



General Assembly

Distr.: General
2 December 2010

Original: English

Sixty-fifth session
Agenda item 118

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Second Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September 2010, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-fifth session the item entitled “Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly” and to allocate it to all the Main Committees for the sole purpose of considering and taking action on their respective tentative programmes of work.
2. The Second Committee considered the item at its 7th and 33rd meetings, on 8 October and 1 December 2010 (see A/C.2/65/SR.7 and 33).
3. At the 7th meeting, on 8 October, the Chair of the Committee made an introductory statement. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Yemen (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Belgium (on behalf of the European Union), the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Mexico, New Zealand (also on behalf of Australia and Canada), the United States of America, the Russian Federation, Guyana and Bangladesh (see A/C.2/65/SR.7).
4. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the Director of the Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (see A/C.2/65/SR.7).
5. Also at the 7th meeting, the Chair responded to the comments made and questions raised by delegations (see A/C.2/65/SR.7).



II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft decision contained in document A/C.2/65/L.72

6. At its 33rd meeting, on 1 December, the Committee had before it the draft programme of work of the Second Committee for the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly (A/C.2/65/L.72), which had been submitted by the Chair on the basis of consultations held with the Bureau of the Committee.

7. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted its draft programme of work for the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, as contained in document A/C.2/65/L.72, and recommended its approval by the General Assembly (see para. 12, draft decision I).

B. Draft decision on improving the working methods of the Second Committee

8. At the 33rd meeting, on 1 December, the Chair introduced a draft decision contained in an informal paper in English only, entitled “Improving the working methods of the Second Committee”, submitted by the Chair on the basis of informal consultations.

9. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft decision had no programme budget implications (see A/C.2/65/SR.33).

10. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted the draft decision (see para. 12, draft decision II).

11. After the adoption of the draft decision, a statement was made by the representative of Belgium on behalf of the European Union, Albania, Croatia, Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, as well as Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (see A/C.2/65/SR.33).

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

12. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decisions:

Draft decision I

Programme of work of the Second Committee for the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly approves the programme of work of the Second Committee for the sixty-sixth session of the Assembly as set out below:

1. Information and communications technologies for development.
2. Macroeconomic policy questions:
 - (a) International trade and development;

- (b) International financial system and development;
 - (c) External debt sustainability and development;
 - (d) Commodities.
3. Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference.
4. Sustainable development:
- (a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;
 - (b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;
 - (c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;
 - (d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind;
 - (e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;
 - (f) Convention on Biological Diversity;
 - (g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-sixth session;
 - (h) Harmony with Nature;
 - (i) Sustainable mountain development;
 - (j) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy.
5. Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).
6. Globalization and interdependence:
- (a) Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence;
 - (b) Science and technology for development;
 - (c) Development cooperation with middle-income countries.
7. Groups of countries in special situations:
- (a) Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries;
 - (b) Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries

and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation.

8. Eradication of poverty and other development issues:
 - (a) Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017);
 - (b) Women in development;
 - (c) Human resources development.
9. Operational activities for development:
 - (a) Operational activities for development of the United Nations system;
 - (b) South-South cooperation for development.
10. Agriculture development and food security.
11. Towards global partnerships.
12. Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources.

Draft decision II

Improving the working methods of the Second Committee

The General Assembly, taking note of the discussion at the 7th meeting of the Second Committee at the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, held on 8 October 2010,¹ and recalling its resolutions 48/264 of 29 July 1994, 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, 58/126 of 19 December 2003, 58/316 of 1 July 2004, 59/313 of 12 September 2005, 60/286 of 8 September 2006 and 64/301 of 13 September 2010:

- (a) Reaffirms the importance of the full implementation of its resolutions on the revitalization of its work;
- (b) Reaffirms also the importance of maintaining the intergovernmental nature of the work of the Second Committee while encouraging the participation of relevant experts in the general debate and debates on individual agenda items as appropriate, and encourages, in this respect, the Bureau of the Committee to meet at an early stage to select relevant experts to address the general debate and debates on individual agenda items, and emphasizes that such selection should ensure, inter alia, a variety of perspectives and appropriate geographic and gender balance;
- (c) With regard to the general debate of the Second Committee:
 - (i) Decides to maintain the general debate, while bearing in mind the need to avoid unnecessary duplications and overlaps in statements during the general debate and debates on individual agenda items;
 - (ii) Decides to maintain the current time limits of seven minutes for individual Member States and ten minutes for delegations speaking on behalf

¹ See A/C.2/65/SR.7.

of a group of States during the general debate, and urges delegations to adhere to those time limits;

(iii) Encourages the Chair of the Committee to continue the practice of providing a summary of the general debate of the Committee;

(d) With regard to debates on individual agenda items of the Second Committee:

(i) Decides to maintain debates on individual agenda items, while bearing in mind the need to avoid unnecessary duplications and overlaps in statements;

(ii) Decides to maintain, as appropriate, the current time limits of five minutes for individual Member States and seven minutes for delegations speaking on behalf of a group of States during debates on individual agenda items, and urges delegations to adhere to those time limits;

(iii) Decides to explore possibilities for rationalizing debates on individual agenda items, including, as encouraged by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/313, through more interactive and dynamic debates with a view to contributing to intergovernmental decision-making;

(e) With regard to draft resolutions submitted to the Second Committee:

(i) Reaffirms the sovereign right of Member States to submit proposals in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly;

(ii) Decides that the Bureau of the Committee shall keep multiple mandatory deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions, while ensuring that those deadlines are also realistic taking into account the complexities of proposals to be negotiated, that the Committee shall strictly adhere to the deadlines established by the Bureau, and submissions after their expiration shall not be accepted, and that any request made prior to the expiration of the deadlines for their extension shall be considered by the Bureau on a case-by-case basis;

(iii) Reaffirms the recommendations made in its resolutions 57/270 B, 58/126 and 60/286 that General Assembly resolutions should be more concise, focused and action-oriented, and that preambular paragraphs in resolutions of the Assembly should normally be kept to the minimum, and encourages Member States, when submitting draft resolutions, to provide references to the sources of the relevant language;

(f) With regard to panel discussions and side events of the Second Committee:

(i) Decides to continue the practice of holding panel discussions and side events so as to enhance informal, in-depth discussions and to bring together experts from various fields without prejudicing the progress of the substantive work of the Committee;

(ii) Decides to restrict the number of panel discussions and side events to a maximum of six at each session of the Committee in order to avoid overloading its work;

(iii) Emphasizes the importance of ensuring, *inter alia*, a variety of perspectives and appropriate geographic and gender balance in the selection of keynote speakers and panellists for panel discussions and side events;

(g) Reaffirms the need to implement paragraph 9 of section B of the annex to its resolution 58/126, in which, *inter alia*, it stipulated that the full Bureaux of the Main Committees shall be elected three months in advance of the next session, in order to foster better advance planning and preparation of the work;

(h) Decides to continue its efforts to improve its working methods, including the rationalization of its agenda, as requested in General Assembly resolutions 60/286 and 64/301, within the framework of the existing item entitled “Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly”.
