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FIRST COMMITTEE

### SUGGESTIONS REGARDING REARRANGEMENT OF THE AGENDA OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

Working paper by the Chairman

#### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, increasing attention has focused on the question of the method of work of the First Committee. On the basis of their experience, various Chairmen of the First Committee have, at successive sessions, offered useful suggestions on how to refine and streamline the work and proceedings of the Committee and have underlined the need to accelerate efforts towards facilitating a more rational and focused discussion of and action on the issues, inter alia, through a rearrangement of the Committee's agenda.

The Committee has, over the years, made an earnest effort to focus on this matter and following extensive consultations, a number of useful initiatives have been introduced in the work and proceedings of the Committee. This process culminated in the adoption on 30 November 1987 of resolution 42/42 N by which the General Assembly decided upon a number of recommendations concerning the work of the First Committee. As I pointed out at the Committee's 2nd meeting, on 12 October 1988, several of those recommendations, based on consultations with delegations, were incorporated in the programme of work and timetable that was adopted by the Committee, thereby implementing them. Some of the other measures which were included in resolution 42/42 N needed to be examined further with a view to determining the best possible modality for implementing them, including the recommendation in paragraph 1 (a) which stipulated that the agenda of the First Committee should be rationalized by grouping or merging related items to the extent possible in order to provide greater organizational clarity and without prejudging their substance.

Pursuant to that recommendation, and the views expressed on the subject-matter, I conducted preliminary consultations with the members of the Bureau of the Committee and subsequently circulated a working paper entitled "Suggestions regarding rearrangement of the agenda of the First Committee".

The paper that I presented was discussed extensively at several meetings of the open-ended Group of the Friends of the Chairman, at which time reference was also made to the working paper circulated at the thirty-ninth session by the then Chairman of the First Committee, Ambassador Souza e Silva of Brazil (A/C.1/39/9). In the course of the consultations within the Group of the Friends of the Chairman, divergent views were expressed on a number of issues. In this context, there appeared to be a general understanding that any efforts aimed at a rearrangement of the Committee's agenda should be geared towards the realization of greater organizational clarity and coherence, without sacrificing the substance of the issues or compromising the right of delegations to request the inclusion of new items on the General Assembly's agenda.

The view was also reiterated that any rearrangement of the Committee's agenda would be subject to limitations imposed, inter alia, by the fact that: (a) various General Assembly decisions provide for the inclusion of individual items on the agenda of future sessions; and (b) the right of every Member State to request the inclusion of new items.

Despite the difficulties involved, however, and taking into account the results of my consultations, I, nevertheless, feel that serious efforts must continue to be made to find an acceptable regrouping or restructuring of the agenda of the First Committee, so that appropriate recommendations to that effect may, as necessary, be transmitted to the General Assembly.

It is my hope that the suggestions that I have presented below, concerning rearrangement of the agenda of the First Committee, will receive further serious consideration by Member States so that the matter may once again be addressed by the Committee at the next session of the General Assembly.

#### I. A GENERAL GUIDELINE FOR SYSTEMATIC ARRANGEMENT

##### 1. Nuclear weapons in all aspects:

- (a) Nuclear test ban;
- (b) Cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament;
- (c) Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters;
- (d) Non-use, non-first-use and the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons;
- (e) Security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States;
- (f) Unilateral, bilateral and multilateral measures towards nuclear disarmament;
- (g) Nuclear-free or nuclear-weapon-free zones;

- (h) Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and safeguards régime, including the question of peaceful uses of nuclear energy;
  - (i) Nuclear-weapon freeze;
  - (j) Prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes.
2. Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons:
- (a) Prohibition of the use of chemical weapons;
  - (b) Convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction;
  - (c) Other issues related to chemical weapons;
  - (d) Bacteriological (biological) weapons.
3. Other weapons of mass destruction, including radiological weapons.
4. Prevention of an arms race in outer space.
5. Conventional weapons:
- (a) Conventional disarmament;
  - (b) Reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces;
  - (c) Question of conventional weapons transfer;
  - (d) Certain inhumane conventional weapons.
6. Other disarmament and disarmament-related measures:
- (a) Reduction of military budgets;
  - (b) Disarmament and development;
  - (c) Confidence-building measures, including openness and transparency, and objective information on military matters;
  - (d) Zones of peace;
  - (e) Disarmament and international security;
  - (f) Naval armaments and disarmament;
  - (g) Disarmament and science and technology;

