
Conference on Disarmament

9 September 2011

English

Final record of the one thousand two hundred and fortieth plenary meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 9 September 2011, at 3.15 p.m.

President: Mr. Rodolfo Reyes Rodríguez (Cuba)

* Reissued for technical reasons on 7 December 2012.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call to order the 1240th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. With its usual efficiency, the secretariat has prepared a new version of the document that includes the proposals submitted by delegations. I suggest we examine the paragraphs that we did not get to on third reading at the morning meeting.

Let us approach them in a spirit of agreement. I will go through the paragraphs one by one to see if they are ready for adoption. If there are any objections to their immediate adoption, we will leave those paragraphs pending along with the ones we identified during the morning meeting.

I suggest that we then move on to informal consultations between the delegations concerned. I would suggest that the delegate of South Africa should coordinate with all the delegations concerned to examine these paragraphs in the informal consultations. We would suspend the meeting once we finish this reading to identify points of consensus on the pending paragraphs. So we would suspend the plenary meeting to facilitate the work of all delegations concerned in informal consultations under the leadership of the delegate of South Africa, and then come together again for a formal meeting on Tuesday morning at 10 a.m., as you have been informed. We would then ask our distinguished colleague from South Africa to report on the informal consultations at the Tuesday morning meeting.

If, as I hope, you are able to produce a clean version of the whole document through these informal consultations at this afternoon's meeting, I will immediately submit it to the secretariat. The delegate of Cuba will also be with you to facilitate all the necessary communication with the secretariat. But in any case, first thing on Tuesday we will give the floor to the delegate of South Africa to present the results of the consultations.

We will make room 1 available for the consultations. The delegate of South Africa, along with all the delegations concerned, will be in charge. I hope that meeting in a smaller room will help you to quickly conclude the necessary consultations and reach agreement.

I give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference.

Mr. Sareva (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament): The document you have in front of you should reflect our work from this morning and also includes those paragraphs which we were unable to cover in the course of this morning's meeting.

One particular point has to do with paragraph 25 ter and the list of documents. Even though it reads "provisionally adopted", the secretariat did listen carefully and take note of the discussion pertaining to the document listed in subparagraph (b). Let me explain. What happened was that we listed every document here as well as under the various agenda items in accordance with the formal, official English translation of the title. So the title that you see here for CD/1913 is the official English translation that we received from the UNOG Division of Conference Management.

I have had discussions with the representative of Colombia, and it would seem that this translation may not fully capture the sense of the Spanish original. I am not a Spanish speaker, but it would seem that some of the words included in the Spanish cover letter have not been fully reflected, and this is something which the secretariat will pursue further with the Division of Conference Management.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you very much, Mr. Sareva, for that explanation. In any event, the delegation of Colombia, efficient as always, will ensure that the Spanish version of the report properly reflects the title that the delegation decided to submit.

Following this logic, I am going to try to determine which pending paragraphs are causing difficulties and conclude this phase of the discussions. As I said, we will suspend

the plenary meeting to allow time for the consultations with the delegations concerned, which will be of help to us.

I give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Daryaei (Islamic Republic of Iran): I thank the Deputy Secretary-General for the explanation. I just wanted to remind the Conference that we presented paragraph 25 *ter* with the understanding that its subparagraph (b) exactly reflects what the representative of Colombia said. We hope that the title will be correctly reflected in the text, because this is part of our basis for joining consensus on this part.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): My understanding is that there is no problem with the English version. The problem is that the Spanish version of the Colombian document said “*reflexiones*” and there was some doubt about whether “thoughts” was the correct translation of “*reflexiones*”, but in any case the problem lies with the original Spanish version and with ensuring that the report, when published, precisely reflects the Spanish title submitted by Colombia and not the translation that might be produced from the title as it appears in English. I would ask the representative of Colombia if that is correct, or does the problem lie elsewhere?

Mr. Valencia Muñoz (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, the word “*reflexiones*” or thoughts ..., really the heart of the matter is that in the version that we submitted we said: “... the way in which Colombia, in its national capacity, perceived and reflected ...”. There are two verbs. In the official translation provided by the United Nations, there is only one verb, “perceive”. This is really the main issue.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I think it is more suitable that way. Let us leave it in English as it appeared officially and we will ensure that the Spanish version reflects exactly what the delegation of Colombia submitted in its Spanish version. This is a technical issue. I repeat, for the benefit of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, that there will not be any problem with the text as it appears in the English version.

Let us move on then to paragraph 28. In this paragraph we had a proposal from the delegation of Poland that would resolve the issues it had with the original version. Are we in a position to adopt paragraph 28 as amended by the delegation of Poland? Can we adopt the Polish proposal for paragraph 28?

