members will recall, at the substantive session this year the Commission agreed to continue considering item 4 and to conclude that item at its 1995 substantive session. As members will also recall, at the substantive session held from 18 April to 9 May this year, the Disarmament Commission concluded one substantive item: "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields".

Pursuant to the three-item phased approach, which was adopted in 1993, two priority disarmament issues have been proposed by Member States to constitute the new third substantive agenda item for the 1995 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, namely: "General guidelines for non-proliferation, with special emphasis on weapons of mass destruction" and "Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade". As a result of intensive consultations during recent months, the First Committee adopted the draft resolution on the work of the Disarmament Commission (A/C.1/49/L.5/Rev.1) by consensus. With regard to the new third agenda item for the 1995 substantive session, operative paragraph 10 of the adopted draft resolution reads as follows:

"10. *Recommends also* that, pursuant to the adopted three-item phased approach, the Disarmament Commission, at its 1994 organizational session, consider including in the agenda of its 1995 substantive session a new third item and, in this context, notes *inter alia*, the following proposals: 'General guidelines for non-proliferation, with special emphasis on weapons of mass destruction' and 'Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade'".

Furthermore, operative paragraphs 2 and 3 of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/49/L.4, which was adopted by the First Committee, read as follows:

"2. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission, at its 1995 session, to make a preliminary assessment of the implementation of the Declaration as well as suggestions that may be put forward to ensure

appropriate progress, and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session;”

“3. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission to include in the agenda of its 1995 substantive session an item entitled ‘Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade.’”

In view of the provisions and requests contained in draft resolutions A/C.1/49/L.5/Rev.1 and A/C.1/49/L.4, the Bureau of the Disarmament Commission unanimously decided, at its meeting on 23 November 1994, to include the two proposed items that I mentioned earlier — “General guidelines for non-proliferation, with special emphasis on weapons of mass destruction” and “Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade” — in the draft provisional agenda for the 1995 substantive session, contained in document A/CN.10/1994/CRP.6. Therefore, members of the Commission are invited to choose which of these two items to include on the agenda for the 1995 session.

Mr. Turrentine (United States of America): At the time the draft resolution on the report of the Disarmament Commission was considered in the First Committee, my delegation made it clear, in its explanation of position on the adoption by consensus of that draft resolution, that my Government did not support the addition of a third agenda item on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission in 1995.

We are certainly aware of the past practice of having three agenda items, and we are also aware that this practice provides for flexibility. We believe, however, that in 1995 it would be prudent to focus on completing one agenda item and on having extensive consideration of the agenda item on conventional arms.

Mr. Cambridge (United Kingdom): The position of my delegation is similar to that of the position of the United States.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I have noted the reservations of the United States and the United Kingdom.

Organizational matters

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): This item relates to the establishment of subsidiary bodies and the appointment of their Chairmen, as well as to the date,

duration and programme of work of the 1995 substantive session.

Since the Disarmament Commission has agreed, at this stage, to consider three substantive agenda items on the agenda of the 1995 substantive session, as contained in document A/CN.10/1994/CRP.6, it may wish, as in the 1994 session, to have three working groups deal with these three subjects.

Mr. Turrentine (United States of America): My delegation did not agree to the addition of a third item for the 1995 session. I think perhaps there was a misunderstanding on that point.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I do not think that there was a misunderstanding. I know that the representative of the United States did not agree but that does not mean that we do not have consensus. I think that I am applying the Commission’s rules of procedure.

Mr. Turrentine (United States of America): It is my impression that if there is no agreement, there is no consensus. I would like a ruling on that issue.

Mr. González Bustos (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I think that you, Sir, have rightly interpreted the idea, which many delegations share, about the ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission that were adopted in 1990, as well as the three-item phased approach, adopted in 1993, an agenda which should be considered on a progressive basis. We see no problem over including a third item. You, Sir, have mentioned two options, either of which we could accept. The idea is that there should be three items on the agenda, despite the fact that we shall be concentrating on concluding two of them, in conformity with the system of work we adopted in 1990.

