



**VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING**

Chairman: **Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire)**

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I should like first of all to extend a warm and sincere welcome to all delegations to the First Committee at the forty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. I should like to express my profound gratitude to all Members of the Organization for the honour and privilege they have accorded me and my country in electing me to the chairmanship of this body. It is, indeed, a great pleasure and honour for me to preside over the deliberations of this important Committee at this session of the General Assembly.

I should also like to extend my sincere gratitude for the extremely kind and generous words addressed to me by the Chairman at the Committee's forty-first session, the representative of the German Democratic Republic Mr. Siegfried Zachmann, when proposing my candidacy as Chairman of the Committee. I am sure that in extending to Ambassador Zachmann our congratulations and expressing to him our gratitude for the exemplary fashion in which he presided over our proceedings last year, as well as for his remarkable contribution to the results achieved by our Committee, I am reflecting the feelings of all the members of the Committee.

By the same token, I wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to my other predecessors in the Chair for their commendable efforts at earlier sessions to propose ways to rationalize and improve the Committee's working methods. As they have stated on various occasions, delegations are generally in favour of continuing the process of simplification and rationalisation of the Committee's consideration of the various items on its agenda. It is my intention to engage without delay in consultations on the most appropriate ways and means of moving that process forward, and I propose to revert to this matter later. Furthermore, I

(The Chairman)

have tried to derive benefit from the experience gained through the adoption of certain practical innovations at earlier sessions, and to that end I have, insofar as possible, held consultations on the subject of the organization of the Committee's work at this session, the results of which I shall impart to the Committee today.

In order to merit the confidence placed in me by the Committee, I hope I may rely on the constructive co-operation and support of all delegations, as well as of the other officers of the Committee that have not yet been elected.

I should like to hail the sound and rich experience and competence of Mr. Yasushi Akashi, who recently assumed the post of Under-Secretary-General, Centre for Disarmament, as well as of Mr. Vasily Safronchuk, who recently took over the post of Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs. I wish them both the very best and would assure them of our wholehearted co-operation here in the First Committee. To Under-Secretary-General Mr. Jan Martenson and Under-Secretary-General Mr. Viacheslav Ustinov, of the Centre for Disarmament and the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, I also wish to extend the thanks and gratitude of all the members of the Committee.

I am also counting on the valuable assistance and co-operation of Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, the Secretary of the First Committee, as well as on that of his colleagues in the Secretariat, who will, I am sure, contribute to the success of the Committee's work. Given their well-known experience and competence, I am sure that they will continue to give us their total co-operation.

For my part, I intend to devote myself wholeheartedly to the task upon which we are about to embark together. Representatives can be sure that, with their assistance and counsel, I will do my very best to make sure that the Committee's work is conducted with responsibility and efficiency so that, at the end of the road, we will be proud of what we have accomplished.

(The Chairman)

The items on the agenda for today's meeting relate to the election of the Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur and to organisation of the Committee's work at this session. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the agenda is adopted by the Committee.

The agenda was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French) : Before proceeding to the first item on our agenda, I should like to draw the Committee's attention to the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 1935th meeting on 22 September 1971 concerning the procedure for the election of officers of the Main Committees. According to the terms of that decision, the nominations of candidates should be limited to one statement for each candidate, after which the Committee should immediately proceed to the election. The Committee will therefore follow that procedure today.

#### ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMEN

Mr. LOTIN (Canada) : Since this is the first time my delegation has spoken in the First Committee at this session, I should like, on behalf of my delegation, to extend my warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee. Your selection is a reflection of your dedication to the efforts of the First Committee and of our confidence in the wisdom and ability with which you will perform the task entrusted to you. You can be assured of the Canadian delegation's full support and co-operation.

