DISARMAMENT COMMISSION
1988 substantive session
New York, 2-20 May 1988
Agenda item 7

REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE FIELD
OF DISARMAMENT

Working paper submitted by the Federal Republic of Germany
on behalf of the twelve Member States that are members of
the European Community

The Twelve wish to see incorporated in the report of the Disarmament
Commission on the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament the
following points:

1. The Twelve have continuously supported endeavours aimed at strengthening
the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, consistent with the
purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. The Twelve view it as necessary that serious efforts should be continued
with the aim of organizing the work within the United Nations in the field of
disarmament in a more efficient way.

3. The Twelve are of the opinion that the forthcoming special session of the
General Assembly should generate new impetus, taking into account relevant
decisions of the Assembly, and the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission
since its 1984 session.

4. The Twelve fully support the contents and spirit of General Assembly
resolution 42/42 N of 30 November 1987, on the rationalization of the work of the
First Committee.

5. The Twelve share the fundamental belief that the United Nations have to
play a central role in the sphere of disarmament.
6. The Twelve are convinced that the United Nations can help the international community in gradually pursuing the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, taking into consideration the major contribution the United Nations have already made and is making to the cause of disarmament.

7. The Twelve wish to emphasize that the United Nations contribution to the disarmament process would be greatly enhanced if full respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations was ensured.

8. The Twelve note the achievements that have been attained in the past in the multilateral disarmament field. They regard it as important that these significant agreements be supported and strengthened. The Twelve are confident that the multilateral disarmament process will have other important contributions to make in the future. The Twelve want to express in this context the hope that the progress achieved outside the multilateral disarmament process should have a positive impact as well.

9. The Twelve are of the conviction that in order to give greater impulse to the disarmament process, periodic reviews of the United Nations machinery and of the prospects of its improvement would be both useful and desirable. The upcoming third special session on disarmament should, under its agenda items 13 and 14, conduct such a review with the aim of streamlining and rationalizing the United Nations machinery.

10. The Twelve are of the opinion that the role of the General Assembly and particularly of its First Committee as central forums of disarmament problems should be reaffirmed.

11. The Twelve see the necessity of continued efforts to find solutions that are conducive to a work situation in which the First Committee will be able to perform its duty optimally in helping the international community to achieve progress in disarmament, especially by reducing the number or resolutions and expanding the area of meaningful consensus, and by rationalizing the agenda.

12. The Twelve wish to emphasize the useful contribution the Disarmament Commission makes to deliberations on disarmament problems (by allowing for in-depth examination of specific issues), with a recommendation that the agenda of the Commission should not be too long, yet leave sufficient scope for discussion of the subjects.

13. The Twelve want to underline the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the single world-wide multilateral negotiating body.

14. The Twelve wish to see strengthened the primary role of the Department for Disarmament Affairs in co-ordinating the resources of the United Nations in the field of disarmament in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of work, also in regard to aspects of the activities of the specialized agencies which have a bearing on disarmament questions.
15. The Twelve see the need that studies conducted under United Nations auspices should be related to specific practical objectives and be the subject of proper consultation in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. The Twelve believe that the future role of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies should also be addressed.