Mr. Gajda (Hungary): You, Sir, and other members of the Commission will probably recall that when the Hungarian delegation had the honour to serve as Chairman it made every effort to put into practice the generally agreed rules of the game, which we are trying to follow again this year. Unfortunately, this practice did not prove fully successful in the first year, and at its last substantive session the Disarmament Commission had to break its ground rules for various reasons; I do not want to go into any details.

There is no precedent for us to depart from the ground rules again this year, but in the opposite direction. We have already extended the shelf-life of a number of items. This

was not fully satisfactory to every delegation, but it was an agreement that everybody could live with. There seems to be reason enough this year to come to an agreement that not every delegation will be happy with, but will have to live with. I feel that agreement is emerging that there is full support behind the two items to be included in the agenda: the two that are indicated in the draft provisional agenda without brackets. But there is hardly consensus behind the two items that are listed within brackets.

My delegation is among those that cannot agree to the inclusion of either of the two items. We shall do our utmost to bring to a fully successful conclusion the discussion of the items already on the agenda, so that the already lengthy discussion on one item can be concluded and so that the discussion on the other, which has been only preliminary in nature, can come to fruition.

Once again, my delegation can join in the consensus on the inclusion of the two items only.

Mr. Whannou (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation supports the statement of the representative of Mexico. Benin is dedicated to the work of the Disarmament Commission, which contributes to progress on disarmament issues and allows us to engage in in-depth consideration of the items on our agenda. To maintain this dynamic, we firmly believe, the Commission should retain three items on its agenda, although we do not prejudge which items these should be.

Mr. Rivero (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We consider that the Disarmament Commission should continue to have three items on its agenda in 1995. In the past we have been flexible; and we think that when necessary and practical, we must be flexible. As other delegations have said, two of the items should be concluded next year, and then we should be flexible, lest we find ourselves in a most complicated situation in 1996. As you rightly indicated, Sir, the Bureau made a unanimous proposal. Cuba having been a Vice-Chairman, it is obvious what our opinion is and as all regional groups are represented in the Bureau, the Bureau's proposal, in principle, reflected the position of all delegations. Every delegation is, of course, free to hold its own, different, view, but my delegation feels that there is full consensus on two agenda items, while some delegations are not yet agreed on a third, although we have the impression that quite a large number are in favour of having a third item.

Clearly, it is better for us all to agree on our agenda. Though we have tried not to decide the matter by voting, it

would be possible to do so. We do not think that that would be the best course of action now; perseverance and patience often yield good results. With the benefit of your experience, Mr. Chairman, and with such perseverance and patience, we believe this matter can be decided in due course, when there is complete agreement on all three items. In view of the differing views expressed today, perhaps there should be consultations on the question in order to achieve a solution satisfactory to all.

Mr. Pava (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation supports the inclusion of a third agenda item, which we feel would enhance the deliberative nature of the Disarmament Commission. We agree with the representative of Cuba that perhaps we should not take a decision today on which item to include. We would be glad to see consultations continue on this matter. This would not prejudice the interests of delegations that have stated that they do not consider that a third item should be included on the 1995 agenda.

My delegation thinks that inclusion of the third item is particularly important. We also think that consultations should be continued in order to reach consensus.

Mr. Alvarez (Uruguay) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I agree with previous speakers. We are adopting a draft provisional agenda, but the agenda can finally be approved during the substantive session, so I think we should hold consultations and then take a decision at the beginning of the substantive session.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I know that the Commission has adopted the rule — a very flexible rule, but nevertheless, a rule — of having three items on the agenda. It was on this basis that the Bureau prepared the draft provisional agenda. The First Committee, an organ of the General Assembly, made certain recommendations, which I have recalled. We have a draft provisional agenda, meticulously drawn up, and representatives will observe that items 6 and 7 are in brackets.

We have made a choice — it was not imposed — and since we live in a democratic world we feel we can count on everyone's understanding in order that the democratic rules may apply, which means heeding the voice of the majority. If this does not work, then we will have to have consultations.

I am grateful to those delegations which have proposed that we continue our efforts. We will persevere — that is, we will continue consultations so that the interests of all

delegations may be met, but the democratic rules must apply; otherwise, our Organization will lose its significance.

I believe, therefore, that it would be wise to suspend our discussion on this matter and go on to another, to give the necessary time for consultations. If the Commission agrees, I will now suspend this debate and proceed to another matter.

