VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

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ENGLISH
The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

THE CHAIRMAN: On behalf of all the members of the Committee and on my own behalf, I take great pleasure in extending a most cordial and friendly welcome to the new member of the United Nations, Brunei Darussalam.

I extend a warm welcome to all delegations to the First Committee at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. For a number of years now - and this is my twentieth session in the General Assembly - I have had the privilege of working with several colleagues among those present while others I have met for the first time this year. I look forward to fruitful and friendly co-operation with them all.

I also pay a much-deserved tribute to my distinguished predecessors in this Chair, whose dedication I shall strive to match. The First Committee greatly benefited from the efforts of my immediate predecessor, Ambassador Tom Vraalsen of Norway, to streamline and improve its working methods at the 1983 session. As Ambassador Vraalsen remarked in his closing statement last year, there is general support for continuing the process of streamlining and rationalizing the Committee's consideration of disarmament items. I intend to conduct early consultations on the best ways and means to push that process forward, and I shall report to the Committee accordingly. At the same time, I have tried to build upon the experience gained from the introduction of some practical changes in the 1983 session, and for that purpose I have consulted extensively on the organization of our work for the current session. The input of suggestions and opinions in response to my consultations encourages me to present a number of organizational proposals.

Before doing so, however, I wish to express the deep sense of responsibility with which I take this high office. My election to this post is a great personal honour to me, but in my view it constitutes above all an acknowledgement of the role of Brazil in multilateral disarmament affairs, which is a result of the overriding importance my country attaches to such matters, affecting as they do the vital interests of all Members of this Organization.

The very nature of those questions and their significance for all nations, regardless of their size or military might, explains the high degree of controversy
(The Chairman)

with which our work is fraught. At the same time, their seriousness calls for effective action, particularly on the part of those who have special responsibilities in this regard. In order to respond effectively to the trust the Committee has placed in me, I count on the constructive co-operation and assistance of all delegations, as well as on the experience and competence of the officials and staff of the Secretariat. For my part, I pledge my dedication to the work we are about to start together.

Our agenda for today's meeting concerns the election of the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur and the organization of the Committee's work. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the agenda is adopted.

The agenda was adopted.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before proceeding to the first item on our agenda, may I draw the attention of the members of the Committee to the decision of the General Assembly, taken at its 1935th meeting, on 22 September 1971, concerning the procedure regarding the election of officers of the Main Committees. In accordance with that decision, the nominations of candidates should be limited to one statement for each candidate, after which the Committee should immediately proceed to the election. The Committee will follow this procedure with regard to the items on our agenda for today.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMEN

Mr. Elfaki (Sudan): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. Aware of your wide experience, tested talents and skills, we are confident that under your wise guidance this Committee will accomplish much and perform its assignments in an exemplary manner.

It is my special pleasure and honour to nominate to the post of Vice-Chairman of the First Committee at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly an esteemed citizen of a country with which my country enjoys the best of friendly and co-operative relations. Ambassador Henning Wegener of the Federal Republic of Germany is a rounded diplomat with diverse knowledge, experience and diplomatic skills. He is known in United Nations circles, both in New York and Geneva, as an intern at the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs in New York in 1960, as a member of this First Committee and other bodies dealing with disarmament and as head of the delegation of his country to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva since 1981.
Ambassador Wegener joined the Foreign Service of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1962 and was assigned to various posts abroad. His tour of duty abroad was of wide scope, as it focused on multilateral activities, such as international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and outer space, technical development and environment policy, as well as on multilateral economic co-operation in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and so on. Between 1977 and 1981 - that is, before his appointment to lead his country's delegation to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva - Ambassador Wegener served as adviser on foreign and security policy to the Christian Democratic Union.

Ambassador Wegener studied law in Germany, the United States of America and France and is the author of a number of very useful publications.