Paragraph 28, as amended, was adopted.

We move on to paragraph 29. As we have adopted paragraph 28, as proposed by the delegation of Poland, then paragraphs 28 to 31 of the previous version are unnecessary. This means we do not have to examine these paragraphs. Does everyone agree with this understanding? I give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Zaleski (Poland): In fact, this second proposal, which is now in italics and which boils down to the deletion of paragraphs 28 to 31, was made on the basis of the fact that the information contained in paragraphs 28 and 29 is then repeated in part III, under the discussion of the consideration of the concrete and urgent items, meaning the number of meetings and which agenda items were discussed. So it was our understanding that repetition was not necessary, and that with the deletion of those paragraphs the information would still be provided under the appropriate agenda items in part III.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I believe that all the delegations share that view because there has been no objection to that interpretation. The Polish proposal for paragraph 28 has been adopted. Paragraphs 29 to 31 have therefore been superseded and will be deleted from the text.

Let us move on to the next paragraph. According to the list I have here, the next paragraph would be paragraph 38. I give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference.

Mr. Sareva (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament): On the basis of the discussion at our previous meeting, the secretariat understood that it was tasked with suggesting, through the presidency, a formula which would obviate the need to refer, in a number of paragraphs, to presidents by name. Either all or none would be referred to. What you have in front of you represents one way to do it. Instead of a reference by name to the first presidency, there would be just a generic reference to the president of the Conference, accompanied by the symbol of the relevant verbatim record. Also, we made an editorial change by omitting the word “informal” from the first line, because these meetings actually were not informal. If they had been, there would be no verbatim record reflecting them. So this is an editorial change.

And, finally, there’s a change reflecting the proposal to delete the agenda titles from the fourth line from the bottom, as was suggested during the meeting. This proposal has not really been attributed to anybody because I think it came from a number of delegations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I believe that the comments by the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference reflect exactly the mandate we gave the secretariat. We asked for its help, and I think that it has provided really valuable help. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Conference wishes to adopt the proposal made by the secretariat.

Paragraph 38, as amended, was adopted.

This approach will be of great help to us in the subsequent paragraphs. In any case, we will review them one by one to ensure that there are no objections.

Let us move on to paragraph 40. Are there any objections to paragraph 40? The secretariat has explained to me that there was a previous version of paragraph 40 that listed all the documents and included their titles. A later proposal from the delegation of India deleted the titles of all the documents, which had already been listed in a previous paragraph, but did retain the symbol and date of submission of each document. In this case, I suggest that we work on the basis of the Indian proposal, but I give the floor to the delegate of India himself to speak on this matter.

Mr. Gill (India): The proposal that we had made was with a view to overcoming possible concerns about repetitiveness. However, it may be necessary to refer, either in the chapeau or in a footnote, to the fact that these documents are listed in the previous section. So maybe the secretariat can suggest a place for this. Maybe we can do it in the chapeau itself, stating, “The following documents (referred to in paragraph 39) were submitted to the Conference under this agenda item”, and then listing the documents.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I think that the Indian proposal helps to clarify even more the logic behind including the symbol and the date and not repeating the title and other details of the document. Does any delegation object? I give the floor to the secretariat. I hope that you are not requesting the floor in order to object.

Mr. Sareva (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament): We can certainly suggest something. One way to do it would be to proceed along the lines of what you will find on the following page with regard to paragraph 41, because, here again, there was a request from the Conference for the secretariat to create an abbreviated version of paragraph 41. What appears here is just one suggestion: “Paragraph 38 above applies.” Certainly, that’s just one possible way to do it. We could, for example, have paragraph 40 read in the same vein, with “Paragraph 37 above applies”.

The problem with the suggestion to include a footnote is that we would then have the paragraph number immediately followed by a footnote referring to the previous paragraph, but certainly there are many ways to do it.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Of these many ways of doing it, can you suggest which one would be most appropriate? Would it be to use the format found in paragraph 41? That is the proposal from the secretariat. I give the floor to the delegate of Algeria.

Mr. Khelif (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, please indulge my delegation in returning to this point, but is it necessary to mention these documents if they have already been mentioned under agenda item 1? What added value do we give our report by referring to these documents twice, either directly or indirectly, given that we all know the history behind this issue? The problem is that we combined agenda items 1 and 2 because we were not able to agree on a programme of work. The reason we combined items 1 and 2 was so that we could hold discussions and avoid problems related to balancing the amount of time devoted to these two agenda items. We therefore combined the two issues for practical rather than political reasons.

