



General Assembly

Seventy-second session

First Committee

1st meeting

Thursday, 28 September 2017, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq)

*In the absence of the Chair, Ms. Raadik (Estonia),
Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

post of Chair of the First Committee for the seventy-second session.

The meeting was called to order at 3 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 Acting Chair: Before proceeding, allow me to extend a very warm welcome to all representatives.

Delegations will recall that on 31 May 2017, during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, the Committee elected His Excellency Mr. Mouayed Saleh of Iraq as Chair of the Committee. In a note dated 26 September 2017, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations informed the Secretariat that Mr. Saleh was unable to perform the functions of Chair of the Committee. In accordance with rule 105 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I have been designated to chair this meeting until the Committee elects a new Chair.

Delegations will further recall that, pursuant to decision 68/505, of 1 October 2013, the Chair of the Committee is to be nominated by the Group of Asia-Pacific States. In that regard, the Secretariat has been informed that an agreement has been reached by the Group to nominate His Excellency Mr. Mohammed Hussein Bahr Aluloom, Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations in New York, for the

Ambassador Mohammed Hussein Bahr Aluloom is the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations in New York. Prior to his most recent appointment, Ambassador Bahr Aluloom headed the Department of the Americas at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iraq from 2016. He was Ambassador of Iraq to Kuwait from 2010 to 2016 and headed several departments of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iraq after joining the Ministry with the rank of Ambassador in 2009.

Ambassador Bahr Aluloom also served as an adviser to the Iraqi Transitional Council in 2004 and to the Iraqi Governing Council in 2003. With 35 years of experience in engineering, telecommunications and the media, he holds a bachelor of science degree in electronics from the University of Technology in Baghdad and a master of science degree in digital systems from Brunel University in London.

Since there are no other nominations from the Group of Asia-Pacific 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 the secret ballot and to elect by acclamation Ambassador Mohammed Hussein Bahr Aluloom of the Republic of Iraq as Chair of the First Committee for the seventy-second session of the General Assembly?

It was so decided.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in 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-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



The Acting Chair: I hereby declare Ambassador Mohammed Hussein Bahr Aluloom of the Republic of Iraq elected by acclamation as Chair of the First Committee for the seventy-second session of the General Assembly. On behalf of all delegations, I warmly congratulate Ambassador Bahr Aluloom 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 seventy-second session of the First Committee.

I now invite Ambassador Bahr Aluloom to the rostrum to preside over the meeting.

The Chair took the Chair.

Introductory statement

The Chair (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to extend a warm and sincere welcome to all delegations participating in the First Committee's deliberations at the seventy-second session of the General Assembly. I should also like to avail myself of this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to all Member States for the privilege and distinction that they have bestowed upon my country and on me personally through my election as Chair of this very important Committee of the General Assembly. I am indeed honoured and deeply indebted to the entire Committee for the trust and confidence that it has placed in me. I wish to assure all delegations that I shall do my utmost to discharge my responsibilities in order to ensure that our work is carried out efficiently. I hope that our deliberations will be guided by a spirit of consensus and understanding.

I look forward to working closely with the other members of the Bureau, including Ms. Terje Raadik of Estonia and Mr. Georg Sparber of Liechtenstein, as well as the Rapporteur, Mr. Martin Ngundze of South Africa, in the discharge of our responsibilities in leading the First Committee to a successful conclusion at this session.

Organization of work

The Chair: The Committee has before it document A/C.1/72/1, which contains the 21 agenda items allocated to the First Committee by the General Assembly at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 16 September. The Committee also has before it documents A/C.1/72/CRP.1 and A/C.1/72/CRP.2, which contain, respectively, the Committee's proposed programme of

work and timetable for 2017 and the draft indicative timetable for structured discussion on specific subjects on the adopted thematic approach on disarmament and international security agenda items.

