



# General Assembly

Official Records

## Disarmament Commission

**300**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Friday, 1 May 2009, 10 a.m.  
New York

*Chairman:* Mr. Towpik ..... (Poland)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.*

**The Chairman:** The Disarmament Commission is meeting as a Committee of the Whole. After two weeks of deliberations by the two Working Groups on the substantive items on our agenda, the Commission is now approaching the final stage of its work for the current session, namely, consideration and adoption of the reports of the subsidiary bodies and the draft report of the Commission to the General Assembly.

As planned and scheduled in the programme of work, this meeting of the Committee of the Whole will be devoted to general consideration of the reports of the Working Groups and the draft report of the Commission, as contained in documents A/CN.10/2009/CRP.2, CRP.3 and CRP.4, which have been distributed.

First, we shall take up the reports of the Working Groups, as contained in documents A/CN.10/2009/CRP.3 and CRP.4, one by one, for general comments. Later, at the 301st plenary meeting, which will follow later this morning, the reports will be formally introduced by the Chairpersons of the respective Working Groups.

The Committee will now take up the reports of the Working Groups. Are there any comments on document A/CN.10/2009/CRP.3, which contains the draft report of Working Group I? I see none.

Are there any comments on document A/CN.10/2009/CRP.4, which contains the draft report of Working Group II? I see none.

We now move to the consideration of document A/CN.10/2009/CRP.2, containing the draft report of the Commission. Are there any comments? I see none.

I call on the Rapporteur of the Commission.

**Mr. de Klerk** (Netherlands), Rapporteur of the Commission: There are a few changes to the draft report, which I will also introduce in our formal plenary meeting later. I will mention them briefly now in order to avoid any confusion later.

In paragraph 6 of document A/CN.10/2009/CRP.2, in order to underline the gender balance in the Bureau, “Vice-Chairmen” should be replaced with “Vice-Chairpersons”. In addition, “(Bolivarian Republic of)” should be added after “Venezuela”.

Furthermore, after a brief discussion in the Bureau this morning, we added one paragraph to the Commission’s conclusions and recommendations, which begin with paragraph 15, after which a new paragraph has been added. The reason for the addition is that the Working Group on elements of a draft declaration made good progress but could not finish its work. So we have added a recommendation, in line with the agenda, as agreed in the Commission. The text is as follows:

“Regarding item 5, entitled ‘Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade’, the Commission recommends that the consideration of this item be continued during its 2010 substantive session.”

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.



The paragraphs that follow should be renumbered.

Finally, there is one very small point in the reports of the Working Groups. In order to be fully consistent, there is a small change in paragraph 2 of the report of Working Group II, which mentions the Chairman and the other staff involved. The last sentence contains the phrase “Mr. Tudor of the Office of Disarmament Affairs served as an adviser”. The word “an” should be deleted and the latter part of that phrase should read “served as adviser to the Working Group”. That is how it is done in the other reports as well.

**The Chairman:** I now call on members wishing to make comments on the reports of the Working Groups and the draft report of the Commission.

**Mr. Amil** (Pakistan): Just for the purposes of accuracy, I have a comment to make about the new paragraph 16 just read out by the Rapporteur. I just have a quick comment about the consideration of the fourth disarmament decade. I think that this is a point that caused some measure of controversy in the run-up to adoption of the agenda. If we say that the Commission recommends that the consideration of this item be continued during its 2010 substantive session, are we then foreclosing the possibility of that going on into 2011? And if it does not get settled in 2010, would we then be looking at a similar paragraph in the next report? I think that this is something that we overcame by adopting the agenda and that it should perhaps not be expressed in this way.

**Mr. de Klerk** (Netherlands), Rapporteur of the Commission: The idea here in the Bureau was that there is a certain tension between what the General Assembly has requested from the Commission in resolution 61/67 and the agenda of the Commission as we adopted it at the beginning of our session. In order to deal with that, we added this recommendation. Of course, it does not change anything in the agenda as agreed by the Commission, and we have this compromise formula that we agreed on. If the General Assembly in its wisdom wanted to do something with that, that is up to the General Assembly. But as far as the Commission is concerned, this agreement stands.

**Mr. Amil** (Pakistan): In that case, since we are going to present it to the General Assembly in any event, we could say, “The Commission recommends that the consideration of this item be continued during

the remainder of the current cycle”, rather than specifying 2010. Then we will have a solution, and if the consideration finishes before that, all the better.

**Mr. Cruau** (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you very warmly for all your efforts during this session, which have made it possible, I think, for us to move forward in a spirit of openness, flexibility and consensus. Of course, we have not completed the work that we would perhaps have liked at the beginning of the session, but we have made progress in any case, and I think that augurs well for the future. Once again, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank you personally for everything.

On the draft report before us, our delegation finds it to be perfect as it is. We do not find it useful to make any modifications. The document is very good. It reflects the state of our work very well. We all know where we are. And I think that we can adopt it as it is.

**Mr. Vasiliev** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, my delegation would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for your excellent preparation of our work and for the preparation of the draft report.

I believe that, during this session, we have already had sufficient discussion of organizational questions, which often led to many voices being heard and to the splitting of hairs on the issues. I think that the wording that is contained in the draft report reflects the essence of the issue very well. We did not finish our work on the item this year; we will continue it next year. If we do not finish it next year, then no one will forbid us from continuing it over the remainder of the three-year cycle until 2011. It is now 2009, so let us finish considering the issue before us.

