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Disarmament Commission**2012 substantive session**

New York, 2-20 April 2012

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

**Recommendations on the functioning of the
Disarmament Commission****Working paper submitted by Poland**

We are deeply concerned with the state of the Disarmament Commission, which, since 1999, has been unable to make any substantive recommendations, as mandated by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (1978).

We are determined to make a serious contribution to overcoming the persisting impasse in the disarmament machinery. We support the efforts of the Secretary-General aimed at the revitalization of the disarmament machinery and we are ready to work together with all States to advance progress in this regard. We are also ready to join innovative efforts aimed at advancing the cause of arms control and disarmament and, in particular, ensuring the effectiveness of the disarmament machinery in responding to current security concerns.

We are also determined not to create a precedent that could compromise the preferred way of decision-making in disarmament and arms control bodies, that is, consensus.

It has to be noted that ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission have been a subject of consideration at a number of sessions of the Commission. Taking into account the current stalemate, we are of the view that the recommendations adopted during those sessions should serve as a basis for the Commission's method of work during the forthcoming three-year cycle.

1. Chairman's summary

At its 1990 substantive session (7-29 May 1990, New York) the Disarmament Commission discussed ways and means to enhance its functioning (A/CN.10/137 of 27 April 1990). It reaffirmed the mandate contained in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (deliberative body to consider and

* A/CN.10/L.67.



make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament, submit them to the United Nations General Assembly and, through it, to the Conference on Disarmament. The Disarmament Commission shall make every effort to ensure that, insofar as possible, decisions on substantive issues be adopted by consensus). According to a decision recorded in document A/CN.10/137, if no agreement can be reached on a specific agenda item, the report of the Disarmament Commission should contain a joint statement or a Chairman's summary of the proceedings to reflect views or positions of different delegations, particularly in the case of those agenda items to be suspended for a period of time.

We are of the opinion that during the 2012-2014 cycle, this option shall be seriously taken into account if no agreement can be reached on consensus-based recommendations. Moreover, the Chairman's summary could be a part of each session's outcome, regardless of its final result. This would allow for better reflection of the discussion and serve as a record keeper, useful for future deliberations.

2. Interaction with experts on disarmament

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/98 of 6 December 2006, "the Commission is encouraged to invite, as appropriate, experts on disarmament, including those at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, for discussions at its plenary meetings".

We are of the view that interaction with various experts on disarmament will give a positive and fresh impetus to the discussion ongoing at the sessions of the Disarmament Commission. This would also encourage States to exchange views on their respective policies in the sphere of disarmament. The interaction would be also substantial, to maintain the deliberative character of the Commission, and so as to allow for in-depth discussions on specific disarmament issues, leading to the submission of concrete recommendations on those issues. The proceedings of such and exchange of views shall be also reflected in the Chairman's summary as an established practice.

3. Effectiveness of the organizational sessions

The General Assembly in decision 52/492 of 1998, paragraph (e), stated that "the regional groups should be urged to make possible the early election of the chairmen of the subsidiary bodies, preferably at the organizational session of the Commission in the autumn, so as to allow them to conduct intersessional consultations on the respective subjects". Resolution 61/98 on the report of the Disarmament Commission states, however, that the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies should be elected at an organizational session of the Commission, if possible at least three months before the beginning of the substantive session.

We welcome the fact that this practice was reflected during the 2012 organizational session and almost all officers of the Commission were elected at the organizational session. In future we should also make every effort to ensure that the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies are elected during the organizational session. It will allow them to conduct informal consultations on the respective subjects before the beginning of the substantive session and ensure the effectiveness of the Disarmament Commission.