Before taking up those documents one by one, with the Committee's indulgence, I should like to make some procedural remarks concerning the conduct of the Committee's work. I should also like to draw the Committee's attention to the relevant rules and recommendations of the General Assembly regarding the work of the Main Committees, as contained in the report of the General Committee in document A/72/250. In order to make full use of the time and conference services made available to the Committee, with its cooperation and support, I shall convene the meetings of the Committee at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. sharp. Similarly, I shall adjourn the meetings punctually at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m., respectively. I trust that delegations will observe punctuality. I appeal to all speakers, especially the first three speakers at a given meeting, to kindly be present in the conference room on time.

In that connection, I sincerely hope that all delegations will make a special effort during this session in order to enable the Committee to maintain, or even improve, the record of the utilization of conference facilities. I should like to remind members that the Assembly has decided to continue its practice during this session of waiving the requirement that at least one quarter of the members be present in order to declare the Main Committee meetings open and permit the debates to proceed. The Assembly made this recommendation with the understanding that such a departure from the rules did not involve any permanent change in the provisions of rule 67 of its rules of procedure.

On the question of explanations of vote, rights of reply and points of order, the Committee will conduct its work strictly in accordance with decision 34/401, which states that explanations of vote should be limited to 10 minutes. The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation, on any item, at a given meeting should be limited to 10 minutes, and the second intervention should be limited to five minutes. In line with the decision taken by the Assembly on 15 September, upon the recommendation of the General Committee, points of order should be limited to five minutes.

Returning to the organization of work of the Committee and the agenda items allocated to it, as

set out in document A/C.1/72/1, I would like to draw the attention of the members of the Committee to the following. First, two new sub-items have been added to the Committee's agenda, namely, sub-item (b) of agenda item 52, entitled "Joint panel discussion of the First and Fourth Committees on possible challenges to space security and sustainability", and sub-item (ii) of agenda item 99, entitled "Nuclear disarmament verification". These sub-items resulted from the decisions taken by the Assembly at its seventy-first session.

Secondly, as noted in the document, some parts of the annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is to be considered directly in plenary meeting under item 89, deal with the subject matter of item 99, entitled "General and complete disarmament". I have been informed that the Assembly will consider the report of the IAEA tentatively on Friday, 10 November 2017.

Thirdly, agenda item 121, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", is allocated to the First Committee for the purpose of discussing its working methods, as well as considering and taking action on its tentative programme of work for the Committee's next session, in 2018. In that connection, the Committee is asked to review a note by the Secretariat contained in document A/C.1/72/INF/4, which highlights the provisions of resolution 71/323, on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

Finally, agenda item 137, entitled "Programme planning", is allocated to all the Main Committees and the plenary of the General Assembly in order to enhance discussion on the evaluation, planning, budgeting and monitoring of reports. So far, I have not received any information concerning this item.

I will now highlight a few details relating to the Committee's proposed programme of work and timetable, as outlined in the document before the Committee (A/C.1/72/CRP.1), which is based on decision 71/518, of 5 December 2016. As indicated in document A/C.1/72/CRP.1, the First Committee will commence its substantive work on Monday, 2 October. It will hold a total of 27 substantive meetings and should conclude its work by 2 November, as approved by the General Assembly.

In accordance with established practice and as currently reflected in the provisional programme of work for this session, the First Committee will conduct its work in three phases. The first phase is the general

debate on all agenda items. The second phase is a thematic discussion on specific subjects, and the third is action on all draft proposals. I shall reflect briefly on what we should expect under each segment.

The general debate on all items will run from 2 to 10 October, for a total of seven meetings. During that segment, on Tuesday, 10 October, the Committee will hold its annual exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs on the follow-up to resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its previous sessions and on presentations of reports. Also during the general debate segment, the President of the General Assembly will address the First Committee on Monday, 2 October. At the end of the general debate, the Committee will devote half a meeting — 90 minutes — to statements by representatives of civil society in an informal setting, following which delegations will be given the floor to make comments or pose questions to the speakers.

To maximize the time available to us during the general debate, I propose that we maintain the practice of using a rolling list of speakers, which is currently open for inscription by all delegations that wish to take the floor. I am aware that a considerable number of delegations have already inscribed their names on the list, and I invite those who intend to speak but have not yet inscribed themselves on the list to do so as soon as possible. As indicated in the programme of work, the list of speakers for the general debate will be closed on Tuesday, 3 October, at 6 p.m. I would also like to remind all delegations to keep in mind that a rolling list implies that they should be prepared to intervene at any time, possibly even one meeting sooner than they had originally planned to speak.