In nominating Ambassador Henning Wegener, of the Federal Republic of Germany, to the post of Vice-Chairman of the First Committee at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, I trust that he will be elected unanimously.
The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Sudan for nominating Ambassador Henning Wegener of the Federal Republic of Germany for the post of Vice-Chairman. I greatly appreciate the friendly remarks he deemed it proper to address to me. I wish to convey to Ambassador Elfaki the Committee's appreciation of his valuable contribution to the work of the Committee in his capacity as Vice-Chairman during last year's session.

There being no other nomination, I take it that, in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure and with established practice, the Committee wishes to dispense with the secret ballot and to declare Ambassador Wegener elected Vice-Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. Henning Wegener (Federal Republic of Germany) was elected Vice-Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. TINCA (Romania): Sir, at the outset I would like to offer you my personal congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am confident that your ability, your qualifications and your skill as an outstanding diplomat will guide the Committee's work to a successful conclusion. Your election is also a recognition of the important and effective role played by your country, Brazil, with which Romania has friendly relations, for the cause of disarmament and the strengthening of international peace and security.

You may rest assured of our full co-operation - and you may count on it - in the effective discharge of your responsibilities.

I would also like to join in the statement you have just made concerning the outstanding work done by Mr. Tom Vraalsen of Norway last year when he presided over the meetings of our Committee.

I would like very warmly to welcome Mr. Kheradi, our new Secretary, and to thank Mr. Rathore for the outstanding manner in which he served in that position last year.

On behalf of the Romanian delegation, I have the great pleasure to nominate Ambassador Milous Vejvoda of Czechoslovakia as Vice-Chairman of the First Committee during the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Ambassador Milous Vejvoda is at present the Permanent Representative of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic to the United Nations Office in Geneva and the Head of the Czechoslovak delegation attending the sessions of the Conference on Disarmament.

Ambassador Vejvoda has had a very distinguished career in the foreign service of his country. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1954 and after serving twice as First Secretary and then Counsellor in the Permanent Mission to the United Nations between 1954 and 1965, Mr. Vejvoda joined the Disarmament
present the facts as I perceive them and to underline thereby the great urgency of reinvigorating and redoubling our efforts in this Committee so as to forge as solid and fruitful a dialogue as possible. So, as we begin our substantive work soon, let us make a concerted effort to find the appropriate solutions, because our common goal, our common destination and hence our common endeavour must be the attainment of peace and security for the benefit of all mankind.

Before I conclude my remarks, I wish to refer briefly to one other matter which is on a more personal note. It will be recalled that, in my capacity as Chairman, I proposed and the Committee adopted some modest innovations as far as the organization of work at our previous session was concerned. The motivation in advancing those proposals was solely to facilitate a more rational and focused discussion of the issues and more rational consideration and action on draft resolutions submitted to the Committee. In that connection, at our concluding meeting last year, I provided the Committee with a brief assessment of the measures that had been instituted. At that time I remarked that the device of moving up the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions on disarmament items and the
I refer to these matters first of all in order once again to pay a tribute to all delegations for their spirit of co-operation and understanding as I endeavoured to effectuate the Committee's programme of work in as efficient a manner as possible. Secondly, in pointing out the relative merits of the various organizational measures adopted at our last session I should like to underline the fact that a further refinement of last year's procedures would be very much in order. Adjustments need to be made in certain areas to take into account what actually transpired. On the other hand, certain other aspects which proved to be more useful, such as clustering of draft resolutions, could be retained - again, with certain refinements as necessary.

Furthermore, at each successive session during the last few years the outgoing Chairman has felt compelled, based on his individual experience, to urge the Committee to examine its procedures with a view to rationalizing them even further. I associate myself with such an appeal and assure you, Sir, that, for my part, I will be happy to participate in any future consultations that may be designed to explore the possibilities for improving the Committee's procedures with respect to the programme of work.

