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Chairman: Mr. Tulbure..... (Moldova)

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

Agenda item 157: Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country (A/62/26 and Corr.1 and A/C.6/62/L.15)

1. **Mr. Mavroyiannis** (Cyprus), Chairman of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, introducing the Committee's report (A/62/26 and Corr.1), said that, during the period under review, topics dealt with by the Committee had included the use of motor vehicles, parking (in particular the second review of the implementation of the Parking Programme for Diplomatic Vehicles) and related matters, the acceleration of immigration and customs procedures, entry visas issued by the host country, host country travel regulations, the Settlement Initiative for Employees of Foreign Embassies, Foreign Consular Offices and International Organizations in the United States, the congestion fee, immunity from the jurisdiction of New York courts of diplomatic property in New York and the safety and security of the Headquarters district. The Committee's recommendations and conclusions were contained in chapter IV of the report.

2. The Committee strove to tackle the issues before it through dialogue, consensus and cooperation. The obligations it monitored flowed from legal instruments such as the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. The Committee had always been an open, transparent and flexible body in which all Member States could participate and raise concerns. Matters within the Committee's purview were handled on a bilateral basis through the Committee's Chairman, who acted as a broker in efforts to settle such questions as might arise.

3. Speaking as the representative of Cyprus, he introduced draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.11 on the report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country on behalf of the sponsors. He observed that the draft resolution endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in paragraph 62 of its report. Among other things, it underlined the importance of observing the privileges and immunities of the missions accredited to the United Nations; noted that some permanent missions continued to experience problems in connection with the implementation of the Parking Programme for Diplomatic Vehicles;

welcomed the outcome of the second review of the implementation of the Programme and urged the host country to address related problems; requested the host country to consider removing the remaining travel restrictions imposed on the staff of certain missions and Secretariat staff of certain nationalities; noted that the Committee anticipated that the host country would ensure the timely issuance of entry visas to the representatives of Member States, and welcomed the efforts of the Chairman of the Committee to address concerns relating to the safety and security of the Headquarters district.

4. **Mr. Madureira** (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate country the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, Moldova, Norway and Ukraine, said that the Committee on Relations with the Host Country continued to serve as an important and necessary venue for considering the various issues and problems that missions accredited to the United Nations might face. In that connection, he expressed the European Union's appreciation for the host country's commitment and efforts to accommodate the needs, interests and requirements of the diplomatic community in New York.

5. Although the various issues handled by the Committee were often practical in nature, they were crucial for the preservation of the legal regime which defined the status of the United Nations and laid down the rights and obligations of diplomatic agents. It was therefore vital to safeguard the integrity of the relevant body of international law. Since the observance of privileges and immunities was extremely important, the decision of the host country partly to exempt diplomats accredited to the United Nations from secondary screening procedures at airports was most welcome.

6. The European Union supported the proper implementation of the Parking Programme in a manner consistent with international law and called upon the host country's authorities to address the problems reported by permanent missions in the context of the second review of the Programme's implementation. While the European Union appreciated the host country's efforts to ensure the timely issuance of entry visas to representatives of Member States on United Nations business, it urged the host country to remove the travel restrictions imposed on the personnel of

certain missions and staff members of the Secretariat of certain nationalities.

7. The European Union fully endorsed the Committee's conclusions and recommendations. The Committee remained the most suitable body for assisting Member States to communicate matters of concern to the host country and for facilitating dialogue between the parties. The Committee's methods should continue to be guided by the constructive approach and spirit of cooperation which had prevailed hitherto, with a view to finding solutions which were entirely consonant with international law.

8. **Mr. Gaspar Martins** (Angola), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that since the administration of privileges and immunities was of great importance, the host country's efforts to resolve issues affecting the welfare of the diplomatic community of the United Nations were welcome. He drew particular attention to the fact that some diplomats were subjected to special and discriminatory treatment on the basis of their origin or destination when they travelled through United States airports, pointing out that such practices were incompatible with their status under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

9. Another issue requiring serious consideration in order to ensure that United Nations diplomats fully enjoyed the privileges and immunities due to them was the exemption from property tax of mission premises used as a chancellery or for residential purposes. Charging such tax on diplomatic premises was contrary to international law, in particular article 34 (b) of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. The recent decision of the United States Supreme Court concerning the competence of district courts to hear cases relating to property tax exemption on mission premises was therefore a matter of concern to many Member States.

10. **Ms. Chadha** (India) said that the open and transparent exchanges of views and spirit of cooperation obtaining within the Committee on Relations with the Host Country made it a useful forum for addressing issues relating to the functioning of Member States' missions in order that their representatives might perform their duties without hindrance. She expressed appreciation for the host country's commitment to fulfil its obligations under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and the Headquarters Agreement.