To make the most efficient use of the resources allocated to us, I would like to urge all delegations taking the floor to kindly respect the time limits for statements. Last year, delegations were asked to limit their statements to a maximum of eight minutes when speaking in their national capacity and 13 minutes when speaking on behalf of groups of delegations. I would encourage participants to keep to those time limits to address genuine time-management concerns expressed by delegations over the years. I have been informed by the Secretariat that the number of speakers in the general debate has been increasing steadily over the years, with 100 speakers participating in the general debate five years ago compared as to 118 speakers last year. Despite that increase, as delegations are aware,

the number of days allocated for the debate remains the same. I would therefore strongly urge all delegations with relatively long statements to deliver a concise summary of their texts and submit the full statement in written form for posting on PaperSmart. This year for the first time, delegations can inscribe their names on the list for the general debate through the e-speaker tool for the First Committee on the e-deleGATE web portal.

The second stage of the Committee's work will focus on thematic discussion of specific subjects, as well as the introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions and draft decisions submitted under the Committee's agenda items. That segment will run from Wednesday, 11 October to Wednesday, 25 October, for a total of 12 meetings. In line with the Committee's established practice, the details of the programme of work for the thematic segment are contained in the indicative timetable outlined in document A/C.1/72/CRP.2.

During the second phase, the Committee will take up the respective subject areas listed in the timetable, comprising the seven clusters on which it has traditionally focused during that phase of its work. They are as follows: "Nuclear weapons", "Other weapons of mass destruction", "Outer space (disarmament aspects)", "Conventional weapons", "Other disarmament measures and international security", "Regional disarmament and security" and "Disarmament machinery". For each of the seven clusters, our proceedings will comprise two parts. The first will begin in a formal mode with a panel or guest speakers, as applicable, followed by an informal question-and-answer segment, during which delegations taking the floor will need to ask concise questions rather than read out statements. The second part will be in an informal mode and will consist of interventions by delegations, including the introduction of draft resolutions and draft decisions.

On 11 October, the Committee will engage in an exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and other high-level officials in the field of arms control and disarmament on the theme "Current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the role of international organizations with mandates in this field". To stimulate lively interaction, the panellists have been requested to submit, adequately in advance, summaries of the key elements to be included in their remarks. Those summaries will be circulated to Committee members by the Secretariat.

Also during the thematic segment, the Committee will hold panel discussions under cluster 6, "Regional disarmament and security", and cluster 7, "Disarmament machinery", and introductory statements under clusters 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7.

Delegations are reminded that the joint panel discussion of the First and Fourth Committees on possible challenges to space security and sustainability will take place on the morning of 12 October. The Secretariat has already circulated the programme for the panel discussion to all members, and a copy is available on the First Committee website. The Committee will therefore meet all day on 12, 16 and 23 October, according to its programme of work.

On 25 October, the Committee will hold the traditional certificate award ceremony for graduating Disarmament Fellows.

The list of speakers for the thematic segment will open on Thursday, 5 October. Delegations will continue to inscribe themselves on the list through the e-speaker tool for the First Committee on the e-deleGATE web portal. As members are aware, the tool was established in keeping with resolution 71/323, which encourages Member States, to the extent possible, to make full use of e-services provided by the Secretariat. I understand that there was very positive feedback to the introduction of the tool last year.

The Secretariat will make a presentation on the features of e-Delegate immediately after the conclusion of this organizational meeting, as indicated in the programme of work. The deadline for inscription on the thematic discussion list is Monday, 16 October, at 6 p.m. Thereafter, the list will close. All delegations wishing to take the floor during that segment of our work are therefore urged to make every effort to inscribe their names on the list of speakers before the stipulated deadline.

Delegations taking the floor during the thematic segment are strongly encouraged to limit statements in their national capacity to five minutes, and statements on behalf of a group of countries should not exceed seven minutes. With the Committee's understanding, I intend to apply those time limits faithfully to enable the Committee to complete its work on schedule and avoid the difficulty of time shortages. I therefore urge all delegations wishing to take the floor at that stage to kindly prepare their statements in accordance with the noted time limits.

