

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
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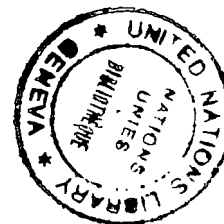
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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON PROHIBITIONS
OR RESTRICTIONS OF USE OF CERTAIN
CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS WHICH MAY BE
DEEMED TO BE EXCESSIVELY INJURIOUS
OR TO HAVE INDISCRIMINATE EFFECTS
Geneva, 10-28 September 1979

ORGANIZATION AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE CONFERENCE

Note by the Secretary-General



I. Introduction

1. This note, which supplements the annotations to the provisional agenda (A/CONF.95/1), has also been prepared by the Secretary-General under his responsibility to make the necessary arrangements for convening the Conference pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 33/70 of 14 December 1978.

2. In considering the organization and methods of work of the Conference, account must also be taken of the fact that it should be necessary to limit the number of meetings requiring interpretation to no more than six a day. In order to complete the work on time it may be necessary to schedule evening meetings (within the limit of no more than six meetings held each day) as well as meetings during the two weekends spanned by the Conference (15-16 and 22-23 September).

II. Conference structure and tasks of particular organs

3. Plenary meetings. It is expected that the Conference will hold plenary meetings only during the first week and at the end of its session: initially to organize the Conference (agenda items 2 (a)-(e)) and to consider item 3 in light of the work done at the Preparatory Conference as reflected in its report (A/CONF.95/3). After this, the Conference might refer each of the questions it has considered to the Committee of the Whole or to the Drafting Committee. Except for possibly meeting briefly to hear the report of the Credentials Committee (item 2 (f)) no further plenary meetings are expected until the Committee of the Whole and the Drafting Committee have reported the final texts of the instrument(s) to be adopted, at which time the Plenary would dispose of items 4-5 of the agenda.

4. General Committee. It is expected that the General Committee will be convened during the Conference when necessary, particularly if the President concludes that the pace of the proceedings is unsatisfactory and he requires the assistance of the Committee, pursuant to procedural rule 13 (see A/CONF.95/2), in speeding up or otherwise improving the proceedings.

5. Credentials Committee. The Credentials Committee is expected to meet, probably only once, towards the end of the second week, by which time it may be expected that the credentials of most representatives will have been received and examined by the Executive Secretary of the Conference. At the beginning of its meeting it will elect its officers, probably only a chairman. It will then receive the report of the Executive Secretary on the credentials and adopt its own report to the Conference.

6. Committee of the Whole and working groups. As indicated above, the Plenary may wish, early in the Conference, to refer issues under consideration to the Committee of the Whole, so that any necessary negotiations can be conducted in that body or in working groups that may be established. After it has reached general agreement on a particular issue, possibly with the assistance of a working group, the Committee of the Whole may request the Drafting Committee to propose an appropriate text or to review any text that the Committee of the Whole may have approved tentatively. If a particular issue cannot be resolved by the Committee of the Whole it could be referred to the Plenary which, once the question has been resolved, would send it directly to the Drafting Committee.

7. Drafting Committee. The Drafting Committee should start its work as soon as agreements are reached in the Committee of the Whole or in a working group, starting no later than the middle of the second week. Towards the end of the session, the Committee is to consider a draft of the Final Document.

III. Scheduling

8. Because of the brief period scheduled for the Conference itself, it would be most useful if advance consultations could take place concerning some of the procedural matters that should be disposed of during the first days. These include the appointment of the principal officers of the Conference: the President, Vice-Presidents, the Rapporteur, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole and the Chairman of the Drafting Committee (procedural rule 6), who are to constitute the General Committee (rule 10); as well as the appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee (rule 4) and the Drafting Committee (rule 34). It is hoped that these consultations can take place during the week preceding the Conference, through the Permanent Missions in Geneva. The Secretariat will be ready to assist.

9. It is hoped that on Monday, 10 September, the Conference, meeting in plenary, will be able to dispose of items 1 and 2 (a)-(e) of the agenda, as well as to consider the organization of its work under item 2 (g). If possible, the Conference should start the consideration of item 3 on the next day, Tuesday, 11 September.

10. From Tuesday, 11 September until Friday, 14 September, the Plenary might, if

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necessary, conduct one meeting each working day devoted to item 3, so that the Committee of the Whole and other subsidiary organs that may be established can start their work.

11. From Monday, 17 September to Monday, 24 September, the Committee of the Whole, its working groups and the Drafting Committee will meet as necessary. By Tuesday, 25 September, the Drafting Committee should be prepared to report to the Plenary. By Wednesday, 26 September, the Final Document should be similarly cleared.

12. From Wednesday, 26 September to Friday, 28 September, the Conference in plenary should consider the reports of its subsidiary organs, including the adoption of its Final Document and of its report to the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly.