11. She hoped that the host country would devote due attention to the question of the municipal taxes imposed on diplomatic missions. Her Government was contesting the imposition of such taxes on its own permanent mission in a New York district court, although it believed that under international law and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations it was immune from the jurisdiction of United States courts, since it was a sovereign State. Many permanent missions were in a similar quandary, and she would therefore be interested to know what the host country was doing to remove the ambiguity of its laws and to ensure that Member States and the staff of their missions were granted the same privileges as those enjoyed by other accredited diplomats, as required by the Headquarters Agreement.

12. As for entry visas and immigration and customs procedures, the host country's right to monitor and control entry into its territory, to adopt the security measures it deemed necessary and to ensure that delegations did not misuse their privileges and immunities had to be balanced against the right of delegations to participate in the work of the United Nations. Security and immigration officials should therefore be made aware of the privileges and immunities enjoyed by diplomats and their families and should show appropriate respect for them. Lastly, she hoped that steps would soon be taken to address diplomatic missions' parking problems.

13. **Ms. Pino Rivero** (Cuba) said that it was essential that the host country properly applied the pertinent provisions of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Headquarters Agreement.

14. One particularly sensitive issue considered in the Committee's report had been the travel restrictions imposed on the staff of certain missions. It was regrettable that the host country's authorities repeatedly turned down Cuban diplomats' requests to attend meetings related to matters on the United Nations agenda and organized by missions accredited to it, when such events were held outside a 25-mile radius from New York City, one case in point being the meeting of the Working Group on the Crime of Aggression of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, held at Princeton University in June, which had been open to all States Members of the United Nations. Such arbitrary and groundless restrictions conflicted with the rule that diplomats should be allowed freedom of

movement. They placed Cuban diplomats at a disadvantage when texts were negotiated, examined and adopted. Moreover they were unjust, selective, discriminatory and politically motivated and they contravened the Headquarters Agreement, as well as customary rules of diplomatic law.

15. She also drew attention to the fact that a representative of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba, a non-governmental organization, who had wished to take part in the fifty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women, had been denied a visa at the last minute even though the organization in question had consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and its representative had attended other sessions of the Commission.

16. Lastly, she was of the opinion that the Parking Programme should be applied in a fair and equitable manner and in accordance with international law and that the host country should reconsider its position on all the above-mentioned issues.

17. **Mr. Tugio** (Indonesia) said that his delegation attached great importance to the maintenance of appropriate conditions of work for the delegations accredited to the United Nations and valued highly the opportunity of having a periodic dialogue with the host country in meetings of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

18. That dialogue had resulted in a notable development concerning screening procedures at the airports. His delegation noted with satisfaction the host country's intention to send a reminder to security and immigration officials at the airports about the proper treatment of persons with diplomatic credentials under international law. It would be helpful if a copy of the reminder could be circulated to all the missions, since the possession of such a document at the airport might prevent unpleasant treatment of diplomatic staff and their families by the Transportation Security Administration.

19. While appreciating the host country's efforts to provide the permanent missions to the United Nations with an enabling environment, his delegation and others continued to have some concerns about parking and related matters and delays in the issuance of entry visas. Another issue of concern involved the gasoline taxes that members of missions were charged, which were inconsistent with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and the Headquarters Agreement. His delegation welcomed the resolution of the issue by

the host country and the New York State Assembly and looked forward to the implementation of refunds.

20. The Committee on Relations with the Host Country was entrusted not only with discussing issues of mutual concern but also with ensuring that action was taken. That would include disseminating to all concerned any new proposal or policies that might affect the normal functioning of the missions and the Secretariat, to permit advance planning and avoid paralysing shocks and delays.

21. **Mr. Kuzmin** (Russian Federation) said that the Committee on Relations with the Host Country played an important role in securing normal working conditions for the United Nations and the diplomatic corps in New York. Even the most complex issues examined by the Committee could be solved through goodwill and endeavours to cooperate. Unfortunately, however, the numerous efforts to reach a mutually acceptable solution to three pressing issues, namely parking arrangements, entry visas and travel restrictions, had proved unsuccessful.

22. The second review of the implementation of the Parking Programme had revealed that, five years after the introduction of the scheme, the lack of any mechanism to ensure that it operated properly meant that the municipal authorities were not meeting their obligations fully and previous difficulties were likely to resurface.