In order to assist you in your task, my delegation is honoured to submit the candidacy of Hr. Carlos Jose Gutierrez of Costa Rica for the post of Vice-Chairman of the First Committee. Ambassador Gutierrez is an experienced diplomat and international statesman well known in the corridors. He is currently Permanent Representative of the Republic of Costa Rica to the United Nations and has also

(Mr. & tin, Canada)

served his country with **great distinction** as a member of the **Legislative Assembly** of Costa Rica, Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Minister of Justice and Minister of Foreign Relations, Ambassador Gutierrez is also an eminent political scientist and legal scholar. The **Ambassador's** broad international experience leaves us with no **doubt** that he will make a valuable contribution **as** Vice-Chairman. Therefore, the Canadian delegation takes great **pleasure** in nominating him for the position and in wishing him every **success**.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Canada for his statement nominating Ambassador Carlos Jose Gutierrez of Costa Rica for the post of Vice-Chairman. I am very grateful to him for his kind words to me, and on behalf of the Committee and on my own behalf I should like to request that he convey our sincere gratitude to Ambassador Douglas James Roche for his outstanding contribution to the Committee's work as Vice-Chairman at last year's session.

Since there are no other nominations, I take it that in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure and with established practice the Committee does not wish to hold an election by secret ballot and declares Ambassador Gutierrez elected Vice-Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. Carlos Jose Gutierrez (Costa Rica) was elected Vice-Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I now call on the representative of Japan, Mr. Nobuyasu Abe.

Mr. ABE (Japan): On behalf of my delegation I should like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at the forty-second session of the General Assembly. We are aware of your active participation in the work of international organizations, both at home and abroad, particularly in the United Nations. My delegation assures you of its full support and co-operation in your discharge of your important duties.

My delegation at the same time expresses its gratitude to the previous Chairman, Mr. Zachmann, for his skilful guidance of our Committee's work during the forty-first session.

I should also like to take this opportunity to convey the gratitude of my predecessor, Mr. Aoki, for all the assistance and co-operation he received while he served as Vice-Chairman during the previous session.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

I am honoured and privileged to introduce Mr. Maher Nashashibi, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of Jordan, as a candidate for the post of Vice-Chairman of the First Committee. Mr. Nashashibi already is a well-known person among us, having served as Rapporteur of this year's United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Born in Jerusalem in 1944, Mr. Nashashibi received his degree in international relations at California State University in the United States, besides having assumed diplomatic functions in Romania and my country, Japan. Mr. Nashashibi has participated in several international conferences as a member of the Jordanian delegation, including the Arab summit conference in Algeria in 1973, the international peace conference in Geneva in 1973 and the Islamic summit conference in Pakistan in 1974. He served as an alternate representative of his country to this Committee at the 38th, 40th and 41st sessions of the General Assembly.

Most recently he was a Vice-Chairman of the Jordan delegation to the International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development, held this summer.

I am certain that his experience and dedication will be extremely helpful for the work of this Committee. It is therefore my great pleasure to nominate him for the post of Vice-Chairman of our Committee.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Japan for his statement nominating Mr. Maher Nashashibi of Jordan as Vice-Chairman. I thank him also for his kind words to me and I would beg him to convey, on behalf of the Committee and on my own behalf, my profound gratitude to Mr. Morihiro Aoki for his outstanding contribution to the Committee's work as Vice-Chairman at last year's session.

(The Chairman)

There being no other nomination, I take it that, in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure and with established practice, the Committee does not wish to hold an election by secret ballot and declares Mr. Maher Nashashibi elected Vice-Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. Maher Nashashibi (Jordan) was elected Vice-Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation,

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French) : I wish now to convey to the two Vice-Chairmen my warmest congratulations on their election and assure them of my co-operation throughout the work of our Committee.

#### ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French) : I now call on the representative of Burkina Faso, Mr. Michel Monvel Dah.

Mr. DAH (Burkina Faso) (interpretation from French) : The delegation of Burkina Faso is truly pleased to extend to you its heartiest congratulations on Your election as Chairman of the First Committee. For a thousand and one reasons, including the fraternity between our two peoples, my delegation can pledge to you its fullest support as you discharge your task as Chairman.

As Rapporteur of the First Committee at the forty-first regular session of the General Assembly and in keeping with a well-established tradition, it is our very pleasant privilege to nominate Mr. Kazimierz Tomaszewski, member of the Polish Permanent Mission in New York.

After completion of higher studies in Krakow, Comrade Tomaszewski studied foreign relations in Moscow and Warsaw, earning a master's degree in international affairs. Mr. Tomaszewski began his career in the Foreign Affairs Office in Poland in 1962. A diplomat in Beirut from 1964 to 1969, in Moscow from 1974 to 1979, Mr. Tomaszewski has also been a member of the International Commission for Control and Supervision in Laos and participated in a number of international conferences.

