DECLARATION OF THE 1980s AS A DISARMAMENT DECADE

Report of the Secretary-General

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REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

BULGARIA

Original: Russian
April 1980

As has been stated more than once, the People's Republic of Bulgaria considers that the cessation of the arms race and the adoption of effective disarmament measures is a basic prerequisite for the maintenance of international peace and security.

As was recently stated by Todor Zhivkov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and Chairman of the Council of State, "the limitation and discontinuance of the arms race and the scaling-down of the parameters of military confrontation would be a salutary step for Europe and the whole world."

Thanks to the joint efforts of peace-loving forces in the 1970s - designated by the United Nations as the "Disarmament Decade" - a number of major measures were taken to strengthen peace, limit the arms race and avert the danger of nuclear war. A considerable contribution to that end was made by the socialist countries.

During that period a number of multilateral and bilateral international agreements was concluded. For example, there was the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons on the Sea-Ded and the Ocean Floor, the Convention on the prohibition of the production of bacteriological weapons, the Convention on the prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques and similar agreements, as well as bilateral agreements within the context of the Soviet-American strategic arms limitation negotiations (SALT) and, in particular, the SALT-II Agreement signed at Vienna on 18 June, the practical implementation of which would promote the further limitation and reduction of nuclear-missile arsenals, and of nuclear weaponry in general.

During the past decade, a special session of the United Nations General Assembly, devoted entirely to disarmament, was also held for the first time. The Final Document adopted at that session specifies both the immediate and the long-term goals in that field and reiterates the necessity for effective disarmament.

However, despite the results achieved, the arms race not only continues but also shows signs of increasing. As a result of action taken by certain ruling circles in the Western countries to step up military preparations, and particularly the decision adopted at the December session of the NATO Council in 1979 on the production and stationing of new American medium-range nuclear devices in some Western European countries, this tendency has recently assumed particularly dangerous proportions. This course presents a serious threat to the disarmament process and to the positive results thus far achieved in international relations. In the situation that has developed, a constructive continuation of the disarmament talks is becoming an even more urgent necessity.
The People's Republic of Bulgaria supported the idea of proclaiming the 1980s as the second Disarmament Decade. It considers that during this period every possible effort must be made to overcome existing difficulties, to reach a decisive turning-point in the disarmament negotiations, to take effective measures to curb the arms race and to set in motion a process of genuine disarmament with the ultimate goal of achieving general and complete disarmament.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria considers that the comprehensive programme of disarmament to be approved by the Disarmament Committee should be taken as a basis for the enumeration of the tasks for the second Decade. In that connexion, special attention should be paid to the following points:

Since the chief threat to international peace and security is the nuclear arms race, nuclear disarmament problems should continue to be the focal point of the efforts of all peace-loving States. In that connexion the practical implementation of the decisions adopted at the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament is a matter of particular importance.

The proposal of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries concerning the cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and the gradual reduction of nuclear-weapon stockpiles, culminating in their complete elimination, is extremely important for the transition to practical steps in the sphere of nuclear disarmament.

The solution of the problems of nuclear disarmament must be accompanied by and inextricably linked with renunciation of the use of force or the threat of force in international relations and with the strengthening of international legal guarantees for the security of States which also provide for the prohibition of the use of both nuclear and conventional armaments.

The reinforcement of the rules governing the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the strengthening of guarantees for the security of non-nuclear-weapon States, the non-stationing of nuclear weapons in the territory of States where there are at present no such weapons, the conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear tests and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, would substantially reduce the danger of a thermo-nuclear disaster.

The prohibition of the development and production of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction and the prohibition of chemical weapons, and similar measures, would be particularly helpful in curbing the most dangerous trends in the arms race.

At the same time efforts must be intensified with a view to the limitation and reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons, and for the removal of foreign military bases from the territory of other States.

An understanding between the permanent members of the Security Council and other States having a large economic and military potential on the reduction of
military budgets would greatly help to curb the arms race. The implementation of such measures would make it possible to devote a portion of the resources thus released to increased assistance to developing countries.

A substantial contribution to the achievement of the goals of the second Decade would, in our opinion, be the implementation of regional disarmament measures, particularly in areas with a high concentration of armed forces and armaments. Particularly important in this connexion are the proposals put forward in the statement made by the Soviet leader L. I. Brezhnev on 6 October 1979 at Berlin, as well as the proposals made by the Warsaw Treaty countries on 23 November 1978 and 6 December 1979.

The holding of a second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and particularly the convening of a world disarmament conference, with broader terms of reference than the special sessions, could make a major contribution to the achievement of the goals of the second Disarmament Decade.

KUWAIT

[Original: English]
[April 1980]

The competent authorities in Kuwait believe that a Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade should embody the findings of the studies being carried out within the United Nations on disarmament, particularly the study on the relationship between disarmament and international security and the study on the relationship between disarmament and development.

