



General Assembly

Sixty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
10 December 2010

Original: English

Sixth Committee

Summary record of the 28th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 11 November 2010, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Picco (Monaco)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 161: Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country (A/65/26; A/C.6/65/L.11)

1. **Mr. Hadjimichael** (Cyprus), Chairperson of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, introducing the Committee's report (A/65/26), said that the Committee was a forum in which representatives of Member States sought to resolve problems faced by the diplomatic community through a frank and constructive exchange of views. No member of the Committee had the right of veto, and any interested delegation could participate in it as an observer. It was the sole body in the United Nations system mandated to report to the General Assembly on matters relating to the host country.

2. **Mr. Janssens de Bisthoven** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, Iceland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the Committee on Relations with the Host Country served as an important and necessary forum for addressing, in compliance with international law, the various issues that missions accredited to the United Nations might face. The European Union expressed appreciation for the host country's commitment to accommodating the needs, interests and requirements of the diplomatic community in New York and to promoting understanding between that community and the people of New York City.

3. The issues dealt with by the Committee, though often practical in nature, were crucial to the preservation of the legal regime that defined the status of the United Nations and laid down the rights and obligations of diplomatic agents. The observance of diplomatic privileges and immunities was a matter of great importance, and it was vital to safeguard the integrity of the relevant body of international law. Expressing appreciation for the timely issuance of entry visas to representatives of States Members of the United Nations, the European Union supported the decision of the host country to exempt diplomats accredited to the United Nations from some of the secondary screening procedures at airports. It also supported the implementation of the Parking

Programme for Diplomatic Vehicles in a manner consistent with international law.

4. The European Union fully endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country. The Committee's methods should continue to be guided by the constructive approach and spirit of cooperation that had prevailed hitherto, with a view to finding solutions that were fully in keeping with international law.

5. **Mr. Delgado Sánchez** (Cuba) said that the host country must properly apply the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the Headquarters Agreement and the general principles of international law, especially those relating to equality and non-discrimination. On the question of security of missions and safety of personnel, he noted that several incidents had disturbed the normal course of diplomatic activities at the Cuban Mission over the past year. It was vital to ensure that such incidents did not develop into security concerns. The history of violence against the Cuban Mission and its staff and the continued presence in the United States of known terrorists argued for all possible preventive and deterrent measures to be adopted by the host country.

6. A particularly sensitive issue for his delegation was the discriminatory travel restrictions imposed on members of the Cuban Mission staff, under which they could not travel beyond a 25-mile radius from Columbus Circle without applying for a special travel permit. The restrictions affected not only Cuban diplomatic officials but also Cuban nationals accredited to the United Nations or working for the Organization. They were unjust, selective, discriminatory and politically motivated and contravened the host country's obligations under international law.

7. Cuba remained concerned over persisting irregularities in the issuance of entry visas by the host country. A greater effort should be made to ensure their timely issuance so as to facilitate attendance by representatives of Member States of meetings in New York and elsewhere in the United States.

8. On the question of acceleration of immigration and customs procedures, he said that diplomatic courtesies should be extended and fair treatment at airports of the diplomatic personnel of Member States should be assured. The host country should intensify

the training of police, security and customs and border control officers to ensure that diplomatic privileges and immunities were fully respected. Lastly, the Parking Programme should be implemented in an equitable, non-discriminatory and efficient manner. The diplomatic parking spaces assigned to permanent missions to the United Nations must be respected.

9. **Mr. Yadav** (India) said that the open, transparent exchange of views in the Committee on Relations with the Host Country had made it possible to address issues relating to the functioning of missions of Member States in a spirit of cooperation. In connection with the property taxes imposed by the City of New York on diplomatic premises used by the Permanent Mission of India to house its diplomats, his delegation was pleased to note that the host country had issued notification that real property owned by foreign Governments and used to house diplomatic missions was exempt from local property tax. However, the City of New York had challenged the notification, and a case regarding the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations was pending before the Supreme Court. Many permanent missions were facing a similar problem. The host country should do its utmost to ensure that States Members of the United Nations were not compelled to raise such issues in the courts of the United States.

10. With regard to immigration and customs procedures, the host country's right to monitor and control entry into its territory, to adopt the security measures it deemed necessary and to ensure that delegations did not misuse their privileges and immunities had to be balanced against the right of delegations to participate in the work of the United Nations. His delegation supported the Committee's recommendation that the host country should enhance its efforts to ensure timely issuance of entry visas to permit attendance at official United Nations meetings.