(Mt. Dab, Burkina Faso)

He is familiar with the work of the General Assembly and throughout has demonstrated real competence. Obviously, Mr. Tomaszewski has the intellectual qualifications needed to discharge his tasks most ably.

Mr. Tomaszewski has the tact of an experienced diplomat. That, together with his savoir faire and his ability to deal with people, is an earnest of the success that he will surely enjoy in the First Committee.

For all these reasons I would call on representatives to accept the nomination of Mr. Tomaszewski to the post of Rapporteur and to show their trust in him by electing him to that post.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Burkina Faso for his nomination of Mr. Kazimierz Tomaszewski of Poland to the post of Rapporteur of the First Committee. I extend to him my gratitude for the kind words he addressed to me and request him to convey, in my own name and on behalf of the Committee, our sincere gratitude to Ambassador Doulaye Corentin Kiri for the work he did so competently as Rapporteur of the First Committee at the forty-first session.

Members of the Committee have just heard the representative of Burkina Faso nominating Mr. Kazimierz Tomaszewski as Rapporteur. As there are no other nominations, I take it that the Committee wishes to follow the procedure adopted so far and refrain from holding a secret ballot and consequently declare Mr. Kazimierz Tomaszewski elected Rapporteur of the First Committee by acclamation.

Mr. Kazimierz Tomaszewski (Poland) was elected Rapporteur of the First Committee by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I wish to convey my warm congratulations to the representative of Poland on his election as Rapporteur of

(The Chair man)

I wish now to draw the attention of members of the Committee to rule 110 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which reads as follows:

“Congratulations to the officers of a Main Committee shall not be expressed except by the Chairman of the previous session - or, in his absence, by a member of his delegatinn - after all the officer3 of the Committee have been elected”.

I hope that rule will be respected, and I should be grateful to delegations if they would omit the customary compliments at the beginning of their statements.

I call now on the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Siegfried Zachmann, Chairman of the First Committee at the forty-first session of the General Assembly.

Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic): Mr. Chairman, I should like first to thank you for the kind words you addressed to me. In my capacity as former Chairman of the First Committee I had the honour and the privilege at the first meeting of the Committee to nominate you for the chairmanship. In doing so I was aware of your outstanding diplomatic experience and your personal and professional qualities, which fit you to guide the work of the First Committee with efficiency and skill.

your election by acclamation was a clear expression of the great confidence of members of the Committee and of their firm will to give you their full assistance. I personally can assure you that the delegation of the German Democratic Republic will render you its unqualified support in the discharge of your responsibilities.

I should like also to express my sincere congratulations to Mr. Carlos José Gutiérrez, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica, and to Mr. Ali Maher Nashashibi, Minister plenipotentiary of Jordan, on their election as Vice-Chairmen. There is no doubt that they have the personal and professional

(Mr. Zachmann, German  
Democratic Republic)

qualifications to contribute effectively to the success of the important work ahead of us, and in particular of the task of the Chairman.

I wish also to congratulate Comrade Kazimierz Tomaszewski, Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations, who has been elected Rapporteur. He will have a very delicate and responsible function to perform. We all have full confidence in his skill and abilities.

Permit me to express my deep gratitude to the members of the Committee for their active and substantial participation in our deliberations last year, and for their effective co-operation with the Committee officers. I am especially grateful to the Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Roche of Canada and Mr. Aoki of Japan, and to the Rapporteur, Ambassador Ki of Burkina Faso. My best wishes go to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Akashi, and to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Safronchuk, for their excellent performance of their responsible functions. I am convinced that both of them will fulfil the duties of their high offices with the same tireless efforts as did your respective predecessors, Mr. Martenson and Mr. Mustinov, to the benefit of the work of the Committee.

I also owe a special debt of gratitude to the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Kheradi, as well as to his able associates in the Secretariat staff, for their steady support and valuable advice.

