



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twelfth Session
5 – 9 November 2007

C-12/HCC.1
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**REPORT BY THE COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS WITH THE HOST COUNTRY
ON THE PERFORMANCE OF ITS ACTIVITIES SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT**

Introduction and overview

1. At its Eleventh Session the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter “the Conference”) adopted a decision (C-11/DEC.9, dated 7 December 2006) establishing a Committee on Relations with the Host Country (hereinafter “the Committee”), composed of the following members:
 - (a) the Chairperson of the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”);
 - (b) two representatives of each regional group;
 - (c) a representative of the Host Country, to be appointed by that State Party; and
 - (d) the Director-General.
2. The Conference instructed the Committee to address the privileges and immunities referred to in its decision, as well as all categories of issues that were considered by the Working Group that the Chairperson of the Council established pursuant to a mandate of the Council at its Fortieth Session, and by the Contact Group that was subsequently established to find, together with the Secretariat and the Host Country, mutually satisfying solutions to pending matters regarding the full implementation of the Headquarters Agreement.
3. The Conference also authorised the Committee to convene periodically and whenever it is convoked by its Chairperson at the request of any Member State or the Director-General, and requested the Committee to report to it at its Twelfth Session, through the Council, on the progress it has made.
4. The Committee was established on 10 May 2007, with the regional groups represented as follows:

African Group	Algeria and South Africa
Asian Group	Islamic Republic of Iran, and Pakistan
Eastern European States Parties	Croatia and the Russian Federation
Latin American and Caribbean States Parties	Guatemala and Mexico
Western European and other States Parties	Switzerland and the United States of America



Meetings the Committee has held

5. Since its establishment, the Committee has held three meetings. At its first, which was held on Thursday, 10 May 2007, and which was chaired by Ambassador Hlengiwe Buhle Mkhize of South Africa, it agreed that it would meet once each quarter. The method of working was also approved, including an arrangement whereby the agenda for each meeting would be limited to those issues proposed to the Chairperson of the Council by a regional group. For its part, the Host Country agreed to invite relevant Dutch authorities to Committee meetings as and when requests arose.
6. In remarks he made to the Committee at this first meeting, the Director-General discussed the status of implementation of the Headquarters Agreement, emphasising the warm relations that obtain with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and other Host Country authorities. He also noted that the Committee has an important role to play in maintaining good relations between the Permanent Representations and the Host Country, and between it and the staff of the Secretariat.
7. The second and third meetings were chaired by Ambassador Romeo Arguelles of the Philippines. At the second, which was held at Schiphol Airport on Friday, 6 July 2007, members met with Airport authorities to discuss a number of issues, including current procedures for very important persons (VIPs). The Committee requested a specially designated passport-control point for diplomats.
8. Mr Ron Louwse, Head of Security at Schiphol Airport, gave a comprehensive presentation on security issues in general, and on procedures for VIPs in particular. Ms Afke Boonen, Head of the new VIP Centre, gave a presentation on the Centre, which will be launched in January 2008. The Committee heard that it would be located in Terminal 4, in the non-Schengen area; that it would include a lounge for meetings and receptions, a press room, and conference rooms; and that transport by car to aeroplanes, and additional parking space for at least 25 cars, would also be provided.
9. At its third meeting, on Thursday, 6 September 2007, the Committee heard a presentation by the Host Country on a proposed arrangement for the use of the tax-and-duty-free commissary in the OPCW headquarters building. The presentation was delivered by Mr Ron Muzert, Ambassador for International Organisations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Transmission of the present report to the Conference of the States Parties

10. The Council at its Fiftieth Session considered and noted the foregoing report, which was submitted to it under cover of EC-50/HCC/1, dated 14 September 2007. Pursuant to C-11/DEC.9, the present version is now being transmitted to the Conference for consideration at its Twelfth Session.