11. India welcomed the steps taken by the host country to address the parking problems of diplomatic missions through efficient implementation of the Parking Programme and hoped that remaining issues, such as India's request for a change in the parking slots allotted to its mission, would be addressed in a timely manner.

12. **Ms. Rodríguez-Pineda** (Guatemala), supported by **Ms. Leal Perdomo** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), expressed surprise and concern with regard to a letter dated 30 September 2010 from JP Morgan

Chase Bank addressed to all the missions accredited to the United Nations, informing them of the Bank's unilateral decision to close the division that served all diplomatic and foreign Government entities and terminate their accounts. In the letter, which was unsigned, the Bank indicated that, while a six-month grace period was envisaged, operations might be interrupted at an earlier point, and it advised the missions to seek another bank's services immediately. That was no simple task.

13. The matter had been brought to the attention of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country with a view to obtaining an explanation for the Bank's decision. Understanding the decision was important, not least to ensure that the same situation would not occur with another bank. While the bank in question was a private financial institution, it had also enjoyed a long and special relationship with the United Nations. She wondered whether members of the Secretariat had received the same letter. Should that not be the case, her delegation would not be comfortable with the Secretariat's continuing to use the services of an institution that did not value all of its clients.

14. Lastly, she acknowledged the assistance of the host country through its Office of Foreign Missions in a number of specific incidents.

15. **Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran), referring to document A/AC.154/401, said it was regrettable that the host country authorities were denying entry visas for Iranian representatives to attend the meetings of the United Nations. Such decisions clearly contravened the international obligations of the United States Government articulated in the Headquarters Agreement, including section 13 (a) and (b) thereof. Depriving representatives of Member States, including high-ranking officials, of the opportunity to attend United Nations meetings adversely affected the functioning of permanent missions, impaired the work of the United Nations and undermined the foundations of multilateral diplomacy. The Islamic Republic of Iran reiterated its calls to the United States authorities to fulfil their legal obligations by facilitating the entry of Member States' representatives to attend United Nations meetings, to take urgent measures to rectify past failures and to avoid any such failures in the future.

16. The Committee on Relations with the Host Country was a unique platform for enabling Member

States to seek practical solutions to problems they faced with regard to the functioning of their missions accredited to the United Nations. It had a special responsibility to uphold the privileges and immunities granted to diplomatic missions under international law, and the concerns that Member States raised before it must be adequately addressed.

17. **Mr. Donovan** (United States of America) said that the United States of America was proud to serve as host country to the United Nations and was grateful to the delegations that had recognized its efforts. His Government had fulfilled the relevant treaty obligations and commitments since 1946 and remained committed to doing so in the future.

18. The Committee on Relations with the Host Country was a valuable forum in which to discuss issues relating to the presence of the diverse and dynamic diplomatic community in New York and to assess and address the concerns of the United Nations community. The host country valued greatly the Committee's cooperation and constructive spirit and welcomed the presence at its meetings of numerous observer delegations. The Committee's limited but representative membership made it efficient and unusually responsive. Over the past year, the Committee had continued its discussions on such issues as improving immigration procedures at New York airports, mitigating delays in visa issuance and ensuring the safety and security of United Nations missions, areas in which the host country regarded its efforts as ongoing and increasingly successful.

19. **Mr. Hadjimichael** (Cyprus), speaking as the representative of Cyprus, introduced the draft resolution on the item (A/C.6/65/L.11) on behalf of the sponsors. The draft resolution, inter alia, endorsed the Committee's recommendations, underlined the importance of observing the privileges and immunities of the missions accredited to the United Nations, noted that some permanent missions continued to experience problems in connection with the implementation of the Parking Programme for Diplomatic Vehicles, requested the host country to consider removing the remaining travel restrictions imposed on the staff of certain missions and Secretariat staff of certain nationalities, noted the concerns expressed by some delegations about the denial and delay of entry visas and noted also the Committee's anticipation that the host country would ensure their timely issuance to representatives of Member States.

