

Assessment of the First Committee work by the Chairman of the First
Committee

New York, November 2010

The Committee concluded its work on 29 October by adopting fifty-five draft resolutions and three decisions on disarmament and international security agenda items. Of the fifty-eight adopted draft resolutions and decisions, twenty draft resolutions were approved by a recorded vote and thirty-three documents or 65% were adopted without a vote. The draft resolutions on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) were adopted with an overwhelming support from Member States. And, this is a testimony to the continuously growing convergence of views within the Committee.

The past year signified an important turning point in international efforts to achieve the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. At the current session, as before, the nuclear issues were at the center stage of the general debate in the First Committee.

The successful implementation of the START Treaty by the Russian Federation and the United States resulted in the reduction of their deployed strategic nuclear weapons by approximately 30 per cent over the last fifteen years. The First Committee at the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly approved a draft resolution welcoming the signing on 8 April of

the Treaty between those two countries on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (the New START Treaty). In the course of deliberations it was overwhelmingly recognized that this Treaty was a timely step towards further reduction of the role and importance of nuclear weapons, thus bringing the world closer to total elimination of nuclear weapons from the arsenals of these countries.

Another new document adopted this year was a draft resolution on the role of women in the area of disarmament and international security, sponsored by a large number of Member States. The draft resolution, for the first time, underlined the essential contribution of women to practical disarmament measures and urged Member States as well as regional organizations to ensure equitable representation of women at all decision-making levels.

Similarly, the advances of the past year in the area of small arms and light weapons are the encouraging events which signify the renewal of interest in genuine multilateralism. The fact that draft resolutions on the Conference on Disarmament, Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and Small Arms and Light Weapons enjoyed increasing support of delegations is part of the overall positive trend.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the widely expressed support for the early commencement of international negotiations leading to the conclusion of a verifiable treaty on fissile materials cut-off within the framework of an approved programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament; the decision adopted in May 2010 by the NPT Review

Conference to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East; and the overall tone of the thematic debate in the First Committee this year.

Equally important to the Committee's work were the panel discussions and interactive dialogues with the participation of such major international disarmament bodies as Preparatory Commission for Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Conference on Disarmament (CD), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and others. This part of the Committee work demonstrated the increased interest of the international community in the disarmament agenda and reflected the growing importance of multilateral disarmament.

Similar to the previous sessions, Member States showed their readiness to cooperate with each other in tackling the topical issues of national and international security. I enjoyed the spirit of cooperation and compromise prevailing in the work of the Committee, as well as assistance and counsel extended to me by other members of the Bureau.