



# General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

## First Committee

**1**st meeting

Thursday, 1 October 2009, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*Chairman:* Mr. José Luis Cancela . . . . . (Uruguay)

*In the absence of the Chairperson, Mr. Davide (Philippines), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

### Statement by the Acting Chairperson

**The Acting Chairperson:** The Chairperson of the First Committee, His Excellency Ambassador José Luis Cancela, the Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations, expresses his regrets that he is unable to be here today to chair this meeting. He asked me to chair it on his behalf in my capacity as Vice-Chairperson of the Committee.

At this first meeting, we will focus our discussion on the organization of our work for the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. Allow me first to extend a warm welcome to all delegations participating in the deliberations of the First Committee during the session and to thank you for the trust and confidence you have reposed in the Chairperson and other members of the Bureau, namely the Vice-Chairpersons, Mr. Hossam Aly of Egypt, Mr. Florian Laudi of Germany and myself of the Philippines, and the Rapporteur, Ms. Tetyana Pokhval'ona of Ukraine.

We look forward to working with you all during the coming weeks. We have a full agenda but I am confident that we will be able to conduct our work in a cooperative and efficient manner. With your full support, the Chairperson and the Bureau hope to guide the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion in the first days of November. It goes without saying that we will rely greatly on your spirit of cooperation

and flexibility. The Chairperson will no doubt enhance effective team work with the other members of the Bureau. I am certain the Committee will benefit from their collective wisdom and expertise in disarmament issues.

I am also confident that the Committee will again receive the full support of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, headed by Mr. Sergio Duarte and Mr. Shaaban Muhammad Shaaban, respectively. Last but not least, the Committee will benefit greatly from the assistance of Mr. Timur Alasaniya, the Acting Secretary of the First Committee, and his experienced team of the First Committee secretariat.

### Organization of work

**The Acting Chairperson:** As I mentioned earlier, the agenda for this afternoon's meeting mainly concerns the organization of the work of the Committee for the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. In considering the Committee's work for this session, I wish first to draw attention to document A/C.1/64/2, containing a letter dated 18 September 2009 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairperson of the First Committee. The letter draws attention to the decisions taken by the General Assembly, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2009, pertaining to the allocation of items to the First Committee. At that meeting, the General Assembly decided to allocate 18 disarmament and related international security agenda items — items 86

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

09-53615 (E)



Please recycle

to 103 — to the First Committee for its consideration during the session.

Before I proceed to give a more detailed account of the programme of work and timetable as contained in document A/63/397, I wish to remind delegations that it was adopted by the Committee on 31 October 2008, in the context of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

I wish to propose one small change to the timetable of the Committee, namely, that the meeting scheduled for the afternoon of Tuesday, 20 October, be moved to the afternoon of Monday, 19 October. Thus the Committee would have morning and afternoon meetings on 19 October and a morning meeting only on 20 October.

The programme of work and timetable itself was prepared in keeping with past practice and taking into account a number of initiatives proposed over the past several years, including the General Assembly's decision 52/416 B, on the rationalization of the work of the First Committee. In this connection, I also took into account paragraph 36 of the annex to resolution 51/241, which reads as follows:

“The First Committee and the Fourth Committee shall not meet simultaneously and may consider meeting in a sequential manner during the regular session of the General Assembly.”

However, members may have noted in document A/63/397 that on Monday, 19 October, both morning and afternoon meetings have been allocated to the First Committee. That is in line with an agreement between the Chairpersons of the First and Fourth Committees.

In accordance with established practice, the First Committee will commence its substantive work on Monday, 5 October 2009. The General Committee recommended that the First Committee conclude its work by 3 November. Thus, including this organizational meeting, the First Committee will have a total of 24 meetings to consider the agenda items allocated to it by the General Assembly. The Committee will also have to consider and take action on its tentative programme of work for the 2010 session, in accordance with agenda item 118, entitled “Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly”. With reference to item 133, entitled “Programme planning”, which has been allocated to all the Main Committees and the plenary of the General Assembly

to enhance discussion of evaluation, planning, budgeting and monitoring reports, we will revert to this item if the General Assembly allocates any report under this item to our Committee.

The Chair will exert every effort to complete the work of the Committee, as recommended by the General Committee and thus earnestly appeals for the full support and cooperation of all delegations on this matter. The Chair would like to recall that during the main part of the previous session, the First Committee had 22 meetings, during which it considered 16 disarmament-related agenda items. Consequently, the Chair believes that, with support and cooperation, the Committee will be able to accomplish the tasks in a timely fashion.

As has been done during previous sessions, the consideration of the items allocated to the First Committee will proceed in three segments, as currently reflected in the proposed programme of work and timetable. The first segment, the general debate on all items, will run from 5 to 12 October, for a total of six meetings. The rolling list of speakers for this phase is currently open, and I am aware that quite a number of delegations have already inscribed their names on the list. I invite others to do the same as soon as possible. Additionally, in order to efficiently use the resources allocated to us, I kindly request delegations to limit their statements to a maximum of 10 minutes for those speaking in their national capacity, and 15 minutes for those speaking on behalf of several delegations.