20. *Draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.11 was adopted.*

Agenda item 78: United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law (*continued*) (A/C.6/65/L.16)

21. **The Chairperson**, drawing attention to the draft resolution on the item (A/C.6/65/L.16), recalled that paragraph 2 had been revised at the preceding meeting to read: "Also authorizes the Secretary-General to award a minimum of one scholarship in 2011 under the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea, subject to the availability of voluntary contributions made for this fellowship, and calls upon, in this regard, States, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, donor agencies, non-governmental organizations and natural and juridical persons to make voluntary contributions to its Trust Fund". In paragraph 6, the phrase "taking into account paragraph 65 of the report" had been deleted.

22. *Draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.16, as orally revised, was adopted.*

23. **Mr. Nikolaichik** (Belarus), speaking in explanation of position, said that his delegation welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution and that the United Nations should be commended for its role in the dissemination and wider appreciation of international law. His delegation would be collaborating with the Treaty Section of the United Nations and the representatives of the Commonwealth of Independent States to organize a regional workshop on the dissemination of knowledge about international law in 2011, which would help to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Agenda item 86: The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction (*continued*) (A/C.6/65/L.18)

24. **The Chairperson** drew attention to the draft resolution on the item (A/C.6/65/L.18).

25. *Draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.18 was adopted.*

Agenda item 84: 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.6/65/L.12)

26. **Mr. Mikulka** (Secretary of the Committee), explaining the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.12, said that in paragraph 2, it was envisaged that the Special Committee would hold its next session from 28 February to 4 March and on 7 and 9 March 2011, which would entail 14 meetings with simultaneous interpretation in all six of the Organization's official languages; the documentation requirements would be 6,625 words of pre-session, 11,925 words of in-session and 11,925 words of post-session documentation issued in the six languages. The session had already been included in the calendar of conferences and meetings for 2011, for which provision had been made in the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011. It was understood that the advisory opinions to be issued as official documents under paragraph 8 of the draft resolution would not constitute an additional workload, since they would be processed as and when capacity became available and following the past pattern of submission. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, no additional requirements would arise under the programme budget.

27. **Mr. Janssens de Bisthoven** (Belgium), speaking in explanation of position on behalf of the European Union, recalled that while a total of seven working days had been allocated to the Special Committee for its meeting earlier in the year, all four working papers had been discussed within 40 minutes, without any significant progress towards reaching a consensus. Therefore, and based on the Secretary-General's proposal in document A/60/733 and the Special Committee's decision of 2006 which had been noted with appreciation by the General Assembly (resolution 61/38), the European Union had taken the position that, unless new developments warranted otherwise, the Special Committee should only be convened every two years. As neither that position nor the compromise plea for a reduced duration of the session had proved acceptable to all delegations, the European Union, in its traditional spirit of compromise, had decided not to oppose the proposal to maintain the duration of seven days for the 2011 session of the Special Committee. Nevertheless, it reserved its right to revisit that issue following the outcome of the debates in the spring of

2011. It was the understanding of the European Union that paragraph 5, which took note of the new subjects proposed at the 2010 session of the Special Committee, did not prejudice the recommendations which the Sixth Committee would make at the sixty-sixth session regarding its agenda.

28. **Mr. Rodiles Bretón** (Mexico), speaking in explanation of position, said that his delegation had proposed that the Special Committee's meetings should be held on a biennial basis, but that a number of delegations had found that suggestion unacceptable. His delegation was therefore prepared to consider a reduced number of days for those meetings. It regretted that no progress had been made in that regard and hoped that the issue would be taken up at the next session.

29. **Mr. Baghaei Hamaneh** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking in explanation of position on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, commended all delegations for the flexibility and spirit of cooperation they had shown during the negotiation of the draft resolution. It was his understanding that all Member States had the right to submit proposals for consideration by the Special Committee and that paragraph 5 was without prejudice to the process for adding new items to the Special Committee's agenda.

30. **Mr. Núñez Mosquera** (Cuba), speaking in explanation of position, said that his delegation was in favour of the adoption of the draft resolution. It had always participated actively in the work of the Special Committee, which was the most important committee of the United Nations when it came to the study and application of the Organization's Charter. If all States showed enough political resolve, the Special Committee would be able to achieve tangible results. His delegation agreed that any Member State had the right to propose an item for consideration by the General Assembly or by any committee of the Organization.