We began our work last year following the attainment of a historic milestone at the meeting at Reykjavik - which for the first time raised the hope of a nuclear-free world. This year we are again commencing our deliberations against the backdrop of significant developments in the international situation. Only a few weeks ago, the Soviet Union and the United States agreed in principle to,

(Mr. Zachmann, German  
Democratic Republic)

nuclear missiles, a measure that for the first time would involve the destruction of existing nuclear weapons. It is to be hoped that the successful conclusion of a treaty on that subject will generate further agreements, including agreements on strategic weapons. Another encouraging development is the agreement reached between those two States on beginning full-scale stage-by-stage negotiations on nuclear testing. Such progress in bilateral negotiations will undoubtedly have a positive impact also on the multilateral negotiating process.

As we begin to perceive breakthroughs on the horizon, it should be pointed out that it is imperative that efforts be intensified to preserve the integrity of the anti-ballistic missile Treaty and to prevent an arms race in outer space.

The positive results achieved at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe and the work under way at Vienna show that despite differences of opinion concrete and verifiable agreements are possible in the sensitive field of military security.

We have also reached the stage of the emergence of the genuine prospect that a convention on the worldwide prohibition of chemical weapons may be within reach.

I am pleased to note that as a result of our joint endeavour during the deliberations in the First Committee last year the International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development I was held in August and September 1987; it successfully concluded its work by adopting a Final Document by consensus. What is now needed are earnest efforts by all, in particular, towards the implementation of its programme of action.

The solution of these issues, the most pressing facing mankind, requires the creation of conditions for lasting and comprehensive international security in the spirit of the Charter and in accordance with the realities of the nuclear and space

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(Mr. Zachmann, German  
Democratic Republic)

During the forty-second session, the First Committee will have to tackle complex issues of disarmament and international security. What matters now, therefore, is that it undertake every effort to accomplish that task in a constructive and business-like manner, in order to make a significant contribution to the solution of those problems which are of utmost concern to the international community.

Last year, the First Committee adopted 67 proposals dealing with various questions of arms limitation and disarmament, as well as seven proposals regarding international security and the question of Antarctica. Constructive approaches, flexibility and a readiness to compromise prevailed in our deliberations and negotiations and led to the adoption by consensus of a number of draft resolutions on important subjects. We should once again endeavour to continue in the same spirit and to undertake efforts to improve our work further.

Despite the positive developments, some of which I outlined above, we recognize that there are still areas where much remains to be accomplished; hence it is my sincere hope that the Committee will redouble its efforts and press ahead resolutely with a view to contributing to the realization of a more secure and peaceful world through disarmament.

I wish now to say a few words on the question of further enhancing the effectiveness of the First Committee's working methods. In that connection, members will recall that in recent years, particularly since 1983, increasing attention has been focused on the question of the methods of work of the First Committee. Drawing upon their experience, various Chairmen of the First Committee have at various sessions offered useful suggestions on how to refine and streamline the procedures of the Committee.

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(Mr. Zachmann, German  
Democratic Republic)

At the Committee's session last year, I, in my capacity as Chairman, convened several meetings of an informal group of friends of the Chairman, consisting of some of the previous Chairmen of the Committee as well as representatives of regional groups, for the purpose of further examining the question of possible ways and means of improving the effectiveness of the Committee's work. Based on those and other consultations with individual delegations, I informed the Committee at its concluding meeting that, although divergent views still persisted on a number of specific proposals, a certain measure of agreement on one or two aspects seemed to have emerged. Thus, delegations were generally of the opinion that greater efficiency could be realized if more time were allowed for the consideration of, and action on, draft resolutions, thereby facilitating the process of consultations and negotiations which might enable the Committee to succeed in merging certain draft resolutions.

In that connection, a number of delegations appeared to be willing to consider advancing the commencement of the First Committee's work by one week. As an integral part of this process, a general agreement also seemed to be evident that the Committee should establish an early deadline for the submission of draft resolutions. In the same statement I also informed the Committee that it was my intention to continue those consultations on the subject during the intervening period between the forty-first and forty-second sessions of the General Assembly. Accordingly, I convened a further meeting of the group of friends of the Chairman in New York on 10 September 1987, with a view to carrying forward the necessary consultations.

It will of course be recalled that in addition to the various discussions that have occurred within the framework of the First Committee, the Disarmament

(Mr. Zachmann, German  
Democratic Republic)

Committee under a relevant agenda item. A number of proposals have been put by various delegations in the course of those deliberations.

