

# General Conference

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## Committee of the Whole

### Record of the Seventh Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Thursday, 29 September 2022, at 1.30 p.m.*

**Chair:** Mr BENGU (South Africa)

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<sup>1</sup> GC(66)/COM.5/1

### **Abbreviations used in this record**

|     |  |
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| LEU | low enriched uranium                                 |
| NPP | nuclear power plant                                  |
| PMO | Policy-Making Organs                                 |
| UK  | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
| UN  | United Nations                                       |

## **21. Promotion of Efficiency and Effectiveness of the IAEA Decision Making Process**

(GC(66)/1/Add.4)

1. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, noting that the item had been discussed by the General Conference for 10 consecutive years, said that promoting the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's decision making process in a fair and balanced manner was of high importance for Member States. It was crucial for the Agency to ensure that it was in step with global realities and with the fundamental changes in international relations of recent decades, especially within the global nuclear community engaged in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
2. In accordance with Article IV of its Statute, the Agency was based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members, necessitating the direct engagement and participation of all Member States in taking decisions on issues fundamental to the work of the Agency, in particular those that affected the sovereign rights of Member States. Some Member States, however, still appeared to be more equal than others.
3. Regrettably, the General Conference, while consisting of representatives of all of the Agency's Members, did not seem to be the Agency's highest policy making body. Given that the General Conference represented all Member States, while membership of the Board of Governors was limited, the balance of powers and functions between the two bodies was inappropriate: most of the issues that the General Conference was able to discuss and on which it could make recommendations were subject to prior agreement or recommendation by the Board. The efficiency of the General Conference could be improved by reconsidering the balance between the two bodies.
4. There was also a need to increase the size and reconsider the composition of the Board's membership. The 1999 adoption of an amendment to Article VI of the Statute, as set out in resolution GC(43)/RES/19, had been a positive step, but, owing to various political and regional issues, the amendment appeared unlikely to enter into force. Member States needed to innovate and cooperate closely to find a more workable solution; they should consider setting up a mechanism to include those that had been unfairly deprived of Board membership for years or even decades, in contravention of Article IV of the Statute.
5. In addition, the composition of certain regional groups referred to in the Statute had for some considerable time restricted their own members' opportunities for Board membership. The Agency and the regional groups needed to establish a fair, logical and efficient arrangement to ensure that no Member States were unjustly deprived of the equal opportunities they should enjoy. An open-ended consultative group of Member States should be set up to discuss proposals and make appropriate recommendations for consideration by the General Conference.
6. Lastly, he said that the General Conference should consider adopting electronic voting, which was widely used in other forums, including the UN General Assembly, by amending Rule 72 of its Rules of Procedure. Doing so would reduce costs and mean less time spent on procedural matters, freeing up time for substantive issues. The example of the General Assembly should be followed.
7. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that his country also attached great importance to ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency but firmly believed that the Board of Governors functioned effectively as the Agency's highest policy-making body. The UK could not

agree to establishing an open-ended consultative group to consider the matter as that would undermine the Board's work and the Agency's effectiveness and efficiency.

8. At the same time, consideration could be given to increasing the number of Board members to reflect the Agency's growing membership. Recalling that his Government had ratified the amendment to Article VI of the Statute, he encouraged other Member States to follow suit as soon as possible.

9. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, noting the importance of the issue raised by Iran, said that in 2022 the Board had adopted three dubious, counterproductive and politicized resolutions. Two of those resolutions, concerning the situation in Ukraine, radically distorted the facts. It was completely absurd to claim that, during Ukraine's shelling of Europe's largest NPP, the Russian national guard and Rosatom specialists at the plant posed the main nuclear security threat. As to the third resolution, which concerned Iran, the sponsors had been warned that if they forced it through, the situation would worsen — unsurprisingly, that is exactly what had happened.

10. The Board's decision making process was being controlled by Western States and their allies. Unless those countries started behaving in a more restrained, professional and balanced manner, the calls to consider the matter under discussion and redistribute the decision making powers of the PMOs would become louder.

11. The representative of UKRAINE reminded the representative of the Russian Federation that the Committee was a technical forum. The statements delivered by the Russian delegation were the only distortion of reality, and it should stop distracting the Committee from its work.

12. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that the Ukrainian delegate simply could not handle the truth. Agreeing that the Committee was indeed a technical forum, he said that the draft resolutions on nuclear security and safeguards before it presented a distorted version of the facts and included country-specific references that could not go unanswered. His delegation would duly respond to all accusations levelled against it at Committee meetings by the sponsors of draft resolutions.

13. The representative of the NETHERLANDS, calling for politicized discussions to be avoided, said that, while her delegation shared Iran's concerns about the Agency's efficient and effective functioning, it agreed with the UK's position. The amendment to Article VI was a good way forward to address those concerns. All European Union member States had ratified the amendment and she called on other States to do the same.

14. The CHAIR said that he would report to the General Conference that, under item 21 of the agenda, the importance of maintaining and promoting the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency's decision making processes and strengthening the Agency and its governing bodies had been highlighted.

15. Expansion of the Board's membership, enhancing the role and authority of both the General Conference and the Board of Governors, and the importance of maintaining an appropriate balance between the two bodies had been underlined. The importance of sovereign equality and of the direct engagement and participation of all Member States in the decision making process on issues related to the Agency's work had been emphasized. The relevance and importance of the process currently under way for the timely ratification of the amendment to Article VI of the Statute had been referred to, and some views and suggestions had been expressed in that context. The issue of the use of electronic voting by the General Conference, following the example of the UN General Assembly, had also been raised.

16. He took it that his summing-up was acceptable to the Committee.

17. It was so agreed.

## **23. Restoration of sovereign equality in the IAEA** (GC(66)/1/Add.2; GC(66)/COM.5/L.2)

18. The representative of KAZAKHSTAN, introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(66)/COM.5/L.2, said that it was absolutely unacceptable that almost thirty fully fledged Member States — including his own — had been excluded from information and advisory, consultative and decision making processes at the Agency for 30 years, because they did not belong to a regional group or geographical area. That denial of their right to sovereign equality was a direct violation of the Statute. Although most Member States had agreed on the absurdity of that unjust and discriminatory situation at the meeting of the Board of Governors held in the morning of 16 September 2022, it seemed unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

19. Drawing attention to the explanatory note contained in document GC(66)/1/Add.2, he underlined that the aim of the draft resolution was not to offer ‘homeless’ States full membership of the regional groups, but to provide a mechanism for assigning them to an appropriate geographical area so that they could finally become real, instead of decorative, members of the Agency. All Member States agreed that commitment to the Statute, international law, inclusivity and equality should be inherent features of their work at the Agency.

20. Although Kazakhstan alone was mentioned in the operative part of the text, he stressed that the draft resolution was not country-specific. The reason was that, to date, his country was the only to have undergone a designation process, in which it had been accordingly concluded that it belonged to the area of the Far East. As Kazakhstan was the test case, implementation of the draft resolution would be impractical without paragraph 2.

21. According to a report issued by the Director General in 1996, it was for the Board and the General Conference to assign countries to geographical areas. In the hope that the Conference would help to break the impasse and show the way forward, he encouraged Member States to adopt the draft resolution as a first step towards restoring true sovereign equality and inclusivity within the Agency. That would bring the Agency’s work into conformity with its Statute and complement the amendment to Article VI.

22. Lastly, he declared that his delegation was committed to solving the issue once and for all.

23. The representative of the PHILIPPINES said that her country attached great importance to the principle of sovereign equality, which enabled her country’s small delegation to participate in the Agency’s activities. It was her country’s belief that a resolution aimed at restoring sovereign equality should be drafted in an open, transparent, inclusive and constructive manner, taking into account the positions and interests of all Member States. Support for the spirit and intent of the draft resolution, did not necessarily mean support for the existing language. It was the first time that the text had been opened for negotiations, but there had been no prior consultations.

24. Recognizing Kazakhstan’s attempts over many years to join a regional group and its very important contributions to the Agency’s work, she noted that the Far East Group was still considering both Kazakhstan’s application and the draft text before the Committee. During informal consultations, several delegations had voiced strong reservations and concerns about paragraph 2, which mentioned the Far East.

25. Her delegation had two proposals for amendments: the first was to insert the words “the Agency” after “Urges” in paragraph 1, as implementation of the provisions of the draft resolution would be a joint effort between Member States and the Secretariat.

26. For paragraph 2, in a spirit of consensus and flexibility, she proposed compromise language: “Recognizes the desire of the Republic of Kazakhstan to belong to a regional group and further encourages the Republic of Kazakhstan to continue its consultations on the basis of consensus with the appropriate regional group.” That was factual and reflected that the decision making process had not concluded.