31. *Draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.12 was adopted.*

Agenda item 85: The rule of law at the national and international levels *(continued)* (A/C.6/65/L.17)

32. **Mr. Rodiles Bretón** (Mexico), introducing the draft resolution on the item (A/C.6/65/L.17) on behalf of the Bureau, said that many delegations had indicated their support for the Secretary-General's proposal in document A/65/318 concerning a high-level meeting of

the General Assembly on the rule of law at the national and international levels. However, some delegations had also expressed the need for more information on the modalities of such a meeting. The coordinators of the Working Group on the topic had invited the head of the Rule of Law Unit to provide further information about that proposal, including on budgetary matters. The coordinators had subsequently circulated an explanatory paper on the topic. In the light of views expressed thereafter, it had been proposed that the high-level meeting would be held during the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, in order to avoid additional budgetary implications.

33. The text submitted for consideration was a revised version of the original draft. The preambular section remained the same, but the operative part contained a number of changes. Paragraph 4 now called for the enhancing of dialogue among all stakeholders with a view to placing national perspectives at the centre of rule of law assistance in order to strengthen national ownership; paragraph 7 requested the Secretary-General to submit, in a timely manner, his next annual report on United Nations rule of law activities; paragraph 13 called for the convening of a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the rule of law at the national and international levels during the high-level segment of its sixty-seventh session, the modalities of which would be finalized during the sixty-sixth session; while paragraph 14 invited Member States to focus their comments in the upcoming Sixth Committee debate on the sub-topic “Rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situations”.

34. **Mr. Mikulka** (Secretary of the Committee), speaking on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution, said that the Secretary-General would wait until the modalities of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the rule of law at the national and international levels had been finalized at the sixty-sixth session before submitting estimates of the financial implications of the draft resolution.

35. *Draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.17 was adopted.*

Agenda item 79: Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixty-second session
(*continued*) (A/C.6/65/L.20)

36. **Ms. Revell** (New Zealand) introducing draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.20 on behalf of the Bureau, said

that the text of the draft resolution was similar to that of General Assembly resolution 64/114 of 2009, with a number of technical updates and amendments and new elements reflecting the work of the Committee during the past session. Paragraph 3 had been updated to draw the attention of Governments to the importance for the International Law Commission of receiving their views, in particular on all the specific issues identified in chapter III of its report, regarding reservations to treaties and treaties over time. Paragraph 4 was new; it invited Governments to submit to the secretariat of the Commission, by 31 January 2011, any further observations on the draft guidelines constituting the Guide to Practice on Reservations to Treaties, provisionally adopted by the Commission at its sixty-second session. Paragraph 6 was also new; it invited the International Law Commission to give priority to its consideration of the topics “Immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction” and “The obligation to extradite or prosecute (*aut dedere aut judicare*)”.

37. Paragraph 7 had been updated to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to special rapporteurs of the International Law Commission and of paragraphs 396 to 398 of the Commission’s report and to request the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to identify concrete options for support for the work of special rapporteurs, additional to those provided under General Assembly resolution 56/272. Paragraph 20 had been updated to express appreciation to Governments that had made voluntary contributions to the trust fund on the backlog relating to the Yearbook of the International Law Commission, and to encourage further contributions to the fund.

38. *Draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.20 was adopted.*

Agenda item 107: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*) (A/C.6/65/L.19)

39. **Mr. Morrill** (Canada), introducing the draft resolution on the item (A/C.6/65/L.19), said that it had traditionally been difficult to include new material in the draft resolution, because the subject matter was of utmost political importance to all States and positions differed considerably. That remained true at the current session. New topics had been introduced into the debate, including: the fate of victims of terrorism; links between organized crime and terrorism; hostage-taking and demands for ransom by terrorist groups; the root

causes of terrorism; and negotiation and opening for signature of the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation and the Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft. However, those new topics had not been reflected in the draft resolution owing to lack of consensual support. The text of the draft resolution was therefore essentially the same as that of the previous year, with only the dates and references updated. Although many Member States had expressed dissatisfaction and disappointment with the final draft, the effort at the current session had not been wasted: it had helped advance the debate on some of the issues, and that could prove useful for future work.

40. **Mr. Mikulka** (Secretary of the Committee), explaining the programme budget implications of the draft resolution, said that in paragraphs 22 and 23, it was envisaged that the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 would hold its next session from 11 to 15 April 2011, which would entail 10 meetings with simultaneous interpretation in all six of the Organization's official languages; the documentation requirements would be 6,625 words of pre-session, 15,900 words of in-session and 10,600 words of post-session documentation issued in the six languages. The session had already been included in the calendar of conferences and meetings for 2011, for which provision had been made in the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, no additional requirements would arise under the programme budget.

