DECLARATION OF THE 1980s AS A DISARMAMENT DECADE

Report of the Secretary-General

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I

In the policy of détente, security and peace constantly promoted by Romania, special priority is given to the institution of urgent measures to end the arms race and bring about disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament.

It was in this spirit that Romania co-sponsored the resolution adopted at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, declaring the decade of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade. In Romania's view, the main purpose of the Decade must be to launch a genuine disarmament process and to institute specific measures and action which will contribute to the achievement of general disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament.

In the present situation, marked by a significant increase in tension, a worsening of the international political climate and the existence of major threats to the peace and independence of peoples, the establishment of the objectives of the Second Disarmament Decade and steps towards their prompt implementation would also be a positive contribution on the part of all States and of the United Nations towards improving the international political situation, reviving and pursing détente and strengthening confidence and peaceful cooperation among States. Events have shown that the peace and security of peoples and their independence and advancement towards economic and social progress can be achieved only if urgent steps are taken to halt the arms race and promote disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament.

II

In the realization that disarmament cannot be achieved overnight, Romania believes that the underlying assumption in establishing the objectives of the Second Disarmament Decade must be the need for the prompt initiation of negotiations for an effective halt to the arms race and an awareness of the obstacles still impeding the adoption of effective disarmament measures, so that those obstacles can be overcome as quickly as possible.

The objectives of the Second Disarmament Decade must be conceived of as an integral part of the objectives of the comprehensive disarmament programme, and as interrelated and interdependent with them, so that they can be mutually supportive. They must comprise both transitional measures designed to generate and promote confidence among States and détente, and to eliminate sources of suspicion and instability in inter-State relations, and disarmament measures proper, in particular nuclear disarmament.

At the same time, in setting the trend of the Disarmament Decade, consideration must be given not only to its objectives but also to practical ways and means of achieving them.
III

In Romania's view, the Second Disarmament Decade should include the following specific measures:

(a) **Transitional measures for immediate implementation**

These would include:

- Freezing and reducing military expenditure. For instance, a decision could be taken to freeze military expenditures at their current level and then gradually reduce them, so that in approximately five years' time they would be 10 to 15 per cent lower. During the second half of the Decade, agreements could also be reached on a further and greater reduction in military expenditure.

- Freezing the military strength and armaments of States at their current level and then gradually reducing them so that in the course of the Decade they would be reduced by at least 15 per cent from their current level.

- Ensuring that the nuclear-weapon States undertake never to use nuclear weapons in any circumstances and, in general, never to use force or the threat of force against non-nuclear-weapon States.

- Dismantling military bases in the territory of other States and withdrawing troops and weapons, including nuclear weapons, to territory within national frontiers.

- Reducing the military activities of the various blocs so that they can all be dissolved at the same time.

- Ensuring that each State undertakes not to permit the installation of new military bases in its territory.

- Prohibiting the use or threat of force in relations among States and settling differences between States exclusively by peaceful means.

(b) **Disarmament measures proper**

During the Decade, absolute priority must be given to disarmament measures. These might include: ending nuclear weapon production and gradually reducing nuclear weapons until they are totally eliminated; halting the production of fissile material for military purposes; totally prohibiting nuclear weapon tests and all technical developments in nuclear weaponry; creating nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world; totally prohibiting and outlawing nuclear weapons.

The adoption of specific nuclear disarmament measures should meet the need both to pave the way for prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to facilitate access by all States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology and stimulate international co-operation in this area.

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- The prohibition of other weapons of mass destruction. To this end, negotiations on prohibiting chemical weapons should be speeded up and an agreement drawn up on the prohibition of radiological weapons. Steps should, however, be taken to prohibit the manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction.

- Measures agreed upon in the context of the Second Disarmament Decade must, at the same time, focus on halting and reducing the arms race in the area of conventional weapons. Any measures taken in this connexion, and indeed in any area of disarmament, must take account of the need to maintain the military balance at increasingly lower levels and be conceived of as stages in the process of general and complete disarmament.

The major nuclear-weapon States clearly have a special responsibility to initiate measures for the reduction of conventional weapons.

To this end, measures might be taken to restrict international transfers of conventional weapons, and agreements concluded to prohibit or limit the use of certain conventional weapons with excessively harmful or indiscriminate effects.

IV

Negotiations on all the measures to be taken in the context of the Second Disarmament Decade must be based on respect for the principles established in the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978. Also, the machinery for disarmament debates and negotiations established by the Special Session must be used to the full, and the United Nations must be given a definite role and responsibilities in the implementation of the objectives of the Decade and in the supervision of their application.

To this end, at mid-Decade the General Assembly should review the progress made in achieving the objectives set for the Decade, to enable the necessary conclusions to be drawn.

