



General Assembly

Official Records

Disarmament Commission

302nd meeting

Tuesday, 15 March 2010, 10 a.m.
New York

Chair: Mr. Towpik (Poland)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Opening of the session

The Chair: I declare open the 2010 organizational session of the Disarmament Commission.

Draft provisional agenda for the 2010 organizational session of the Disarmament Commission (A/CN.10/L.64)

The Chair: As in past years, the Commission has convened today for a brief session to deal with organizational matters, including the election of the Chair and other members of the Bureau for 2010.

As far as the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission are concerned, we are fortunate in that, at our 2009 session, we elected Mr. Paolo Cuculi of Italy as Chair of Working Group I and Mr. Johan Paschalis of South Africa as Chair of Working Group II.

I remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 52/492, of 8 September 1998, Chairs will be elected for the full three-year cycle. That, in turn, adds a heavy burden of responsibility to chairing the Working Groups' deliberations. I have every confidence that the Chairs will successfully fulfil their duties.

I wish now to draw the Commission's attention to the provisional agenda for this organizational session, as contained in document A/CN.10/L.64. There being

no comments, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the agenda.

The agenda was adopted.

Election of the Chair

The Chair: In accordance with the established practice of rotation, it is the Group of African States that has the honour to nominate the candidate for the post of Chair of the Commission for its 2010 session. I have received a note from the Chair of that Group informing me that the Group has reached an agreement on its candidature for the chairmanship of the Commission for its 2010 session.

I give the floor to the representative of Equatorial Guinea, Chair of the Group of African States, to announce the nomination.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before introducing the candidate of the African Group, allow me on behalf of our Group to offer you our most sincere congratulations and appreciation for the way in which you have been conducting these important discussions. We wish you every success and positive results in the conclusion of your work.

Allow me now to introduce His Excellency Ambassador Jean-François Régis Zinsou, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Benin, as the candidate the African Group.

The Chair: I thank the representative of Equatorial Guinea for his nomination of Ambassador

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Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou, Permanent Representative of Benin to the United Nations, as Chair of the Commission.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that it is the wish of the Commission to elect Ambassador Zinsou as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission by acclamation.

It was so decided.

The Chair: On behalf of the Commission and on my own behalf, I congratulate Ambassador Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou, Permanent Representative of Benin, on his election to this high office. I express the commonly shared view when I say that we look forward to benefiting from his extensive experience and diplomatic skill. We wish him success in discharging his newly assumed and important duties. With these brief remarks, I invite Ambassador Zinsou to take his place at the podium.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) took the Chair.

Statement by the Chair

The Chair (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to thank the members of the Disarmament Commission for electing me as Chair of the Commission and for having entrusted me with the important task of presiding over this organizational session. I would also like to thank them for their kind words and wishes addressed to me. I count on the support and cooperation of all member States in achieving the Commission's important goals.

Before going on to the next item on our agenda, allow me to pay a well-deserved tribute to Ambassador Andrzej Towpik, who chaired the Disarmament Commission at its 2009 substantive session, for his guidance and leadership of the Commission. My gratitude also goes to the other members of the Bureau for their valiant and tireless efforts, which I myself witnessed as a member of the Bureau. Finally, I thank delegations for their constructive spirit and cooperation during the past year of the Commission's work.

It is no easy task to try to achieve a balance of interests on issues concerning the fundamental issues of Member States' security. We have made real progress in agreeing upon the substantive items on our agenda for this session and in electing the Chairs of Working Groups I and II, who were announced at the start of this meeting.

Today, I invite the Commission to look to the future with a positive spirit. The 2010 international disarmament calendar includes a number of important events, including the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May. The outside world and the community of nations expect a great deal from these events. It is to be hoped that this general atmosphere of expectation will have a positive influence on and help to focus the work of the Disarmament Commission in 2010.

Election of other officers

The Chair (*spoke in French*): Like the Chair, the other officers of the Bureau are also elected on the basis of the established principle of geographical rotation. Accordingly, it is the turn of the Group of Eastern European States to nominate a candidate for Rapporteur of the Commission for the 2010 substantive session.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine, on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, to nominate the candidate.