The third, and last, segment of the work of the Committee, namely, action on all draft resolutions and decisions, will run from Thursday, 26 October to Thursday, 2 November, for a total of six meetings. However, the Committee will aim to conclude its work earlier, on Wednesday, 1 November. Therefore, the 6th meeting, on 2 November, will be held only if necessary.

As indicated in the programme of work, the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions and draft decisions is Thursday, 12 October, at noon. Compliance with that deadline will provide sufficient time to delegations for consultations and also ensure the timely issuance of all drafts in all official languages.

The sponsors and co-sponsors of draft resolutions and draft decisions wishing to schedule informal consultations on their drafts are encouraged to begin as soon as possible, in order to ensure that they have sufficient time for those consultations. Delegations that need assistance in booking conference rooms for that purpose should contact the Secretariat.

Taking into account the lessons learned from the Committee's experience over the years on the need for the early determination of the programme budget implications of draft resolutions and decisions before the Committee, sponsors and co-sponsors organizing informal consultations on their drafts are encouraged to turn to Secretariat officials in the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Committee Secretary for guidance. I have invited senior United Nations officials to the informal meeting on working methods to be held at 4 p.m. today to brief delegations on the programme budget implications process. I encourage one and all to actively participate in that exchange.

At the same time, I would like to remind all delegations that, in accordance with paragraph 12 of decision 34/401, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Fifth Committee require sufficient time to review the programme budget implications of any draft resolution or decision before it can be acted upon by the General Assembly. The General Committee also drew the attention of the General Assembly to the views expressed by the ACABQ regarding the use of the phrase "within available resources", as set out in document A/72/250. In that connection, I draw members' attention to paragraph 70 of that document.

Accordingly, the use of that phrase in draft resolutions and decisions should be avoided.

On a final note, delegations are reminded to consult the chart entitled "Programme Budget Implications: Regulatory Framework, Process and Practice for the Main Committees", which was prepared by the United Nations Budget Division and is posted on the Committee's public website under "documents". It contains very useful information for delegations as they make their preparations.

All submitted draft proposals will continue to be listed in document A/C.1/72/CRP.3 and grouped under the seven clusters I mentioned earlier. Drafts will be issued subsequently as L. documents, which will indicate on the title page the list of delegations that have signed on as sponsors of the draft prior to its submission to the Secretariat. Delegations are reminded that the sponsoring of draft proposals this year will continue through the e-sponsorship tool on the e-deleGATE portal. The technical briefing today by the Secretariat will also cover that tool.

During the action phase, the Committee will continue to be guided by the informal papers issued by the Secretariat and containing the draft resolutions and decisions on which action will be taken each day. Those informal papers will be revised by the Secretariat on a daily basis in order to update the drafts that are ready for action at each of the remaining meetings. In that regard, I propose that the Committee retain the procedure it followed in previous years, by which draft resolutions and decisions are grouped under the clusters that I mentioned earlier.

Additionally, during the action phase, a draft provisional programme of work and timetable for the next year, to be issued under the symbol A/C.1/72/CRP.4, will be circulated for the Committee's consideration and action. Closer to the final phase of our work, further information will be provided on how we will proceed, including the traditional ground rules for taking action on draft resolutions and decisions, prepared by the Secretariat and made available on the e-deleGATE portal.

The documents before the Committee at this session, including those already issued or forthcoming, are listed in document A/C.1/72/INF/1. One of the forthcoming documents will include a list of participants, which will be issued as document A/C.1/72/INF/2. The e-list of participants module will be deployed for the lists of

membership of the Main Committees and for the list of delegations to the seventy-second session. Permanent Missions' focal points will submit their participants' names in an online form and upload a scanned copy of the relevant note verbale. Each Mission will have to make only a single submission for all the Main Committees, as well as the list of delegations to the seventy-second session. That module will be available as of early October.

The Department of Public Information will issue press releases with daily coverage of First Committee proceedings, which will be posted on the United Nations website a few hours after each meeting.