The meeting was suspended at 11.35 a.m. and resumed at 12.10 p.m.

41. **Mr. Morrill** (Canada) said that, following consultations, new paragraph 7 bis had been added to draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.19, to read: "Expresses concern at the increase in incidents of kidnapping and hostage-taking with demands for ransom and/or political concessions by terrorist groups, and expresses the need to address this issue".

42. *Draft resolution A/C.6/65/L.19, as orally revised, was adopted.*

43. **Ms. Perdomo** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking in explanation of position, said that although she did not agree with the manner in

which the new paragraph had been inserted into the text, her delegation joined the consensus on the draft resolution.

44. **Mr. Janssens de Bisthoven** (Belgium), speaking in explanation of position on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union had some reservations about the process surrounding the draft resolution. While it understood that the text proposed by the coordinator of the Working Group reflected the best consensus that could be achieved, it hoped that such last-minute amendments would not set a precedent for the future.

45. **Mr. Dahmane** (Algeria), speaking in explanation of position, said that despite the best efforts of all delegations, it had been difficult to achieve a consensus on the draft resolution. He commended all delegations which had set aside some of their national concerns in order to join the consensus on the draft resolution. The traditional spirit and method of work of the Committee had been maintained and positions had been expressed in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The only new development was that the draft resolution now reflected realities on the ground.

46. **Ms. Rodríguez-Pineda** (Guatemala) said that her delegation shared the reservations expressed by the representatives of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Belgium but nonetheless joined the consensus on the draft resolution.

47. **Mr. Wada** (Japan), **Ms. Quezada** (Chile), **Mr. Rodiles Bretón** (Mexico), **Ms. Guo Xiaomei** (China) and **Ms. Zuluaga** (Colombia), speaking in explanation of position, said that, although their delegations had reservations about the insertion of last-minute amendments into the text, they joined the consensus on the draft resolution. They hoped that that process would not set a precedent for the future.

48. **Mr. Adi** (Syrian Arab Republic), **Mr. Baghaei Hamaneh** (Islamic Republic of Iran) and **Mr. Salem** (Egypt), speaking in explanation of position, said that their delegations joined the consensus on the draft resolution but wished to express their reservations concerning the twenty-first preambular paragraph insofar as it included a misplaced reference to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which, as a military alliance, differed in nature and activities from the other organizations listed.

49. **Mr. Gouider** (Libyan Arab Jamahiyira) said that his delegation opposed the reference to any military alliance in the draft resolution. Combating terrorism was an international phenomenon that required international action, and it was hard to see how that could be achieved through narrow alliances. Nonetheless, his delegation joined the consensus on the draft resolution.

50. **Ms. Millicay** (Argentina), speaking in explanation of position, said that her delegation had no objection to the language which had been proposed by the representative of Algeria, but for the sake of transparency, it hoped that the Committee would improve its method of work.

51. **Mr. Morrill** (Canada) said that, while he was pleased that the Committee had been able to reach a consensus, he too was concerned about the process; he had always tried to maintain as much transparency as possible. He acknowledged that last-minute amendments militated against transparency and should therefore not become a habit of the Sixth Committee.

Agenda item 130: Programme planning

52. **The Chairperson** explained that the agenda item had been allocated to all Committees on an annual basis since the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. However, no reports under that item had been provided to the Sixth Committee at the current session.

Agenda item 118: Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/C.6/65/L.21)

53. **The Chairperson** drew attention to the provisional programme of work of the Sixth Committee for the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, contained in draft decision A/C.6/65/L.21, and said that she intended to send a letter to the President of the General Assembly bringing to his attention the concern expressed by several delegations with regard to the overlap of meetings of the Committee and the plenary Assembly on topics relating to public international law. The programme was provisional in nature and was intended to help delegations and the secretariat in planning and preparing for the sixty-sixth session.

