

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF TERRORIST BOMBINGS

By resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996, approving the Declaration supplementing the 1994 Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism (see Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism), the General Assembly decided to establish an ad hoc committee to elaborate an international convention for the suppression of terrorist bombings and, subsequently, an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, to supplement related existing international instruments, and thereafter to address means of further developing a comprehensive legal framework of conventions dealing with international terrorism. The Ad Hoc Committee, which was open to all States Members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency, was mandated to meet from 24 February to 7 March 1997 to prepare the text of a draft international convention for the suppression of terrorist bombings. In the same resolution, the General Assembly further recommended that work continue during its fifty-second session of the General Assembly from 22 September to 3 October 1997 in the framework of a working group of the Sixth Committee. This pattern of two meetings in a year –in the context of an ad hoc committee and a working group of the Sixth Committee– has always been followed in the subsequent work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

During the first round of meetings in the context of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Working Group of the Sixth Committee, the focus was on the elaboration of the draft convention for the suppression of terrorist bombings, on the basis of a preliminary working paper submitted by France (on behalf of the Group of Seven major industrialized countries and the Russian Federation) (A/AC.252/L.2) (see report of the Ad Hoc Committee, A/52/37). The beginning of work on the draft convention was preceded by the issuance, during the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, of a report of the Secretary-General (A/51/336) on measures to eliminate international terrorism prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/53, which offered an analytical review of existing international legal instruments relating to international terrorism, in order to assist States in identifying aspects that may not have been covered by such instruments and could be addressed to develop further a comprehensive framework (A/51/336)

In its discussions at the first session (from 24 February to 7 March 1997), the Working Group of the Whole of the Ad Hoc Committee, conducted a first reading of articles 1 to 12 of the draft convention, during which oral and written amendments and proposals were submitted and considered, it being understood by the Committee that the oral amendments and proposals would continue to be treated on an equal footing with written amendments and proposals in its future work (see report of the Working Group (A/C.6/52/L.3)). On the basis of the discussions in the Working Group, the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee prepared texts of articles 1, 2, 3 and 12 ter (A/AC.252/1997/CRP.3), articles 4 to 10 bis (A/AC.252/1997/CRP.1) and articles 11 to 12 bis (A/AC.252/1997/CRP.2) (for prepared texts, see the report of the Ad Hoc Committee, A/52/37); and, it was agreed that work would continue on the basis of the above-mentioned documents and in the framework of two consultation groups entrusted respectively with articles 1 to 3 and 12 ter and articles 4 to 12 and 12 bis. On the basis of the discussion in the informal consultations, the Bureau prepared revised texts of articles 4 to 12 bis (A/AC.252/1997/CRP.6) and articles 1 to 3 and 12 ter (A/AC.252/1997/CRP.6/Add.1) (see A/52/37). It was understood that the texts prepared by the Bureau were intended simply to further facilitate the future work of the Committee and did not replace or substitute any of the written or oral texts proposed by delegations.

The Working Group of the Sixth Committee, which met from 22 September to 3 October 1997, had before it the report of the Ad Hoc Committee (A/52/37) containing the revised texts of articles 1 to 12 *ter* referred to above, together with the preamble and articles 13 to 17 contained in the preliminary working document, as well as oral and written proposals submitted during its work by delegations. Discussions were held both in the Working Group and in informal consultations, on the basis of which a series of draft texts were prepared and revised by a group of Friends of the Chairman (composed of the members of the bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee and some other delegations) for consideration by the Working Group (A/C.6/52/WG.1/CRP.31 and Add. 1, and A/C.6/52/WG.1/CRP.45 and Rev. 1 and 2). At the conclusion of its work, the Working Group decided to recommend to the Sixth Committee the consideration of the revised texts of the preamble and articles 1 to 2, and 4 to 17 (see report of the Working Group, A/C.6/52/L.3).

The Chairman of the Working Group introduced the report of the Working Group to the Sixth Committee on 13 November 1997. On 14 November, the representative of Costa Rica introduced a draft resolution entitled "International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings", containing in annex the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (A/C.6/52/L.13). On 19 November, the Sixth Committee had before it amendments (A/C.6/52/L.19) proposed by Pakistan to the annex to draft resolution A/C.6/52/L.13. However, the representative of Pakistan informed the Committee that his delegation would not press for a decision on the amendments proposed. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.6/52/L.13 without a vote.

By resolution 52/164 of 15 December 1997, the General Assembly adopted the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and decided to open it for signature at United Nations Headquarters in New York from January 1998 until 31 December 1999. Pursuant to article 22, paragraph 1, the Convention entered into force on 23 May 2001, the thirtieth day following the date of the deposit of the twenty-second instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.