



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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Statement by Mr. Hiroshi Onuma
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On agenda item 135: Pattern of Conferences

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United Nations General Assembly
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Thank you Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I wish to thank Mr. Yotam Goren, Chair of the Committee on Conferences, Mr. Tegegnetwork Gettu, Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for introducing their respective reports on this agenda item. In the following statement, I wish to share my delegation's views on these reports.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation recognizes that maintaining an appropriate quality of conference services at the United Nations is essential for proper decision making by the Member States. Yet we believe that those services should be provided in the most efficient and effective manner possible. The Secretariat should not stop seeking efficiencies in delivering conference services through the introduction of new cost-saving measures. At the same time, Member States should refrain from adding unnecessary conference resource requirements when deciding the modalities of new meetings in General Assembly resolutions.

Mr. Chairman,

In September, the Committee on Conferences (CoC) for 2014 held numerous discussions on various subjects, including Paper Smart, the improvement of the utilization of conference-servicing resources and facilities, and digital recordings, in spite of the time constraint. We believe it important that the issue of seeking efficiencies in delivering conference services continue to reside at the center of our discussions and be discussed substantially.

Mr. Chairman,

We recognize the progress already made in implementing Paper Smart in the world, and that Paper Smart is already an unquestionable reality at the United Nations. It is also obvious that we enjoy the benefit of Paper Smart's development and dissemination throughout the UN by accessing updated information on the web-site of the Committee anytime we need. We wish to continue and deepen the discussion on this issue, taking into account both the continuous needs of hard copy documents from the Member States and the premise that the promotion of Paper Smart should ultimately contribute to a reduction of the total cost of conference services.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the utilization of conference-servicing resources, Japan welcomes all the various initiatives introduced by the Secretariat to increase the utilization rates of these resources; however, in addition to these initiatives, Japan deems it important to consider taking more concrete and practical measures to reduce the whole cost of conference services, such as planning fewer meetings and shortening the durations of meetings, taking into account the historical pattern.

With regard to digital recordings, Japan commends that the use of digital recording is being actively considered and implemented at both the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) in order to seek greater efficiencies and cost-effectiveness. We wish to encourage the efforts of the other intergovernmental bodies to introduce such a good practice.

With regard to matters related to translation and interpretation, Japan stresses that the Secretariat needs to refrain from changing agreed texts of both draft and adopted resolutions beyond purely grammatical and editorial reasons, even as we appreciate the efforts the Secretariat has made to improve such practices.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan is ready to engage in discussions on various subjects including the aforementioned issues, taking into account all further information to be provided by the Secretariat.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to reiterate that my delegation will participate constructively in the discussions during the informal consultations on all aspects of this agenda item and I hope we will reach a positive conclusion by consensus.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.