

Northwest Atlantic



Fisheries Organization

Serial No. N4564

NAFO/GC Doc. 01/5

## **REPORT OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting, 17 September 2001  
International Conference Centre "Plaza América", Varadero, Matanzas, Cuba

- 1.1 In accordance with the announcements of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting and the Provisional Agenda circulated to Contracting Parties, the meeting was opened by the NAFO President and Chairman of the General Council, Enrique Oltuski (Cuba), at 1500 hr on 17 September 2001.
- 1.2 The Chairman welcomed everyone to Cuba.
- 1.3 The Representatives of nine (9) Contracting Parties were present: Cuba, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland-DFG), Estonia, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine (Annex 1).  
  
Observers were present from FAO, Mr. D. J. Doulman and, from South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO), Mr. S. Kashindi. Mr. Doulman presented the statement by FAO to the Meeting (Annex 2).
- 1.4 The Chairman noted there was no quorum to hold a General Meeting of NAFO at this time. He announced the Secretariat (T. Amaratunga, Assistant Executive Secretary) will record the activities of this meeting and the outcome will be communicated to Contracting Parties at earliest practical time for considerations for future activities and decisions.
- 1.5 The Chairman noted the extra-ordinary situation with respect to conducting this meeting, and proposed that he would say a few words of introduction and ask the delegations present to give their views. Heads of delegations expressed their opinions. The delegation of Denmark (DFG) presented its written statement (Annex 3).
- 1.6 The Chairman mentioned that the Cuban Government had conveyed its condolences to the government of United States of America, and its solidarity with the USA in finding ways to oppose such terrorist violence.
- 1.7 The Chairman noted the violence has also affected NAFO in that there is no quorum to conduct its meeting.
- 1.8 It was noted that the Scientific Council members had arrived before these problems and was in a position to continue with their business during this week, but the rest of NAFO could not have meetings at this time.
- 1.9 The Chairman noted that the views of delegations around could be recorded, but decisions on how to proceed will require mail voting. The Chairman then called for the views from Heads of Delegation.
- 1.10 All Contracting Parties around the table expressed their views, and these were summarized for record on this report.
- 1.11 Collectively, Contracting Parties expressed appreciation to Cuba, and to the Chairman, Mr. Oltuski, for hosting this meeting, for the excellent modern facilities offered for the meeting, and the warm welcome extended to this beautiful country.

- 1.12 In general, Contracting Parties expressed deep regret for the tragedy in USA and extended condolences to USA.
- 1.13 Views were expressed by some Contracting Parties that it was regrettable that the USA incident affected NAFO business.
- 1.14 It was noted regrettably by some that the inability of certain Contracting Parties to participate in this meeting was not conveyed to all Contracting Parties well in advance of the meeting date, and many Contracting Parties were already in travel status when announcements were made.
- 1.15 Some Contracting Parties expressed concern that this late communication resulted in great expenses to the host country, Cuba, and also Contracting Parties who arrived for the meeting. It was regrettable that those that arrived could not carry back home firm decisions of NAFO.
- 1.16 The Chairman received two specific proposals made by Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), and Japan, on how to proceed with NAFO decisions as a result of these delays.
- 1.17 It was noted that in accordance with the NAFO Statutes, the current elected Executive Officers will hold their positions until such time as the business of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting is completed.
- 1.18 One specific proposal offered by Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), identified the need to work as soon as possible to address the requirements for 2002 on Conservation and Enforcement Measures including allocations as well as matters of NAFO Administration. In this regard, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) was ready to host a new meeting near Helsingor, Denmark, during the 5<sup>th</sup> week of 2002 (beginning 28 January 2002). However, this decision was needed this week.
- 1.19 Japan expressed the view that it cannot support a proposal to hold a full-scale meeting again for NAFO requirements for 2002. While such a meeting would represent commitments for large additional expenses, it would also be difficult to adjust many Government schedules. Japan proposed a mail vote to be held immediately to extend the current 2001 NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures and administration commitments for the year 2002. It was proposed that new decisions for 2003 as needed should be undertaken at the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting which will be held in Spain in September 2002.
- 1.20 Japan stated that this proposal was justified because the scientific advice from the Scientific Council in June 2001 had not proposed significant changes from the previous year. Also, Japan proposed that the present Executive Officers should continue to hold office till the end of the September 2002 Meeting in Spain.
- 1.21 With respect to these two proposals, each delegation commented on their preference.
- 1.22 Contracting Parties present around the table expressed their individual views, and in general support for the proposal by Japan was stated by Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Ukraine.
- 1.23 Contracting Party Cuba was in general support of the proposal by Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) to hold another meeting in the place and time decided through mail vote.
- 1.24 The Chairman noted that the proposals from Denmark and Japan and the views of the rest of the Contracting Parties will be circulated to all the member countries of NAFO and comments and proposals requested.
- 1.25 Once all this information is received the Secretariat will circulate the proposals and a mail vote requested in order to take final decisions.
- 1.26 In conclusion, the Chairman expressed his sincere thanks to all Contracting Parties, and once again expressed in the name of all the Contracting Parties NAFO's condolences to the United States.

