

**Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference
of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of
the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other
Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and
the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof**

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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO
THE TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE EMPLACEMENT OF NUCLEAR
WEAPONS AND OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION ON THE
SEA-BED AND THE OCEAN FLOOR AND IN THE SUBSOIL THEREOF

First Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIRST MEETING (CLOSED)

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 7 February 1977, at 11.10 a.m.

Acting Chairman: Mr. BJORNERSTEDT (Representative of the
Secretary-General)
Chairman: Mr. WYZNER (Poland)

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be consolidated in a single corrigendum to be issued shortly after the end of the
session.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. The ACTING CHAIRMAN declared open the first session of the Preparatory Committee and invited nominations for the offices of Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
2. Mr. SCHØN (Denmark) nominated Mr. Wyzner (Poland) for the office of Chairman, and Mr. Di Bernardo (Italy) and Mr. Foli (Ghana) for the office of Vice-Chairman.
3. Mr. SOKOLOV (Bulgaria) and Mr. SUKHDEV (India) supported the nominations.
4. Mr. Wyzner (Poland) was elected Chairman by acclamation and took the Chair.
5. Mr. Di Bernardo (Italy) and Mr. Foli (Ghana) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.
6. The CHAIRMAN said that the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee marked the beginning of a busy and challenging period for the United Nations in connexion with disarmament. The Committee was fortunate in having had as a precedent for the review process the experience acquired during the 1975 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). He hoped that the Conference would further develop the procedure for reviewing the operation of international instruments as it proceeded with the first review of the Sea-Bed Treaty.
7. That Treaty was an international instrument of great importance. It had been the first disarmament agreement concluded at the beginning of the Disarmament Decade of the 1970s proclaimed by the General Assembly, and it had contributed significantly to the relaxation of international tension and the strengthening of peace and security.
8. The mandate of the Review Conference was described in article VII of the Treaty; it was to review the operation of the treaty in order to ensure that the purposes stated in the preamble, and the provisions of the Treaty, were being realized, taking into account new technological developments. The Conference also had to decide whether another review conference should be convened, and, if so, when.
9. A consideration which the Preparatory Committee might have to take into account was the relationship between its work and that of the Conference on the Law of the Sea pertaining to the peaceful use of ocean space.
10. In view of the short time at the Committee's disposal and the need to expedite its work, he hoped that it would agree from the outset to reach its decisions on the basis of a consensus.

11. Mr. BJORNSTEDT (Representative of the Secretary-General) said that he had been asked by the Secretary-General to extend to the Committee his best wishes for success in its endeavours.

12. The Sea-Bed Treaty, which had come into force early in the Disarmament Decade, had raised the expectations of Governments and peoples that negotiations on other pressing disarmament issues would soon follow. Its substantive value lay in the fact that it was an important measure to prevent the spread of the nuclear arms race to an area constituting two-thirds of the planet, whose significance to mankind was bound to increase. It had also been an important element in the international community's efforts to establish an international régime to ensure that the resources of the sea-bed and ocean floor would be exploited solely for peaceful purposes. The Review Conference was to consider the operation of the Treaty with a view to ensuring that the purposes of its preamble and the provisions of the Treaty were being realized in the light of relevant technological developments. The Conference required careful preparation and, following appropriate consultation, arrangements had accordingly been made for holding a Preparatory Meeting.

ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE (SBT/PC.I/CRD.1)

13. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Preparatory Committee adopted its draft agenda.

14. It was so agreed.

SUMMARY RECORDS

15. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would assume that the Preparatory Committee wished to have summary records of its meetings throughout the session.

16. It was so agreed.

BUSINESS PERTAINING TO THE SEA-BED TREATY REVIEW CONFERENCE

17. Mr. MEYERS (United States of America) said that it would be necessary to streamline the organization of the Review Conference in certain areas of concern if it was to operate effectively; it might therefore be better not to keep too closely to the rules of procedure laid down for the NPT Review Conference.

18. The CHAIRMAN said that several agenda items were covered by item I(a), on rules of procedure, but some important subjects would have to be discussed separately, such as item I(d), on financing. As the Preparatory Committee had little time at its disposal to discuss a subject that had proved both complex and time-consuming at the NPT Review Conference, he asked representatives to submit any proposals they wished to make as soon as possible.

19. Mr. JAY (Canada), supported by Mr. DAVIS (Australia), said his delegation was particularly interested in the subject of financing and would like to know whether the Preparatory Committee had a basic proposal before it on the subject. It was his understanding that the arrangements for financing agreed upon at the NPT Review Conference were not to be taken as a precedent for future review conferences.

20. The CHAIRMAN agreed that there was no precedent on which the Preparatory Committee could base itself, unless the appendix to the draft rules of procedure for the NPT Review Conference counted as such.

21. Mr. TUDOR (Romania) said that the experience gained during preparations for the NPT Review Conference could provide a useful basis for working out the financing of the Sea-Bed Treaty Review Conference. The NPT Review Conference rules of procedure (NPT/CONF/2) did not constitute a precedent, however, and could be amended in due course.

22. The CHAIRMAN said it would be helpful if at least one proposal on financing could be placed before the Committee as soon as possible. With regard to agenda item I (f), there was already a recommendation concerning the duration of the Conference, and the Preparatory Committee should examine it. As to the agenda of the Conference, the Committee might wish to ask its officers to prepare a paper setting out some ideas for consideration at a subsequent meeting.

23. It was so decided.

RULES OF PROCEDURE (agenda item I (a))

24. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should examine the draft rules of procedure for the Review Conference (NPT/CONF/2) in order to see whether any amendments were necessary. He agreed with the United States representative that not all the draft rules would necessarily apply to the Review Conference. Perhaps the meeting should be adjourned to allow representatives time to study the draft rules of procedure.

25. Mr. VAN DER KLAUW (Netherlands) said that since the Sea-Bed Treaty Review Conference would necessarily be smaller than the NPT Review Conference, the rules of procedure would need to be shortened. To facilitate discussion of those rules, and to avoid going through them item by item, he proposed that the officers should prepare a shorter draft adapted to the scale of the Conference.

26. Mr. SOKOLOV (Bulgaria) said he supported the proposal to adjourn the meeting to enable it to make a further study of document NPT/CONF/2. Nevertheless, his view was that, mutatis mutandis, the NPT rules of procedure could be applied to the Sea-Bed Treaty Review Conference.

27. Mr. DAVIS (Australia) proposed that the question of participation (agenda item I (c)) should be taken before item I (d) (financing), because financing depended to a large extent on the number of participants.

28. The CHAIRMAN said that that particular point would be covered under rule 44 of the draft rules of procedure (NPT/CONF/2). If the Committee had no objection, he would proceed on the lines proposed by the representative of Australia. With regard to the Netherlands representative's proposal, he did not think that the officers were in a position to make such a draft at that stage; the preparation of rules of procedure entailed a great deal of work and that was one of the Committee's main tasks. If it proved necessary at a later stage to draft compromise texts on any especially difficult rules, the officers would be glad to do so.

29. It had been the practice at the first session of the NPT preparatory meetings to issue a short press release giving the names of the officers elected, the agenda adopted, and the proposed duration of the session. He suggested that the secretariat, in consultation with the officers, should issue a press release reflecting the decisions of the first meeting of the session.

30. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.