- (h) Regional disarmament;
  - (i) Economic and social consequences of the arms race and military expenditures;
  - (j) Other measures.
7. General and complete disarmament under effective international control:
- (a) General and complete disarmament in all its aspects;
  - (b) Comprehensive programme of disarmament;
  - (c) Declaration of disarmament decades.
8. Verification in all its aspects and compliance.
9. Role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, disarmament machinery and institutional matters:
- (a) Role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament;
  - (b) Role of the Secretary-General;
  - (c) Security Council;
  - (d) General Assembly;
  - (e) Special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament;
  - (f) First Committee;
  - (g) Disarmament Commission;
  - (h) Conference on Disarmament;
  - (i) Ad\_Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean;
  - (j) Ad\_Hoc Committee on World Disarmament Conference;
  - (k) Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies;
  - (l) United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research;
  - (m) Department for Disarmament Affairs;
  - (n) United Nations regional disarmament centres;
  - (o) World Disarmament Campaign and non-governmental organizations;

- (p) Disarmament Week;
  - (q) United Nations studies on disarmament;
  - (r) Fellowship and training programme on disarmament.
10. Question of Antarctica.
11. Strengthening of regional and international security:
- (a) Regional security, including security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region;
  - (b) International security, including a comprehensive system of international peace and security.

II. ALLOCATION OF CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK  
OF THE GENERAL GUIDELINE

<u>Headings</u>	<u>Current agenda items</u>
1. Nuclear weapons in all aspects:	
(a) Nuclear test ban;	Items 52, 53, 64 (c)
(b) Cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament;	Items 64 (e), 67 (k)
(c) Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters;	Items 67 (j), 67 (l)
(d) Non-use, non-first-use and the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons;	Item 65 (c)
(e) Security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States;	Items 57, 58
(f) Unilateral, bilateral and multilateral measures towards nuclear disarmament;	
(g) Nuclear-free or nuclear-weapon-free zones;	Items 51, 54, 55, 60, 69
(h) Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and safeguards régime, including the question of peaceful uses of nuclear energy;	Item 141

- (i) Nuclear-weapon freeze; Items 65 (b), 65 (f)
- (j) Prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes. Item 64 (i)
- 2. Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: Item 63
  - (a) Prohibition of the use of chemical weapons;
  - (b) Convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction;
  - (c) Other issues related to chemical weapons;
  - (d) Bacteriological (biological) weapons.
- 3. Other weapons of mass destruction, including radiological weapons. Items 61, 64 (b)
- 4. Prevention of an arms race in outer space. Item 59
- 5. Conventional weapons:
  - (a) Conventional disarmament; Item 64 (d)
  - (b) Reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces;
  - (c) Question of conventional weapons transfer; Item 145
  - (d) Certain inhumane conventional weapons. Item 56
- 6. Other disarmament and disarmament-related measures:
  - (a) Reduction of military budgets; Item 62
  - (b) Disarmament and development;
  - (c) Confidence-building measures, including openness and transparency, and objective information on military matters; Item 64 (f)

- (d) Zones of peace; Item 68
  - (e) Disarmament and international security;
  - (f) Naval armaments and disarmament; Item 64 (h)
  - (g) Disarmament and science and technology;
  - (h) Regional disarmament;
  - (i) Economic and social consequences of the arms race and military expenditures; Item 67 (h)
  - (j) Other measures. Item 64 (k)
7. General and complete disarmament under effective international control:
- (a) General and complete disarmament in all its aspects; Item 67 (c), 67 (n)
  - (b) Comprehensive programme of disarmament;
  - (c) Declaration of disarmament decades. Item 67 (f)
8. Verification in all its aspects and compliance. Item 139
9. Role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, disarmament machinery and institutional matters:
- (a) Role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament; Items 64 (a), 64 (g), 64 (j), 65 (a)
  - (b) Role of the Secretary-General;
  - (c) Security Council;
  - (d) General Assembly;
  - (e) Special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament; Item 66
  - (f) First Committee;

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| (g) Disarmament Commission;   | Item 67 (a)                     |
| (h) Conference on Disarmament;  | Items 67 (b), 67 (i)            |
| (i) <u>Ad Hoc</u> Committee on the Indian Ocean;  | Item 68                         |
| (j) <u>Ad Hoc</u> Committee on World Disarmament Conference;                                      |                                 |
| (k) Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies;  | Item 67 (d)                     |
| (l) United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research   | Item 67 (e)                     |
| (m) Department for Disarmament Affairs;   |                                 |
| (n) United Nations regional disarmament centres;  | Items 65 (d), 65 (h),<br>65 (i) |
| (o) World Disarmament Campaign and non-governmental organizations;                                | Item 65 (e)                     |
| (p) Disarmament Week;   | Item 67 (m)                     |
| (q) United Nations studies on disarmament;  | Items 67 (g), 67 (h)            |
| (r) Fellowship and training programme on disarmament.   | Item 65 (g)                     |
| 10. Question of Antarctica.   | Item 70                         |
| 11. Strengthening of regional and international security:   | Items 72 (a), 72 (b)            |
| (a) Regional security, including security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region;           | Item 71                         |
| (b) International security, including a comprehensive system of international peace and security. | Item 73                         |
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