Ms. Pokhval'ona (Ukraine): On behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election. Also on behalf of the Chair of the Group of Eastern European States for the month of March 2010, it is my pleasure to announce that Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, Second Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Bulgaria to the United Nations, has been endorsed as the Group's candidate for the post of Rapporteur of the Disarmament Commission for 2010.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Ukraine for the Group's nomination of Ms. Lachezara Stoeva to the post of Rapporteur of the Commission at its 2010 session.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to elect Ms. Stoeva of Bulgaria as Rapporteur of the Commission at its 2010 substantive session.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): I suggest that we now proceed to the election of Vice-Chairs. I have been informed that consultations are still ongoing within the Group of Latin America and Caribbean States on

possible candidates for the posts of Vice-Chairs. We will therefore address this issue at a later stage.

With regard to the candidate for the post of Vice-Chair from the Group of Eastern European States, I wish to inform the Commission that the Group has successfully concluded its consultations and has endorsed a candidate for the vacant post allocated to that Group.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Ms. Pokhval'ona (Ukraine): I am pleased to announce that the Group of Eastern European States has endorsed Mr. Attila Zimonyi of Hungary for the post of Vice-Chair of the Commission.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Commission wishes to elect by acclamation Mr. Attila Zimonyi of Hungary as Vice-Chair of the Commission.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): With regard to the candidates for the post of Vice-Chair from the Group of Asian States, I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Faiq (Afghanistan): Allow me at the outset, before I introduce the nominees from the Asian Group, to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the Disarmament Commission. I wish you and all the members of the Bureau every success. My gratitude also goes to your predecessor for his efforts.

On behalf of the Chair of the Group of Asian States for the month of March, I am pleased to announce that the Group has selected Mr. Youn Jong kwon of the Republic of Korea and Mr. Raphael Hermoso of the Philippines as the Group's candidates for the posts of Vice-Chairs of the Commission.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Commission wishes to elect by acclamation Mr. Youn Jong kwon of the Republic of Korea and Mr. Raphael Hermoso of the Philippines as Vice-Chairs of the Commission.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): With regard to the candidates for the posts of Vice-Chairs from the Group of African States, I now give the floor to the representative of Equatorial Guinea.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in French*): We have the pleasure to announce that the Group of African States has decided to nominate Mr. Hassan Hamid Hassan of the Sudan as the Group's candidate for the post of Vice-Chair of the Commission.

Allow me also to take this opportunity, Sir, to convey to you, on behalf of the African Group, our heartfelt congratulations and our wish for every success in the accomplishment of these lofty tasks.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to elect by acclamation Mr. Hassan Hamid Hassan of the Sudan as Vice-Chair of the Commission.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): With regard to the candidates for the posts of Vice-Chairs from the Group of Western European and other States, I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Laudi (Germany): On behalf of the Group of Western European and other States, let me first of all congratulate you, Sir, on the assumption of your post and wish you all the best for this session.

On behalf of the Group of Western European and other States, I am pleased to announce, on behalf of the Chair of the Group for this month, that the Group has selected Ms. Penny Douti of Greece and Mr. Juan Ignacio Morro of Spain as the Group's candidates for the posts of Vice-Chairs of the Commission.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to elect by acclamation Mr. Juan Ignacio Morro of Spain and Ms. Penny Douti of Greece as Vice-Chairs of the Commission for 2010.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): Allow me, on behalf of the Commission, to warmly congratulate all elected officers and to wish them every success in discharging their duties. I look forward with great interest to working with them and with all other fellow Bureau members.

Review of the draft resolution relating to the Disarmament Commission, submitted to the First Committee at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly

The Chair (*spoke in French*): As members of the Commission are aware, the General Assembly adopted one resolution that has specific bearing on the work of the Commission. For the sake of clarity and for the benefit of members of the Commission, I would like to refer to that resolution. Resolution 64/65, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission", was adopted by the General Assembly on 2 December 2009 under sub-item (b) of agenda item 98. The relevant paragraphs of the draft resolution, namely, paragraphs 7 and 8, read as follows:

"[The General Assembly] recommends that the Disarmament Commission continue the consideration of the following items at its substantive session of 2010:

(a) Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons;

(b) Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade;

(c) Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. This item will be taken up upon the conclusion of the preparation of the elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade, preferably by 2010 and in any case no later than 2011;

"Requests the Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 2010, namely from 29 March to 16 April, and to submit a substantive report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session."

