



General Assembly

Official Records

Disarmament Commission

318th meeting

Thursday, 19 January 2012, 10 a.m.
New York

Chair: Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Opening of the session

The Chair: I declare open the 2012 organizational session of the Disarmament Commission.

As this is the first time the Commission is meeting this year, I should like to wish all members a happy new year and every success in its work in 2012.

Draft provisional agenda for the 2012 organizational session of the Disarmament Commission (A/CN.10/L.68)

The Chair: As in past years, the Commission has been convened today for a brief meeting to deal with organizational matters, including the election of the Chair and of other members of the Bureau for 2012.

I wish now to draw members' attention to the draft provisional agenda for this organizational session, as contained in document A/CN.10/L.68.

If there are no comments on the provisional agenda, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the draft provisional agenda as contained in document A/CN.10/L.68.

The agenda was adopted.

The Chair: In accordance with the established practice of rotation, it is the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States that has the honour to nominate the candidate for the post of Chair of the Commission at its 2012 session. I have received an official

communication from the Chair of that Group informing me that the Group has reached an agreement on the nomination of Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey, Permanent Representative of Peru, as a candidate for the chairmanship of the Commission at its 2012 session.

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that it is the wish of the Commission to elect Mr. Enrique Román-Morey as Chair of the Disarmament Commission by acclamation.

It was so decided.

The Chair: On behalf of the Commission and on my own behalf, I congratulate Ambassador Román-Morey on his election to this high office. I express a commonly shared view when I say that we look forward to benefiting from his broad experience and diplomatic skills. We wish him success in discharging his new and important duties. For our part, we will remain at his service, providing support and counsel as need be.

Having made those brief remarks, I now invite Ambassador Román-Morey to take the Chair.

Mr. Román-Morey (Peru) took the Chair.

Statement by the Chair

The Chair: I wish to thank the outgoing Chair for his kind introduction.

(spoke in Spanish)

At the outset, allow me to express my gratitude to the members of the Disarmament Commission for having elected me as Chair of the Commission and for

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having entrusted to me the important task of chairing it during this session. In particular, I would like to thank the outgoing Chair of the Commission for his kind words. I also especially wish to thank my regional group, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, for placing their trust in me to lead our work.

I am fully aware of the responsibility that I am taking on today. The Disarmament Commission, along with most of the disarmament machinery, has experienced incomprehensible stagnation, which has proven harmful to the international community for more than a decade. I have personally witnessed the problems that we must face and share if we are to make progress in the crucial area of disarmament.

As members are aware, for more than five years I served as Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and as Director of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in that city. I bore special witness to the major but disappointing efforts undertaken at that time as the Conference sought to achieve our objectives. I am convinced that, with the support and cooperation of all members, the Disarmament Commission will find a way to move beyond this impasse and, in compliance with its mandate, make recommendations to the appropriate negotiating forums so as to reach agreements that will benefit the international community as a whole.

However, those agreements will be impossible without the necessary political will, which has been mentioned on so many occasions by each and every member of the Commission. It is up to us, and only us, to ensure that it is no longer said that the only political will existing in terms of disarmament is to not reach agreements in the important field in which we work. Once again, I count on the support and cooperation of all Member States to achieve the Commission's important objectives.

Before turning to the next item on the agenda, allow me to pay well-deserved tribute to Ambassador Hamad Al Bayati for the excellent guidance and leadership he provided as Chair of the Disarmament Commission at its 2011 substantive session. My gratitude also goes to the other members of the Bureau for their courageous and tireless efforts.

Finally, let me thank delegations for their constructive spirit and cooperation during the previous session of the Commission.

Election of other officers

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): I have been informed that the Group of African States, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Group of Asian States are still holding consultations on possible candidates for the posts of Vice-Chair and Rapporteur. We can address that issue at a later stage.

As for the candidates for Vice-Chairs from the Group of Eastern European States and the Group of Western European and other States, I wish to inform the Commission that those Groups have successfully concluded their consultations. I have received an official communication from the Group of Eastern European States endorsing Ms. Danijela Čubrilo of the Republic of Serbia and Mr. Łukasz Zieliński of the Republic of Poland as Vice-Chairs from the Group of Eastern European States.

I have also received a letter from the Chair of the Group of Western European and other States for the month of January nominating Mr. Niclas Kvarnström of Sweden and Mr. Knut Langeland of Norway as Vice-Chairs representing that Group.

There being no objections, I will take it that the Commission wishes to elect by acclamation Ms. Danijela Čubrilo of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Łukasz Zieliński of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Niclas Kvarnström of Sweden and Mr. Knut Langeland of Norway as Vice-Chairs of the Commission for the 2012 substantive session.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Commission, I warmly congratulate all the elected officers and wish them every success in discharging their duties. I look forward to working with each and every one of them and other fellow Bureau members. I hope that we will be guided by the best of luck and political will as we endeavour to achieve our objectives.

Review of General Assembly resolution 66/60

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): As members of the Commission are aware, the General Assembly adopted resolution 66/60, which has specific bearing on the work of the Commission. For the sake of clarity and for the benefit of the members of the Commission, I should like to refer to that resolution.

Resolution 66/60, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission", was adopted by the General

Assembly on 2 December 2011, under agenda item 100 (b). The relevant paragraphs of the draft resolution are paragraphs 7 and 8.

Paragraph 7 reads:

“Recommends that the Disarmament Commission intensify consultations with a view to reaching agreement on the items on its agenda, in accordance with decision 52/492, before the start of its substantive session of 2012”.

Paragraph 8 reads:

“Requests the Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 2012, namely from 2 to 20 April, and to submit a substantive report to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session”.

The resolution to which I have just referred also contains the mandate for the upcoming work of the Disarmament Commission.

I shall now give the floor to those representatives wishing to make statements or comments.

Mr. Juul-Nyholm (Denmark): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union (EU).

The acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Iceland; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

First, we would like to express our sincere thanks to Ambassador Hamid Al Bayati, the outgoing Chair of the Disarmament Commission, for his tireless efforts during the previous session. We wish to congratulate the newly elected Chair, Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey. We take this opportunity to assure you, Sir, of the full support of the EU countries. The EU looks forward to working closely with you, and we are convinced that under your leadership the work of the Disarmament Commission will advance. We also congratulate the elected Vice-Chairs and wish them success in their work.

Disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control remain highly significant matters. Progress has been made in some forums in advancing those issues, but many challenges are still waiting to be overcome. We

thus regret that the Disarmament Commission has for the last 12 sessions failed to meet its mandate.

According to its mandate, the Disarmament Commission is to consider and make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament. In order for the Commission to succeed in that task, the European Union calls for more focused deliberations of the Commission for the next three-year cycle. The Commission should direct its attention to specific subjects and avoid generic and repetitive discussions.

We all have a responsibility to make use of this three-week-long forum. The European Union stands ready to engage in discussions pertaining to the Disarmament Commission, in the context of the review of the United Nations disarmament machinery.

In conclusion, Mr. Chair, we would like to wish you every success in your future work and reiterate to you the full support of the European Union.

Mr. Cassidy (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). NAM would like to thank you, Sir, for having convened this meeting. The Movement congratulates the newly elected Chair, His Excellency Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey, of Peru, as well as the other officers on their successful election. NAM wishes to assure the incoming members of the Bureau of its cooperation and active work to contribute to a productive and substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. NAM also assures all Member States and groups that it will engage with them constructively in that process.

The Group would also like to sincerely thank and pay tribute to the previous Chair, Ambassador Hamid Al Bayati, for his leadership, and to thank the other Bureau members.

On the issue of the agenda items for the new cycle of the Disarmament Commission, starting in 2012, NAM stresses that it attaches the highest priority to the agenda item entitled “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons”, and it expects that results-oriented work will be undertaken on this crucial subject in order to help achieve international peace and security.

NAM would like also to propose that the second agenda item in the new cycle of the Disarmament Commission be “Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade”. Considering the vital importance of this issue, the Movement hopes

that this proposed agenda item will also receive the widespread support that it merits. NAM is confident that if Member States work together and display the necessary political flexibility, the vision of achieving complete nuclear disarmament can become a reality.

Mr. Zieliński (Poland): Let me first of all congratulate you, Sir, on having taken up the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission and assure you of the full support of the delegation of Poland.

My country fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. I should just like to make a few comments.

Poland is deeply concerned at the status of the Disarmament Commission, which since 1999 has been unable to make any substantive recommendations as mandated by the first special session on disarmament. We are determined to make a serious contribution to overcoming the persistent 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 that regard.

We are also ready to join in the 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.

Poland is also determined not to create a precedent that could compromise the preferred way of decision-making in disarmament bodies and arms control bodies — that is, consensus. It has to be noted that the issue of ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission has been considered 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 the basis for the work of the Conference in the years to come. To that end, Poland will present a working paper during the substantive session, to be held in April.

The opening of a new cycle of the Disarmament Commission creates a new opportunity to make progress in the area of the United Nations disarmament machinery. Poland will support the United Nations in the achievement of that goal.

Mr. Kvarnström (Sweden): First, allow me to congratulate the Chair on his election. Sweden looks forward to a productive session under his chairmanship. I also wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the other elected officers, with whom I look forward to working in the Bureau.

Sweden aligns itself fully with the statement made by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. Nevertheless, I wish to add a few observations in my national capacity.

The Disarmament Commission was created with the mandate to be a deliberative body, where discussions would lead to recommendations that the General Assembly could consider. As such, it was never meant to be a negotiating forum. Indeed, the Commission has sometimes been referred to by fellow representatives as the think tank of the disarmament machinery. I fear, however, that the description is misleading, as no actual thinking has emerged from the Commission for more than a decade.

No matter from which angle one looks at it, not least from the point of view of United Nations reform and how to make the Organization more efficient, it is unacceptable that a forum tasked with delivering recommendations has failed to do so for 12 years, despite having ample time devoted to its sessions, and at a high annual cost to the Organization.

It is often said that there is nothing wrong with the disarmament machinery, and that the problem is simply the lack of political will. But even if that were true, that does not excuse the lack of progress in the case of the Commission, since we are not meant to solve the deadlock but merely to reflect thinking that can contribute to its solution.

It is only natural, and in line with sound organizational practice, that when a forum fails to deliver on its basic mandate for such an extended period of time, some sort of review of its function and work should be considered. It is our strongly held view that we should commence such a discussion presently. Specifically, if we were again to accept the same broad agenda topics for the next three-year cycle as we have had before, we know that, in the absence of extraordinary progress elsewhere in the disarmament machinery, we would invariably achieve nothing for another three years, not just because we have different opinions on fundamental issues, but also because possible progress in one area is held hostage to another, and because our work is set

up in a way that prevent us from making any form of concrete contribution.

The disarmament decade that we have been discussing — the 2010s — has already begun, and our previous discussions give little hope for an outcome this year. The Disarmament Commission was supposed to be the place where the major disarmament issues of the day could be deliberated upon and from where the product of those discussions could then be reported to the General Assembly. We are of the firm opinion that now is the time for change. After more than a decade of discussions leading to no recommendations and with most of our deliberations having never being heard by anyone outside this room, it is time to move.

For a start, therefore, we might want to discuss the role and functioning of this forum. Let us be self-critical, but also creative. Let us work together. I am sure that with a room of such talented diplomats and friends we can find a more constructive way to conduct our business.

Some of the flaws in how we work seem fairly obvious. Agenda topics are too broad, there is an absence of agreement on how we could report from our deliberations, there is the need to make use of previous discussion papers, time is wasted on finding working group chairs, and there is an absence of the oxygen that external participants might add to this room in order to really live up to the think tank analogy.

