PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT

Third session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 5 October 1981, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. VENKATESVARAN (India)

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A/AC.206/88.10
10 November 1981

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH
The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the opening of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament was only seven months away and that there were many important and sensitive matters to be decided. It was therefore vital that the current session of the Preparatory Committee should be productive. At the Committee's second session in May 1981 the wide exchange of views among members concerning the agenda and other relevant questions relating to the 1982 special session had been useful in outlining a variety of aspects and priorities and had been supported by a series of documents and working papers.

2. He drew attention to documents A/AC.206/CPR.6 and A/AC.206/13, which dealt with possible elements for a draft agenda for the second special session devoted to disarmament.

3. At its second session, the Committee had not arrived at any conclusions on the draft agenda, nor on relevant questions relating to the 1982 special session, including the organization of the work of the session. Both topics would therefore be major tasks at the current session of the Committee.

4. Another important task facing the Committee was the preparation of its report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, as required under paragraphs 2 and 6 of General Assembly resolution 35/47. That item was number 30 on the General Assembly's agenda for its thirty-sixth session and had been allocated to the First Committee. It was therefore essential that the current session of the Preparatory Committee should produce an agreed draft provisional agenda and recommendations concerning the organization of work for the 1982 special session. The Committee's work could be carried out only in a spirit of compromise.

5. After quoting from paragraph 11 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution 510/2), he said that disarmament and the relaxation of tensions had to be dealt with together as an indivisible whole. At its second session the Committee had agreed that the 1982 special session should last no more than five weeks, and the Secretariat had been requested to reserve the period from 10 May to 2 July 1982 for the work of that session. At its present session, the Committee should finalize its recommendations on the subject to the General Assembly. At the 17th meeting of the Committee, on 15 May 1981, it had been agreed that non-governmental organizations should be allowed to make oral statements at one meeting during the current session, and accordingly, the afternoon of Friday, 9 October had been set aside for that purpose.

6. He drew attention to documents A/AC.206/10, A/AC.206/14, A/AC.206/15 and A/AC.206/16, which had been prepared since the 17th meeting.
ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (A/AC.206/17)

7. Mr. ISKANDYH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he would like agenda item 5, which reproduced paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 35/47, to be spelled out in more detail. He wondered precisely what discussion was going to take place. At the key session of the Preparatory Committee, a preliminary consensus on the length of the 1982 special session had been reached. In principle, his delegation would have no objection to the proposed agenda for the Committee if the questions it had raised were adequately clarified. The time available should be used judiciously and devoted mainly to settling the key issue of the agenda of the 1982 special session.

8. The CHAIRMAN said that the wording of item 5 was taken from the mandate of the Preparatory Committee under the relevant General Assembly resolution. A number of delegations had expressed their desire to make statements on some aspects of the implementation of the decisions adopted at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. He could not prejudge what the delegations would say.

9. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee accepted the provisional agenda as circulated (A/AC.206/17).

10. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK:

11. The CHAIRMAN said that the Preparatory Committee was scheduled to meet twice a day until Friday, 16 October, that schedule provided the Committee with a maximum of 18 meetings to complete its work. The Bureau had recommended that the morning and afternoon of Tuesday, 6 October and the afternoon of Wednesday, 7 October should be devoted to agenda item 4 (preparation of a draft provisional agenda of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament). The morning and afternoon of Thursday, 8 October and the morning of Friday, 9 October should be devoted to item 5 (consideration of other relevant questions) and the afternoon of 9 October, the Committee should hear oral statements from non-governmental organizations.

12. On Monday, 12 October, depending on the progress of work, the Committee could return to either item 4 or item 5 and, it was to be hoped, would be in a position to decide upon its programme of work for the remainder of that week.

13. While discussing the organization of the future work of the Preparatory Committee, it might be necessary for representatives to focus their attention on the kind of final outcome and document the special session should produce. A question to be considered was whether the Preparatory Committee should work on the framework of such a final outcome. He hoped that the schedule he had outlined would help the Committee to structure its work effectively.

14. If there was no objection, he would take it that the programme he had outlined was acceptable to the Committee.

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15. It was so decided.

16. Mr. ISSRALLYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he would like to know when the report of the Preparatory Committee to the General Assembly would be drawn up, so that members could study it before adoption.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that no decision had been taken so far on substantive issues; the Secretariat had prepared a skeleton draft which needed to be fleshed out. After members had made their comments, the report would be completed and circulated.

18. Mr. ISSRALLYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) urged the Secretariat to prepare the report for the General Assembly in time. If it was to be submitted on 16 October, it would have to be distributed by 15 October at the latest.

19. Mr. HILFARI (Secretariat) said that the Secretariat was already working on the report; after consultation with the Rapporteur, the report would be finished and circulated in due time.

20. Mr. EMMARDS (United States of America) felt that too little time was being devoted to item 4 in comparison with item 5. The preparation of a draft provisional agenda was the primary purpose of the current session, and unless assiduous work was done on that task at the Committee’s current session, a great deal of time would have to be devoted to it later, before the special session was convened. He stressed the need to keep the importance of that item in focus.

21. The CHAIRMAN said that in the light of the organizational decisions taken at the present meeting, substantive work would begin on Tuesday, 6 October with agenda item 4. If there was no objection, he would take it that that arrangement was acceptable to the Committee.

22. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.