I have just cited the resolution containing the mandate for the upcoming work of the Disarmament Commission.

I now open the floor to those delegations wishing to make statements or to comment.

Mr. Morro (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the European Union.

First of all, we would like to sincerely thank Ambassador Andrzej Towpik, former Chair of the Disarmament Commission, for his work at the previous session. We also wish to sincerely congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair. We are convinced that, under your wise leadership, the work of the Commission will enjoy a new impetus at this session. We take this opportunity to assure you of the full support of the European Union and our intention to work closely with you to achieve a successful outcome to our proceedings. We also congratulate the newly elected Vice-Chairs and Rapporteurs and wish them every success in their endeavours.

The European Union wishes to underscore the importance of the mandate entrusted to the Disarmament Commission as a deliberative body within the multilateral disarmament machinery of the United Nations, allowing us to address specific disarmament and non-proliferation issues and to submit concrete recommendations.

The European Union appreciates the work accomplished last year by the two Working Groups established to analyse recommendations to meet the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the elements for a draft declaration for the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade. We wish to thank the Chairs of the two Working Groups for their efforts to date to make progress in seeking consensus.

The European Union hopes that the Disarmament Commission will be able to benefit from the renewed impetus of the international agenda in the fields of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. We trust that the initiatives to be launched in the coming months will lead to satisfying results in order to strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and to progress towards general and complete disarmament. The European Union is prepared to participate actively in this process and commits itself to working towards attaining these objectives.

Once again, Mr. Chair, we repeat the full support of the countries of the European Union and their desire to ensure a successful outcome to your work.

Mr. Ruddyard (Indonesia): First of all, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Disarmament Commission at this important session. We are confident that, under your able stewardship, this session will yield tangible outcomes that fulfil the critical mandate entrusted to the Commission by the General Assembly.

The Non-Aligned Movement also extends its felicitations to the other members of the Bureau and the Chairs of the Working Groups on their elections.

As we are all aware, at the present session we are going to continue the discussion from the previous session, both in Working Group I and in Working Group II. We are of the view that the momentum generated from previous sessions should be carried forward towards realizing the mandate given to the Commission by the General Assembly. We are confident that, with a positive beginning, this session will serve as one of the important steps towards attaining these objectives.

Finally, allow me to reiterate the Non-Aligned Movement's commitment to continuing to engage actively and constructively with you, Sir, with the Chairs of the Working Groups and with all member States at this session of the Disarmament Commission as part of our responsibility to the international community in our efforts to seek common solutions for international peace and security.

Draft provisional agenda for the 2010 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission
(A/CN.10/L.63)

The Chair (*spoke in French*): May I take it that the Commission wishes to take note of the draft provisional agenda of the 2010 substantive session, as contained in document A/CN.10/L.63?

It was so decided.

Organizational matters

The Chair (*spoke in French*): The United Nations Disarmament Commission is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly and meets annually. Its sessions are financed from the regular budget and do not require additional funding. Moreover, in accordance with decision 52/492 of 1998, the annual substantive sessions of the Commission should last three weeks. As a result, at the 2010 session, the Commission will work on the basis of our usual practice, namely, a full three-week session.

The Commission will recall from last year's report that the dates for the 2010 substantive session shall be from 29 March to 16 April. I note that these dates were chosen taking into consideration the disarmament calendar for the coming month, in particular the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which follows immediately after the Disarmament Commission's substantive session. Delegations are asked to kindly take note of these dates. If I hear no comment, it shall be so decided.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in French*): I should like to note that, according to established practice, all organizational matters should be concluded at the organizational session of the Disarmament Commission. I would like to remind the Commission that we have not yet elected the Vice-Chairs from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, as the members of the Group have not reached an agreement on candidates. I urge them to do so as soon as possible. As a result, the Commission may wish to conclude this organizational session in order to allow time for the Bureau and delegations to carry out consultations on this issue. We would then take up the matter once again in due course.

Before we conclude, I would like to urge members that wish to take the floor during the general debate to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible, but no later than Monday, 29 March. I also ask members to submit the names to be included in the list of delegations by the deadline of 31 March.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Commission to conclude its 2010 organizational session?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.