As I stated earlier, the consultations revealed that although some significant divergencies of viewpoint on specific issues still remain, there also appeared to be an emerging convergence of views on certain aspects. Accordingly, it would seem necessary that further intensive consultations be conducted on the subject with a view to enabling the Committee to take certain decisions on this matter by the close of this session.

In the meantime, however, at one who has been intimately involved in this subject matter, I feel it is incumbent upon me to present to the Committee certain suggestions on my own part which the Committee might, in its wisdom, wish to consider for future implementation, following further intensive consultations. These suggestions are

- To start the substantive work of the First Committee during the last week of the general debate in the plenary, thereby expanding the committee's time frame but scheduling approximately the same number of meetings of the Committee as previously. This measure would afford the Committee the due degree of flexibility in scheduling its meetings and by allowing more time during the stage of consideration of draft resolutions that would facilitate the process of consultations and negotiations;

- To combine the two phases which are now listed as "General debate on all agenda items" and "Statements on specific disarmament agenda items and continuation of general debate". This would enable the Committee at the very outset of its work to give attention to specific items on the disarmament agenda, concurrently with the general debate;

(Mr. Zachmann, German  
Democratic Republic)

• To further advance the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions, as feasible, in order to give more time for their subsequent consideration; to reduce the number of resolutions by combining proposals on the same issue and thereby attempting to achieve consensus. As an auxiliary measure, the draft resolutions on which action is completed in the Committee should be transmitted thereafter at the earliest possible date to the plenary of the General Assembly for its consideration;

- And, finally, to devise a modality according to which certain procedural matters, such as taking note of reports, studies, etc., should be the subject not of resolutions but of decisions by the Committee.

These suggestions that I have made are of a preliminary nature and should, of course, be construed as my personal suggestions only. Undoubtedly, the Committee will wish to examine carefully and at length the other valuable proposals that have been made in the past and would be forthcoming at our current session.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): On behalf of the officers of the Committee, as well as on my own behalf, I should like to thank the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Zachmann, for his kind words to the Vice-Chairmen, the Rapporteur and to me. I am grateful for his co-operation and support to the officers of the Committee in the discharge of their functions, and I hope to be able to benefit from the experience he acquired last year when he conducted, so effectively and competently, the proceedings of this Committee.

I now call on the representative of Costa Rica, Ambassador Carlos José Gutierrez.

Mr. GUTIERREZ (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your election, and to thank you for your kind words on my election as Vice-Chairman of this Committee. I pledge to you my

(Mr. Gutierrez, Costa Rica)

fullest co-operation and will do whatever I can to contribute to the success of the work of this Committee.

I would also like to thank the representative of Canada for his kind words when he nominated me, as well as the members of the Committee who unanimously supported my nomination. I plan to work with the Chairman and the other members of the bureau to the fullest extent of my ability in an effort to bring about the success of our work. I hope that the Committee will thus be able to complete its busy schedule which contains many items of much importance to the world and to the United Nations.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Costa Rica, vice-Chairman of the First Committee, for his kind words, and I should like in turn to assure him of my most cordial sentiments. I am confident that I can count on his active assistance and co-operation.

I now call on the representative of Jordan, Pk. Maher Nashashibi, Vice-Chairman of the First Committee.

Mr. NASHASHIBI (Jordan): I should like to express my sincere appreciation to the members of the First Committee for electing me Vice-Chairman. I am grateful for the Committee's confidence and am looking forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman, in dealing with the roster of draft resolutions at the forty-second session of the General Assembly.

I take great pleasure in congratulating you most warmly, Sir, on having achieved high distinction and I am sure your diplomatic skill and experience will guide us in a most satisfactory manner through the work of the Committee. I should like to assure you of my full support in the discharge of your responsibilities.

I should also like to express the deep thanks and gratitude of my delegation to the former Chairman of our Committee, Mr. Zachmann of the German Democratic Republic, for the diplomatic skill that enabled him to conduct the work of the Committee in a most satisfactory manner.

In that connection, I also wish to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to my colleague and neighbour, Mr. Abe of Japan, for his very kind words about me and for his kindness in presenting me in such a flattering manner.

I should also like to convey my sincere congratulations to Mr. Carlos Jose Gutierrez of Costa Rica on his election as Vice-Chairman, and I should like to congratulate Mr. Tomaszewski of Poland, who has been elected Rapporteur.

