13 November 2015
Seventieth session
Sixth Committee

Agenda item 108
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Oral report of the Chairman of the Working Group

Chairman: Ambassador Rohan Perera (Sri Lanka)

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/127 of 10 December 2014, the
Sixth Committee decided, at its 1st meeting, on 12 October 2015, to establish a working group with a view to finalizing the process on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism as well as discussions on the item included in its agenda by Assembly resolution 54/110 concerning the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations.

2. At the same meeting, the Sixth Committee re-elected Ambassador Rohan
Perera (Sri Lanka) as Chair of the Working Group. Pursuant to paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 51/210 and consistent with past practice, the Working Group was open to all States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

3. In keeping with its established practice, the Working Group decided that
members of the Bureau of the Ad Hoe Committee, to the extent of their availability, would continue to act as Friends of the Chair during the meetings of the Working Group. Accordingly, and as per last year, Ms. Maria Telalian (Greece), Ms. Ana Cristina Rodriguez-Pineda (Guatemala), Mr. Petr Valek

United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, dated 1 September 2005 (A/60/329), and the letter dated 30 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Chair of the Sixth Committee (A/C.6/60/2).

II. Proceedings of the Working Group

5. The Working Group held five meetings, on 26 and 30 October and on 9, 11
and 13 November 2015. At its 1st meeting, on 26 October, the Working Group adopted its work programme and decided to hold its discussions in the framework of informal consultations. At that meeting, the Working Group discussed outstanding issues relating to the draft convention. At its 2nd meeting, on 30 October, the Working Group considered the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Informal consultations on the draft convention were also held on 30 October. At its 3rd, 4th and 5th meetings, on 9, 11 and 13 November, the Working Group held informal consultations on the way forward. The Chairman and Ms. Telalian, as Coordinator, were also engaged in informal and bilateral contacts with interested delegations and groups of delegations on the outstanding issues relating to the draft convention between 26 October and 13 November.

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The following section of the oral report constitutes an informal summary of
the exchange of views. It is for reference purpose only and is not an official record of the proceedings.

Informal summaries prepared by the Chair· of the Working Group on the results of the informal consultations on the draft com'prehensive convention and on the question of the convening of a high-level conference

A. Draft comprehensive convention

Coordinator, in particular as most

clauses. Some other delegations, however, stressed that the Bureau proposal did not fully meet their concerns, in particular with regard to the questions of foreign occupation and the right to self-determination. In the view of these delegations, the fact that the texts under consideration were not very dissimilar did not mean that the small textual difference therein did not reflect serious differences of view.

B. Question concerning convening of a high-level conference

10. During the informal consultations held on 26 and 30 October 2015, delegations commented on the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

11. During the informal consultations on 30 October, the sponsor delegation of
Egypt recalled that its proposal to convene an international conference had been made more than a decade earlier. According to the sponsor delegation, the proposed conference could mobilize the political will necessary to reach agreement on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. it was clear that more than fifteen years of negotiations on the draft convention at the technical level had not led to more than minimal progress, and that raising the level of negotiations to the level of heads of State or Government may gamer the necessary political will to overcome the few outstanding difficulties. Eventually, if the impasse remained after such a conference, delegations could acknowledge that agreement on the draft convention was not possible, and consider suspending further deliberations.

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C. Informal consultations on the way forward on 9, 11 and 13 November

14. During the informal consultations on the way forward, held on 9 and 11
November, the Chairman recalled the various efforts to engage delegations in a constructive dialogue on the outstanding issues surrounding the draft convention, during past sessions and also at the current session. It was recognized however that those efforts had not generated the kind of discussions that would be necessary to overcome the current impasse. Instead, delegations, particularly those that were considered key to the process, had merely repeated their preferred positions. The Chairman urged all delegations to remain engaged in the negotiations and continue to consider the text proposed by the Bureau in a constructive spirit.

15. The Chairman also recalled the mandate of the Working Group, which
envisaged bringing the process to a closure and signaled a sense of finality. That mandate had been repeated for several years. He reiterated that the general debate on this item and his interactions with many Ambassadors had provided him with a renewed optimism that this goal was within reach. Indeed, there had seemed to be a common desire and a sense of urgency among delegations to complete the draft convention in light of the increase in terrorist attacks worldwide. Delegations had also expressed a desire to embrace the momentum generated by the 70th Anniversary of the Organization to overcome the last hurdles. The

Let me conclude my report by thanking all delegations for their continued engagement in the issues before the Working Group. Even though progress remains elusive I encourage delegations to continue to explore possibilities of overcoming differences.

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