23. Another crucial matter was the issuance of visas to representatives of Member States who wished to participate in events related to the United Nations and who, in the case of the Russian Federation, usually had to wait for three weeks, or sometimes even longer, before receiving their visa. Such long delays hindered his delegation's full participation in the Organization's work. While he was grateful for the support given by the United States mission in one or two specific instances and in trying to secure normal working conditions for representatives to the United Nations, it was vital to find a general solution to the problem.

24. Relations between the host country, the United Nations and Member States' permanent missions were also blemished by the travel restrictions placed on the personnel of several missions and some Secretariat staff within the territory of the United States. The general public would be astonished to learn that citizens of the Russian Federation were still restricted in their movements as they had been during the cold war. For many years the Committee had received the same standard answer to its request for the lifting of

those measures — that the host country was continuing to think about the possibility of doing so. The resolution of that issue would enhance the Committee's image.

25. **Mr. Shah** (Pakistan) said that his Government appreciated the host country's continuous efforts to improve facilities for diplomatic missions to the United Nations in New York. He therefore requested the host country's authorities to look into the reasons for the withdrawal of the tax rebate on gasoline for diplomatic vehicles, which had been processed through the Exxon Mobil credit card system. He also requested them to examine the question of the imposition, without prior notice, of parking fees on diplomatic vehicles by the New York airport authorities.

26. **Mr. Donovan** (United States of America) said that the United States was proud to serve as host country to the United Nations and was grateful to the delegations that had recognized its efforts. Since 1946, his Government had fulfilled its relevant treaty obligations and commitments in every respect, and it remained committed to doing so in the future. The Committee on Relations with the Host Country was a valuable forum in which to discuss issues relating to the diplomatic community in New York City. The United States greatly appreciated the cooperation and constructive spirit of the Committee members, together with the interest and participation of numerous observer delegations in its meetings.

27. As a matter of courtesy, the host country had approved special procedures for diplomats accredited by the United Nations who were selected by airlines for secondary screening. Those procedures were expected to mitigate problems encountered by diplomats with respect to airport security screening.

28. His Government continued to regard the Parking Programme as a success, as the number of parking tickets received by the diplomatic and consular officials in New York continued to be a small fraction of what it had been before the Programme was implemented. Congestion caused by illegal parking near the United Nations had been reduced, making it easier and safer for both residents and permanent representatives and their staffs to carry out their business. However, some missions had reported that they were still experiencing problems with some aspects of the Programme. Host country representatives would continue to work with the New York City authorities to ensure that the Programme functioned as intended. His Mission would uphold its

commitments to the United Nations community, just as it expected all members of that community to respect local laws.

29. With regard to the complaints about restrictions on private non-official travel of members of certain missions, he said that such restrictions did not violate international law. Under the Headquarters Agreement, the United States was obliged to provide mission members and delegations with unimpeded access to the Headquarters district and it did so. It was not required to permit all such individuals to travel to other parts of the country unless they did so on official United Nations business. Travel to unofficial events, such as those hosted by universities, was not governed by the relevant international agreements.

30. *Draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.15 was adopted.*

Agenda item 79: United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law (A/62/503 and A/C.6/62/L.12)

31. **Mr. Tachie-Menson** (Ghana), speaking as Chairman of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law, reported that the Advisory Committee had considered the draft report of the Secretary-General on the Programme of Assistance (A/62/503) at its forty-second session, held in October 2007. The views expressed during that session, as well as those put forward during the forty-first session, held in November 2006, were reflected in the report.

32. Draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.12 generally followed the pattern of previous resolutions on the topic, although it contained some new paragraphs, reflecting recent developments within the Organization, particularly in the area of the rule of law. Four new paragraphs had been added to the preambular section, reaffirming the General Assembly's commitment to an international order based on the rule of law and international law and recalling its resolution establishing the Programme of Assistance as a means of strengthening international peace and security among States.

33. Drawing attention to paragraph 1, he said that the words "as well as the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on the Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law" should be deleted. Paragraphs 9 to 13, 15 and 21 were all new. Among

other things, they welcomed the placing on the Internet of various legal publications and documents and the establishment of the website of the Programme of Assistance. The new paragraphs also noted the need to safeguard the audio-visual history of legal developments in the United Nations, acknowledged the efforts made by the Codification Division to revitalize the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law and encouraged the continuation of the training and technical assistance activities in international law undertaken by the Office of Legal Affairs. Paragraph 15 expressed appreciation to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for its participation in the Programme in 2006 and 2007.