It was so decided.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We will now consider the date and duration of the 1995 substantive session. Representatives will recall that at the last plenary meeting of its 1994 substantive session held on 9 May 1994, the Commission decided provisionally that the 1995 substantive session would be held from 15 May to 5 June, with a duration of 16 working days, as in 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994.

This decision was made at the request of a number of delegations, in order to facilitate the Conference on Disarmament's consideration of its 1995 schedule. It is my understanding that the Conference on Disarmament has already decided to extend its regular session by two weeks in 1995, ending on 22 September. Accordingly, at this organizational session we simply need to confirm the agreed date and duration for the 1995 substantive session of the Commission.

At its meeting on 23 November the Bureau of the Commission unanimously decided to recommend that the Commission should not change the agreed date and duration for its 1995 substantive session. Does any delegation wish to comment?

Mr. Turrentine (United States of America): My delegation certainly agrees that the normal practice is for the Disarmament Commission to have 16 working days for its session, and we support that in principle. However, we foresee a special situation in 1995, and perhaps it would be wise to consider reducing the overlap with the resumption of the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation would certainly prefer that there be no overlap — that is, that the session of the Disarmament Commission should be a two-week session as opposed to its normal 16-day session.

However, if there is a strong desire to maintain the practice of a 16-day session we shall not object. On the other hand, if others were to agree that it would be prudent to shorten the session somewhat — even by a few days — to enable people to return to Geneva for the important

negotiations that we anticipate will be going on there, we should certainly welcome that.

Mr. Miraillet (France) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation supports what has just been said by the representative of the United States. We believe that the importance of the work to be done at the end of the session of the Conference on Disarmament is such that most of the participants in the Commission's work should be able to return to Geneva as soon as possible. We therefore think that, exceptionally, the Commission should be allocated only two weeks for its work this year.

Mr. Cambridge (United Kingdom): I hope to be as brief as I was when I made my statement on another agenda item.

I should like to express my delegation's support for the comments that have just been made by the representatives of the United States and France.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The representative of the United Kingdom does indeed have a gift for brevity.

Mr. Larsen (Norway): For the sake of brevity, I want simply to support the comments that have just been made by the British, French and United States representatives.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The statement of the representative of Norway was just as brief as that of the representative of the United Kingdom, and just as interesting.

Mr. González Bustos (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We have followed very closely the points of view expressed by some delegations with regard to the possibility of, exceptionally, reducing the length of the 1995 session of the Disarmament Commission, because of other meetings to take place in 1995 — above all, the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

However, if we wish — as we all do — to finish our debate on the two agenda items whose consideration should be concluded in 1995, it will be extremely difficult to complete the work in only two weeks. My delegation therefore suggests that we defer a decision on this question and see how matters develop with regard to our schedule of work for 1995. If, exceptionally, given that representatives have to return to Geneva to take part in certain meetings, we were to think it wise to take such a decision, we could

do so then. I should prefer us not to have to decide on a shorter session here and now.

Mr. Rivero (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation shares some of the concerns of the representative of Mexico. It was stated in the First Committee that one item had been on our agenda, or the draft provisional agenda for 1995, for four years. My delegation believes that if the session is reduced to two weeks we shall not have enough time to finish that item. If we are unable to conclude our consideration of the question of nuclear disarmament, for example, it will be very difficult for all delegations to show the necessary flexibility to keep it on the agenda for a further year. Thus my delegation believes that the matter should be given more thought before we take a final decision.

Mr. Mpay (Cameroon) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation supports the comments made by the representatives of Mexico and Cuba. We believe that a decision on the duration of the next substantive session of the Disarmament Commission should take into account the inclusion of a third agenda item. If this third item were not included, the Commission could shorten its session to two weeks. Otherwise, the session should be of the normal duration, as previously.

Mr. Stelzer (Austria): My delegation supports and adheres to the formal consensus in the Disarmament Commission on the three-item approach and on the question of duration. However, as was pointed out by the representative of the United States, supported by a few other delegations, we face a very exceptional year. The crowded agenda contains very important items. The Disarmament Commission's three weeks will overlap with the session of the Conference on Disarmament, which will start a little earlier than was anticipated.