It is my understanding that the authors of resolution 61/67 themselves included the request to present a relevant report to the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, and we are fulfilling that request. It is also my understanding that the wording presented by the Rapporteur is fully in keeping with that.

**Mr. Rao** (India): As this is the first time that I have taken the floor at this session, Mr. Chairman, let me say how much we appreciate the manner in which you have conducted our deliberations during the past three weeks.

As regards the draft report, I would draw the attention of the Committee to the last sentence of paragraph 4 of the report of Working Group II, which says that the Group decided to continue consideration of the revised Chairman's non-paper at the next session of the Disarmament Commission, in 2010. I understand the tension between General Assembly resolution 61/67 and the Commission, but perhaps, in the present circumstances, it might be better if we left the draft report as it is, without the amendment that was proposed earlier. The Commission would in any case be fulfilling the requirement that the results of the work be submitted to the General Assembly. In these circumstances, perhaps the best option would be to leave the draft report as originally presented. Otherwise, we would be contradicting ourselves in the report of the Working Group, as well as in the report of the Disarmament Commission.

**The Chairman:** If I understood correctly, the suggestion is that the draft report be left unchanged, without the amendment suggested by the Rapporteur.

**Mr. Amil (Pakistan):** Actually, the observation that we made was that we should not impede the process and thus create difficulty. However, I think that, although there is obviously a desire to wrap up the process and to move on, if our recollection is correct, this is an issue that created a great deal of controversy. This is an issue that prevented the Disarmament Commission from adopting its agenda. The adoption of the agenda was delayed and the whole process was shaken up because of this issue.

If we are coming back to square one at this final meeting, perhaps there is a certain resignation that tends to seep in towards the end of such lengthy sessions. That said, essentially, our objection is based on the point that if it were not an important issue, then we should not have done so much hair-splitting to begin with; we should have just adopted an agenda and gotten along.

There was, of course, a great deal of tension between the view that resolution 61/67 stipulates that consideration has to be concluded in 2009 and the contrary view. If delegations think — and the Bureau is on the same page — that if we say 2010, we are not foreclosing the possibility of extending it beyond 2010, then we can go along with the new paragraph.

But, for the record, we would like to make the following observation. We should not confront this

hurdle later on by saying that, since we have now devoted two sessions to it and it was just an issue for brief consideration, we should now move along; it is an important issue that is going to inform disarmament-related discussions in the coming years. That is the observation we wanted to make. Of course, Mr. Chairman, we will very willingly place ourselves in your very able hands and trust in your stewardship, along with that of all other members of the Bureau.

**Mr. Seruhere (United Republic of Tanzania):** I wish to draw attention to the fact that disarmament has almost become synonymous with the nuclear world. However, I believe that the majority of the lives on this planet are much more affected by weapons other than nuclear weapons. So, without spending much of our time, I would appeal to you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau to consider allocating more time at the next session to the issue of disarmament related to weapons other than nuclear weapons. I hope that that request appeals to you and the rest of the Bureau.

**The Chairman:** I understand very well the good intentions of the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania. However, it seems to me that it is up to the Commission at its next session to take a decision regarding the organization of its work during the forthcoming substantive session. We should leave it up to the Chairman, the rest of the Bureau and the participants at the next session to take a decision concerning the allocation of time for that session. I thank the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania very much for that suggestion; it will be taken note of. But I am afraid that we cannot take such a decision at this time.

Coming back to the previous discussion: As the Rapporteur said, the issue of the additional paragraph was discussed this morning during the meeting of the Bureau. We considered the language very carefully, and it seems to me that the language that was finally adopted at the meeting does not close any options; it simply refers it to the work of the next session. In addition, we took care to reflect the language that was adopted in the report of Working Group II. So there was no intention to reintroduce this issue, which had caused some controversy. And that is what I would like to convey to the delegation of Pakistan.

So I would say that my feeling is that we will either follow the suggestion made by the delegation of

India and not try to introduce this new paragraph, or perhaps after this discussion the delegation of Pakistan will be able to accept the formulation suggested by the Rapporteur of the Commission.

**Mr. Amil** (Pakistan): Looking at the draft report as it stands, perhaps it would be advisable not to insert anything into it. The draft report says that an agenda was adopted, and the agenda is also on the record. That would serve the purpose. It is then understood that, when the General Assembly approves the report of the Disarmament Commission, the discussion will go on into the next substantive session.

So in that sense it would be advisable to keep the draft report as it is. It makes mention of the agenda, and we all know what the agenda is. We will then be spared the same, I would say, tension — or however we want to characterize it — next year. During the next

session we will also have to make up for the time that was lost this year. So, in that sense, the less wrangling we see on procedural matters, the better.

**The Chairman:** So I understand that the preference is to keep the draft report as it was before the present meeting began, without the amendment suggested by the Rapporteur. I see that there are no comments or objections. I shall therefore take it that that is the decision of the Commission.

*It was so decided.*

**The Chairman:** We have thus concluded our consideration of the reports of the Working Groups and of the draft report of the Commission. I therefore intend to adjourn this meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

*The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.*