## Annex 1. List of Participants

### CUBA

#### Head of Delegation

E. Oltuski, Ministerio de la Industria Pesquera, 5<sup>ta</sup> Avenue y 246, Sta Fe, Barlovento  
Phone: +537 297008 – Fax: +537 246297 –E-mail: [oltuski@fishnavy.inf.cu](mailto:oltuski@fishnavy.inf.cu)

#### Alternate

L. L. Albelo, President, Pesport Association, Playa la Habana

#### Advisers

R. Cabrera, 5<sup>ta</sup> Ave y 246, Playa, Ciudad Habana  
Phone: +537 298088 – Fax: +537 294168 – E-mail: [rinter@fishnavy.inf.cu](mailto:rinter@fishnavy.inf.cu)  
V. E. Sarda Espinosa, Ministerio de la Industria Pesquera, 5<sup>ta</sup> Avenue y 246, Sta Fe, Barlovento  
Phone: +537 297034 - Fax: +537 249168 - E-mail: [abogados@fishnavy.inf.cu](mailto:abogados@fishnavy.inf.cu)  
R. Hurtado, San Indalecio # 707-A e/Coco y Encarnacion, Santos Suarez, C. Habana  
Phone: +537 29 71 17/297008 – Fax: +537 29 71 17 – [outuski@fishnavy.inf.cu](mailto:outuski@fishnavy.inf.cu)  
I. Ramos, Pesport Association, Cuban Fishing Fleet, Habana  
E. Valdes, Centro de Investigaciones Presqueras, Sta. Ave y 248, Barlovento, Sta Fe, Playa C. Habana 19100  
Phone: +537 298055 – Fax: +537 339168 – E-mail: [evaldes@cip.fishnavy.inf.cu](mailto:evaldes@cip.fishnavy.inf.cu)

### DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF FAROES AND GREENLAND)

#### Head of Delegation

A. Kristiansen, Ministry of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Yviri við Strond 17, P. O. Box 347, FO-100  
Torshavn, Faroe Islands  
Phone: + 298 35 30 30 - Fax: +298 35 30 37 - E-mail: [andrask@fisk.fo](mailto:andrask@fisk.fo)

#### Representative

A. Kristiansen (see address above)

#### Advisers

O. A. Jørgensen, Danish Institute for Fisheries Research, Charlottenlund Slot, 2900 Charlottenlund, Copenhagen  
Phone: +45 33 96 33 00 - Fax: +45 33 - E-mail: [olj@dfu.min.dk](mailto:olj@dfu.min.dk)  
M. T. Nedergaard, Fiskerilicensinspektør, Head of Unit, Grønlands Fiskerilicenskontrol, Postbox 501, DK-3900 Nuuk, Greenland  
Phone: +299 345000 - Fax: +299 323235 - E-mail: [mads@gh.gl](mailto:mads@gh.gl)  
A. Nicolajsen, Fiskirannsóknarstofan, Noatun, P. O. Box 3051, FR-110 Torshavn, Faroe Islands  
Phone: +298 1 5092 - Fax: +298 1 8264 - E-mail: [arninic@frs.fo](mailto:arninic@frs.fo)  
L. D. Madsen, Head of Section, Dept. of Industry, Greenland Home Rule, Box 269, 3900 Nuuk, Greenland  
Phone: +299 34 53 29 Fax: +299 32 47 04 E-mail: [ldm@gh.gl](mailto:ldm@gh.gl)  
A. Olafsson, Councillor on Faroe Islands Affairs, Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2 Asiatic Plads, DK-1448 Copenhagen K, Denmark  
Phone: +45 33 92 03 41 – Fax: +45 33 92 01 77 – E-mail: [arnola@um.dk](mailto:arnola@um.dk)  
E. Rosing, Head of Unit, Dept. of Industry, Greenland Home Rule, Box 269, 3900 Nuuk, Greenland  
Phone: +299 34 53 32 – Fax: +299 32 47 04 – E-mail: [emanuel@gh.gl](mailto:emanuel@gh.gl)