27. The Philippines would find it difficult if the General Conference prejudged, or even sought to influence, the outcome of a group’s internal consultations, and hoped that it would respect the independent decision making process of the regional groups. Furthermore, her delegation was not aware of any existing criteria by which the General Conference could determine a State’s regional affiliation, or if it even had the mandate to do so in the absence of a recommendation from the Board of Governors.

28. Her delegation looked forward to hearing the views and proposals of other Member States in order to improve the text and ensure that it was fair, inclusive and aligned with the spirit and intent of its title. The resolution had wide-ranging implications that affected all Member States. The text should therefore be negotiated on the basis of consensus and not be forced to a premature conclusion by vote before it had been thoroughly studied by the PMOs.

29. She concluded that, while the urgency of the situation was clear, expediency should not be at the expense of diplomacy. Diplomatic processes, established working methods and the Vienna spirit must be relied upon so as to achieve sovereign equality.

30. The representative of JAPAN said that he agreed with most of the statement by the representative of Kazakhstan but could not immediately support the draft resolution because, as explained by the representative of the Philippines, the Far East Group had not yet reached a decision. Although the Group respected the sovereign right of all Member States to participate in the Agency’s activities, the adoption of the resolution would pose a number of predictable difficulties.

31. Article V of the Statute cast considerable doubt on the General Conference’s competence to decide on such a matter. Moreover, the draft resolution would be adopted by a simple majority vote. A much stricter, almost consensus-based decision making process had been followed in adopting the 1999 amendment to Article VI. A single majority vote would not guarantee that same shared feeling towards welcoming the many ‘homeless’ Member States into regional groups, and the ensuing difficulties were easy to imagine.

32. Consensus — or, failing that, at least a conclusion on which most Member States could agree — was the best approach to making such sensitive decisions. Delegates should think seriously about the issue and give due consideration to the proposals made by the representative of the Philippines.

33. The representative of TURKMENISTAN, expressing support for the draft resolution, thanked the delegation of Kazakhstan for its diligent efforts. Every Member State should have an equal opportunity to participate fully in all the Agency’s decision making processes.

34. The draft resolution would provide a simple and practical mechanism for States to identify themselves with a geographical area, with a view to joining a regional group. That would accelerate the establishment of the sovereign equality laid down in the Statute and underpinning the Agency’s work. All Member States should support the draft resolution.

35. The representative of the REPUBLIC OF KOREA, expressing full support for the proposals by the representative of the Philippines, thanked the delegation of Kazakhstan for preparing the draft resolution. His delegation had a strong reservation with regard to paragraph 2 and regretted that the Far East had been mentioned in it, with no prior consultation on the text.

36. The crucial entry into force of the 1999 amendment would restore the sovereign equality of all Member States. He therefore proposed adding a clear reference to encouraging acceptance of the amendment in a new paragraph 3 that read: “Recognizes that, as of September 2022, 63 members of the Agency have accepted the 1999 amendment to Article VI of the Statute (GC43/RES/19) and encourages all members which have not done so to accept the amendment as soon as possible in accordance with their respective constitutional processes, as provided for in the Statute.”

37. Lastly, he stressed that the draft resolution must be negotiated on the basis of consensus. Forcing a premature decision by vote would only create division within the Agency instead of restoring equality.

38. The representative of CHINA, noting that the membership of regional groups had not kept pace with that of the Agency, said that all Member States should have equal rights and opportunities. Expressing support for the draft resolution and its legitimacy, he encouraged Member States and the Secretariat to give due importance to the issue in order to reach a satisfactory solution.

39. The representative of TÜRKIYE, highlighting Kazakhstan’s contributions to the Agency’s work, in particular through the LEU Bank, expressed her delegation’s support for the draft resolution.

40. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA, thanking the delegation of Kazakhstan for bringing the unjust situation of ‘homeless’ States into sharp focus, reiterated the importance that his delegation accorded to rectifying the issue. The draft resolution could have benefited from wider consultation, and expansion of its scope could better serve the interests of all the States concerned.

41. Bearing that in mind, he proposed inserting the words “noting that some Member States have not belonged to any regional group for more than 30 years” at the end of paragraph (d), and adding a paragraph (d) bis that read: “Recognizing the desire of all Member States to belong to regional groups and to fully participate in all activities of the IAEA”.

