

Geneva, 7-17 November 2006

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 10 November 2006, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. RIVASSEAU (France)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

PROGRESS OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEES

1. Mr. MARKOTIĆ (Chairperson of the Credentials Committee) said that the Credentials Committee, at its first meeting, had examined the credentials received thus far. He urged all States parties that had not yet done so to submit their credentials to the Secretary-General of the Conference by the afternoon of 15 November, thus allowing sufficient time for the Committee to meet again and to submit its final report at the concluding meeting of the Conference.
2. Mr. PRASAD (Chairperson of the Drafting Committee) said that the Drafting Committee had held its first meeting, and he had requested that another meeting be scheduled for the formal adoption of the procedural report on the draft Declaration on the occasion of the entry into force of the CCW Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War (Protocol V) (CCW/CONF.III/7/Add.6), since four minor editorial changes had been made in the English version.
3. Mr. da ROCHA PARANHOS (Chairperson of Main Committee II) said that Main Committee II had met three times to date and another meeting was scheduled after the present plenary meeting. The transmission to the Drafting Committee of the draft Declaration on the occasion of the entry into force of Protocol V had been approved. Moreover, under the informal coordination of the Chairperson of Main Committee I, whose invaluable collaboration had been appreciated, a proposal for an additional preambular paragraph in the Final Declaration of the Conference had been discussed. The new recommendations of the McCormack report had also been discussed, and he hoped the Chairperson of Main Committee I would provide the plenary with details of the discussions held on explosive remnants of war. With regard to the issue of mines other than anti-personnel mines, he hoped that the newly submitted proposals - including an important contribution from the Russian Federation - would be considered. While no new protocol might be completed by the end of the Third Review Conference, it had emerged from the consultations that all countries were committed to achieving progress on the issue.
4. Mr. BORISOVAS (Chairperson of Main Committee I) said that Main Committee I had concluded work regarding a sponsorship programme under the Convention, and that a draft decision (CCW/CONF.III/7/Add.8) together with proposed changes had been transmitted to the Drafting Committee. The plan of action to promote the universality of the Convention was still under consideration, although he expected the document to be concluded at a forthcoming meeting, once consensus had been reached on action No. 7. On the issue of compliance, work was in progress under the guidance of the President of the Conference, as new proposals had been submitted, and efforts were under way to improve the wording of the text. As to the issue of laser systems, informal exchanges of information were still ongoing, and at its next meetings, the Committee planned to consider procedural issues and follow-up, and any other matters on its agenda.
5. The PRESIDENT wished to present the Bureau's perception of the situation regarding the main issues still under discussion. He had noted that a certain number of countries which had expressed reservations concerning the draft decision on compliance had indicated that they would accept the text as it stood, on the understanding that further work was required in order to achieve consensus on the issue of explosive remnants of war. He said that if he heard no objections, he would take it that the Conference approved the draft decision.

6. It was so decided.

7. The PRESIDENT, turning to the issue of mines other than anti-personnel mines, said that many delegations had presented either draft protocols on such mines or position papers on proposals. While that indicated that all delegations were in negotiating mode, he emphasized that he was not in a position to report other progress on the issue at present. Meanwhile, the Meeting of Military Experts on mines other than anti-personnel mines would continue its work.

8. Mr. MALOV (Russian Federation), while commending the value of the serious and informative consultations under way on that issue, considered it inappropriate to refer to negotiation, for which no legal mandate had been established.

9. Mr. KOVAR (United States) did not share the view of the representative of the Russian Federation, considering that the discussions held over the past five years amounted to negotiation, since agreement had been sought on recommendations to be submitted to the Review Conference with a view to the adoption of a protocol. Moreover, States parties and the Group of Governmental Experts did not require a mandate for their undertakings.

10. The PRESIDENT took note of the two comments, which illustrated the difficulties faced by the Conference on the issue at hand.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.