### ESTONIA

#### Head of Delegation

K. Mühlbaum, Ministry of the Environment, Fisheries Department, Marja 4d, 10617 Tallinn  
Phone: +372 6567620 - Fax: +372 6567599 - E-mail: [kristiina@klab.envir.ee](mailto:kristiina@klab.envir.ee)

**Representative**

K. Mühlbaum (see address above)

**Advisers**

K. Martin, Officer, Fisheries Department, Ministry of the Environment, Marja 4d, 10617 Tallinn

Phone: +372 656 7315 - Fax: +372 6567 599 – E-mail: [kaire.martin@ekm.envir.ee](mailto:kaire.martin@ekm.envir.ee)

T. Roose, Deputy Director General, Estonian Environmental Inspectorate, Kopli 76, 10416 Tallinn

Phone: +3726962238 – Fax: +3726962237, E-mail: [tarvo.roose@kki.ee](mailto:tarvo.roose@kki.ee)

A. Sõna, Reyktal Ltd., Paljassaare Road 28-412, 10313 Tallinn

Phone: +372 6709460 - Fax: +372 6512055 - E-mail: [arne@reyktal.ee](mailto:arne@reyktal.ee)

A. Soome, Senior Officer, Ministry of the Environment, Fisheries Department, Marja 4d, 10617 Tallinn

Phone: +372 6112 987 - Fax: +372 6567 599 - E-mail: [ain.soome@ekm.envir.ee](mailto:ain.soome@ekm.envir.ee)

T. Tamme, Reyktal Ltd., Paljassaare Road 28-426, 10313 Tallinn

Phone: +372 6512055 - Fax: +372 6512055 - E-mail: [toomas@alvinab.ee](mailto:toomas@alvinab.ee)

**JAPAN****Head of Delegation**

S. Yuge, Councillor, Resources Management Dept., Fishery Agency Government of Japan, 1-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100

Phone: +81 3 3591 2045 Fax: +81 3 3502 0571

**Advisers**

M. Ogawa, Japan Marine Fishery Resources Research Center., 3-27 Kioi-Cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-009X

Phone: +81 3 3265 8301 – Fax: +81 3 3262 2359 – E-mail: [ogawa@jamarc.go.jp](mailto:ogawa@jamarc.go.jp)

K. Suzuki, Assistant Director, Fisheries Div., Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo

Phone: +81 3 3580 3311 – Fax: +81 3 3503 3136 – E-mail: [keiko.suzuki@mofa.go.jp](mailto:keiko.suzuki@mofa.go.jp)

K. Tanaka, Deputy Director, International Affairs Div., Fisheries Agency, Government of Japan, 1-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8907

Phone: +81 3 3591 1086 - Fax: +81 3 3502 0571 - E-mail: [kengo\\_tanaka@nm.maff.go.jp](mailto:kengo_tanaka@nm.maff.go.jp)

**LATVIA****Head of Delegation**

N. Riekstins, Director, National Board of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture, 2, Republikas laukums, LV-1010 Riga

Phone: +371 732 3877 - Fax: +371 733 4892 - E-mail: [fish@com.latnet.lv](mailto:fish@com.latnet.lv)

**Alternate**

R. Derkacs, Head of International Agreements and Legal Div., National Board of Fisheries, 2, Republikas laukums, LV-1010 Riga

Phone: +371 702 7415 - Fax: +371 733 4892 - E-mail: [ricards.vzp@latnet.lv](mailto:ricards.vzp@latnet.lv)

**Representatives**

N. Riekstins (see address above)

R. Derkacs (see address above)

**Advisers**

D. Kalinovs, President, "Mersrags" Ltd., Brivibas Gatve 215A-46, LV-1039 Riga

Phone: +371 754 2471 – Fax: +371 754 2471 – E-mail: [skaga@latnet.lv](mailto:skaga@latnet.lv)