42. Building on the proposal of the Philippines to amend paragraph 1, he suggested that “for the sake of inclusivity and” should be replaced with “including through initiating inclusive consultations to attain”.

43. In his delegation’s view, the proposed amendment to paragraph 1 would allow for the deletion of paragraph 2.

44. Lastly, he proposed that paragraph 3 should instead begin with the words “Calls on the Agency to remain seized of”.

45. The representative of KYRGYZSTAN said that a solution to the issue of ‘homeless’ States, in particular regional group membership, was long overdue. Supportive of Kazakhstan’s initiative to develop a fair and multilateral assignment mechanism — as it had stated before the Board of Governors — his country called for a working group to be created. The issue must be discussed in a fair, non-politicized manner, taking into account the experience of other UN system organizations. The ‘homeless’ States must unite to amplify their voices and ensure that their views were heard.

46. It was his delegation’s hope that the draft resolution submitted would be a first step towards producing a jointly drafted, inclusive text that provided for automatic assignment to geographical areas and regional groups and which would be submitted at the General Conference in 2023. Defining the composition of the geographical areas would boost the effectiveness of joint action to achieve common goals for the benefit of the whole international community. He called on all Member States to show good will, avoid politicization and support the draft resolution.

47. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that he agreed with the representative of Kazakhstan that it was high time for the Agency to step up its efforts to rectify a situation whereby a

number of Member States, including Kazakhstan, were left outside the regional groups. Those States were deprived of the opportunity to become members of the Board of Governors and to nominate officers at PMO meetings, which was clearly unjust.

48. Whereas the draft resolution — which his delegation fully supported — sent a clear message that there was a problem that needed to be remedied, some of the proposed amendments were less helpful. The proposed new paragraph 3 made reference to the amendment to Article VI of the Statute: while it was true that the aim of that amendment was to increase the number of Board members, it did nothing to prevent States that were not members of regional groups from being excluded from election to the Board. Such proposals were related to another item on the agenda and would by no means help to solve the problem identified by Kazakhstan.

49. Moreover, it was unfair to criticize Kazakhstan for directly mentioning one of the regional groups in the draft resolution. As a member of the Eastern Europe Group, the Russian Federation had seen how Kazakhstan had spent years actively trying to join the group. Unfortunately, it had been blocked by one State — not the Russian Federation — with the support of others. The inclusion of the name of a specific group in the draft resolution was a justified expression of despair. Moreover, the reference to the need for consensus within regional groups made in one of the proposed amendments struck his delegation as derisive.

50. He proposed adopting the draft resolution as originally submitted by Kazakhstan. If others could not help, they should at least not hinder the efforts being made.

51. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that it was important that all States should be able to enjoy the full benefits of membership in the Agency. The draft resolution raised issues of legal and statutory interpretation, including the competencies and role of the Agency. That long-standing issue required a systematic solution, and he supported the new paragraph, as proposed by the representative of the Republic of Korea, on the 1999 amendment to Article VI of the Statute.

52. As the issue must be resolved among Member States on the basis of consensus, in accordance with the Statute, he also welcomed the proposals put forward by the representatives of the Philippines and South Africa.

53. The representative of SINGAPORE said that he fully sympathized with the plight of Kazakhstan and the other ‘homeless’ States, and he welcomed the initial opportunity for consultations on the draft resolution. Noting the positions expressed by representatives of countries in the Far East Group, he shared the view regarding the need for consensus. The amendments proposed by the representatives of the Philippines and South Africa appeared to be useful and would help to move towards consensus.

54. The representative of EGYPT said that, while his country had always been a staunch supporter of the principle underpinning Kazakhstan’s endeavours, the concerns expressed by representatives of countries in the Far East Group had merit, in particular with regard to the need to ensure inclusivity and consensus. The draft resolution contained important principles but might have far-reaching legal implications, which required thorough study. The proposed amendments were pertinent and would help to allay some concerns regarding those ramifications.

55. To ensure that the draft resolution was fully in line with a previous General Conference resolution, he proposed adding the words “in line with the General Conference resolution contained in document GC(43)/RES/19” to the end of paragraph 1. In the interest of logic, he also proposed reversing the order of paragraph 2 and the proposed new paragraph 3.

56. The representative of GUATEMALA said that, while some founding principles, such as the sovereign equality of all Member States, needed to be protected at all costs, the Agency also needed to be able to adapt to new conditions, in accordance with the procedures in the Statute.



