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CONSIDERATION OF THE DECLARATION OF THE 1990s AS THE
THIRD DISARMAMENT DECADE

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INTRODUCTION

1. On 7 December 1988, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/78 L, entitled "Consideration of the declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade", the operative part of which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. Decides to declare the decade of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade;

"2. Directs the Disarmament Commission, at its 1989 substantive session, to prepare elements of a draft resolution to be entitled 'Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade' and to submit them to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session for consideration and adoption;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to seek the views and suggestions of Member States and of relevant specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency on the possible elements to be included in the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade and to make these available to the Disarmament Commission at its 1989 substantive session;".

2. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of the resolution, the Secretary-General submits herewith the replies on the subject received from Brazil, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Finland, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Other replies will be issued as addenda.

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

BRAZIL

[Original: English]
[24 April 1989]

The Brazilian Government regards with satisfaction the recent positive trend towards an improvement of the international political atmosphere, in particular with regard to negotiated solutions for different conflicts and questions of concern to the international community. We welcome the signature of the Washington Treaty of 1987 1/ and its ratification by the Governments of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1988 as a first effective step towards nuclear disarmament and express our expectations that the momentum created by this event will lead to new and more significant measures to reduce and eliminate the international tensions caused by the arms race.

Therefore, we believe it is important that the international community give evidence of its continued pledge to support the ongoing negotiating efforts in

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different modalities of arms control and disarmament, either bilaterally, as between the super-Powers or among the main military alliances, or, above all, in the Conference on Disarmament, the only negotiating multilateral forum of the international community in the field of disarmament.

Hence, we fully support the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade in accordance with resolution 43/78 L, and put forward the following suggestions as possible elements to be included in the Draft Declaration to be considered by the Disarmament Commission at its 1989 substantive session:

(a) The need to reverse the arms race, especially among the super-Powers and the militarily significant States, which are also the most industrialized and technologically advanced States, with a view to allowing for a redirecting and more rational use of the resources of the planet for the benefit of all mankind, having in mind the guidelines contained in the Action Programme 2/ of the Final Document, adopted without a vote, on the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development of 1987;

(b) The need to preserve the environment for future generations through, inter alia, the elimination of the threats posed by modern weapons of mass destruction, among which nuclear, chemical, radiological and bacteriological weapons, as well as those capable of modifying the environment and space weapons;

(c) Parallely, the need to promote an effective system of scientific and technical co-operation to exchange the results of the conversion to peaceful ends of the research on and production of weapons of mass destruction among States in different stages of development;

(d) The urgent need to strengthen international consciousness of the profound interrelationship among questions relating to disarmament, to economic and social development and to environmental protection;

(e) The acknowledgement of the fact that the security concerns of one State are as valid, as important and as relevant as those of any other State;

(f) The acknowledgement of the fact that no State can demand of another State the adoption of disarmament measures that it is not ready to adopt itself;

(g) The evidence that horizontal non-proliferation measures of weapons of mass destruction will only be valid and effective if adopted concurrently with vertical and geographical non-proliferation measures;

(h) The significance of the creation, consolidation and strengthening of zones of peace and co-operation in different regions of the globe, with the aim of reducing political and military tensions and promoting the strengthening of confidence among the States in the region and outside of it.

The Brazilian Government is ready to examine with all interest and a constructive attitude any other initiatives that contribute to the furtherance of the efforts of the international community in the field of disarmament.
The Government of Cuba attaches special importance to the United Nations declarations concerning the disarmament decades. They provide an appropriate framework for States to demonstrate their goodwill and promote multilateral and bilateral negotiations in this sphere.

In the last stages of the Second Disarmament Decade, however, although encouraging steps are being taken in the bilateral sphere in respect of nuclear weapons, the nuclear-arms race is continuing its course and the qualitative and quantitative development of these means of mass destruction is continuing unchecked. Despite the renewed efforts of the international community to halt and reverse the nuclear-arms race, it has not yet been possible to initiate multilateral negotiations on the subject at the Conference on Disarmament.

Although it has been demonstrated that verification aspects are not a problem in prohibiting nuclear-weapons tests, verification continues to be raised as an obstacle, and there are even some who believe that the prohibition of such tests is a "long-term objective". This contradicts the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly over many years, which accord unquestionable priority to the prohibition of nuclear-weapons tests. In the context of the Third Disarmament Decade, multilateral negotiations should be initiated for the urgent prohibition of nuclear-weapons tests in all environments for an indefinite period.