In summary, I believe that we are in a dire place, because year after year we consume substantial time and money in a place where both of those commodities are in short supply. Worse, we have learned in advance to expect nothing to come of our efforts. Even given the deep divisions and critical topics among our Governments, there must be a way for us to provide input to the General Assembly in some form, and thereby make an actual contribution to the important disarmament and non-proliferation problems of our time, as well as to preserve the relevance of this forum.

We look forward to your guidance, Mr. Chair, in finding an agenda that can lead to progress. We promise you our full cooperation in this urgent work. Let us give ourselves the chance to make the upcoming three-year cycle one worthy of what the United Nations is supposed to be.

Mr. D'Antuono (Italy): I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to the outgoing Chair of the

Disarmament Commission, Ambassador Al Bayati, for his commitment and efforts during the Commission's previous session. I would also like to congratulate this year's new Chair, Ambassador Román-Morey, as well the Vice-Chairs.

Let me take this opportunity to assure them of my delegation's support in advancing the Commission's work.

Italy fully subscribes to the statement made by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. I would like to briefly highlight a few points.

The fact that the Disarmament Commission has not been able since 1999 to make any substantive recommendations is regrettable and unacceptable, especially considering its important annual cost. We think that it is crucial to learn from the past negative experiences in order to avoid making the same mistakes over and over. We are convinced, therefore, that we should refrain from generic and repetitive discussions that will eventually lead to another failure of the Disarmament Commission. In particular, as has been stressed by others, it is important not to choose for the next three-year cycle subjects that are too broad and general. On the contrary, in order to facilitate an agreement on consensus-based recommendations, we should try to identify specific topics within the realm of nuclear disarmament and conventional weapons, as well as other important issues in the field of disarmament.

Italy is a strong and active supporter of the initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General and by many other Member States to revitalize the disarmament machinery. We are convinced that we should spare no effort to overcome the impasse that is preventing the Disarmament Commission from doing the work that it is mandated to do as a deliberative body, that is, to consider and to make recommendations on various issues in the field of disarmament.

In that regard, how the disarmament machinery can be improved is, with no doubt, one of the central issues that needs more urgent attention. My delegation therefore believes that it would be important to have a topic on the agenda that addresses the role and the relevance of the Disarmament Commission in the context of the revitalization of the disarmament machinery.

Mr. Bavaud (Switzerland): At the outset, let me congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the Chair of the 2012 session of the Disarmament Commission. I wish

you every success in that function. I also wish to extend our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau.

The fact that the multilateral disarmament bodies have been blocked for far too long is a matter of particular concern. The consequences are significant, and are already making themselves strongly felt. If a way out cannot be found, those consequences will become more acute in the coming years. The existing disarmament bodies do not appear to be able to find answers to the challenges they face. One of the reasons for that lies in the fact that numerous players are focusing their attention primarily on considerations of national security, instead of the interest of the international community as a whole. That kind of narrow approach is clearly inappropriate, since today it is no longer possible to separate national interests and global security. Fresh impetus is therefore required in order to redress the imbalance between the acuteness of the problems and the current lack of progress.

The main objective of the Disarmament Commission as a specialized and deliberative forum within the United Nations disarmament mechanism is to reinforce and create rules relating to disarmament by submitting recommendations to the General Assembly. In the past, those recommendations have demonstrated the added value of the Commission, but this body has not been able to adopt any recommendations of substance for more than 12 years now. The value added that it provides to the disarmament and arms control processes therefore needs to be reassessed. The potential matches for coping with that situation need to be examined in greater detail. The deadlock faced by the Disarmament Commission is, to some extent, tied to the fact that it has two major items on its agenda, namely, nuclear arms and conventional weapons. That gives rise to a situation that is hardly favourable to progress, since a lack of progress in one area results in a deadlock in the other.

One concrete way to improve the discussion is to be more specific in the choice of topics, for example, picking a specific aspect in the area of nuclear and conventional weapons. Business as usual is no longer an option. In view of that, with regard to the provisional agenda of the 2012 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, we would also strongly favour the theme of the role of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in the disarmament machinery. We are ready to discuss with members of the Bureau and with delegations the best way to integrate that topic, or those topics, into the agenda.

Ms. Stoeva (Bulgaria): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. Having you guide our work already gives hope for a different and more successful Disarmament Commission. It is an honour and a pleasure to work with you, and you can truly rely on our delegation's support.

As several previous speakers have mentioned, it is highly disappointing that the Disarmament Commission has been unable to produce any substantive results for 12 consecutive years. As its mandate clearly states, it is a deliberative body meant to consider and make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament, and yet, we have not been able to achieve much.

We are also of the view that a discussion of the relevance of the Disarmament Commission is much needed. It is up to us to make the best use of that particular forum but, without an honest discussion on its role and place in the broader context of the disarmament machinery, we would once again tie our own hands with an agenda that we have seen before and that is likely to produce the results that we have seen before.

Therefore, my delegation believes that a discussion on the role of the Disarmament Commission and how to make it more relevant should be held during this three-year cycle. We have nine weeks over three years. We could dedicate at least some time to have an introspective look at our own work and taking responsibility for it.

Mr. Ishigaki (Japan): As this is my first time taking the floor, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the position of Chair. I would also like to reassure you, and all other members here, of Japan's full support and active participation in the upcoming session.

Since we also share many of the frustrations expressed by our fellow colleagues on the lack of progress of the Commission for many of the past years, I would very much like to stress that Japan hopes that this year we will be able to actually use that frustration to build positive momentum to make substantive progress in order for the Commission to play a significant role in the broader landscape of the disarmament machinery.

I believe that we all share a certain level of recognition of the lack of progress within the Commission for some years. However, I also think that that also puts us in a much better position to think about

the role that the Commission can play in the many other ongoing discussions on disarmament around the world.