34. **Mr. Fitschen** (Germany) observed that, although the item on the Programme of Assistance was generally perceived as a technical one, the Programme itself was of great value from a political standpoint. The General Assembly had clearly recognized the political importance of a better understanding of international law for the maintenance of peace and security when it had adopted its first resolution on the teaching of international law in 1947 (A/RES/176 (III)) and when it had established the Programme of Assistance in 1965. Members of the Sixth Committee were, of course, not so naive as to assume that mere knowledge of international law was enough to ensure the establishment of the rule of law at the international and national levels. International law had to be applied through State policies and in international relations.

35. Nevertheless, if international law was to become the “gentle civilizer of nations”, in the words of Martti Koskenniemi, the teaching, study and dissemination of the law was indispensable. The Programme, owing to its limited resources, made only a modest contribution to that end, but it was one that was held in high esteem by those who had profited from its various activities. Germany therefore fully supported the Programme’s continuation. The United Nations Secretariat, through its Office of Legal Affairs, also made a valuable contribution to the dissemination of international legal materials, especially through the websites of its various divisions, and his delegation was grateful for that service.

36. Germany welcomed the new format of the Secretary-General’s report on the implementation of the Programme (A/62/503). The report was no longer structured by issue, but by the unit or body that had undertaken the activities. That new structure would facilitate better coordination of all the players in the

United Nations system working in support of the rule of law and, by making the report more readable, would ensure greater attention to its content.

37. **Mr. Aniokoye** (Nigeria) said that the fellowships, scholarships and other forms of assistance provided by the Programme were crucial in enhancing capacities, especially in developing countries. His delegation welcomed the activities carried out under the Programme during the biennium 2006-2007 and was grateful to the Office of Legal Affairs Codification Division and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) for their efforts in implementing those activities. It went without saying that the dissemination of international law would lead to greater incorporation of international instruments into the domestic law of Member States, thereby contributing to the universality of those instruments. His delegation therefore called on all Member States to donate generously to the Programme.

38. **Mr. Kuzmin** (Russian Federation) said that since the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law made a substantial contribution to the strengthening of the rule of law, all aspects of the Programme should be continued. One of its most vital elements was the holding of treaty events to coincide with General Assembly debates.

39. He looked forward to the launching of the website containing audio-visual material on international law and welcomed the establishment of a separate website on the Programme, which would enable a wide circle of potential participants to obtain information about seminars and fellowships. Lastly, he commended the Office of Legal Affairs for organizing a panel on “Nuclear Terrorism: Prevention, Security and Counter-Terrorism Legal Framework”.

Agenda item 83: Diplomatic protection (*continued*)
(A/C.6/62/L.13)

40. **Mr. Maqungo** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Bureau, introduced draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.13 and outlined its content, noting that paragraphs 3 and 4 had been the main focus of the informal consultations held on the topic in recent weeks. Paragraph 3 invited Governments to submit their comments concerning the drafting of a convention on the basis of the draft articles on diplomatic protection, which were annexed to the resolution. Paragraph 4 provided for the establishment of a working group of the Sixth Committee during the

sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly to examine the question of a convention in the light of the comments received from Governments and the views expressed during the current session.

Agenda item 85: Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization
(continued) (A/C.6/62/L.11)

41. **Ms. Negm** (Egypt), introducing draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.11 on behalf of the Bureau, noted that for technical reasons the Arabic version of the text had been reissued with an asterisk (A/C.6/62/L.11*). The text was an updated version of General Assembly resolution 61/38, with some additions and modifications. Subparagraph 3 (b) was new; it invited the Special Committee on the Charter to continue its consideration of the working document on sanctions submitted by the Russian Federation (A/C.6/62/L.6). In paragraph 7, a new provision concerning the advisory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice had been added. Paragraph 9, also new, noted with appreciation the contributions made by Member States to the trust funds for updating the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* and eliminating the backlog in the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*. Paragraphs 8 and 10 to 13 replicated the recommendations made by the Special Committee in paragraph 56 of the report of its 2007 session (A/62/33) concerning the *Repertoire* and the *Repertory*.

Agenda item 80: Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission (continued)
(A/C.6/62/L.10)

42. **Ms. Telalian** (Greece), introducing draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.10 on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission on behalf of the Bureau, said that the draft resolution was a new text that had emerged from the deliberations of the Working Group established by the Sixth Committee at its 1st meeting of the current session. It focused on short-term measures for addressing the problem and set a clear policy direction to States to hold their nationals accountable for crimes of a serious nature committed when serving as United Nations officials and experts on mission. It sought to provide for continued discussion of the issue by reconvening the Ad Hoc Committee during the intersessional period and establishing a working group of the Sixth Committee during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly. The draft resolution sent a strong message that

impunity for misconduct on the part of United Nations officials and experts on mission would not be tolerated, since such conduct had a negative impact on the United Nations and its mission.