Finally, I wish once again to reiterate how happy I am to see you, Sir, presiding over our present deliberations. The Committee is indeed fortunate to have a diplomat of your calibre at the helm of its affairs. This alone, I venture to say, bodes well for the outcome of our proceedings in the coming days. I wish you and I wish the Committee every success in the task which lies ahead.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the other officers and on my own behalf I thank the representative of Norway, Ambassador Tom Vraalsen, for the kind words he addressed to the Vice-Chairmen, the Rapporteur and myself. I wish also to thank him for the pledge of co-operation that he made; I shall need it throughout the course of the deliberations of the First Committee.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): I should like briefly to express my gratitude for the confidence the Committee has placed in me by electing me as a Vice-Chairman. I should like also to express my thanks for the kind words spoken by some of the preceding speakers. My particularly cordial thanks go to Ambassador Elfaki, who was kind enough to nominate me and who made generous remarks about me in doing so.

It is a source of particular gratification to me that I am being allowed to serve under you, Mr. Chairman. Let me personally congratulate you on your election
to and assumption of your high office. I have been privileged to work with you for the past three years, in the Conference on Disarmament, in the General Assembly and, most recently as your Vice-Chairman when you presided over the annual meeting of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

This has been a most rewarding experience, which gave me the opportunity to observe you and to form a view of your exceptional abilities as a diplomat and an outstanding representative of one of the major States Members of the United Nations. You have always been masterful in the exercise of your professional skills, but beyond that you have displayed a remarkable analytical gift and rare political acumen. You have made a considerable contribution in substance to the conceptual progress of the multilateral disarmament debate. These faculties will be of great importance when we try jointly to cope with the considerable difficulties which our work in this Committee will entail.

It will be a great pleasure for me also to work with the other Committee officers who have just been elected. Let me be one of the first to congratulate our Rapporteur and also Ambassador Vajvoda. It is a happy coincidence that I find as fellow officers two distinguished colleagues from Geneva, with whom co-operation in past years has been exceptionally fruitful.

I gratefully record the exceptional contribution last year's officers made to the ongoing and important endeavour with which this Committee is charged. I make particular mention of the services of Ambassador Vraalsen. I wish also warmly to welcome Mr. Kheradi as Secretary of the Committee.

The office of Vice-Chairman is often thought of as honorific, but that is not my view. Personally, I am determined to serve you, Sir, and the Committee as a whole to the best of my ability, assuming willingly all the duties which it is your view should devolve upon me.

The Committee is commencing its work, as has been stressed, at a crucial juncture. The fervent hope of the international community for a new impetus to the process of disarmament after a year of very limited progress - and none at all in vital disarmament areas - has recently derived some measure of encouragement from high-level encounters and conciliatory comments. It is also my personal hope that my term of office will witness the needed improvement in the relationship between the two great Powers. I would wish that the work of the Committee could make a
Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany

contribution to making possible the resumption or commencement of those disarmament negotiations which are currently the most important, without self-defeating pre-conditions of any kind on any side.

We in the Committee can all assist in the realization of this objective. In this spirit, it is my hope that the Committee's work will be marked by tolerance and that we will all give credit to each other for seriously and responsibly seeking peace. Our work should be in the nature of a rational discourse; there should be no mere declaratory, repetitive statements, no monologues; we should gear our work to the operational necessities of disarmament. Finally, the hallmark of our work should be responsibility: we should not indulge in the sterile repetition of proposals remote from the current security situation, but we should indeed never lose sight of the close link that exists between security and disarmament.

Mr. PENÁŽKA (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): I wish on behalf of the Czechoslovak delegation to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the very responsible post of Chairman of the First Committee and to wish you and the other newly elected officers of the Committee every success in discharging your important duties. On behalf of Ambassador Vejvoda - who, because of other duties, is for the present unable to leave Geneva - I wish to thank the Committee for the trust which it has placed in him by electing him to the post of Vice-Chairman of the First Committee.
We would particularly like to express our gratitude to the representative of the Socialist Republic of Romania, who nominated Ambassador Vejvoda for this post. On the Ambassador's behalf, I should like to assure the Committee that in performing his duties he will exert every effort to ensure that the Committee successfully accomplishes the extremely important tasks entrusted to it.