As the Conference on Disarmament is dealing with crucial items this year, although in principle my delegation does not favour shortening the session of the Disarmament Commission, we would be prepared, in the exceptional year ahead, to go along with the consensus if there were agreement on shortening. On the other hand, we agree that a decision does not have to be made right now.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I do not think that there is consensus. Some delegations are in favour of shortening the session virtually to two weeks; others are opposed, for reasons that they have explained.

In these circumstances, I shall do what I did before. As with the other question, the matter will be deferred for consultation and closer study. In any case, there is no need for a hasty decision, which might have unforeseen consequences.

As the Disarmament Commission consists of wise men and women, I propose that we take the wise decision to continue our consultations.

It was so decided.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Since we have not been able to take a decision on the duration of the session, it would be difficult to talk about the programme of work for the session. I therefore ask members to move on to the final item.

In accordance with the provisions of the reform programme adopted, all items relating to organization of work should be dealt with at the Commission's organizational session. However, since there are several items still pending at this stage — for example, the membership of the Bureau for 1995, the appointment of the Chairmen of the subsidiary bodies and the possible inclusion of a new substantive item for the 1995 substantive session — it might be better for the Commission to suspend the current organizational session and resume it later, to allow time for further and deeper consultations on these matters.

I am at the disposal of all those delegations wishing to hold consultations. However, time is short, and we have to meet to discuss the various matters still pending. I shall do everything in my power to be here in New York for the consultations. I am even willing to give up a few days' vacation after this busy session.

Is there any objection to the proposal to suspend the organizational session?

Mr. Stelzer (Austria): My delegation does not insist on continuing this session; we fully agree that it is a very wise idea to suspend it.

I would like first to ask for some clarifications. As you quite correctly remarked, Sir, the organizational session is supposed to decide on all organizational matters. This organizational session has been able to decide on some of the items, but not all.

The Disarmament Commission is therefore deciding to suspend its organizational session and to continue with consultations. These consultations have an enormous agenda. We have to consult not only on the duration of next year's substantive session, but also on its agenda. We have to decide whether to deviate from the consensus and have only two items on the agenda or find a compromise on the third item that quite a few delegations wanted to have on the agenda.

One delegation has suggested that at the substantive session we should decide whether to include a third item, and, if so, which. My delegation does not support this suggestion, for several reasons. First, we support your remark, Sir, that the organizational session is supposed to take organizational decisions. Secondly, it would be too late to take a decision of this magnitude at the beginning of the substantive session, because, as we know from previous years, it takes a considerable preparatory process to get an item ready for substantive discussion. Last year we saw that even items that are discussed only at a preliminary level in a substantive session have to be thoroughly prepared. Hence, my delegation counsels strongly that we take these decisions long before the beginning of the substantive session — at the resumed organizational session.

I would like to ask you, Mr. Chairman, what the timetable would be for continuing these consultations. Is the plan to have consultations in small groups or consultations of the whole? Are these issues to be taken up at the resumed organizational session for decision as soon as they have matured?

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The representative of Austria has made a very detailed and useful intervention, which will enable us to clear things up before we adjourn the meeting. He was quite right to ask such questions. I believe — I shall consult the secretariat on this — that we can resume the organizational session next week. I repeat that the organizational session must settle organizational problems; it cannot be done in the substantive session. It is not just the Disarmament Commission that has such a rule. Other organs of this Organization have the same rule, and we should not violate it. We should be very strict. Next week, with the cooperation of the secretariat, we shall find the necessary time slot to resume the organizational session.

In the meantime, I hope there will be consultations of all types — informal, informal, informal to the nth degree; whatever the Commission wants. At any rate, I am at the Commission's disposal for such consultations. I shall get in touch with the other members of the Bureau and the secretariat to find out how we can begin to organize such consultations before resuming our organizational session.

By no means can these matters be sent to the substantive session. That would be a failure, and I would not like to be responsible for failures.

I therefore propose suspending this organizational session, on the understanding that it will be resumed as soon as possible — at any rate, next week — on a date to be announced in the *Journal*. I think the approach of Christmas has tired the Commission or dulled its enthusiasm and dynamism, and its dedication to the work of the Commission.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.