Before taking action on document A/C.1/72/CRP.1, I shall give the floor to delegations for comments or questions on the information I have provided so far regarding the organization of the Committee's work for this session.

Mrs. Schneider Calza (Brazil): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. Please be assured of my delegation's full support in discharging your duties.

I would like to draw the Committee's attention to an issue regarding the timetable for the thematic discussions of the First Committee and in particular to a letter sent by the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) to the previous Chair.

For the past three years, the States of Latin America and the Caribbean, which are all members of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in the region, have expressed their strong support for the request of the Secretary-General of OPANAL to take part as a panellist within the framework of the thematic discussions in the exchange of views between the High Representative and other high-level officials from international organizations that are relevant in the field of disarmament and arms control on the thematic discussion on "Current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the role of international organizations with mandates in this field".

Brazil reiterates its conviction that the Secretary-General of OPANAL — the organization responsible for the implementation of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area — perfectly meets that criterion. It has played a key role in promoting peace and

stability in our region. We are confident that OPANAL would provide a valuable contribution to discussions related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation by offering the perspective of nuclear-weapon-free zones. That perspective is particularly relevant in the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and at a time when one of the most pressing issues on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda is that of the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

This is the fourth consecutive year in which OPANAL presents that request to the Chair of the First Committee. Although it was met with broad support each of the previous times it was presented, it was not granted at all for the first two times and only partially last year, when the OPANAL Secretary-General was allowed to speak from his seat instead of the rostrum, and only after the exchange of views. It is Brazil's sincere hope that this year we will have a different result and that OPANAL will be fully represented at the panel discussion.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiola (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and wish you success in the discharge of your duties in the First Committee. We commence this session with a renewed hope in our work on disarmament of a kind we have not had for many years.

My delegation would like to echo the request just made by the representative of Brazil. We believe that it is relevant to the work of the Committee that the Secretary-General of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in the world be allowed to participate in the Committee. It is quite natural that the Committee would welcome him simply because 115 countries of the Organization are living in nuclear-weapon-free zones. It would not be justifiable to deny the presence of the Secretary-General of the oldest organization representing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area — the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Ms. Mac Loughlin (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your election. My delegation would like to join the request so eloquently made by the representatives of Brazil and Mexico to invite the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean to participate

in the exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Mr. Luque Márquez (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chair, on your election and assure you of the full support of Ecuador during the First Committee's work in this session.

I would also like to associate myself with the arguments made by the representatives of Brazil, Mexico and Argentina on the participation of the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) in the first panel discussion, which will take place on Wednesday, 11 October. That is where he must speak and share the experience of the zone.

Certainly, while the arguments already made should suffice, I would add a historical point. The Treaty of Tlatelolco, from which OPANAL emerged, originated at the General Assembly in 1963, just a few months after five Latin American Presidents, including the Ecuadorian President, had circulated a letter inviting negotiations on what would eventually become the first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone, which was then welcomed in a resolution adopted by the General Assembly. The Treaty of Tlatelolco and OPANAL have a direct relationship with the Organization. OPANAL is an observer organization to the United Nations. The Secretary-General of OPANAL is a regular invitee to the general debate of the Committee.

The truth is that, after three years of requests, it is very strange that the Secretary-General of OPANAL has not been allowed to speak on the panel that he belongs on, along with the other panellists. OPANAL is an organization made up of 33 States Members of the United Nations, and that should be worthy of respect by the Committee. We believe, therefore, that the Secretary-General of OPANAL should be heard this year on the panel, during the panel discussion.

Mr. Garrido (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chair, on your election to chair the First Committee, and I offer you my delegation's full support in the discharge of your duties, which begin today.

I would like to echo the comments made by other delegations that preceded me and underscore how important it is for our region that the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

in Latin America and the Caribbean be allowed to speak during the panel discussion. My colleagues have already eloquently explained the reasons for which the Secretary-General should participate in the thematic discussion. That is why I should just like to reiterate our request that this should be agreed to. It is of extreme importance for my region.

Ms. Zelaya (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your election.