Nuclear disarmament should be considered one of the main objectives of the Second Decade, including a comprehensive test ban. In this respect responsibility of States, such as Israel and South Africa, which prevent the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East and Africa should be clearly defined.

Another major objective should be the reduction of military budgets of the major military Powers and using the resources thus released for economic and social development, especially in the third world.

Special mention should also be made of a ban on the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. This matter has gained increasing urgency in view of recent developments in Afghanistan.
Nicaragua

[Original: Spanish 24 March 1980]

With regard to the operative part of this resolution, the Government of Nicaragua would agree to the inclusion in the Declaration of, inter alia, the following principles, on which the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, of which Nicaragua is a member, is based:

"The persistent channelling of human and material resources into an arms race is unproductive, wasteful and dangerous to humanity, and we must therefore reaffirm the necessity, importance and urgency of adopting and applying measures for general and complete disarmament with all due speed and of using a substantial part of the resources thus released, particularly by the major Powers, for the benefit of developing countries, thus contributing to the creation of a climate of international peace and security."

Niger

[Original: French 27 March 1980]

As a country devoted to peace and justice, Niger is in favour of the declaration of this Decade and, as in the past, will support any efforts made to this end by the United Nations.

Sudan

[Original: Arabic 1 April 1980]

1. The Sudan, which is in favour of this declaration, has always exerted the utmost endeavour in all fields related to the application of international humanitarian law to armed conflicts with a view to reducing the agonies suffered by mankind during wars and prohibiting or restricting the use of excessively injurious weapons or weapons which have indiscriminate effects.

Proposals concerning measures to be taken in the 1980s

(a) With regard to conventional weapons:

The United Nations should extend all possible aid and assistance to the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, the first session of which was held at Geneva last
September and the second session of which is expected to be held next October, so that the Conference will be able to accomplish the tasks assigned to it by drafting a comprehensive agreement on the prohibition or restriction of the use of specific conventional weapons or separate agreements for individual types of weapons, so that we can usher in the decade of the 1980s with an appropriate achievement.

(b) With regard to nuclear weapons:

The Sudan hopes that, with help from the United Nations and endeavours on the part of the Organization of African Unity, the 1980s will witness the drafting of an agreement acceptable to the General Assembly and under the terms of which Africa will be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone after the fashion of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, signed in 1967, which turned Latin America into a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Original: Russian
11 April 1980

At the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the delegation of the USSR supported the resolution concerning the declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade. In the opinion of the USSR, the main task of this Decade is to preserve, strengthen and further develop the positive results achieved in curbing the arms race during the 1970s and to achieve the implementation of practical measures in this field. The 1980s must be years of real forward movement in the struggle to secure a lasting peace.

In the course of the 1970s, declared by the United Nations as the first Disarmament Decade, certain positive results were attained. For example, international agreements were concluded to prohibit the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor, the use of bacteriological weapons and the military use of environmental modification techniques, and agreements were also concluded on strategic arms limitation and the prevention of nuclear war. During those years, certain measures were initiated for the purpose of strengthening confidence in Europe. A definite procedure was established for disarmament negotiations on both a multilateral and a bilateral basis. The United Nations General Assembly held its first special session devoted to disarmament, at which useful decisions were taken. The task now is to put these into effect.

The results of the negotiations on disarmament problems during the 1970s show that real measures in this field are possible and practicable. The achievements of the past decade have provided a good basis for further progress towards reducing armaments and bringing about disarmament.

Nevertheless, because of opposition by certain forces, the arms race has not been halted. The United States and its allies are continuing to increase their
military budgets. In these countries, new and increasingly dangerous weapons and weapons systems are being developed and stockpiled, and arsenals are being quantitatively increased.

As the 1970s give way to the 1980s, the international situation has grown more tense as a result of the actions of the United States and certain other NATO countries aimed at undermining détente and exacerbating the arms race.

With the international situation as complicated as it is today, the Soviet Union believes that it is of the utmost importance not to slacken but rather to intensify the efforts of all peace-loving States to strengthen peace, eliminate the threat of war and achieve concrete action to curb the arms race and attain disarmament. The fundamental position of the USSR remains unchanged: the Soviet Union is prepared to limit or prohibit any type of weapon on a mutual basis and by agreement with other States, provided, of course, that no one's security is impaired and that full reciprocity is observed among States possessing the weapons concerned.