It has not been possible either, in past decades, to adopt practical measures for preventing the outbreak of nuclear war. There is no doubt about the devastating consequences that such a war would have; the avoidance of nuclear war continues to be the most critical and urgent task at present. The Third Disarmament Decade should be the framework, also, for the adoption of concrete measures in this sphere.

The Government of Cuba considers it extremely dangerous that steps are still being taken to extend the arms race to outer space. The plans under way for the militarization of outer space are a violation of previous agreements, both bilateral and multilateral, in the field of disarmament, and are inadmissible and unacceptable in that they mean the beginning of a new spiral in the arms race. It is unacceptable that the arms race should be extended to a new area as we are entering the Third Disarmament Decade.

The principles and priorities adopted unanimously at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament remain fully valid. It should be the obligation of all States to respect and promote them. It is essential that the validity and relevance of these principles and priorities should be reaffirmed within the framework of the Third Disarmament Decade.
The Government of Cuba also finds it unacceptable that the world is spending a billion dollars on weapons while hunger, poverty and insanitary conditions prevail in various regions of the world. Within the framework of the Third Disarmament Decade, it must be reiterated that the arms race and development are competing for the same resources, and therefore the close relationship between disarmament and development must be reaffirmed and deepened.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

[Original: English]

[3 May 1989]

The Third United Nations Disarmament Decade will differ from the previous ones primarily by the atmosphere in which it will be held. What is mainly at issue is a shift from the policy of rearmament to one of reasonable defence sufficiency. In a number of spheres constructive co-operation outplays confrontation. Mutual trust in East-West relations is increasing. Especially, the dialogue between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America is expanding promisingly. If the development of international relations continues with the present dynamism then it is possible to expect further concrete results also in the field of genuine disarmament.

Simultaneously, however, the situation in the world remains complicated and full of contradictions. Therefore, the aim of the adoption of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade should be to expand the positive trends to the sphere of multilateral efforts aimed at disarmament and at ensuring the irreversibility of the initiated process which should gradually become universal. This positive trend of development must not come to a halt, otherwise the path towards disarmament and international security at a level of reasonable defence sufficiency will be shut off. Only a comprehensive approach to the questions of peace and security fully in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations can ensure a continuance of this tendency. Only cardinal progress in the field of disarmament can be a reliable prerequisite and a guarantee for strengthening international peace, security and stability and for an increase of mutual confidence.

As priorities during the coming Disarmament Decade we regard:

- The conclusion of a Soviet Union-United States treaty on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive weapons in compliance with the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972;

- The stopping of all nuclear-weapon tests as the first step towards the building of a non-violent world without nuclear weapons;

/...
A speedy completion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling, use of chemical weapons and on the elimination of the arsenals of such weapons in the spirit of the conclusions of the Paris Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in January 1989;

- Conventional disarmament.

Of special importance for Czechoslovakia is the European region. We advocate unequivocally an all-round development of the ideas and principles of the Helsinki Final Act. This applies especially to the line of contact between the two military-political groupings, the Warsaw Treaty and the North-Atlantic pact in Central Europe, where the highest accumulation of live military strength and combat equipment exists. Therefore, of essential importance is the Czechoslovak proposal for the creation of a zone of confidence, co-operation and good-neighbourly relations precisely in that part of Europe. Also the initiatives put forward jointly with the German Democratic Republic to establish a nuclear-weapon-free corridor and a zone without chemical weapons in Central Europe retain their topicality. Although these proposals are specific, other regions also can be found on the political map of the world where a proper use could be made of the experience to be drawn from their realization.

The Third Disarmament Decade also should not permit the opening up of new channels of the arms race. An increased attention in this sense should be paid to the ensuring of exclusively peaceful uses of outer space so that science and technology may serve to the benefit of the whole mankind. Besides, it remains an urgent global and regional problem to eliminate the danger of a compensation for the liquidated types of weapons by other means of warfare, and that of a modernization of the existing weapons systems.

It appears necessary that the degree of information and publicity about the questions of disarmament and security during the Third Disarmament Decade be on a level adequate to the needs of the present dynamically developing process of détente.

The new political thinking is the driving force of the further development of mankind at present. It is based on the premise of averting a nuclear war and guaranteeing the priority of universal human values. The primacy of international law becomes a basic norm of relations among States in all spheres. The most urgent task of the Third Disarmament Decade is to demilitarize international relations. However, its implementation will be possible only in case of an active contribution by all States on the basis of good political will and international co-operation.