I believe that, of course, as you, Mr. Chair, have already pointed out, the Conference on Disarmament has also been making its utmost effort despite not being able to produce much progress. However, as the deliberative body, we can also play a role in lending a hand to its discussions. Also, as all of us here know, the Secretary-General has personally been very much involved in revitalizing the process of disarmament in a number of his activities. We are also going to see the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as several important negotiations on small arms and the arms trade treaty, take place this year.

Looking at it in a much broader context, I believe that that Committee, which has the universal representation of all Member States, will be able to come up with recommendations on the role that the Commission can play in that broader framework. As many have pointed out, I believe that the primary role of the Commission is not to come up with any kind of agreement, but to provide recommendations — food for thought, in a way — for the other organs that are also working hard for the objective of the disarmament agenda.

I would also like to briefly touch upon our views on the opinion expressed by our colleagues of the Non-Aligned Movement. I believe that Japan also shares the strong support of the goal of complete nuclear disarmament. Japan is at the forefront of efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, and we very much share their enthusiasm.

In addition, I believe that discussing such matters in the disarmament decade is also an important issue, but that, as I said at the beginning of my statement, it should be looked at in a broader, and the more present, context of how we can break through the current stalemate surrounding the disarmament machinery.

Therefore, once again, we believe that it is very opportune timing for us to use this three-year session to think about how the Commission can play a positive and supportive role vis-à-vis other colleagues, for example, in Vienna and Geneva as well as here in New York at this critical juncture. I very much look forward to engaging in the discussion, with the strong hope that the Commission can produce very good recommendations this year, and also in this three-year cycle.

Mr. Langeland (Norway): First, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your election. My delegation very much looks forward to working with you. We would also like to thank the outgoing Chair for his excellent performance last year during the 2011 session.

A number of delegations have expressed concern about the current situation in the Disarmament Commission. That should be interpreted as a commitment to the Commission and an interest in improving its operation. I think that we should make use of that opportunity.

Secondly, Norway is also concerned about the Disarmament Commission. Norway has flagged its concerns on a number of occasions, both in the Disarmament Commission and in the First Committee. Among other proposals, we have advocated focused discussions in the Disarmament Commission. We have also proposed that if the consensus that we all seek is not possible at this session, at least the deliberations should be reflected in one way or another so that we do not lose sight of the discussions that have taken place in the Commission.

We now have the opportunity to make the Commission more relevant. As the representative of Switzerland said, that would imply that we should refrain from business as usual. There is no doubt, from my delegation's perspective, that we need to address the issue of nuclear weapons. My delegation also assumes that the issue of conventional weapons will also come up. However, if we are to do that, perhaps we should try to identify selected topics to be discussed or to make use of what was done last year, and in previous years, and build on some papers that were, at least, a subject for discussion at the 2011 session.

From my delegation's perspective, it would important to also take time to discuss the role of the Disarmament Commission as part of broader efforts to revitalize multilateralism in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. The Commission will have a role to play, and we need to clarify that role in relation to other bodies. Since we are a deliberative body, we can also look into how the machinery is functioning as such.

We are sensitive to the different views of Member States. Some call, *inter alia*, for the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which is also a discussion that will take place. But we should also be able to have exchanges of

views on how we can get out of the current impasse, both in the Disarmament Commission and in the Conference on Disarmament.

Before the substantive session starts in April, we need to have consultations on how to make best possible use of the three weeks we have available. Hopefully, we will have sorted out all procedural matters and we can start working at once at the beginning of April. Hopefully, we can agree on focusing some of our discussions on trying to identify areas where we have common perspectives, areas where there might be a convergence of views and areas where we need still more discussion. If we do that, then the Disarmament Commission would be performing its function.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Norway for his proposals. We have taken good note of them, as we do of all proposals made by delegations.

Mrs. Ledesma Hernández (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Cuban delegation, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to lead our work. We are very happy to see a member of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States in the Chair.

We would like to endorse what was said by the representative of Indonesia, who spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, in support of an item on nuclear disarmament on the Commission's agenda. That is the Movement's priority with regard to disarmament, with a view to achieving a world that is free of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, we would like to support the proposal to include as the second item on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission during this new cycle elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade. On that issue, we believe that progress should be made on the basis of the work done up until now in order to declare the 2010s as the fourth decade for disarmament. In our opinion, that that would be an important step as part of the multilateral agenda on disarmament. We stress the validity and relevance of the matter as a mobilizing factor in bringing about disarmament.

With regard to some of the opinions expressed by representatives with regard to the lack of progress that has been made in this body, we believe that that is not an isolated phenomenon. On the contrary, it is a reflection of the lack of political will to achieve concrete results

in the area of disarmament. We have also heard some proposals that favour avoiding general matters and concentrating on specifics. However, we have noted a number of contradictions, namely, that some are advocating for discussing a very broad issue, such as the revitalization of the disarmament machinery.

In that regard, the Non-Aligned Movement has been stressing for several years now the need to convene the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV). We believe that SSOD-IV would be the appropriate forum for reviewing the functioning of the multilateral disarmament process. If there is consensus that a revision of the disarmament machinery is necessary, then the special session should be convened without further delay.

On behalf of the Cuban delegation, we would like to state our preparedness to work constructively towards a successful conclusion of this session. We hope that the Disarmament Commission in its new cycle will be able to present to the General Assembly concrete results from our work.

Mr. Koller (Austria): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau, on assuming your respective offices for this year's session of the Disarmament Commission. I would also like to thank the previous Chair and Bureau of the Commission for their work during the 2011 session.

Allow me to assure the Commission of the fullest cooperation of my delegation. Austria has a keen interest in the dynamization of the work of the Disarmament Commission, taking into account our general efforts aimed at the revitalization of the disarmament machinery.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. In addition, I would now like to make a few further comments.