(Mr. Nashashibi, Jordan)

In taking up my duties, I am delighted to know that I can look forward to the co-operation and support of the other members of the Committee and my colleagues in the Bureau and the Secretariat and the valuable experience of the Department for Disarmament Affairs under the guidance of its Head, Mr. Yasushi Akashi.

The First Committee is once again set to embark on substantive consideration of the items on its agenda devoted to disarmament and international security. We are beginning our work this year just as a summit meeting is about to take place in Washington between President Reagan and the General-Secretary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. Gorbachev. In this connection, we welcome the agreement that is emerging between the two super-Powers to eliminate medium-ranges and shorter-range missiles. I am sure that I reflect the sentiments of the international community as a whole when I say that we are optimistic.

I hope that we in this Committee can reflect by our actions the current optimism in the world and that at this session we can do our part in reaching out towards achievement of the multifaceted objective of peace that the people of the world expect of us.

I wish you, Mr. Chairman, and this Committee every success in our task.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Jordan for his kind words. I should like to assure him of my most cordial sentiments. I am very pleased at the prospect of m-operating with him and I am sure that I will enjoy his active support,

I now call on the representative of Poland, Hr. Kazimierz Tomaszewski, Rapporteur of the First Committee.

Mr. TOMASZEWSKI (Poland): First of all, Sir, I should like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this Committee. I am confident

(Mr. Tomaszewski, Poland)

that our Committee is in very good and experienced hands. I wish also to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Gutierrez of Costa Rica and Mr. Nashashibi of Jordan on their election as our Vice-Chairmen.

At the same time, I should like briefly to express to the members of the Committee my sincere appreciation and gratitude for the great honour conferred upon me and which I consider a tribute to my country, Poland, whose tireless efforts towards real disarmament and collective international security are well known to the Committee. I should like to assure them that I will do my best to prove worthy of the trust and confidence they have placed in me.

(spoke in French)

Finally, I should like to express my warmest thanks to the representative of Burkina Faso for his kind words to me and for his nomination. I should also like to assure our Chairman and all the Vice-Chairmen of my whole-hearted co-operation in the difficult work of the Bureau.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French) : I thank the Rapporteur of the First Committee for his kind words. I am grateful to him for having stated his wish to co-operate closely with me and the other officers of the Committee.

I am sure that when I state that it is our intention to work closely with him at the forty-second session of the General Assembly, I am expressing not only my own view but also that of the two Vice-Chairmen.

Having elected its officers, the Committee has thus concluded consideration of the first item on its agenda for today.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C. 1/42/1 and A/C. 1/42/3)

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French) : I draw the attention of delegations to document A/C. 1/42/1 of 21 September 1987, containing a letter dated 18 September 1987 addressed to me by the President of the General Assembly and

(The Chairman)

informing me that the General Assembly decided at its third plenary meeting to refer 26 items of the agenda to the First Committee for its consideration - namely, items 48 to 73.

I should like to begin by stating that I have held the necessary consultations with a view to drawing up and submitting to the Committee a proposal on the organization of work for the present session.

As members are all aware, according to established practice, the First Committee begins its substantive work only after the conclusion of the general debate in the Assembly. Members know the reasons for this well-established tradition and I therefore need not go into them. Furthermore, members will recall that, in the course of consultations on the rationalization of the Committee's work, particularly those consultations conducted by Mr. Zachmann, who was Chairman of the First Committee last year, some members thought it might be possible further to rationalize the work of the Committee by advancing, perhaps by one week, the beginning of our substantive work.

Some delegations have once again put forward a similar proposal in the course of the informal consultations I just mentioned. However, I have come to the conclusion that if there was a tendency in favour of establishing that practice as of next year, most delegations would prefer, at the current session, to proceed as we normally do, beginning our substantive work after the general debate in plenary meeting.

Several other practical factors were taken into account, particularly the meetings of foreign ministers and heads of delegations of the non-aligned countries at the forty-second session of the General Assembly.

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(The Chairman)

That being the case, I should nevertheless like to stress that I intend to examine the matter with the closest attention in the course of the consultations that I intend to hold on the simplification and rationalization of the work of the Committee. In that context, I intend to maintain the useful practice of consultations initially in an open-ended group of friends of the Chairman.