**LITHUANIA****Head of Delegation**

V. Vaitiekūnas, Director, Fisheries Dept. under the Ministry of Agriculture, Gedimino 19, 2600 Vilnius  
Phone: + 37 02 391174 – Fax: +3702 391176 – E-mail: [vytautasv@zum.lt](mailto:vytautasv@zum.lt)

**Alternate**

A. Rusakevicius, Fisheries Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, 19 Gedimino St., 2600 Vilnius  
Phone: +370 2 391183 - Fax: +370 2 391176 - E-mail: [algirdasr@zum.lt](mailto:algirdasr@zum.lt)

**Representatives**

A. Rusakevicius (see address above)

**Advisers**

V. Petraitiene, Fisheries Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Gedimino 19, Vilnius  
Phone: +370 2 391174 – Fax: +370 2 391174 – E-mail: [vyteutop@zum.lt](mailto:vyteutop@zum.lt)  
V. Ramanauskas, S Daukanto 9, Klaipeda, LT-5800  
Phone: +370 8 742045 – Fax: +370 6 312393 – E-mail: [vramanau@takas.lt](mailto:vramanau@takas.lt)  
S. Ramanauskienė, Ukmergės 14, LT-5800, Klaipeda  
Phone: +370 6 312216 – Fax: +370 6 312393 – E-mail: [vramanau@takas.lt](mailto:vramanau@takas.lt)  
L. Siksniete, Gedimino 19, Vilnius  
Phone: +370 7 323365 – Fax: +370 7 226204 – E-mail: [lina@lrf.lt](mailto:lina@lrf.lt)  
S. Staskus, M. Gimbutienės Str. 35, 3014 Kaunas  
Phone: 370 7 370656 – Fax: +370 7 370664 – E-mail: [zukme@ijo.net](mailto:zukme@ijo.net)  
J. Vilkiene, M. Gimbutienės Str. 35, 3014 Kaunas  
Phone: 370 7 370656 – Fax: +370 7 370664 – E-mail: [zukme@ijo.net](mailto:zukme@ijo.net)

**POLAND****Head of Delegation**

T. Wodzynski, Second Secretary for Economic Affairs, Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Calle C No. 452, esq. 19,  
Vedado, Ciudad de La Habana, Cuba  
Phone: +53 7 662439/40 – Fax: +53 7 662442 – E-mail: [ambrp@ceniai.inf.cu](mailto:ambrp@ceniai.inf.cu)

**Representative**

T. Wodzynski (see address above)

**Adviser**

B. Szemioth, Parkowa 13/17/123, Warszawa  
Phone: +48228408920 – Fax: 48228408920 – E-mail: [szemioth@alpha.net.pl](mailto:szemioth@alpha.net.pl)

**RUSSIA****Head of Delegation**

A. N. Makoedov, State Committee for Fisheries of the Russian Federation, 12 Rozhdestvensky Boul., Moscow  
103031  
Phone: +7 095 928 5527 - Fax: +7095 928 5527

**Representative**

A. N. Makoedov (see address above)

## Advisers

V. K. Babayan, Head of Laboratory for System Analysis of Fishery Resources, VNIRO, 17, V. Krasnoselskaya, Moscow 107140

Phone: +70 95 264 6983 – E-mail: [vbabayan@vniro.ru](mailto:vbabayan@vniro.ru)

A. Boltnev, PINRO, 6 Knipovich St., Murmansk

Phone: +7 815 2 47 2532 – Fax: +815 2 473331 – E-mail: [boltnev@pinro.murmansk.ru](mailto:boltnev@pinro.murmansk.ru)

V. A. Rikhter, AtlantNIRO, 5 Dmitry Donskoy St., Kaliningrad, 236000

Phone: +70 112 22 5547 – Fax: +70 112 21 9997 – E-mail: [atlant@baltnet.ru](mailto:atlant@baltnet.ru)

A. Rodin, Hohlovsky St. 3-13, Moscow 9162881

Phone: +7095 9162381 – Fax: +7095 9162460

E. Samoylova, PINRO, 6 Knipovich St., Murmansk 183763

Phone: +7 8152473461 – Fax: +47 78910518 – E-mail: [inter@pinro.murmansk.ru](mailto:inter@pinro.murmansk.ru)