Mr. Chair, your stewardship at the beginning of the new triennial cycle is highly important, especially as regards the elaboration of an appropriate agenda for the Disarmament Commission. As a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and a deliberative body, the Commission is tasked with elaborating recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament. It has already been pointed out during the current session that that is the main task of the Commission. Its main task is not to negotiate disarmament treaties, but to undertake deliberations. Consequently, I think we can do better

than we have done in the past 12 years. We deeply deplore that the Commission has failed to fulfil its mandate during the past decade or more, and sincerely hope that our work during the forthcoming triennial cycle will result in concrete recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly for its endorsement.

To that end, it is important that the agenda for the next triennial cycle be carefully and accurately crafted. Experience from previous cycles has shown that discussions of topics that are too broad in scope remain without any tangible outcome. In that regard, it should be noted that the last time the Commission agreed on concrete recommendations, in 1999, those recommendations pertained to specific and concise topics, namely, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the regions concerned and guidelines on conventional arms control limitation and disarmament with particular emphasis on the consolidation of peace in the context of resolution 51/45. From our perspective, we should again strive to identify topics that are sharp in focus, thereby facilitating the elaboration of concrete recommendations.

In addition, the Commission should engage in a discussion about its own role and functioning. Already in 1999, the Commission identified ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission. After 12 years of failure, a frank discussion on how to make the Commission operational again seems necessary.

In that context, I would like to stress that that idea is also fully in tune with decision 52/492, in which the General Assembly decided that further optimization of the functioning of the Disarmament Commission according to circumstances could be a continuing consensus-based process in the context of the disarmament machinery, *inter alia*. I think that that is a question of setting up the framework, as the General Assembly has the last word in defining any discussion on the role and functioning of the Commission.

Lastly, like other delegations that we have heard today, my delegation is of the view that the outcome of our deliberations in the form of recommendations should be better reflected so as to enable future sessions of the Commission to build upon what has already been achieved.

Mr. Moktefi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, the Algerian delegation would like to

fully associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. I would also like to offer you our heartfelt congratulations, Sir, on your election to preside over the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Beyond your broad diplomatic career and specific experience in the area of disarmament, you have well-tested skills and competence that make us optimistic with respect to our deliberations, which, under your guidance, will certainly lead to concrete results.

My delegation would also like to commend the other Bureau members and offer you and them our full support and cooperation. We also thank the outgoing Chair, the Permanent Representative of Iraq, for his painstaking work at the helm of the Commission.

My delegation would like to speak today on the issue of the items on the Disarmament Commission's agenda. We would also like to respond to the many statements that have been made by some representatives, who have reiterated with one voice their regret at the lack of progress in the Commission. This impasse is the shared responsibility of all member States.

At the same time, the solution to the impasse and stalemate in the Disarmament Commission is linked, in our view, to political will and other elements outside the Commission's work. At the same time, we could improve the Commission's work if we want to do so. Work is already under way. Document A/CN.10/137 contains practical recommendations for improving the Commission's work. You, Sir, in your capacity as Chair, could make use of that paper in our informal consultations prior to the substantive session and perhaps suggest working methods for the Commission's work.

Our delegation believes, however, that in no case should there be an agenda item solely devoted to the role of the Commission. Such an item cannot be included in the agenda because it would not be wise to launch a debate that would probably have not outcome. It would simply be a repetitive and unfruitful discussion. Any debate of that kind should take place at the General Assembly's fourth special session on disarmament, which could be the venue for reviewing the full spectrum issues relating to disarmament and the United Nations disarmament machinery. Stalemates of this kind also exist in other United Nations mechanisms. Therefore, the delegation of Algeria supports the proposal of the Non-Aligned Movement to include two items on the

agenda concerning nuclear disarmament and the draft statement on the fourth disarmament decade.

Mr. Arrocha (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We hope that the statement made by the representative of Norway is not an omen for the future work of the Disarmament Commission.

My delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Disarmament Commission, and through you to extend our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. As we have reiterated on numerous occasions, Mexico shares the frustration that other delegations have mentioned. In particular, we agree completely and fully with the points that were emphasized by the representative of Sweden in his statement.

The Disarmament Commission has a single goal, namely, to deliberate in order to generate recommendations that will lead to disarmament. As various delegations have pointed out, for more than 10 years this body has been unable to fulfil that one and only mandate. That naturally leads us to question the rationale and relevance of the Commission within the disarmament machinery of the United Nations.

For Mexico, there is no more compelling theme to be explored than how to find mechanisms that will allow the Commission to fulfil its deliberative mandate and produce concrete results. Therefore, if the Commission is to fulfil its mandate, we need to address that issue. Furthermore, since this is par excellence the only forum of its kind on the matter of disarmament, we should be prepared to account to the international community on our successes or failures. Let us hope that the former will prevail.

I would like to conclude, Sir, by reiterating Mexico's support for your work and wishing you much success in the tasks.

Mr. Sanabria (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, Sir, I would like to express my delegation's satisfaction and delight that you will be guiding our substantive work in April. We also congratulate you on the responsibility you have just accepted, and assure you of our closest and most loyal cooperation for a positive outcome to the work. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau who were elected today. We hope that the remaining Bureau posts will be filled promptly. I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of Ambassador Al Bayati, the

Chair of the past session, with whom I had the pleasure and privilege to work closely last year.

The Spanish delegation aligns itself explicitly with the statement made by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union, and agrees with the views that have been expressed up to this point today. We are certainly concerned about the inertia that has dragged the Disarmament Commission down for many years, which, if I may be permitted to say so, has been lethal for the Commission itself. Nor has it been good for the disarmament machinery as a whole that this Commission should be incapable of fulfilling its goal, which is no longer to deliberate — because as we all know, it does deliberate, and its deliberations are interesting — but to produce results in the form of recommendations. That is what we are lacking. It would be beneficial for the disarmament machinery, but its lack is very harmful to this Commission.