In this connection, it is my intention to introduce the use of a timing mechanism for this first phase of our work for effective management. I would invite delegations that have longer statements to make the full statement available in written form for posting on the First Committee Quickfirst website and to read out an abbreviated version, or executive summary thereof, during the general debate.

I would like to remind delegations, as they inscribe their names on the list of speakers, that a rolling list means that members should be prepared to intervene, possibly even one meeting sooner than they had originally planned. Based on the programme of work and timetable contained in document A/63/397, it is the intention of the Chair to close the list of speakers for the general debate on Tuesday, 6 October, at 6 p.m.

The second segment of the Committee's work will be the structured thematic discussion on item

subjects, and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions and decisions that will be submitted under disarmament and related international security agenda items. For the advance information of delegations, an indicative timetable, based on the established practice of the Committee for the second phase of its work, has been circulated to all delegations in document A/C.1/64/CRP.1. I am sure members already have copies of this.

That segment will cover the period from Tuesday, 13 October, to Monday, 26 October; a total of 11 meetings have been allocated for that purpose. In the event that the Committee completes its general debate ahead of schedule, that is, before the end of Monday, 12 October, I propose that we begin the thematic segment on 12 October with the discussion on the follow-up of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its past session and the presentation of reports.

As indicated in document A/C.1/64/CRP.1, it is within the second thematic phase that time has been allocated for an exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and other high-level officials, on the current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the role of international organizations with mandates in this field. Furthermore, a number of guest speakers have been invited. As in previous years and as outlined in document A/C.1/64/CRP.1, the meetings during the thematic segment will be divided into two parts. The first part will begin in formal mode with a panel or guest speaker, as applicable. It will be followed by an informal question-and-answer session. The second formal part will consist of interventions by delegations on the items under consideration, as well as the introduction of draft resolutions.

Again, following past practice, the discussion on the follow-up of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its past session and the presentation of reports, which will take place on 13 October, as well as the 21 October panel on regional disarmament and security, the 22 October panel discussion on disarmament machinery and the 23 October meeting with the participation of non-governmental organizations, will be in informal mode. The Chair plans to provide delegations with a more detailed explanation of this second phase of the Committee's work during the latter part of next week.

In order to facilitate the Committee's work and to provide sufficient time to delegations for consultations, as well as to give enough time to the Secretariat for processing draft resolutions in all official languages, following discussions with the Bureau, I am proposing that the deadline for submission of draft resolutions and decisions be Thursday, 15 October, at noon. This submission deadline is necessary in order to allow sufficient time for processing and translation of the drafts so that they will be available as early as possible in all languages for the consideration of delegations. I therefore appeal to all delegations to adhere strictly to the submission deadline of noon on Thursday, 15 October. If possible, I would encourage delegations to submit draft resolutions and decisions even before the deadline to give delegations enough time to seek the necessary instructions from their capitals and to consult sufficiently, so that the text finally adopted will reflect the greatest possible degree of agreement. An early submission of draft resolutions or decisions would also offer all delegations the opportunity to make comments on them during the second phase, which is also intended for that purpose.

In particular, it is important that delegations submit those draft resolutions that might entail programme budget implications as early as possible to give the Secretariat sufficient time to prepare the necessary statements on programme budget implications. The Chair would like to remind delegations that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee need adequate time to review the programme budget implications of a draft resolution before it can be acted upon by the General Assembly.

In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of delegations to the guidance of the General Committee contained in its first report to the General Assembly (A/64/250). In paragraphs 40 and 41 of that report, the General Committee recalls resolution 45/248 B, on procedures for administrative and budgetary matters, in particular reaffirming that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters and reaffirming the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The General Committee further draws the attention of the General Assembly to the views expressed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

on the use of the phrase “within available resources” (see A/54/7, paras. 66-67). Accordingly, I would kindly request delegations to avoid use of the phrase “within existing resources” in draft resolutions or decisions of the First Committee.

Finally, the third and last segment of the work of the Committee, namely, action on all draft resolutions and decisions, will be from Tuesday, 27 October, to Tuesday, 3 November. A total of six meetings have been set aside for this purpose. If possible, it would be the Chair’s aim to complete that phase of the work of the Committee by Friday, 30 October. Last year, the Committee concluded the final phase, adopting 54 draft resolutions and four draft decisions, in four meetings. Consequently, the Chair urges all delegations to take note of this fact and requests their full cooperation so that the Committee will be able to take action on all draft resolutions and decisions, including those involving programme budget implications, in a timely manner.

It is the intention of the Chair to retain the voting procedure we have followed in previous years, namely, grouping draft resolutions by clusters, using as a basis the agreed seven clusters mentioned in the 5 November 2004 letter from the Chairman of the First Committee to the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, pursuant to paragraph 3 — annex C — of resolution 58/316 on “Further measures for the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly”. The clusters are: nuclear weapons; other weapons of mass destruction; outer space (disarmament aspects); conventional weapons; regional disarmament and security; other disarmament measures and international security; and disarmament machinery. The Chair will provide the Committee with specific information on this final phase of our work closer to the beginning of the action period.