43. Some of the 11 preambular paragraphs contained a narrative of the background of the draft resolution. The fifth preambular paragraph reaffirmed that the resolution was without prejudice to the privileges and immunities of United Nations officials and experts on mission, and the sixth further reaffirmed the obligation of United Nations officials and experts on mission to respect the national laws of the host State, as well as the right of the host State to exercise its criminal jurisdiction.

44. In the operative portion of the draft resolution, the core provision was to be found in paragraph 3, which urged States to consider establishing their jurisdiction over serious crimes committed by their nationals while serving as United Nations officials and experts on mission. Other paragraphs encouraged cooperation among States in the exchange of information and in facilitating the conduct of investigations and prosecutions and requested the Secretary-General to take a number of measures, including predeployment and in-mission induction training for United Nations officials and experts on mission. The Secretary-General was also requested to bring credible allegations of a crime to the attention of the State of nationality. The focus on the State of nationality was, of course, without prejudice to existing arrangements for cooperation by the host State in United Nations investigations of serious misconduct in a mission area.

45. She was grateful to delegations for their active participation and spirit of compromise and hoped that the draft resolution could be adopted without a vote.

Agenda item 78: Responsibility of States for internationally wrongful acts (continued)
(A/C.6/62/L.20)

46. **Mr. Zyman** (Poland), speaking on behalf of the Bureau and introducing draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.20 on responsibility of States for internationally wrongful acts, said that the resolution was based on General Assembly resolution 59/35 and reflected the progress made on the topic over the past three years. It contained a new preambular paragraph noting with appreciation the compilation of decisions of international courts, tribunals and other bodies referring to the articles (A/62/62 and Corr.1 and

Add.1). Paragraph 4 provided for the establishment of a working group of the Sixth Committee to examine further the question of a convention or other appropriate action on the basis of the articles.

47. He appreciated the constructive spirit during consultations, which had resulted in a compromise, and was particularly grateful for the concrete and focused suggestions of the Canadian and United Kingdom delegations. He hoped the draft resolution could be adopted without a vote.

Agenda item 165: Observer status for the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia in the General Assembly (*continued*)
(A/C.6/62/L.8)

48. **Mr. Sadykov** (Kazakhstan) said that Afghanistan, India, Indonesia and Viet Nam had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.8 on observer status for the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia in the General Assembly.

49. *Draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.8 was adopted.*

Agenda item 166: Observer status for the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf in the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/C.6/62/L.7)

50. **Mr. Sallam** (Saudi Arabia) said that Albania, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, India, Japan, Madagascar, Niger, Russian Federation, Thailand and Togo had joined as sponsors of draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.7 on observer status for the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf in the General Assembly.

51. *Draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.7 was adopted.*

52. **Mr. Baghaei Hamaneh** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking in explanation of position, said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution and indeed welcomed the granting of observer status to the Cooperation Council. However, with reference to the name of the Council, he wished to draw attention to the fact that “Persian Gulf” was the only universally recognized and historically correct name of the body of water lying between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula, and his country did not recognize any other name attributed to it. In that context, the practice of the United Nations over the past decades in emphasizing the term “Persian Gulf” as the only geographical designation applicable to that body of water was noteworthy.

53. **Mr. Sallam** (Saudi Arabia) thanked the Iranian delegation for joining the consensus. He wished to clarify that the adjective “Arab” referred to the six Arab States members of the Cooperation Council and not to the Gulf. The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf was the name of the organization as it appeared in the agenda of the General Assembly and as it was accredited with the European Union.

54. **The Chairman** said that a survey had been distributed containing a few questions about the Secretariat services provided by the Codification Division to the Sixth Committee. The Secretariat would be very appreciative if delegations could take a moment to fill it out.

55. The Committee had been expected to conclude its business on 15 November, but following consultations with the Bureau and the coordinators of draft resolutions, it seemed clear that it would be unable to meet the deadline. He had asked the President of the General Assembly for an extension. Accordingly, the last meeting would be held on 19 November to enable the Committee to adopt resolutions on the remaining items.

56. **Ms. Negm** (Egypt), **Ms. Gómez** (Ecuador) and **Mr. Charles** (Trinidad and Tobago) pointed out that important consultations on agenda item 77 (b), “Oceans and the law of the sea: sustainable fisheries”, were scheduled for that same day, and small delegations would find it very difficult to attend both meetings.

57. **The Chairman** said that he would do his best to seek a solution.

The meeting rose at noon.