

**General Assembly**

Seventy-first session

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Sixth Committee**Summary record of the 32nd meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 7 November 2016, at 10 a.m.

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In the absence of Mr. Danon (Israel), Mr. Turbék (Hungary), Vice-Chair, took the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 121: Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

1. **The Chair** said that the Bureau had prepared a draft provisional programme of work of the Sixth Committee for the seventy-second session and had circulated it prior to the current meeting to allow more time for reflection and consultation before its adoption. Additional time had been allotted for the debate on international terrorism, since that debate had been longer than anticipated in recent sessions. More time had also been planned for informal consultations on the administration of justice at the United Nations, and care had been taken to ensure that sufficient time would be available for the debate on the report of the International Law Commission, on which more than 140 statements had been made at the current session.

2. In response to concerns expressed by delegations about overlapping of meetings, the Bureau had undertaken to better coordinate the meetings of the Sixth Committee with those of other bodies. It had taken particular account of when the reports of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals and the International Criminal Court were scheduled to be presented to the General Assembly. At the same time, it had been mindful of the need to avoid unnecessarily disrupting the rhythm of the work in both the Sixth Committee and the General Assembly, the need not to affect standing arrangements such as those with the President of the International Court of Justice and the need to reduce the overlap between meetings in different venues as much as possible. The proposed work programme had been brought to the attention of the Secretariat staff involved in the various meetings relating to the law of the sea, which traditionally took place in November, in order to have the Sixth Committee's schedule taken into account in their planning for 2017. The Bureau recommended that the work programme should be applied flexibly, taking into account the rhythm of the debate in the Committee and any needs that might arise.

3. **Mr. Ávila** (Dominican Republic), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and

Caribbean States (CELAC), said that the credibility of the United Nations was closely linked to the performance of the General Assembly. It was the only organ in which all Member States were represented in an equal, inclusive and democratic manner, and its competence and authority must be fully respected. As in previous years, CELAC wished to stress that all six official languages of the Organization should be treated equally, without excuses related to budgetary constraints, and all relevant General Assembly resolutions on multilingualism should be fully and effectively implemented.

4. CELAC was pleased to note that some of the proposals it had put forward during the seventieth session had been taken into account. It welcomed the positive response to its views on specific measures for the adoption of agendas aimed at achieving more ambitious goals, and remained convinced of the usefulness of organizing thematic debates in order to discuss specific issues of critical importance for the international community. CELAC appreciated the efforts of the Bureau and the Secretariat to avoid any overlap in the consideration of legal issues by the Sixth Committee and the plenary Assembly, and called on the General Committee and the Secretariat to continue striving to avoid conflicts in the scheduling of meetings. The timing of important debates had a particular impact on permanent missions staffed by only a few officials, affecting not only their attendance but also the quality of the substantive discussions.

5. Further efforts were needed in planning work so as to ensure that proceedings were transparent, inclusive and efficient. CELAC wished to underline the need for close cooperation and coordination among all the principal organs, including on their agendas and programmes of work, in the interests of efficient relations, broad coherence, complementarity and mutual respect. It also wished to highlight the usefulness of the electronic systems for sponsoring resolutions (eSponsorship) and for inscription on speakers' lists (e-Speakers), which had already been introduced in other Main Committees and had led to more efficient coordination.

6. CELAC welcomed General Assembly resolutions [69/321](#) and [70/305](#), which sought to enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly and should be fully implemented. The

process for selecting the new Secretary-General had set a precedent for a more democratic system. CELAC encouraged the Secretary-General-designate to take effective measures to ensure a fair and equal distribution of posts throughout the Organization, including senior posts, and to achieve gender and geographic balance, while also maintaining the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. It welcomed the commitment made by the current President of the General Assembly to base his conduct on the principles of integrity, impartiality, transparency, accountability, professionalism and effectiveness, as well as his interaction with the Chair of the Sixth Committee.

7. **Ms. Diéguez La O** (Cuba) said that, in the past, overlap between Sixth Committee meetings and General Assembly plenary meetings dealing with legal issues had made it difficult for legal experts from countries with small delegations to take part in important debates. Her delegation was therefore grateful for the Secretariat's efforts to avoid such overlap. It also appreciated the Secretariat's response to its request that the necessary documentation on organizations seeking observer status in the General Assembly should be made available in advance so that Member States would have sufficient time to analyse the information before taking a decision.

8. She wished to raise some concerns about the procedures for consultation on draft resolutions on the items assigned to the Sixth Committee. Currently, following a first reading of the draft resolution in scheduled informal consultations, any contentious issues were often then discussed in small groups that were not representative of the entire membership of the Organization. She called on the Secretariat to work with the Bureau and the facilitators for the various agenda items to ensure that consultations on all draft resolutions during the seventy-second session were included in the Committee's programme of work and that those consultations were open and transparent, so that the end result reflected the views of all Member States. The facilitators should also ensure that all Member States were made aware of any proposed amendments to draft resolutions. She agreed that the eSponsorship system could be useful, but all delegations would have to be provided with clear instructions on how to use it, but they should also have the option of continuing to use the current system.

9. With regard to the draft programme of meetings for the seventy-second session, the debates during the current session had shown that more time should be allotted for the discussion of various items, including the reports on international terrorism and on the work of the International Law Commission. Consideration should also be given to scheduling the introduction of the report of the Host Country Committee earlier in the session in order to allow more time for consultations on the corresponding draft resolution.

10. **Mr. Luna** (Brazil) said that his delegation, too, appreciated the efforts made to avoid any overlapping of meetings of the General Assembly with those of the Sixth Committee related to agenda items allocated to the Committee. At the same time, it invited the Bureau, the Secretariat and Member States to consider how the discussions on the report of the International Law Commission might be made more interactive so that Member States could better provide the Commission with the information it needed to continue its work in relation to the codification and progressive development of international law. He agreed that more time should be allocated during the seventy-second session for the consideration of the agenda items on international terrorism and the administration of justice in the United Nations and supported the use of the eSponsorship and e-Speaker systems.

11. **Mr. Waweru** (Kenya) said that the report of the Host Country Committee should be introduced earlier in the session in order to allow Member States sufficient time to consider the matters raised therein. In addition, it was important to find ways to revitalize the Host Country Committee's work so that it was more in tune with the issues that it was called upon to address.

Agenda item 77: United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law
(continued) (A/C.6/71/L.17)

Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.17: United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of international Law

12. *Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.17 was adopted.*

Agenda item 79: Diplomatic protection (continued)
(A/C.6/71/L.14)

Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.14: Diplomatic protection

13. *Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.14 was adopted.*

Agenda item 80: Consideration of prevention of transboundary harm from hazardous activities and allocation of loss in the case of such harm (continued) (A/C.6/71/L.20)

Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.20: Consideration of prevention of transboundary harm from hazardous activities and allocation of loss in the case of such harm

14. *Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.20 was adopted.*

Agenda item 82: Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives (continued) (A/C.6/71/L.18)

Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.18: Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives

15. *Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.18 was adopted.*

Agenda item 83: Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization (continued) (A/C.6/71/L.16)

Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.16: Commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the International Court of Justice

16. *Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.16 was adopted.*

Agenda item 85: The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction (continued)
(A/C.6/71/L.23)

Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.23: The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction

17. *Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.23 was adopted.*

Agenda item 174: Observer status for the Central American Bank for Economic Integration in the General Assembly (continued) (A/C.6/71/L.19)

Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.19: Observer status for the Central American Bank for Economic Integration in the General Assembly

18. *Draft resolution A/C.6/71/L.19 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.