V. N. Shibanov, PINRO, 6 Knipovich St., Murmansk 183763

Phone: +7 8152 47 26 14 – Fax: +7 8152 47 33 31 – E-mail: [inter@pinro.murmansk.ru](mailto:inter@pinro.murmansk.ru)

## UKRAINE

### Head of Delegation

V. Litvinov, Senior Expert, State Department for Fisheries of Ukraine, 82A Turgenivska str., Kiev, 252053

Phone: +38044 246 8984 - Fax: +38044 246 8984 – E-mail: [nauka@i.kiev.ua](mailto:nauka@i.kiev.ua)

### Representative

V. Litvinov (see address above)

## Advisers

L. Petsyk, Director, Chernomorskaya Rybolovnaya Kompania Ltd., 12, Safronova, Sevastopol

Phone: +38 0692451905 – Fax: +38 0692 577277 – E-mail: [bsc@souz.sevastopol](mailto:bsc@souz.sevastopol)

V. Kulykov, Embajade de Ukraine, 5ta Ave. No. 4405 E/44 y 46 Miramar, La Habana, Cuba

Phone: +537 24 25 86 – Fax: +537 24 23 41 – [cubukrem@cenial.inf.cu](mailto:cubukrem@cenial.inf.cu)

I. I. Serobaba, Deputy Director for Scientific Work, Southern Scientific Research Institute of Marine Fisheries and Oceanography (YugNIRO), 2, Sverdlov St., 98300 Kerch, Crimea

Phone: +38 06561 2 35 30 – Fax: +38 06561 21572 – E-mail: [postmaster@yugniro.crimea.com](mailto:postmaster@yugniro.crimea.com)

## OBSERVERS

D. J. Doulman, Senior Fishery Liaison Officer, International Institutions and Liaison Service, Fishery Policy and Planning Division, Fisheries Dept. (FAO), Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, Room F-409, 00100 Rome, Italy

Phone: +39 0657 056752 – Fax: +39 0657 056500 – E-mail: [david.doulman@fao.org](mailto:david.doulman@fao.org)

M. S. Kashindi, Republic of Namibia, Directorate of Policy, Planning and Economics, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Private Bag 13355, Windhoek, Namibia

Phone: +264 61 2053029 – Fax: +264 61 2053041 – E-mail: [mkashindi@mfmr.gov.na](mailto:mkashindi@mfmr.gov.na)

H.-J. Rätz, ICES Observer, Institute of Sea Fisheries, Palmaille 9, D-22767 Hamburg, Federal Republic of Germany

Phone: +49 40 389 05169 – Fax: +49 40 389 05263 – E-mail: [raetz.ish@bfa-fisch.de](mailto:raetz.ish@bfa-fisch.de)

## SECRETARIAT

T. Amaratunga, Assistant Executive Secretary

F. D. Keating, Administrative Assistant

S. Goodick, Accounting Officer

D. C. A. Auby, Word Processing Secretary

## **Annex 2. Statement by FAO to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization**

**Varadero, Cuba  
17-21 September 2001**

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates and observers:

FAO is very grateful for the invitation extended by NAFO's Secretariat to observe this annual meeting. Over the years there have been close and effective working relations between the two Organizations and it is FAO's earnest desire that this type of collaboration should continue.

FAO appreciates, in particular, the cooperativeness of the NAFO Secretariat in responding to FAO's periodic requests for information relating to NAFO's activities. These requests are made to NAFO and other regional fishery management organizations once or twice a year and FAO is well aware that such requests create an additional burden for the secretariats of these organizations. The NAFO Secretariat always responds fully and in a timely manner. This collaboration greatly assists FAO in meeting its global fisheries reporting responsibilities.

This NAFO Session is taking place when global fishery issues are more complex than ever before. The international community is requiring that both target and non-target fishery resources are managed and utilized in a long-term sustainability manner. Furthermore, there is a need to:

- proceed with precaution when information is lacking;
- deal responsively with new entrants;
- ensure that fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance is both cost- and operationally effective, and so on.

In short, innovative measures are needed to address the changing complexion of fisheries and the demands of management.

Regional fishery management organizations such as NAFO have a critical role to play in managing fishery resources. Where resources are shared there must be a coordinating mechanism to facilitate international cooperation. Such cooperation requires a high level of commitment on the part of all participants to ensure that stocks are not overfished nor their ecosystem degraded. However, management arrangements must be seen as fair and equitable if ongoing efforts are not to be undermined by disgruntled players.