57. The changes under consideration would help to strengthen the Agency and its functioning. The draft resolution was a commendable endeavour to broach a long-standing challenge and was intended only to make the Agency function in line with its Statute. At the same time, while supporting Kazakhstan, he firmly believed in dialogue and that agreement must be pursued through open consultations with all Member States, in particular those in the group of which membership was being sought. Consensus was vital if progress was to benefit everyone; it was his view that the draft resolution moved somewhat away from that goal.

58. Lastly, he expressed his delegation's support for the amendments proposed by the representatives of the Philippines and South Africa, which would help to focus efforts on achieving the due representation of all Member States in the Agency's decision-making bodies.

59. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that his country attached the greatest importance to the sovereign equality of all Member States. With regard to the final paragraph of the text, he was not convinced that a report by the Director General was required. Many delegations had said that the issue should be considered in intergovernmental consultations, which should continue, in order to find a practicable solution.

60. The representative of LEBANON said that his country fully understood Kazakhstan's desire to join a representative group. The appropriate way to achieve the legitimate goal of the draft resolution was through a consensual approach based on thorough consultations with all Member States — in particular those in the geographical group of which membership was sought — on a sound legal basis, in line with the Statute and General Conference resolutions.

61. At the same time, Lebanon had concerns about the draft resolution, in particular paragraphs 1 and 2. Some of the proposed amendments therefore merited consideration and support, in particular those put forward by the representatives of Egypt, the Philippines and South Africa. Work should continue with Kazakhstan to produce a draft resolution that enjoyed consensus.

62. The representative of SWITZERLAND said that, while his country attached great importance to the sovereign equality of all Member States and supported an inclusive and transparent process for its restoration, the draft resolution would benefit from the commendable amendments proposed by the representatives of the Philippines and South Africa.

63. The representative of SLOVENIA said that his country had always supported Kazakhstan's efforts to join a regional group, including the Eastern Europe Group. As many other countries were in the same situation as Kazakhstan, a sustainable solution needed to be found. The proposed amendments went some way in that direction; in particular, his delegation supported the proposed changes to paragraph 2 and the proposed new paragraph 3.

64. The representative of FRANCE, acknowledging the concerns expressed by Kazakhstan and noting that the General Conference must act in accordance with the Statute, said that he shared the understanding of the situation expressed by the representatives of Japan and the Philippines — and encouraged Kazakhstan to pursue consultations.

65. Turning to the proposals for amendments, he expressed support in particular for those made by the representative of the Philippines. France had accepted the amendment to Article VI of the Statute and encouraged others to do so. His delegation also supported the proposal made by the representative of the Republic of Korea. More time would be required to consider the other proposed amendments.

66. The representative of THAILAND, noting that her delegation attached importance to sovereign equality, said that the issue of 'homeless' States should be addressed by Member States and members of regional areas in a consensual manner. She encouraged Kazakhstan and its interlocutors to resolve issues through dialogue and consultation, while seeking consensus.

67. The proposal made by the representative of the Philippines provided a balanced and good way forward, addressing the issue for all Member States in that position; she also supported the proposal put forward by the representative of South Africa in that regard. However, before the General Conference could make a decision on the draft resolution, it was very important to clarify the legal grounds of the issue, in particular concerning the General Conference's mandate.

68. The representative of KAZAKHSTAN said that he was aware that other delegations wished to take the floor. However, whereas it was all very well for other delegations to advise his own to continue consultations — and whereas he very much appreciated the efforts made by all those proposing amendments to the draft resolution — he wanted to speak about the entire process.

69. The proposed amendments took the Agency and the 'homeless' States back to square one. Kazakhstan had started the process 30 years previously and had actively endeavoured to achieve consensus among the regional groups. In response to those speakers who had said that no consultations had been conducted and that they were unaware of the issue, he noted that his delegation had raised the matter bilaterally and multilaterally. To those saying that more time was required, he pointed out the major difference in positions: whereas for most delegations the current discussion was just one item on the agenda, for his delegation it was the most important issue because his country was deprived of its equality and its sovereign right to express its views at the Agency. It simply had to sit and listen to all the others.