In your introductory statement, Sir, you used the phrase “an incomprehensible and dangerous stalemate”. We certainly agree. It is certainly incomprehensible from the outside and dangerous for the reasons I have just given. We also understand that, in order to change things, one has to begin with oneself, in this case with the Commission itself.

When we wound up our work, unfortunately without issuing any recommendation, at the last session and the last cycle, my delegation said that we needed to reconsider the working methods of the Commission. As I said, we should think about what we ourselves can do to improve effectiveness. Experience certainly teaches us that much time and energy are spent on procedural issues. Those things are important; we do not deny that procedural questions are important, but they work to the detriment of discussing the substance of the issues.

We therefore support other speakers in saying that, in the coming cycle, we should make the best possible use of the accumulated experience — which is great — to improve on what has been badly or insufficiently done to date. We need to set ourselves some concrete and feasible objectives on the horizon over the next three years. Of course, we would like to make our modest contribution to the deliberations. But let me repeat that we think it inevitable, advisable and necessary that we reflect on how to change the way this body works in order to avoid its becoming completely irrelevant and insignificant. That would not be good for

anyone, of course, but it is the Commission itself that would certainly suffer most.

A lot has been said about political will. That is all well and good, but I think that there needs to be an organic will here among the members of the Commission, spurring us to make an additional joint effort to reach compromises. The issues we are discussing are very difficult and very sensitive. Still, if this Commission is not able to produce results in some of the priority areas on the international agenda, such as disarmament, certainly it is working well below what is expected and needed.

I would like to conclude by congratulating you, Sir, and I hope that, together, this year we will all be able to change this energy and begin to deliver results, because that would be good for everyone.

Mr. Ko Ko Shein (Myanmar): I would first like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Disarmament Commission. I would also like to convey our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau.

I have been working in the Disarmament Commission since 1999. At that time, I was able to bear witness to all the results of our negotiations. If I am not mistaken, we discussed three topics at the 1999 session of the Commission. They were nuclear-weapon-free zones, conventional arms control and the fourth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. Among those three topics, we have reached a conclusion on two: nuclear-weapon-free zones and conventional arms control.

If we look back at those successes in 1999, we can easily see that since the beginning of the new cycle we have chosen the topics we were going to discuss carefully. We have had a lack of progress since 1999. This year, 2012, is a new year for a new cycle of our discussions. So I would like to suggest to the members of the Commission that we focus not only on the substance but also on procedural matters. We need to focus on specific issues on which it would be possible for the Disarmament Commission to reach a successful conclusion at this three-year cycle. I would like to convey this food for thought to all member States for their consideration.

Mr. Toro-Carnevali (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Disarmament Commission, and I take this opportunity

to extend the appreciation of my delegation to the outgoing Chair.

My delegation endorses the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Although Venezuela, like other countries, regrets the lack of progress in the work of this Commission, we understand that this stagnation — if we want to use the word — is a result of the lack of political will. It is not, as some have said, a product of one or another aspect of the working methods. In line with the fundamental objectives of this forum, my delegation endorses the proposal made by the delegation of Cuba to include on the Commission's agenda the issue of designating the 2010s as the fourth decade of disarmament.

Once again, I wish you, Sir, every success in your chairmanship.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of Algeria has asked to speak a second time.

Mr. Moktefi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): My statement will be very brief. I apologize for taking the floor again, but I would like to draw your attention, Sir, to the fact that a number of delegations have reiterated the same position that was already expressed by the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement group. That should not be understood to mean that the majority of member States favour a certain position. The Non-Aligned Movement exercises discipline, and only its Chair takes the floor on its behalf. One can imagine if all States members of the Non-Aligned Movement were to take the floor to repeat that same position, that would not be worthwhile and could spark a lengthy debate and pointless costs and expenses.

Mr. Laudi (Germany): I will be brief. Let me first congratulate you, Sir, and all the new members of the Bureau on assuming your functions. Be assured that you can count on our support. I also thank all the members of the outgoing Bureau.

We of course completely align ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

I have been around not since 1999, but only since 2008, and I am very grateful and enthusiastic after hearing so many positive, constructive contributions from different camps. That gives me the impression that we are moving in the right direction — in a new direction. I think it is the way forward, because, as other

speakers have said, there is a stalemate. Unfortunately, this body has been unable to produce anything in the past 12 years.

I have heard other voices; I would say that they remind me of more of the same, but I think that they are constructive. However, I should like to make a brief comment on the second intervention made by my colleague and friend from Algeria. It is not true to say that all other voices have been in line with the Chair of the regional group. That is actually incorrect, and I would like to offer him the opportunity to explain in a little more detail the membership of the EU, of the Western Group, of the Eastern Group. It is actually not the case. I cannot let this go through here.

Mr. Hashmi (Pakistan): Pakistan wishes to associate itself with other delegations in congratulating you, Sir, and other members of the Bureau on being elected to the Commission. We also appreciate the work done by the previous Chair and Bureau members.

Let me also take this opportunity to associate my delegation with the statement made by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). I should like to add a few comments in our national capacity based on what has been said today.

My delegation has listened with great interest to the comments made today and to the characterization of the dismal state of the disarmament machinery, specifically the Disarmament Commission. For us, those expressions of concern are not new. We have heard them before, including in the General Assembly. But for my delegation, those concerns are essentially a narrative of the effects of the stalemate, and they have less to do with the actual causes of the so-called stalemate that have led to this situation.

We are open to hearing proposals on strengthening the Commission as well as the entire disarmament machinery. At the same time, we also need to draw attention, and perhaps emphasize, the need to really think very hard about whether a piecemeal approach is worth the effort.

The Disarmament Commission, at the end of the day, is one component of the larger disarmament machinery. We need to think about whether attempts to overhaul the working methods of the Commission will have an impact on the larger political reality, and, if so, to what extent. We should bear in mind the fact that efforts to improve the working methods of the Commission have

been undertaken within the Commission in the past, with little or nothing in the way of results.

