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FORUM FOR PEACE

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Forum for Peace and ReconciliationModalities of Debate on Nature of the Problem

1. At its meeting on 18 November, the Forum approved a paper from the Co-ordinating Committee (F 020) on the allocation of time (i) for delegations' presentation of their papers and (ii) for initial questioning by other delegations. It was agreed that the overriding aim was to allow for free general debate. The Co-ordinating Committee was asked to look further at the modalities of debate.

Possible Approach

2. The following approach, which would incorporate the decisions already taken by the Forum on time allocation, is proposed.
3. First of all a delegation would introduce its paper, taking up to 15 minutes (larger delegations - down to and including Democratic Left) or 10 minutes (smaller delegations). This initial presentation would occur in public session.
4. Next, in private session, each of the other eleven delegations would in turn question the presenting delegation on its paper. A maximum of 5 minutes (larger delegations) or 3 minutes (smaller delegations) would be allowed for questions and answers combined. It is suggested that, in the interests of clarity and the need to focus on key points, each delegation should, at the start of its period, put one question only. It should be borne in mind that, given the number of delegations, initial questioning should nonetheless succeed in addressing numerous issues. If, following the first question and answer, there were time left over within its allocation, a delegation could either pose supplementaries or ask a second question. This phase should take a little less than one hour.
5. Thereafter, it is proposed that there be open debate (still in private session) with members

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- of the Forum having the option of putting additional questions, pressing points further, or making observations. As a rule, the delegation presenting a paper shall be invited to respond to each question put or point made. In regulating the debate, the Chairperson will adhere to the principles set out in paragraph 5 of her overall Note on procedures. She will seek to ensure that interventions are succinct and to the point, and she will also have regard to equity of treatment both between delegations and between Forum members. She will accordingly endeavour to ensure that as many individual members as possible are facilitated in making interventions.
6. While the duration of this second phase of debate will inevitably be constrained by the Forum's other business and the desirability of concluding its meetings at a reasonable time, the Chairperson will seek to be as flexible as possible in this regard, with a view to allowing for the fullest possible discussion of the issues raised.
 7. It is proposed that following the conclusion of the Forum's consideration of each delegation's paper, it should be open to any other delegation to put in writing any further points it might wish to make (which it feels might not be fully or satisfactorily addressed in its own paper). It would then equally be open to the presenting delegation to respond, or to clarify matters in its paper, also in writing. These papers would be channelled through the Secretariat, which would circulate them to all other delegations.

Forum Secretariat

23 November 1994