



General Assembly

Seventy-fifth session

First Committee

16th meeting

Monday, 7 June 2021, 12.40 p.m.
New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Santos Maraver(Spain)

The meeting was called to order at 12.40 p.m.

Agenda item 5

Election of the officers of the Main Committees

Election of the Chair and the Bureau of the First Committee

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rules 99 (a) and 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, this meeting has been convened to elect the Chair and other officers of the First Committee for the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly.

We shall first take up the election of the Chair of the First Committee for the forthcoming seventy-sixth session. Members will recall that, pursuant to resolution 72/313, of 17 September 2018, which established the pattern for the rotation of the Chairs of the Main Committees for the seventy-fourth to the eighty-third sessions, the Chair of the First Committee at the seventy-sixth session is to be nominated by the Group of African States. In that regard, I understand that an agreement has been reached by the Group to nominate His Excellency Ambassador Omar Hilale of Morocco for the position of Chair at the seventy-sixth session.

Ambassador Hilale is an accomplished diplomat of his country and has served as the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations since April 2014. Prior to his current assignment, he served as Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva beginning in November 2008. Ambassador Hilale has extensive and well-demonstrated experience in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The important posts that Ambassador Hilale has held during his long diplomatic career include President of the 2004 session of the Conference on Disarmament; Chair of the Negotiating Group on Radiological Weapons in 1988; Coordinator on Chemical Weapons for the Group of 21 non-aligned States members of the Conference on Disarmament; Head of the Moroccan delegation to the International Committee of Legal Experts on the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1993; member of the national delegation to every Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held since 1985; and member of the national delegation to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1988.

Ambassador Hilale previously held the positions of Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation in Rabat from 2005 to 2008; Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva from 2001 to 2005; and Ambassador to Indonesia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand from 1996 to 2001.

Mr. Hilale has also held several positions in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Morocco, including Minister Plenipotentiary and Member of the Cabinet of the Secretary of State from 1993 to 1996. From 1991 to 1993, he headed the section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation responsible for relations with the General Assembly, the Security Council and international organizations. Since joining the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1974, he served in Monrovia as

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Deputy Ambassador to Liberia from 1979 to 1980 and also served in Addis Ababa and Algiers.

Since there are no other nominations from the Group of African States, may I take it that, in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and established practice, the First Committee wishes to dispense with a secret ballot and to elect by acclamation Ambassador Hilale of Morocco as the Chair of the First Committee for the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly?

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): I hereby declare Ambassador Omar Hilale of Morocco elected by acclamation as Chair of the First Committee for the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly. On behalf of all delegations, I warmly congratulate Ambassador Hilale on his election. I am certain that he will receive the support and cooperation of each and every delegation in executing his mandate to guide the work of the First Commission at the seventy-sixth session.

We will now proceed with the election of other officers of the First Committee for the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly, beginning with the Vice-Chairs. It is my pleasure to present to the Committee the following nominations.

The Group of Asia-Pacific States has endorsed Mr. Amir Hamzah Bin Mohd Nasir, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the United Nations, and the Group of Eastern European States has nominated Mr. Saša Milanović, First Secretary of the Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations.

Bearing in mind rule 103 of the rules of procedure and recalling paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, may I take it that the Committee wishes to dispense with a secret ballot and elect the candidates by acclamation?

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): With respect to the position of Rapporteur, the Group of Western European and other States has nominated Ms. Sanna Leena Orava, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations. May I take it that the Committee wishes to elect her by acclamation as the Rapporteur of the First Committee at its seventy-sixth session?

It was so decided.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Committee, I should like to express my warmest congratulations to Mr. Amir Hamzah Bin Mohd Nasir of Malaysia and Mr. Saša Milanović of Bosnia and Herzegovina on their election as Vice-Chairs of the First Committee, and to Ms. Sanna Leena Orava of Finland on her election as its Rapporteur.

Regarding the remaining vacancy from among the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Committee will hold elections upon notification by the Group concerned.

I now give the floor to the Chair-elect of the First Committee of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session, His Excellency Ambassador Omar Hilale.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I should like to take this opportunity, upon my election as Chair of the First Committee for the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly, to express my warm thanks to the Group of African States, which nominated me on its members' behalf, and to the Members of the United Nations for the confidence that they have placed in my modest person and in my country, the Kingdom of Morocco.

I would like to congratulate all the members of the Bureau elected at this meeting, with whom I look forward to working closely in the near future. I would also like to commend my dear friend His Excellency Mr. Agustín Santos Maraver, Ambassador of Spain, Chair of the First Committee, as well as the members of his Bureau for the excellent professionalism they have shown in leading the work of the First Committee during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

The seventy-sixth session of the Assembly will be unique in several ways. It will be convened in a difficult international context, characterized by the deterioration of international security, a heightened level of terrorist threats and the unprecedented resurgence of many new and long-standing challenges to the foundations of international peace and security, in particular the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. It will also have to address the impacts of the pandemic, in particular on the deliberations and working methods of the United Nations and its important bodies, such as the First Committee.

That exceptional global situation — more volatile than when the Organization was established — has not spared

the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime, which has been put to the test at a key moment. Renewed and intensified efforts are called for to safeguard and consolidate the progress made with respect to key international instruments such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as to pursue multilateral efforts to strengthen the current disarmament and non-proliferation regime and thereby improve our ability to protect future generations and the environment from disasters caused by weapons of mass destruction.

In that context, the role and work of the First Committee are today more important than ever. Cognizant of the enormity of the task, Morocco, under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohamed VI, is resolutely committed, as always, to the goals of disarmament, non-proliferation and a world free of nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, in that regard, Morocco remains firmly convinced that only diplomacy, dialogue and negotiations can enshrine the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, ensure lasting peace and restore the pre-eminence of the values of multilateralism and consensus.

The Chair (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank my dear friend His Excellency Ambassador Hilale for his statement. I wish him every success at the helm of the First Committee.

Before adjourning this meeting, on behalf of all delegations, I would like to thank all the members of the Bureau of the First Committee at the seventy-fifth session, particularly the Vice-Chairs — Mr. Bassem Hassan of Egypt, Mr. Ariel Penaranda of the Philippines and Ms. Corina-Cristina Lefter of Romania — as well as the Rapporteur, Ms. María del Rosario Estrada Girón of Guatemala, for their outstanding contributions in guiding the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion in the unprecedented and extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic.

It is also only fitting to thank the Secretariat, under the leadership of Ms. Sonia Elliott, for its support. I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate my sincere thanks to all delegations for their support and cooperation throughout my tenure as Chair of the First Committee during this singular and unusual seventy-fifth session, which we held during the pandemic.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.