What our delegation is suggesting is not that the Commission preclude that possibility, but that it keep in mind that such efforts have been undertaken within the Commission in the past five or six years, with little in the way of results.

The fact is that, in the absence of a larger political agreement on the approaches, modalities and mechanisms of the entire disarmament and non-proliferation regime, it is difficult to see how far such micro-approaches, although well-meaning, can go.

We would also like to comment very briefly on the arguments on moving away from broad and generic agenda items to specific and concrete ones. In our view, the problem lies not so much with the wording of agenda items. It is about the larger issues of perspectives and past disappointments or failures, including the present trends of selective approaches, which, incidentally, are based on national interests, and I am reminded of the comments made by certain delegations to the effect that some of the approaches being adopted by some countries are essentially based on national interests, not on international interests.

But we see trends in the present age, within the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, that selective approaches are being taken based on very narrow national interests, commercial interests and political interests, at the cost of established international norms, the international legal framework and international treaties. These are some of the issues that lie at the heart of the debate. These are the issues that provide the framework for what I referred to earlier as the causes of the stalemate. Thus we need to really reflect on these aspects very candidly.

My delegation is ready to engage both within and outside the Commission to discuss both the causes of this deadlock and its impact on this body as well as other parts of the disarmament machinery. We would also like to discuss and deliberate on possible ways forward.

In conclusion, from my delegation's point of view, a comprehensive approach such as the one advocated by NAM — to convene a special session on disarmament — is the best approach whereby all the issues can be brought up, discussions can be held and differences harmonized, and then we can identify the

elements on which an international consensus can be built.

Mr. Aljowaily (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. Our delegation wishes to assure you of its full support in the discharge of your mandate.

I did not want to intervene, as the delegation of Indonesia delivered the agreed-upon statement of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) on behalf of all the member States of NAM. However, the representative of Algeria reminded us of the fact that Indonesia, in delivering the statement on behalf of NAM, expressed our view as a group and as a Movement on the items on the agenda.

But in connection with our current discussion, we do not see a contradiction between the views of certain States today and the point of view of NAM, in that addressing comprehensive and general issues does not mean that it is impossible to reach a compromise on certain aspects and elements of the agenda.

The converse is perhaps true. Because we are dealing with generic terms and a holistic issue, States could express their views on specific elements and aspects of all of the items under discussion. However, we are flexible regarding discussions and exchanges of views aimed at reaching a consensus in April on the agenda of the current session and of the following one.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I would first like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as the Chair of this very important body. At the same time, I would like to thank the outgoing Chairman, Mr. Al Bayati of Iraq, for his excellent work in the 2011 session. With respect to the topic under consideration today, my delegation has been following the discussion very carefully. We recognize the importance of the role being played by the Disarmament Commission. As many delegations have stated, the Commission is one of a small number of components of the disarmament machinery within the United Nations framework and has been trying to make a contribution in any way that it can. It cannot be ruled out in the future, and specifically in the coming session of its work.

The specific role of the Disarmament Commission in relation is closely linked to setting agenda items in the sense that the items that we are discussing will inevitably have a very important impact on its own role.

In that sense, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to endorse and align itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

With respect to the priority areas touched upon by the representative of Indonesia, those are also in line with the national priorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. My delegation upholds nuclear disarmament as the number one priority in its foreign policy.

Many delegations raised the issue of working methods, which can contribute to the progress of this important forum, but one thing needs to be considered carefully. Whatever we choose as an agenda item — for example, working methods — progress can be made only when there is political will in all the various regional groups or different political camps. My delegation believes that political will is the most important tool in moving the Disarmament Commission forward in its work.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of Norway has asked to speak a second time.

Mr. Langeland (Norway): I apologize for taking the floor again, but the discussion is so interesting that I was motivated to speak yet again. I will not respond directly, but I do have a few reflections.

First, it has been stated that there have been contradictory proposals on how to move forward. Evidently, there are different views that have not been harmonized, but a common thread through many of the statements is the concern about the current status of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the disarmament machinery.

Some ascribe the current situation to a lack of political will. Evidently, had there been full agreement on how to move disarmament forward, we would probably not even need the Commission, because we would be in full agreement. We would not need to deliberate; we would need simply to negotiate and conclude agreements. So, in a way, we need a deliberative body because there are disagreements.

As my colleague from Pakistan said, there are different interests and perspectives. From the perspective of my delegation, we do not expect miracles to happen at a session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. There will be disagreements during the April session when we discuss nuclear weapons and

conventional weapons, but let us at least have those discussions in a structured way.

The intention of today's discussion is to invite delegations to look into and explore possible ways forward. There is no blueprint for that. Some would like to suggest more focused discussion on selected topics under the rubric of either nuclear disarmament or conventional arms, drawing inspiration, for instance, from the outcome of the 1999 session, at which specific recommendations on nuclear-weapon-free zones were made. The idea here is to find issues we could agree and make progress on without being selective; we need to find out where, at least, there are points of agreement.

Another approach that has been suggested today is to make use of what we have accomplished in previous years. The sad reality is that we have procedural reports from previous Commission sessions, but they only make reference to the working groups where the substantive discussions took place. The only formal report we have merely states the name of the Chair and that we had a number of discussions with no consensus having been achieved. Perhaps we should try to carry forward these discussions from year to year and build on them. Eventually, we might move the deliberations into a more consensual mode. We do not know if that will work, but we should at least try it. Some of us have been trying to make that point. We need to reflect on our discussions when we report back to the First Committee.