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(The Chairman)

If the Committee deems it necessary, a special working group would also be set up for this purpose, as proposed last year by Ambassador Alatas, Chairman of the Committee at the fortieth session. When consultations seem about to yield results, the Committee might perhaps wish to consider the possibility of holding an informal plenary meeting before finalizing the appropriate decisions on the various proposals relating to the rationalisation of the working methods of the Committee, including those relating to a possible reorganization of the Committee's agenda-

In this regard, I should like to state that, taking as our point of departure the praiseworthy efforts of my predecessors, who as Chairmen of the Committee, made such valuable contributions, I shall do my very best to make sure that the work of the Committee is conducted as effectively and rationally as possible. I should like to recall the innovation introduced at the thirty-eighth session by the representative of Norway, Mr. Tom Eric Vraalsen, which was to "regroup" the draft resolutions. It contributed very much to facilitating the voting procedure. Since then, this procedure has become accepted practice in the Committee, a practice which I intend to maintain, as was pointed out by Ambassador Zachmann, Chairman at the forty-first session. I have also drawn inspiration from another useful measure introduced by one of my predecessors: advancing the deadline for submitting draft resolutions on items relating to disarmament. I hope this will give delegations enough time to hold necessary consultations before any decision is taken on these draft resolutions. I think Ambassador Zachmann in his statement just now also put forward this suggestion.

I turn now to another point. The Committee will recall that the General Assembly, at its third meeting on 18 September 1987, decided, on the General Committee's recommendation, that in view of the financial problems which continue

(The Chairman)

to face the United Nations, and in light of the process of renewal and reform which is under way, not to fix in advance a closing date for the work of our Committee and to strive to reduce the duration of the forty-second session.

I therefore think that it would be desirable for us to organize the work of the Committee in such a way as to be able to conclude our work at the latest by Wednesday, 25 November 1987. Consequently, the substantive work of the First Committee would run from Monday, 12 October to Wednesday, 25 November, a total of 33 working days in which we would be able to hold at most 66 meetings, provided, of course, that we can get conference services. I should like to point out here that last year the Committee held a total of 59 meetings; therefore, with a concerted and sincere effort to make effective and rational use of the resources available to us, I am certain we can perform our task without undue difficulties. In that regard, and in the light of the current financial situation of the Organization, it is my hope that everything possible will be done to make it unnecessary to hold additional meetings, which would be contrary to our goal of reducing the length of the Committee's work. However, if circumstances genuinely call for additional meetings, it would be desirable to provide for Saturday meetings rather than night meetings, for which it would be more difficult to arrange conference services.

As provided for in the programme of work, the Committee will deal first with the items on the agenda relating to disarmament, that is, items 48 to 69. On these points, I propose to devote the period from 12 October to 22 October 1987, or 18 meetings at the most, to a general debate on all the items on the agenda relating to disarmament.

From 23 October to 3 November, a total of 16 meetings, delegations will be able to make statements on any item or group of items on the agenda relating to

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disarmament. In no way, however, does this prejudice the right of delegations to make a general statement during the period devoted to statements on individual items.

The period from 4 October to 16 November 1987, 18 meetings in all, will then be devoted to an examination of draft resolutions on all agenda items relating to disarmament which will have been submitted to the Committee, and to taking decisions on them. I think that the time allotted for this phase of our work will give delegations enough time to examine the draft resolutions and to undertake the necessary consultations so that the texts finally adopted can enjoy the broadest possible consensus. As I have already said, I intend to follow the procedure of grouping resolutions together before putting them to the vote. In due course I shall be presenting specific proposals on the matter.

The deadline for submission of draft resolutions on agenda items relating to disarmament would be 6 p.m., Tuesday, 27 October 1987. This is at the suggestion of the former Chairman of the Committee that we advance the deadline for the presentation of draft resolutions. I urge delegations to show co-operation by respecting it strictly. Once again, I should like to stress that I have set deadlines as advanced as possible, since it was deemed possible to give delegations enough time to proceed to consultations before taking a decision on the draft resolutions in question. Delegations are urged to submit their draft resolutions as soon as possible, even during the period of the general debate, so that statements on particular items can also be made on texts already presented.