Despite some tough periods, NAFO has come a long way since its Convention entered into force in 1979. The Organization has continued to focus sharply on its mandate of promoting the conservation and optimum utilization of the fishery resources of the Northwest Atlantic area within a framework appropriate to the regime of extended coastal States jurisdiction over fisheries, and accordingly to encourage international cooperation and consultation with respect to these resources.

In pursuing this goal, NAFO has been at the forefront of work undertaken by regional fishery management organizations to:

- implement the precautionary approach;
- enhance monitoring, control and surveillance;
- minimize by-catches, discards and post-harvest losses;
- promote compliance by non-contracting NAFO parties with conservation and management measures established by the Organization;
- strengthen dispute settlement procedures, and
- promote transparency.

These NAFO initiatives have been taken against a background that has involved States taking measures to implement recently concluded international fishery instruments, namely, the 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement, the

1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the four international plans of action concluded within its framework, and the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement. The implementation of these instruments is critical if long-term sustainability in fisheries is to be achieved.

The 1993 Compliance Agreement is nearing the number of acceptances required to bring it into force. As of today the Agreement has 22 acceptances, and an additional three are required for it to enter into force. For those countries that have not accepted the Agreement, FAO urges that every effort be made to do so. The entry into force of this Agreement will enhance the manner in which high seas fisheries are managed.

Let me conclude Mr. Chairman, by saying that I bring to the meeting the very best wishes of FAO's Assistant Director-General for Fisheries, Mr. Ichiro Nomura. A friend and colleague to many of you, he wishes the meeting success in its deliberations on the important matters before this session.

Thank you very much.



**Annex 3. Statement by Delegation of Denmark (in respect of  
the Faroe Islands and Greenland)**

**Delegation for  
Denmark in respect of  
The Faroe Islands and  
Greenland (DFG).**

**Ad N7. J. nr. 63.C.5 a**

**NAFO Annual Meeting 2001  
Informal Council Meeting  
17 September 2001**

**Opening Statement  
Talking Points**

Mr. Chairman,

The Delegation for DFG wants to thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation to the annual meeting of NAFO 2001 to be held here in Varadero, Cuba. Now we are here, and we can see that you have arranged everything necessary in order to make this meeting a successful one, just like you did last time we met in Cuba, in 1985.

Upon our arrival here, we have learnt that a considerable number of delegations have decided not to take part in this meeting. We have taken note of the fact, that you, Mr. Chairman, have declared that there are not enough Contracting Parties present here to constitute a quorum, and therefore this session is to be regarded as an informal gathering of a number of Contracting Parties.

We have understood that the absence of a number of delegations is due to the tragic events, which took place in New York Tuesday last week, 11 September.

In Denmark, including the Faroe Islands and Greenland, we deeply regret these tragic events. The head of the Danish Government as well as the heads of the two home governments have expressed their condolences to the U. S. Government. Furthermore, the Danish Kingdom authorities have in the relevant international fora expressed their solidarity with the United States in this situation where major cities and institutions of the U. S. have been subject to terrorist aggression.

Having said this, it has been the opinion of the relevant authorities of the DFG that we, as a Contracting Party to NAFO, have been called by the NAFO President and Secretariat for a regular NAFO annual meeting here, at the invitation of the Cuban Government. Therefore we have deemed it correct to come here, unless NAFO had decided to postpone the meeting.

If a decision to postpone the meeting, due to difficulties of the North American delegations to participate, had been put to a quick postal vote Thursday afternoon, or at the very latest, early Friday morning, European time, DFG would have voted in favour, and, if the proposal were carried, we would of course have stayed at home. We acknowledge that the absence of the coastal state, which has most straddling stocks in common with the Regulatory Area, would greatly reduce the value of an annual meeting, not least in the Fisheries Commission.

Mr. Chairman, DFG is both a coastal state in NAFO and taking active part in the fisheries in the Regulatory Area. We feel responsibility for the functioning of this organisation. We will in this meeting, recognising the legal constraints that limit the powers of this gathering, be ready to co-operate with you, Mr. President, and take active part in a discussion of how we best can perform the functions of this organisation under these unforeseen circumstances.