My delegation would like to join the requests made by the representatives of Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Ecuador and Chile for the presence of the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean in the panel discussion on 11 October with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. All previous speakers have explained the reasons behind the request, and we would hope that it will be duly heard.

Mr. Méndez Graterol (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I speak in advance of the formal request to be made by the Permanent Representative of Venezuela when he delivers his statement in the general debate of the First Committee.

I would like to extend our congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to chair the First Committee and wish you every success in the important work that is entrusted to this body of the General Assembly.

I would like to add to what the representatives of Brazil and the other Latin American countries have said today, to the effect that our delegation also fully supports the request that has been made at this meeting for the participation of the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). We believe that OPANAL's contribution to the cause of disarmament and non-proliferation is truly noteworthy, as indicated by the fact that that legal instrument is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, as it was established in 1967. I therefore believe that the participation of the Secretary-General of OPANAL here in the panel discussion on 11 October on the matter at hand would be most appropriate.

We once more reiterate our full support and wish you, Sir, every success.

Ms. Sánchez Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Like other delegations that took the floor before me, my delegation would first of all like to reiterate its

congratulations to you, Mr. Chair, on having been elected as Chair of the First Committee, and we wish you the greatest success. You can count on the support of our delegation in leading the work of the Committee.

Along with the other delegations — Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Ecuador, Chile, Honduras and Venezuela — we would like to support the call for the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean to participate in the meetings that will take place on 11 October with the other senior officials of various disarmament organizations. Our region's request has special significance this year because, as the representative of Venezuela stated, this year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Ms. García Gutiérrez (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I join my colleagues in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to chair the First Committee at this session. You can count on our full support in your work.

I also join colleagues who have taken the floor before me to request that the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) be invited to participate in the panel to take place on 11 October. We believe that OPANAL has made excellent contributions to the work of the Committee and agree with the arguments put forth by my colleagues previously.

Mr. Manrique Trejo (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Mr. Chair, I would like to echo those who have congratulated you on your election as Chair of the First Committee.

My delegation would like to add to the support expressed by various delegations for an invitation to be extended to the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean to participate in the panel to be held next Wednesday, 11 October. The reasons why our region considers it important and necessary have already been expressed, and the delegation of El Salvador wishes to echo and stress that support. I would also like to reiterate our support for the work of the Committee at this session in the days to come.

Mr. Prieto (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the First Committee and note that you will receive the full support of my delegation.

We would like to associate ourselves with the statements made by the representatives of Brazil, Mexico, Ecuador, Chile and other delegations in requesting that the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) be invited to the thematic debate to be held on Wednesday, 11 October, with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. We believe that the participation of the Secretary-General of OPANAL is important and will make for a better debate, given that, through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, Latin America and the Caribbean became the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area. In that regard, we reiterate what other delegations have already requested, namely, the participation of OPANAL's Secretary-General.

Mr. Benard Estrada (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Mr. Chair, Guatemala wishes to express its congratulations to you on your election as Chair of the First Committee. We will be participating constructively in this session of the First Committee.

I will not take much time to explain why it is important for our delegation that the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean be invited to the panel discussion. We believe that it is a particularly important request for different delegations, which has been made clear in the previous statements made by delegations from the region. Guatemala echoes the request made by the delegation of Brazil and supported by the various delegations.

Mr. Díaz Reina (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Mr. Chair, I would like to congratulate you on your election and inform you that you have the full support of Colombia at this session of the First Committee, which will unfold in the coming months.

I take the floor to echo the requests of several delegations from my region with regard to the participation of the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean in the panel to be held on 11 October. The participation of the Secretary-General is of paramount importance and will be beneficial to all discussions that will take place in the Committee — not only because of the expertise that the Secretary-General may have but also because we have gained 50 years of experience in the matter since the Treaty of Tlatelolco

entered into force — which will be of value for all discussions.

The Chair: In view of all the comments made by delegations, I propose that we continue consultations on document A/C.1/72/CRP.2 in the hope of reaching agreement and adopting it by consensus within the week. I will discuss this matter with the Bureau of the Committee.

Ms. Sánchez Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Forgive me, Mr. Chair, for taking the floor again. With respect to document A/C.1/72/CRP.1, I would like to ask about the length of the statements in the general debate. I apologize, Sir, for bringing this matter to your attention again.