So, that is why we are facing this difficulty. We do not believe that mentioning these documents twice adds anything to the report. If there is no truly political issue requiring that these documents be mentioned within the context of agenda item 2, then we suggest simply deleting all mention of the document in paragraph 40. In fact we suggest deleting paragraph 40 entirely.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Here we have documents submitted by various delegations, and when they submitted them the delegations asked that they be included with regard to two agenda items. Since most of the delegations that submitted documents are represented here today, I would like to ask if there is any objection to deleting paragraph 40. Otherwise, if we are to somehow resolve this problem, perhaps it would be better to keep the repetition and return to the original wording, so as to avoid dragging this out. What I do not want is to prolong the discussion on something that is more a question of form than substance.

I give the floor first to the representative of Japan and then to the representative of India.

Mr. Nakayama (Japan): Mr. President, first, I have a technical enquiry regarding this two-line note at the bottom of the new paragraph 40. Argentina, Japan, Nigeria and the United States requested inclusion of differences to the official documents to the Conference. Does that mean that the documents requested by these countries will be duly reflected? I take your nod as an affirmative answer.

Second, regarding the point the representative of Algeria made just now, we all know the historical background of why we had this complete repetition under agenda items 1 and 2. This is a realistic compromise we made. Of course, we understand this is a waste of paper, ink and so on, but this is the compromise created in the past, and I don't think that it is wise to change it now. We have a creative suggestion from the representative of India to list just the numbers and dates of the documents, and I think that is a very good compromise.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I am going to give the floor to the delegation of India, but I ask you not to turn this into a big debate, and to seek a practical solution. The reason we redrafted the proposal was to save paper and avoid repetition, but really in the United Nations there is so much repetition and so much paper wasted that I do not think anyone is going to be financially ruined because of the repetition. If it makes our work easier, I suggest that we retain the original wording submitted by the secretariat and revert to the practice that has been used to record these documents in previous reports — even if it

is repetitive, and even if we have to read the same list over again — if it allows us to overcome these difficulties.

My specific proposal is to retain the original wording put forward by the secretariat, or simply to accept the Indian proposal.

It is clear that we cannot delete the paragraph; I have no doubt about that. There are two options; one is to use the wording proposed by the delegation of India. In this case, I would like to ask the delegate of India if he has a specific proposal to help us decide in which part of the chapeau ... in which part of his specific proposal we should include the reference he wishes to make to the previous paragraph, which includes the full list. The second option is to revert back to the list as it was before. What I ask is that you do not turn this into a long debate when it is basically a question of form. I give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Gill (India): Mr. President, we were only trying to be helpful because concerns were raised about repetitiveness. We have no problem withdrawing the proposal and going back to the original language as drafted by the secretariat, with perhaps some of the technical changes that have been made.

The President (spoke in Spanish): This is the President's specific proposal. Does any delegation object to using the original wording, proposed by the secretariat, with this small amendment to the chapeau drafted by the delegation of South Africa? Is any delegation opposed to this?

Paragraph 40, as amended, was adopted.

Let us now turn to paragraph 41. I would like to ask the secretariat if the wording from paragraph 38 would apply here. I give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference.

Mr. Sareva (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament): There is the old text, which is a pre-amendment of paragraph 38, which we just did, and then there is the proposed text, which could read, "Paragraph 38 above applies", or "The text of paragraph 38 above applies". But, of course, having just decided to repeat the list of documents from paragraph 37 in paragraph 40, the Conference may just as well decide to repeat the language of paragraph 38 in paragraph 41, in which case probably the best course of action would be to repeat, as just amended.

The President (spoke in Spanish): Does any delegation object to the understanding outlined by the secretariat? I think this wording would facilitate agreement on this paragraph. Are there any objections?

Paragraph 41, as amended, was adopted.

Let us move on to paragraph 44. I believe the issues with paragraph 44 were resolved with the proposal from the secretariat. In any event, given that there are various paragraphs that contain the same proposal, I will go through them one by one to make sure there are no problems. Are there any objections to the proposal for paragraph 44?

Paragraph 44 was adopted.

Are there any objections regarding paragraph 46?

Paragraph 46 was adopted.

We have now reached paragraph 48. We had already included the proposal from the delegation of Belarus, which appeared to be acceptable, but there were some issues to resolve based on the proposal from the delegation of Pakistan. Everyone should know what we are talking about, because in fact we had provisionally adopted the proposal from the

delegation of Belarus. The issue still to be resolved was the concern about the relationship among the presidencies.

Are there any objections regarding paragraph 48 as it appears in the document distributed?