Furthermore, it is indispensable for delegations to present as soon as possible all draft resolutions having implications for the programme budget so that we may meet the deadline for their presentation to the Fifth Committee.

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After finishing the work on the items of the agenda on disarmament, the Committee will turn to the next phase of its work, namely, the general debate on item 70 of its agenda - the Question of Antarctica - examination of the draft resolution or draft resolutions relating thereto, and adoption of decisions on it. We could devote 17 and 18 November to that item - a total of four meetings. That allotted time would be the same as that allotted to the same item at the forty-first session. The deadline for the presentation of a draft resolution or draft resolutions on agenda item 70 will be Tuesday, 17 November at noon.

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After having taken a decision on agenda item 70, the First Committee will use the time remaining, that is, the period from 19 to 25 November, for consideration of agenda items 71, 72 and 73, on questions of international security. It will therefore have 10 meetings to devote to the general debate on that group of items, the consideration of relevant draft resolutions and decisions on them. In the light of past experience I think that the time allotted for consideration of these agenda items should give delegations sufficient time to hold consultations before the Committee takes decisions on them. This deadline, then, for the submission of draft resolutions on agenda items relating to international security, agenda items 71, 72 and 73, will be Friday, 20 November 1987, at 6 p.m. sharp.

By following the programme of work and calendar I have set forth, the First Committee should be able to conclude within the allotted time its consideration of all the items entrusted to it by the General Assembly. I would like to point out that this programme of work and timetable are both based on the hypothesis that flexibility will also be a primary consideration in our use of the time and facilities made available to us - solely, of course, to the extent that it enables us to organize our work more efficiently.

At this stage, and if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee is prepared to adopt the programme of work and timetable in document A/C. 1/42/3.

It was so decided,

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I should now like to draw the Committee's attention to the rules and recommendations of the General Assembly on the work of the Main Committees, and in particular those set forth in document A/INF/136/Rev.1 and in General Assembly decision 34/401.

In accordance with the recommendations of the General Committee subsequently approved by the General Assembly, for reasons of economy and in order to make the

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best use of the time and facilities allotted to us, I intend to begin meetings of the Committee punctually at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., and shall do my best to adjourn them at 1 P.m. and 6 p.m. I also intend to call meetings of the Committee when there is a sufficient number of speakers. I believe that as a general rule there should not be fewer than four speakers at a given meeting, in order that we can make the most efficient use of the time and facilities at our disposal and so that we do not have to advance the closing time of our meetings for lack of speakers.

I should also like to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that the General Assembly has decided at this session to depart from the rule that a quarter of the members must be present for a meeting of a Main Committee to be declared open and for discussions to begin. The Assembly made that recommendation on the understanding that such a departure from the rules does not entail any permanent modification of the relevant provisions of articles 67 and 108 of the rules of procedure and that, in accordance with those rules, the presence of a majority of members is always required for any decision to be taken.

The List of speakers for the general debate on all agenda items relating to disarmament is now open and will be closed on Tuesday, 13 October, at 6 p.m. sharp. Some delegations have already indicated their intention of participating in the general debate, and the Secretariat has noted their requests. I would urge delegations to inscribe their names on the List of speakers as soon as they are in a position to do so.

In order to facilitate the work of the Committee's officers and the Secretariat, members of the Committee should submit draft resolutions as far in advance as possible to allow sufficient time for consultations. The Secretariat has asked me to draw the attention of Committee members to the fact that draft resolutions, amendments, revisions and requests to be included among the sponsors

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of draft resolutions or decisions must be submitted in writing to the Secretariat in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding. Requests for the use of conference rooms for group meetings should also be submitted in writing to the Secretariat as far in advance as possible.

Delegations are also asked to provide the conference officers with 30 copies of all prepared statements.

In the light of the importance and complexity of the items on the Committee's agendas it is essential that every opportunity for consultation and co-operation be fully explored and utilized. Thus, with other officers of the Committee and with the assistance of all interested delegations, I shall do my utmost to ensure that the work of the session will be conducted not only in accordance with the agreed timetable but also efficiently and constructively, in order to ensure the success of our efforts.

If no delegation wishes to make any comments at this stage, I propose to adjourn the meeting now, and we will meet again, as decided, on Monday, 12 October, at 10 a.m. sharp, in this room.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

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