54. **Ms. Quezada** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that while her delegation welcomed the efforts already made to avoid the overlapping of

Sixth Committee meetings with plenary meetings on legal issues, it was important that the Committee secretariat should continue holding consultations with the relevant entities so as to ensure that such overlaps did not occur in the future. In particular, the Sixth Committee should not schedule meetings on the days that the plenary Assembly planned to consider, the reports of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

55. The Rio Group reiterated its concern at the delayed issuance of reports for the Committee's consideration, which seriously compromised the quality of its debate, and requested that the secretariat should take all necessary measures to prevent such delays from occurring in the future. It furthermore requested that the reports in question, including that of the International Law Commission, should be issued in all six official languages no later than the end of July. As the issuance of the Commission's report was closely tied to the scheduling of its sessions, it might be necessary to consider an adjustment of dates; she invited other delegations to bear that point in mind during the Committee's debate at the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

56. The time devoted to consideration of the report of the International Law Commission had been considerably shorter than at past sessions. The Rio Group supported a more interactive debate and a closer working relationship between the Commission and the Sixth Committee. Special rapporteurs needed more financial support and should be given the opportunity to come to Headquarters in order to work directly with the legal experts of Member States. She requested that the secretariat should consider in advance the feasibility of those proposals so as to facilitate the Committee's discussions at the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

57. While welcoming the progress made to ensure transparent, inclusive and efficient working methods, she said that more needed to be done. The Committee's work must be organized in such a way as to allow sufficient time for all agenda items. Decisions regarding the coordination of draft resolutions, which were usually adopted by consensus and were not proposed by individual States, must take into account geographical distribution criteria. Draft resolutions should be introduced at the conclusion of the debates on the relevant items. Open informal consultations among all Member States must continue to be

encouraged; in that connection, the Rio Group requested that the Bureau and the coordinators should introduce all draft resolutions at informal meetings, for the benefit of all Members States, without prejudice to the informal consultations undertaken by the coordinator with delegations. The necessary flexibility in planning the Committee's work must not lead to the use of spare time, after the conclusion of one item, to consider substantive issues not included in the agenda.

58. While electronic access was a welcome development, the provision of information was the responsibility of the secretariat and should not be left to personal initiative alone. With a view to improving the Committee's working methods, the Rio Group suggested that a decision should be taken: to compile and update annually the contact information of members of delegations; to provide Member States, at the beginning of every session, with the contact information of all the coordinators of items to be considered by the Committee and any other useful information; to ensure, by working with the Bureau and the coordinators, that delegations received all relevant information on every item, particularly the draft resolutions in their various versions, and to convene informal consultations; and to organize the holding of meetings in conference rooms and make available any documents necessary to consultations. In addition, the secretariat should take steps to ensure that the e-room was more accessible and user-friendly and included up-to-date information about the Committee's work, especially the practical details relating to draft resolutions. It should also provide, where possible, advance copies of reports, without prejudice to the publication of the official version in all six languages. It was hoped that the proposals would contribute to better planning and to greater transparency, inclusiveness and effectiveness of the Committee's work.

59. **Mr. Janssens de Bisthoven** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that his delegation supported any practical measures that enhanced the efficiency and transparency of the Committee's work. It endorsed a number of suggestions made by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group, including, inter alia, continued efforts to avoid the simultaneous scheduling of Sixth Committee meetings and plenary meetings on legal issues; improvements to the e-room; and changes to the Committee's organization of work that would

allow for the proper consideration of all items allocated to it. In addition, his delegation favoured earlier and more open circulation of draft resolutions, although it remained unconvinced by the Rio Group's arguments concerning the most appropriate time to introduce draft resolutions. He furthermore questioned whether some of the issues raised by that Group, especially those relating to the work of the International Law Commission, went beyond the remit of the Committee.

60. **Mr. Appreku** (Ghana), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Bureau, the secretariat and other delegations, and said that the Group stood ready to work with other groups and delegations to explore ways of improving working methods.

61. *Draft decision A/C.6/65/L.21 was adopted.*

Agenda item 5: Election of the officers of the Main Committees

62. **The Chairperson** said that, in accordance with rule 99 (a) of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and rule 103, as amended by General Assembly resolution 58/126, all the Main Committees should, at least three months before the opening of the session, elect a Chairperson and a full Bureau. She therefore suggested that the regional groups should hold consultations at least three months before the opening of the sixty-sixth session of the Assembly, which would enable the Committee to elect its next Chairperson, three Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur at an appropriate time.

Completion of the Committee's work

63. After an exchange of courtesies in which **Mr. Janssens de Bisthoven** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, and **Mr. Baghaei Hamaneh** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, took part, **the Chairperson** declared that the Sixth Committee had completed its work for the sixty-fifth session.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.