Paragraph 48 was adopted.

In paragraph 50 the situation is very similar to the one I've just described. Are there any objections regarding paragraph 50? Paragraph 50 has not yet been adopted. I give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Zaleski (Poland): I would like to come back quickly to paragraph 48. Somehow too much text was deleted, because right now we do not know how many meetings were held on agenda item 5. So, I think "one plenary meeting" in the second and third lines should not be deleted.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegate of Poland has the advantage of previous work experience in the secretariat. Thank you, Sir, for your welcome correction.

We return then to paragraph 50. I realize that I need not worry because it was basically just a change of form. I give the floor to the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. Reid (United States of America): Going back to the point the representative of Poland was talking about. I think they cover the number of meetings held by putting it in the passive voice, and saying, "... was considered in a plenary meeting ...". I think that's why they took it out above, but they covered that, saying that there is just the one meeting in the new bold language below. I don't care either way. They make the point technically that there is just one meeting, so it can be either way. I am just saying that I think that was the original Belarusian intent.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In any case, we will ask the delegation of the United Kingdom — because, after all, it was not you, Sir, who created the English language — we will ask the delegation of the United Kingdom if the wording in English is correct. Thank you very much also to the delegate of the United States of America.

We turn once again to paragraph 50. Are there any objections to paragraph 50?

Paragraph 50 was adopted.

Paragraph 52. It seems to me that this is a similar situation. Are there any concerns, any objections to paragraph 52?

Paragraph 52 was adopted.

This relieves me of my duties as President for the moment, as I make way for our distinguished friend and colleague from South Africa, whose primary duty from now on will be to facilitate informal consultations. I would like to remind you of the points of agreement. First of all, we have given our colleague from South Africa a mandate to facilitate informal meetings of all the delegations concerned. Room 1 will be available to them for the rest of this afternoon, and also on Monday if necessary, though we hope it will not be necessary. We would therefore ask the delegate of South Africa to duly inform us about the results of these consultations at Tuesday's meeting.

I would like to remind you that if you agree on a text in the informal consultations, we would appreciate it if you would submit it to the secretariat, and also if someone from the secretariat would attend these informal consultations, so as to ensure continuity in the agreed texts and to be able to distribute them at the meeting on Tuesday. Are there any objections to this procedure?

The meeting on Tuesday will be convened at 10 a.m. I need to clarify the agenda for that meeting. One of the basic items on the agenda will be to hear about the results of the informal consultations, and some ambassadors who have recently arrived in Geneva have expressed an interest in speaking at a plenary meeting. At the appropriate time, I will also need to explain how we will deal with the first draft of the resolution that will be submitted to the General Assembly.

In any case, before I adjourn the 1240th plenary meeting, I give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Endoni (Nigeria): Mr. President, first of all, speaking on behalf of the delegation of Nigeria, I would like you to clarify whether, in the event that we are not able to come up with a conclusion today, information about the next informal meeting will be circulated to delegations so that we will be able to participate.

Second, regarding paragraph 40, it has been indicated here that the delegation of Nigeria, on behalf of the Group of 21, requested the inclusion of references to the official documents. I hope that that will be reflected in the final report.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Let us first seek clarification on paragraph 40. I give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General.

Mr. Sareva (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament): Yes, at the end of today, depending on how much progress we make, the secretariat will be sending a communication to all missions informing them whether or not we will reconvene for informal consultations on Monday. Regarding the second point, yes, all official communications and other documents will be listed in the final version.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I would ask all interested delegations to stay this afternoon, because some of them are now leaving and they do not know whether or not it will be necessary to attend on Monday. I know that what you are asking is fair, because now it is Friday afternoon, and I hope that you are not going to say, "Thank God it's Friday!" and leave everything until Monday. I think the secretariat should inform everyone about whether or not the consultations will continue on Monday, as decided by the facilitator, our colleague from South Africa. So, the delegate of South Africa will inform the secretariat, and the secretariat will notify all delegations.

In any case, I wish all success to the delegations taking part in the informal consultations under the leadership of our friend from South Africa. I also wish you a good weekend. Would any other delegation like to speak before we close this plenary meeting? I give the floor to the delegate of South Africa.

Mr. Combrink (South Africa): Mr. President, we will start the informal consultations after a 10-minute break, at 4.05 p.m. in room 1.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): You have heard the scheduled time. I hope that you listen to the delegate of South Africa and are on time, because no matter how many times I say that I want us all to be here at a certain time, you always arrive 15 minutes later. I hope you do not do to the delegate of South Africa what you do to me.

I declare the 1240th plenary meeting of the Conference closed.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.