Negotiations on the measures selected for implementation during the Decade must of course take account of the specific military and political features of each geographical area and the interests of international peace and security.

In view of the present, particularly serious military situation on the European continent, genuine measures for military disengagement and disarmament in Europe must be agreed upon during the Disarmament Decade. In this connexion it would seem that the meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) to be held in Madrid in November 1980 should focus attention on measures of this kind. Also, the holding of a general European disarmament conference within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe would make a vital contribution to the attainment of the objectives of the Second Disarmament Decade.
It is common knowledge that armaments involve a massive transfer of material and human resources and technical and scientific potential from the civilian to the military sector and that, in addition to posing a serious threat to international peace and security, the arms race places a heavy burden on the shoulders of the peoples, thereby hindering their efforts to achieve development and progress. That is why the solution of disarmament problems has ceased to be a matter for the exclusive concern of Governments and has become a matter of active concern to the masses and the people everywhere.

Now, more than ever, all political and democratic forces and public opinion as a whole must take stronger action so that a new approach can be taken to disarmament problems and real progress can be made in resolving this vital contemporary issue.

For the above reasons, steps must be taken in the context of the Second Disarmament Decade to stimulate the interest of international public opinion in disarmament problems, so that the public gains a better understanding of the need for decisive disarmament action and an awareness of the obstacles and difficulties in the way of disarmament, and so as to mobilize all the political and social forces of the peoples for efforts to halt the arms race and bring about disarmament.

To this end, it would seem necessary to make provision for the United Nations and its specialized agencies to increase their activities in facilitating the broadest possible dissemination of information and data on the armaments situation and on the progress of the disarmament negotiations and their results.

Governments must also take steps to set up organizational structures at the national level so that public opinion in each country has a proper and complete understanding of the threat posed by the escalation of the arms race and the need to bring about general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

The urgent implementation, as part of the Second Decade, of the specific recommendations contained in paragraphs 99 to 108 of the Final Document of the special session devoted to disarmament would make a significant contribution to the achievement of those objectives.

VI

The Second Disarmament Decade must also contribute to a better understanding of the question of disarmament within the actual context of its interdependence with other major problems of our times. To this end, the action taken in the context of the Decade must lead to a more thorough examination of the relationship between disarmament and development and to the identification of specific courses of action to facilitate the diversion of part of the funds wasted on the arms race to peaceful development activities.
The objectives of the Second Disarmament Decade must therefore be correlated with those of the Third Development Decade and an attempt must be made to identify specific economic and social projects, primarily in the developing countries, to be financed from the funds released by measures to reduce the arms race and bring about disarmament.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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[12 May 1980]

The Government of the United States of America joined in the consensus of General Assembly resolution 34/75 declaring the decade of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade because of its long-standing conviction that balanced and adequately verifiable arms control agreements can make a major contribution to national and international security. During the first Disarmament Decade, the United States demonstrated this conviction by actively encouraging and participating in the conclusion of a number of such agreements. Those agreements represent solid international achievements. During the Second Disarmament Decade, it is important that we work diligently to promote their effective operation and to preserve their benefits.

It is also important during the coming decade that we move substantially beyond those earlier milestones, and that we intensify and broaden the search for effective measures in the field of arms control and disarmament that can strengthen international peace and security. The United States hopes that declaring the decade of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade will help provide additional impetus to these vital efforts.

The United States, therefore, deeply regrets that recent developments have gotten this current Disarmament Decade off to an inauspicious start. The use of military force by certain States, in violation of basic tenets of the United Nations Charter, cannot help but complicate efforts to achieve negotiated measures of mutual restraint. Concrete steps by States to demonstrate that they are committed to the Charter not only in word but also in deed would improve the prospects for a successful Second Disarmament Decade.

The international community already has invested considerable time and effort in reaching agreement on the objectives and priorities to be pursued in the area of arms control and disarmament in the period ahead. The Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, adopted by consensus after prolonged negotiations, continues to be a useful guide, and a great many of its elements are being addressed in the Committee on Disarmament or other fora. The United Nations Disarmament Commission, also acting on the basis of consensus, has developed elements of a comprehensive program of disarmament. At the request of the General Assembly, the Committee on Disarmament is engaged in the elaboration of such a program. The results of this work will be reviewed at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, scheduled for 1982. A declaration
of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade should, in the view of the United States, seek to encourage these activities rather than to duplicate or prejudge them.

Moreover, given the direct relationship between arms control and the security of States, progress can result only from careful and deliberate negotiations. Setting deadlines would not expedite the process.

With these general considerations in mind, the United States suggests that the declaration on the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade be designed to encourage States to promote conditions most conducive to meaningful and enduring progress in achieving balanced and verifiable measures in the field of arms control and disarmament. In the view of the United States, respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations is a fundamental condition for such progress.