70. In response to calls to achieve consensus, he said that attempts to discuss the matter with different regional groups had been made, to no avail. His country had received written and oral confirmation from the governments of Far East Group countries that they had no problem with Kazakhstan's membership. His country had therefore decided that it could join and work together with that area. In the case of the Republic of Korea, for example, a joint statement had been signed at presidential level to the effect that it would join consensus if other members agreed. Consensus had, therefore, been sought and found. But, when time came to make a final decision, one Member State had said that Kazakhstan was misinterpreting the text. How could consensus be achieved when certain countries were unwilling?

71. It was generally agreed that all countries were equal and had a role to play; Kazakhstan wanted to cooperate and conduct consultations. During his numerous consultations, he had asked colleagues and the Secretariat to explain how to join a regional group — or at least an area. It was understandable that others were trying to propose consensual language, but Kazakhstan was being forced into reverse, with no way forward. The draft resolution had been tabled precisely to provide a practical way forward. If others genuinely wanted progress, it was already time to act. His country was not creating any issues; it merely wanted inclusivity at the Agency. Kazakhstan agreed with the calls for diplomacy and consensus, but that consensus was proving hard to secure. And the matter concerned not only Kazakhstan, but some thirty other countries.

72. The original draft resolution and the amendments proposed by the representatives of the Philippines and other countries had different aims: the original text sought a solution to the issue, while the proposed amendments suggested resuming the same old process, which would be delayed for many more years. If 30 years had not been enough, how long would be? He therefore asked for understanding as to why his country was taking such steps. The original draft resolution represented a bold step forward on the premise that there was a real desire to make the Agency a healthy organization. It did not give rise to bigger issues but simply established equality and a democratic method of working. How could legalities and legal wording be invoked when 30 countries were in legal limbo, and when legality at the Agency was being infringed?

73. Furthermore, the resolution was concise — just a few short paragraphs long — and complied with the Statute, which stated very clearly that every Member State had the sovereign right to be elected from

its respective regional area. He would be very interested to hear how the Statute was being infringed by the draft. He had beseeched others for such information; yet, after a way forward had been found, his country was being asked yet again to delay the process, to wait, and to pursue a futile process of seeking consensus.

74. The issue had therefore been brought to the General Conference, which had the right and mandate to decide such matters according to the Statute. Although the Statute did not explicitly grant the General Conference the authority to allocate countries to areas — as it contained neither a definition of “area” nor any guidelines for membership of the regional groups — Article V.D stated that the General Conference may discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the Statute. Since neither the Statute nor any Agency document prohibited the General Conference from taking such decisions, the General Conference evidently had the right to recognize the geographic attribution of the Member States. In logical terms, anything that was not forbidden was permitted.

75. A report on related matters issued by the Director General in 1996 — which his delegation had mentioned earlier — stated that “under the Statute of the Agency, it is for the Board and the General Conference to act on the premise that each Member State belongs to some area”. In the report it was also noted that, in the event of doubt as to whether a Member State was within a particular area, the decision could not be taken solely by the Member States acknowledged as being within that area, because any such State could end up being excluded from all areas as a result. As that was precisely the situation facing all the ‘homeless’ States, his delegation asserted that the General Conference had both the right and the mandate to assign States to a geographical area.

76. He mentioned a glaring example whereby one delegation from the Far East Group had recently circulated an advisory note widely among the regional groups. Like the other ‘homeless’ States, his country had not received it and had been excluded from an advisory or consultative process because no one wanted Kazakhstan involved.

77. The General Conference was the appropriate forum in accordance with the Statute. There was no time frame for submitting a draft resolution — his delegation had simply done its best. The draft resolution was very short, and he stood ready to discuss it. There was a suggestion that, as 20 countries were ‘homeless’, that could create political problems. Yet the African Group comprised 55 countries and easily dealt with such issues. If all the ‘homeless’ countries were divided between the groups, only two or three States would be added to each — not a large number — and that would fully resolve the issue.

78. Instead, the pretence continued that there was no issue. As a result, he very much doubted that he would be able to accept the amendments proposed by the representative of the Philippines. Her country had sent his own an official note saying that it had no problem with Kazakhstan’s membership and was now telling it to go back and try again.

79. Kazakhstan naturally wanted to listen to other delegations, but the difference was that others were eligible for election while his country was not and remained deprived of that ability — in other words, there was no equality among States.

80. In closing, he said that, along with other countries that understood and sympathized with his case, the issue could be resolved quickly. A solution should not be further delayed for decades to come.

81. The CHAIR said that consideration of the item would continue at the following meeting.

**The meeting rose at 3.10 p.m.**