The Soviet Union favours negotiations on a wide range of topics. All negotiations in this field which have been initiated in recent years in various forums and on a bilateral basis but have now been suspended or postponed for one reason or another should be resumed and continued. The USSR and other countries of the socialist community have put forward a realistic programme of measures which covers virtually every aspect of the problem of halting the arms race and achieving disarmament and which indicates the basic directions in which efforts should be concentrated in coming years. I refer, in particular, to the following measures:

- Cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and the gradual reduction of stockpiles to the point of their complete elimination, together with the immediate initiation, for that purpose, of appropriate negotiations among all nuclear-weapon States and a certain number of non-nuclear-weapon States. At the same time, measures should be taken to strengthen political guarantees of the security of States and those provided by international law;

- The further limitation and reduction of stockpiles of strategic weapons, and the further qualitative limitation of such weapons, with due regard for all factors affecting the strategic situation throughout the world, including that in Europe;

- The conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests;

- The conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of radiological weapons;

- The adoption of further measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, including the universal accession of States to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

/...
The conclusion of a convention on strengthening guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States;

- The conclusion of an agreement prohibiting the emplacement of nuclear weapons in the territory of States in which none are now located;

- The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world;

- The limitation and subsequent reduction of military activities in the Indian Ocean, and the creation of a zone of peace in that region;

- The conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons;

- The conclusion of a comprehensive agreement prohibiting the development and production of new weapons of mass destruction and new weapons systems of that type;

- The conclusion of a convention prohibiting the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of neutron weapons;

- Cessation of the development of new conventional weapons of great destructive capacity;

- The achievement of agreement, among the Powers which are permanent members of the Security Council and the countries linked with them under military agreements, to refrain from increasing the size of their armies and the numbers of their conventional weapons;

- Limitation of the sale and supply of conventional weapons;

- The elaboration of an international agreement prohibiting or restricting the use of conventional weapons which are excessively injurious or have indiscriminate effects;

- Accession, by all States which have not yet so acceded, to the existing agreements on limitation of the arms race and on disarmament;

- Reduction, in absolute or percentage terms, of the military budgets of the States permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and of other militarily important States;

- The achievement of agreement on reducing armed forces and armaments in Central Europe;

- The conclusion, among all States parties to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, of a treaty outlawing the first use of both nuclear and conventional weapons;

- The further expansion of confidence-building measures in Europe;
- The convening of a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe;
- The convening of a world disarmament conference.

The Soviet Union is convinced that the implementation of the measures enumerated above would give real content to the Second Disarmament Decade. The application of these measures would be of historical significance in the struggle for lasting peace on earth.

States and those who direct their foreign policies must apply their efforts to ensure that the new Decade actually becomes a Disarmament Decade and not one in which the arms race is continued and intensified.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

/Original: English/
/26 March 1980/

The Government of the United Kingdom continues to work actively for balanced and verifiable measures of arms control and disarmament. The United Kingdom thus welcomes genuine attempts to maintain the impetus in arms-control discussions and negotiations, including measures to raise the level of public awareness of these important issues. The United Kingdom sees the declaration of the 1980s as the second Disarmament Decade as such a step.

At the same time, the Government of the United Kingdom takes the view that such declarations will be of limited use if Governments lack the political will to carry them out in good faith. It notes that the first Disarmament Decade saw an unprecedented increase in world military expenditure, the deployment of further nuclear weapons and the distribution of more sophisticated conventional weapons. Nevertheless, the resolution which formally declares the 1980s as a Disarmament Decade might note the considerable efforts made during the first Disarmament Decade to promote arms control. It should include references to the successful negotiations of the 1970s, such as the entry into force of the non-proliferation Treaty, the Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement of 1972, the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor in 1971, the biological weapons Convention of 1972, the 1977 Convention banning the military use of environmental modifications techniques and the signature of the second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty last year.

The declaration might then encourage progress in the tasks to which the 1980s should be devoted. These were outlined in the Final Document of the first United Nations Special Session on Disarmament. The United Kingdom does not believe that it would be helpful to try to map out precisely what should be achieved during the second Disarmament Decade or to set targets for particular measures. The setting of targets may, if they cannot be fulfilled, be a cause of disappointment leading
in turn to a souring of the atmosphere and a reduction in the chances of progress. More important, however, the Committee on Disarmament is now starting work on the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament for presentation to the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly. The United Kingdom does not believe that any purpose would be served by a parallel framework in the context of the Disarmament Decade.

The Government of the United Kingdom believes that the second special session on disarmament, planned for 1982, should be co-ordinated with the Disarmament Decade. The Declaration should include a section on the relationship between the Disarmament Decade and the United Nations special session on disarmament. They hope that it will also reaffirm the Final Document of the special session, without repeating at length its detailed provisions. The Final Document should serve as a blueprint for action throughout the Decade and beyond.

The Government of the United Kingdom hopes that all Member States at the United Nations will use the 1980s Disarmament Decade to achieve the completion of arms-control agreements and arrangements at every level - multilateral, regional and bilateral - leading to the creation of a safer and more stable world.