Mr. KESSELY (Chad) (interpretation from French): I would like to convey to you, Mr. Chairman, and to all the members of the Committee my very sincere and profound gratitude for the honour that has been done me in electing me Rapporteur of this Committee. I should particularly like to thank Mr. Goyen Alvez, the Permanent Representative of Uruguay, for having put forward my candidacy.

It is a commonplace to say that such a phenomenon as election to a post as Committee officer is a token honour paid a country. I think that that is indeed true, however, and I regard my election as a recognition of the interest that Chad has always shown in the question of general and complete disarmament.

I should also like to take this opportunity to assure you, Mr. Chairman, and the other officers of the Committee of my complete co-operation. I intend to carry out my duties faithfully in order to ensure that the Committee fulfils the important tasks that have been allocated to it.

The CHAIRMAN: Having elected its officers, the First Committee has concluded its consideration of the first item on its agenda.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I would now like to draw the Committee's attention to documents A/C.1/39/1 dated 26 September 1984 and A/C.1/39/1/Add.1 dated 10 October 1984, which contain, respectively, letters dated 21 September 1984 and 9 October 1984 addressed to me by the President of the General Assembly and informing me that at its third and twenty-seventh meetings the General Assembly had decided to allocate 27 agenda items to the First Committee, namely, agenda items 45 to 69 and items 142 and 143.

As I stressed at the beginning of this meeting, I undertook extensive consultations in order to prepare and to submit to the Committee a proposal on the organization of our work for the 1984 session. In a slight departure from previous practice we are holding this organizational meeting later than it has been held in past years. The overall amount of time available for our work, however, is not
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less than it has been in the past. The General Assembly has recommended 7 December as a target date for the conclusion of our work. Accordingly, the substantive proceedings of the First Committee would extend from Wednesday, 17 October to Friday, 7 December, or a total of 36 working days, during which time a maximum number of 72 meetings can be scheduled. In 1983 the Committee discharged its task in a total of 54 meetings. On the basis of that experience I am fully confident that the Committee will be able to perform its work this year well within the time available.

I should now like to turn to document A/C.1/39/2, which contains the proposed programme of work and timetable of the First Committee. The experience of past years, as well as the valuable comments and suggestions made by delegations, were taken fully into account. With respect to last year's programme and timetable a few slight adjustments seemed necessary in order to further the general desire that the Committee work in a structured and streamlined manner without detracting from the time usually allocated to a thorough consideration of the questions at hand and bearing in mind the special interests of delegations, particularly the smaller ones.

In its main lines the programme and timetable I am now submitting to the Committee follow the division of the agenda items entrusted to this Committee into three main categories, ratione materiae, as follows: first, disarmament items, that is, agenda items 45 to 65 and 142; secondly, agenda item 66, the "Question of Antarctica"; and, lastly, agenda items 67 to 69 and 143, which concern international security matters.

For the first category, disarmament items, I propose to devote the period from 17 October to 27 November - or a maximum of 56 meetings - to debate and action on agenda items 45 to 65 and 142. Such a period would be divided as follows: from 17 to 26 October the Committee would carry on a general debate on those items; then, from 29 October to 12 November, delegations would have an opportunity to make statements on any specific items or groups of items among those in the disarmament category. This, of course, would not preclude the right of any delegation to make a statement of a general character during the period devoted to specific statements.

In this manner, the overall period comprising the two phases of our debate would be completed by Monday, 12 November. May I stress that both during the first phase of the general debate and during the second phase of specific statements
delegations will have at their disposal a maximum of 36 meetings, seven more than were actually held last year for the corresponding period of the Committee's work. This arrangement should enable us to make necessary adjustments as the intention of delegations to speak is made known to the Chair. Consequently, the remaining available time can be devoted to informal consultations among delegations as our work proceeds.