These proposals are made in the spirit of making the discussions of the Disarmament Commission more relevant for the capitals, for our friends in Geneva and here. Evidently, we have in mind that there are different views on the arms control agenda. We know that from Geneva and from the First Committee simply by taking a look at the different resolutions that have been subject to vote, but the function of this body is to deliberate and discuss disagreements and to seek ways to move forward towards consensus.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to chair the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We are convinced that your experience and wisdom will be an asset contributing to the success of our work. We offer our thanks to the Permanent Representative of Iraq, the previous Chair of the Commission, for his tireless efforts in his work last year.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia who spoke on

behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and we endorse entirely his remarks on the specific agenda items of the Commission itself. Like other colleagues before me, I did not plan to take the floor because the representative of Indonesia spoke on behalf of all the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement. However, in view of the discussion in this Hall this morning and the statements that we heard delivered by our colleagues, we are moved to make the following points.

First, we would like to emphasize that nuclear disarmament is our highest priority, consistent with what is contained in decision 52/492, which is also in line with the Disarmament Commission's own agenda and priorities. The main reason for the failure of the work of the Disarmament Commission or any other element of the disarmament machinery is the lack of political will on the part of certain parties that have focused on their own agendas and motives.

We look forward to discussing the essential disarmament issues in general, as well as disarmament mechanisms, in the context of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. I will stop at that.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): We have reached the end of the list of speakers on this item.

If I may, in my capacity as Chair, with the responsibility entrusted to me, I would like to say that the wealth of views heard in this debate just shows us that we are dealing with subjects that are truly important to us and that really need to be addressed. All statements, whether made by the respective regional or political groups or by delegations of various countries, have been and will be duly taken into account.

In the area of disarmament and in my own experience and frustration, I believe that every millimetre of progress is important. On disarmament, one cannot move forward a kilometre at a time. We must understand the enormous needs of the international community, while, at the same time, not disregarding respect for the national interests of each delegation. That is why I think that it is important that a discussion such as this can, above all in this first phase, provide us with a very important reference framework. Representatives can be assured that this Chair will put all his personal effort and knowledge, little as it may be, into trying to achieve certain objectives that are important to our Commission.

Unfortunately, I have to go on mission next week. I will return in the first week of February. However, participants can be assured that from then, I will convene consultation meetings immediately after my arrival in order to have a slightly clearer picture. I reiterate that all the statements that have been made and all ideas and proposals are duly taken into account. I am certain that, in time, participants will see them reflected in the document that we all look forward to adopting by consensus.

Draft provisional agenda for the 2012 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): The provisional agenda for the 2012 substantive session is contained in document A/CN.10/L.67. As participants can see, there are two substantive items, namely, items 4 and 5, which are left blank.

Since we are at the beginning of the three-year cycle, I would like to open the floor for an exchange of views on the drafting of items 4 and 5. However, much was already said in the previous debate. Of course, that can serve as a basis for a more objective approach in that regard.

As members of the Commission are aware, General Assembly decision 52/492, which guides the procedures of the Commission, is very clear.

“[T]he substantive agenda of the Disarmament Commission should normally comprise two agenda items per year from the whole range of disarmament issues, including one on nuclear disarmament; the possibility of a third agenda item would be retained if there was a consensus to adopt such an item; parallel meetings of its subsidiary bodies should be avoided”. (*General Assembly decision 52/492, paragraph (b)*)

Depending on the outcome of our discussion, we could take a decision on the number of substantive items for the 2012 session and for the rest of the three-year cycle, including 2014, and the number of working groups.

If they wish, representatives can now have an exchange of views on the substantive items. If not, we could submit that very important matter to a future meeting following consultations with the regional groups of countries. If there are any views in that regard, I would like to hear them. If there are no comments, I will take it that the Commission wishes to take note

of the provisional agenda for the 2012 substantive session, contained in document A/CN.10/L.67, with the understanding that the agenda will be revised accordingly and will be formally adopted after reaching consensus on items 4 and 5.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): It is also my understanding that informal consultations should be held in order to reach agreement, as I mentioned, on the substantive items and that the Commission should take the necessary measures once that agreement has been reached.

Organizational matters

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): As has been noted, 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. That means that we must spend money that is so difficult for us to put into the Organization on empty sessions that do not achieve an outcome. So, let us all try to ensure that the regular budget and the lack of requirement for additional funding can truly be used to our benefit.

Moreover, in accordance with decision 52/492 of 1998, the annual substantive session of the Commission lasts three weeks. As a result, during the 2012 session, the Commission will work on the basis of our usual practice, that is, it will meet for three full weeks. Bearing that in mind, the Secretariat has arranged that the 2012 substantive session will be held from 2 to 20 April. The last day of the first week — 6 April — coincides with a religious holiday, Good Friday, and there will be no meetings on that day. The schedule of the session will be adjusted accordingly.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to point out that, in line with established practice, all organizational matters should be concluded during the organizational session of the Disarmament Commission. Unfortunately, as I have already told the Commission, we are not in a position to conclude those organizational matters owing to the following vacancies: two Vice-Chairs from the African States; one Vice-Chair from the Latin American and Caribbean States; and a Rapporteur and one Vice-Chair from the Asia-Pacific States.

As members of the Commission will appreciate, that is an urgent task. I would like to use this opportunity to appeal to the regional groups concerned to conduct the necessary consultations so that the Commission can start its substantive work on 2 April, as planned, with all members of the Bureau elected.

Accordingly, it would be advisable for the Commission to conclude this organizational meeting in order to give the Chair and delegations time to carry out further consultations on those issues and to consider them at an appropriate time.

If there are no other pressing issues to discuss, I shall take it that it is the wish of the Disarmament Commission to conclude its 2012 organizational session and to resume the unfinished organizational business at

the first meeting of the Disarmament Commission, on 2 April.

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): As I mentioned previously, we will of course hold consultations as often as necessary prior to those meetings. I would appreciate members' cooperation and attendance at each of those meetings.

The next meeting of the Disarmament Commission, as well as its format, will be announced in The Journal of the United Nations. I thank all members for their attendance and participation and for the substance of their comments.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.