It is my firm belief that, based on the proposed programme of work and timetable that is now before members, the Committee will be able to consider efficiently all the agenda items allocated to it, within the available time, and to wrap up its work, as recommended by the General Committee, at the latest by Tuesday, 3 November 2009.

The Chair wishes to remind delegations of the need to maintain the necessary spirit of compromise and flexibility in the process of implementing the proposed programme of work and timetable.

I wish to inform the Committee of two requests the Bureau has received to hold meetings in the margins of the First Committee session. The first is for a short formal organizational meeting of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. The purpose of the meeting is to re-elect the Chairperson of the Open-ended Working Group for the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The meeting will be chaired by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. Following discussion, the Bureau proposes that the organizational meeting of the Open-ended Working Group be held on Wednesday, 21 October, at 10 a.m. and that the First Committee begin its meeting at 10.30 a.m. that morning in order to facilitate the work of the Open-ended Working Group.

The second request the Bureau has received is from Ambassador Pablo Macedo of Mexico in his capacity as Chairperson-designate of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, to be held in New York from 14 to 18 June 2010. Ambassador Macedo wishes to hold informal consultations with delegations regarding the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States during the Committee’s thematic segment. The Bureau will try to accommodate Ambassador Macedo’s request, on the understanding that the consultations should not impinge on the programme of the First Committee. We will inform the Committee once a suitable date for the consultations has been identified.

With this introduction, may I take it that the Committee wishes to approve the proposed draft programme of work and timetable in document A/63/397, with the amendment I introduced earlier, namely, that the meeting scheduled for the afternoon of Tuesday, 20 October, be moved to the afternoon of Monday, 19 October, so that the Committee will have morning and afternoon meetings on 19 October and only a morning meeting on 20 October?

If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting Chairperson:** The programme of work and timetable, as adopted, will be issued as a

document of the Committee with the symbol A/C.1/64/3.

I should like now to draw attention to the relevant rules and recommendations of the General Assembly affecting the work of the Main Committees, including those contained in decision 34/401, especially its provisions dealing with explanations of votes, rights of reply and budgetary and financial questions, which I intend to apply, with the cooperation and assistance of all members of the First Committee.

In order to make full use of the time and facilities allocated to the Committee, I intend, with the full cooperation of members, to begin meetings promptly at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. and to end at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m., respectively. We will always have time for a coffee break anyway.

I would also like to draw attention to agenda item 5 in document A/64/250, entitled "Election of the officers of the Main Committees", and also to rule 99 (a) of the Assembly's rules of procedure, as amended by resolution 56/509 of 10 July 2002, which reads as follows:

"All the Main Committees shall, at least three months before the opening of the session, elect a Chairman. Elections of the other officers provided for in rule 103 shall be held at the latest by the end of the first week of the session."

In view of this, I should like to propose that the First Committee, in accordance with the aforementioned resolution, consider this item some time in May or June 2010, about three months before the opening of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to proceed accordingly.

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting Chairperson:** Concerning the submission of draft resolutions, we will continue with the electronic submission of drafts introduced at the sixty-third session. The Secretariat will provide further details in a technical briefing directly following this meeting.

I call now on those representatives who wish to make comments at this stage.

**Mr. Ruddyard (Indonesia):** I do not want to miss this opportunity to say something about the way you, Mr. Davide, are conducting the meeting. Allow me, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), first to congratulate the Chairman of the First Committee, Ambassador José Luis Cancela of Uruguay, as well as you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau. We are confident that with the Chair's experience and able leadership, along with the efforts of the Bureau of this session, the agenda of the First Committee will be advanced.

NAM reaffirms the role of the First Committee as an essential subsidiary body of the General Assembly in addressing the difficult and complex issues in the field of disarmament and international security. On this occasion, we would like to commend the Secretariat for continuing the Quickfirst website, which served as a useful tool in facilitating our work at the previous session and will no doubt serve the same purpose this year. In closing, NAM assures the Chairperson of its full support and cooperation in facilitating his task of presiding over this sixty-fourth session of the Committee, and for its part will actively and constructively participate in the deliberations and negotiations of the Committee, including by submitting our draft resolutions.

**Mr. Obisakin (Nigeria):** We want to associate ourselves with the declaration of the Non-Aligned Movement. On behalf of the African Group, Nigeria is taking the floor, Sir, to congratulate you, the Chairman, the other members of the Bureau and all those associated with you, and to pledge traditional African support for you and for the Committee. We hope fervently that this year will be a year in which we will discover the honey about disarmament. We thank you very much and wish you all the best. Africa is here for you, as usual. You can count on us.

**The Acting Chairperson:** With such expressions of support, we will surely succeed. Are there any further statements? There being none, I shall now adjourn the meeting, but I encourage all delegations to remain in the room for the briefing.

*The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.*