The second sentence in footnote (a) states:

“Delegations are encouraged to limit their statements for the general debate to a maximum of eight minutes; statements on behalf of a group of countries should not exceed 13 minutes.”

I would ask that you clarify this formulation for us, Sir, taking into account that, in *The Journal of the United Nations*, we have seen that the duration of the statements made in a national capacity would be eight minutes.

The Chair: Let me repeat what I stated earlier:

“[t]o make the most efficient use of the resources allocated to us, I would like to urge all delegations taking the floor to kindly respect the time limits for statements. Last year, delegations were asked to limit their statements to a maximum of eight minutes when speaking in their national capacity, and 13 minutes for those speaking on behalf of groups of delegations.”

May I take it that the Committee wishes to proceed in accordance with the provisional programme of work and timetable contained in document A/C.1/72/CRP.1?

Mr. Sandoval Mendiola (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): In response, Sir, to the proposal you have just put before us — whether we are ready to continue with the adoption of document A/C.1/72/CRP.1 — the motion made by the representative of Brazil, and seconded by a number of other delegations, means that a change must be made to the timetable that you presented to us in document A/C.1/72/CRP.2. In the schedule that you presented to us for Wednesday, 11 October, the “Subjects” column would have to include the

Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). This is a specific proposal: to amend the schedule contained in the timetable for Wednesday, 11 October, as contained in document A/C.1/72/CRP.2, to include OPANAL.

The Chair: In view of the comments made by delegations, I propose that we continue consultations on document A/C.1/72/CRP.2 in the hope of reaching agreement and adopting it by consensus within the week. I will discuss this matter with the Bureau of the First Committee.

Mr. Luque Márquez (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Concerning the point made by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico, I believe that his suggestion is very clear: Brazil made a specific proposal, which enjoys strong support from various countries in the room and to which there has been no objection. My delegation, at least, therefore does not understand why it is not possible, through an oral amendment on your part, Sir, to include the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean in the panel for the meeting of 11 October, so as to be able to adopt document A/C.1/72/CRP.2 at this afternoon’s meeting. If there is an objection, it should be heard. But none has been made. Therefore, it seems to me that, in the absence of objection, that ought to be possible.

The Chair: In view of the comments made by delegations, I would like once again to propose that we continue consultations on document A/C.1/72/CRP.2 in the hope of reaching agreement and adopting it by consensus within the week. I will discuss this matter with the Bureau of the Committee.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiola (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): In support of what you have just said, Sir, we believe that it is good for you to consult with the Bureau. However, the Bureau does not supersede the membership. You can consult with the Bureau with regard to what happens in this room, but a Bureau decision does not supplant requests made by Member States in any way. The Bureau cannot not qualify what we States have requested. It is very important to make that distinction: the Bureau does not qualify requests made by States. A proposal has been made in the clearest terms.

The Chair: This proposal is being made for the first time, and I need to give delegations time to consider it.

May I take it that the Committee wishes to proceed in accordance with the provisional programme of work and timetable contained in document A/C.1/72/CRP.1.

It was so decided.

The Chair: Before we adjourn, I would like once again to draw members' attention to agenda item 5 and to rule 99 (a) of the rules of procedure, 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 that connection, the General Assembly, in its decision 68/505, of 1 October 2013, approved an interim arrangement concerning the rotation of the Chairs of the Main Committees of the Assembly at its next five sessions. In accordance with that decision, the Chair of the First Committee will be nominated from the Group

of Asia-Pacific States for the seventy-third session, in 2018. In the light of that provision, I would like to propose that the First Committee consider that item some time in May or June 2018, approximately three months before the opening of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to proceed accordingly.

It was so decided.

The Chair: In accordance with our programme of work and timetable, the Committee will meet again on Monday, 2 October, at 10 a.m. sharp in this conference room to begin its substantive work with the general debate. I look forward to working closely with all members in the coming weeks. Delegations are reminded of the briefing by the Secretariat at 4 p.m. on working methods, including the programme budget implications process and the e-deleGATE portal.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.