The deadline for the submission of draft resolutions, which should be strictly observed, could then be set to coincide with the conclusion of the two phases of our debate, namely, 12 November, at 6 p.m. Delegations in a position to do so are encouraged to submit and introduce their draft resolutions as early as possible, even during the period of the general debate, so that statements on specific agenda items may also address the texts of the draft resolutions already introduced. I invite delegations to submit those draft resolutions that would contain programme, financial and administrative implications as early as possible in order to meet the deadline of 1 December 1984 set by the General Assembly.

With regard to the agenda items dealing with disarmament, the period from 13 to 27 November would be devoted to consideration and action on the draft resolutions submitted to the Committee. This period is slightly longer than was the case last year and should provide sufficient time for delegations to consider the existing drafts and to consult among themselves in order to ensure that the texts finally adopted reflect the maximum possible degree of consensus.
It is my intention to utilize the experience of last year's voting procedure by grouping resolutions in clusters. I shall make a specific proposal on that matter in due course.

Having finished its action on the disarmament items, the Committee would move on to consider and act on item 66, which deals with the "Question of Antarctica". We could devote to that item the period from Wednesday, 28 November to Friday, 30 November, which would permit a maximum of six meetings to be used. That would be equal to the time allocated for that purpose last year.

Thursday, 29 November at 12 noon would be the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under agenda item 66.

After having acted on item 66, the Committee would utilize the remainder of the time available, that is, from Monday, 3 December to Friday, 7 December, for items 67 to 69 and 143, dealing with international security matters. A total of 10 meetings would thus be available for the debate, consideration and action on the draft resolutions to be submitted with respect to this last category of items. As experience has shown, this should again provide ample time for consultations among delegations before action is taken. The deadline for submission of draft resolutions on international security items would be Tuesday, 4 December at 6.00 p.m.

Let me conclude the presentation of document A/C.1/39/2 by emphasizing that it is based on the assumption that flexibility should also be a primary consideration in our use of the time and material resources available, so that we may be able to achieve the maximum results with judicious utilization of such resources.

If I hear no objection, I shall consider that the Committee adopts the programme of work and timetable contained in document A/C.1/39/2.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the rules and recommendations of the General Assembly affecting the work of the Main Committees, particularly those contained in document A/INF/136/Rev.1 and decision 34/401. Finally, I intend to open the meetings of the Committee at 10.30 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. and will endeavour to close the meetings at 1.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. respectively.
(The Chairman)

I shall convene meetings of the Committee only when there is a sufficient number of speakers. I believe that, as a general rule, we should have no less than four speakers inscribed for a particular meeting, so that we can use our time and resources in the most effective manner.

The list of speakers for the general debate on all disarmament agenda items is open as of today and will be closed on Friday, 19 October at 6 p.m. Some delegations have already signified their intention to participate in the general debate and the Secretariat has taken note of those requests.

To facilitate the task of the officers of the Committee, as well as that of the Secretariat, members of the Committee should submit draft resolutions as much in advance as feasible, so as to provide sufficient time for consultations.

The Secretariat has asked me to request members of the Committee to note that draft resolutions, amendments and co-sponsorships should be given in writing to the Secretariat in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding. Requests for the use of conference rooms for group meetings should also be given in writing to the Secretariat.

It would also be appreciated if delegations could provide the conference officers with 20 copies of a statement when a prepared text is to be delivered.

Furthermore, I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Committee to rule 110 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

"Congratulations to the officers of a Main Committee shall not be expressed except by the Chairman of the previous session - or, in his absence, by a member of his delegation - after all the officers of the Committee have been elected."

If no delegation wishes to make any observations or remarks at this stage, I propose to adjourn the meeting. Before doing so, may I inform representatives that our next meeting, that is, the first substantive meeting of the Committee, will be held on Wednesday, 17 October at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.