

of the reasons which militate against their full utilization. It should be highly instructive to conclude this examination before new initiatives involving the creation of additional legal obligations are undertaken. Secondly, the elaboration of new legal regimes may tend to undermine the effectiveness, or potential effectiveness of existing dispute settlement mechanisms before that effectiveness had been adequately tested. Finally, peaceful settlement of disputes is a concept that is inseparable from the concept of non-use of force being considered in another committee. If a new legal regime on peaceful settlement of disputes were to be elaborated, the Non-Use of Force Committee would seem to us to be a more appropriate forum.

Some interesting suggestions have been made in the Special Committee on the question of rationalization of procedures. We are aware that most of the proposals made, if they were to be accepted, would improve the efficiency of the UN and particularly the General Assembly. It is clear, however, that among those proposals, there are some that demand of member states a degree of self-discipline and preparedness which is not always evident at the present time. For that reason, they are probably impractical at this stage. We hope the Committee will concentrate on those proposals which appear generally acceptable and will go on to produce concrete suggestions in the near future.

We fully endorse the observations made by the Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly to improve and streamline the workings of the General Assembly. The agenda of the General Assembly is in danger of being overloaded. We hope that it will be possible to devise at an early stage, procedures which would ensure firstly that the number of items before the General Assembly remains manageable and secondly that items normally only come to Plenary for final disposition after a full discussion in the committees. We fully agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that the practice of arbitrarily selecting certain items for discussion in the Plenary meetings is likely to result in duplication, loss of impact and confusion in the Assembly's program of work. In our view, the General Committee has a fundamental role to play in working toward a reduction of the number of items by elimination or combination, in order to reduce overlapping and the lack of balance in workload. We fully support those delegations which have proposed that the General Assembly might properly and profitably invest the General Committee with the power of meeting before the next General Assembly to discuss such questions with more time than is available at present.

Mr. Chairman, I turn now to the maintenance of international peace and security. Like many other delegations, we believe that this is an area of fundamental importance and one on which the Committee could play a very constructive role. My delegation hopes the Committee will discuss the proposals before it in a systematic and positive way and will focus initially, in accordance with its mandate, on those where general agreement is likely to be possible. A more successful course for the Committee would be to focus primarily on the modalities for the more effective pursuit of international peace and security, rather than seeking to discuss and perhaps re-open basic decisions taken at the time the Charter was drafted.