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic fully supports the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade and is ready to consider all proposals and ideas concerning the specific contents of the Declaration.
FINLAND

[Original: English]

[13 April 1989]

The Government of Finland considers that declaring the decade of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade could be useful in highlighting the role that disarmament can play in maintaining and strengthening international peace and security and in stressing the role of the United Nations in efforts aimed at disarmament. In our view, these purposes would best be served by a resolution of the General Assembly which would take due account of the developments of the decade of the 1980s in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. Building upon the experiences gained, such a resolution should emphasize the need to explore new methods of work in order to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations in this field.

In Finland's view, the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade should be a concise document giving expression to the major preoccupations of the international community in the area of arms limitation and disarmament. Consequently, such a declaration should reaffirm that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in this field is general and complete disarmament under effective international control. It should acknowledge recent progress in nuclear disarmament and urge further efforts. It should, in the context of nuclear disarmament, also recognize the need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty as well as the importance of preserving and strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation régime.

The declaration should urge rapid conclusion of a total, global and verifiable ban on chemical weapons and, in this context, endorse the Final Declaration of the Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and Other Interested States, 4/ held in Paris in January 1989. The declaration should likewise stress the necessity to take steps to promote conventional disarmament and confidence-building measures both regionally and globally, and welcome, in this context, the talks begun in Europe. Finally, the declaration should also note the implications that disarmament may have for development and recognize, in this context, the impetus given by the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

Finland considers that a declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade built upon the above-mentioned elements should be able to command the necessary consensus on the part of the international community, thus contributing to increased public awareness of United Nations efforts in the field of disarmament.

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The final years of the Second Disarmament Decade have witnessed significant events. The process of real nuclear disarmament has begun. Serious steps have been taken for completion of a comprehensive convention on the complete prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons and negotiations have begun on the reduction of conventional armaments in Europe. The disarmament negotiating process is gathering strength.

All this became possible because of the positive change in the international situation as a result of the efforts of Governments to implement the principles of new political thinking. The threat of war has been averted and States have begun to move from overarmament to a reasonable defensive sufficiency.

It is necessary, however, for all States to take practical steps to make this positive trend in international life irreversible and to move towards the creation of a nuclear-free and non-violent world. Efforts to continue the disarmament process should be intensified in order to achieve substantial reductions of armed forces and conventional armaments with a corresponding reduction of military expenditures. To achieve this, every possible approach should be utilized at the unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. The Third Disarmament Decade can and should become an important stage in the consolidation of these efforts.

The forthcoming Declaration of the Third Disarmament Decade should, in the opinion of the Ukrainian SSR, first of all reflect the continuity and momentum of the disarmament process and what has been accomplished in the Second Disarmament Decade, and direct international society towards achieving specific results.

The basis for such a document exists. It is the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament questions adopted in recent years on the basis of consensus and the balance of interests of all members of the world community.

It is important for the forthcoming document to reflect a conceptual and philosophical appraisal of the contemporary world and its prospective development. A lively and constructive dialogue on these basic questions has begun to develop in the United Nations. In this context, the concept of a comprehensive approach to the strengthening of international peace and security in accordance with the United Nations Charter is also being discussed with interest.

International security is only attainable through the efforts of all States – this is the logic of the ever-more interdependent and unitary contemporary world. The real path towards that security lies through the reduction of armaments and rejection of the use of force in international relations, through the internationalization and increased effectiveness of the negotiating process and the
full utilization of all the instruments of politics and international law for the solution of international problems. Co-creation and co-development by all States is becoming increasingly important. Ideological differences should not impede the search for joint and mutually advantageous solutions in the interests of security for all.

In addition to the considerations noted above, the Declaration should, in the opinion of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic give direction to the world community on disarmament questions and specific objectives. It would, in our opinion, be appropriate to set as the goals of the Decade, toward the attainment of which the efforts of States should be directed, the following:

- The complete and universal abolition of nuclear weapons. Important immediate and practical steps in this direction would be:

1. The conclusion of an agreement between the USSR and the United States of America on a 50 per cent reduction in their strategic offensive arms, subject to compliance with the terms of the 1972 ABM Treaty;

2. More effective use of the bilateral and multilateral negotiating machinery in the field of nuclear weapons, and of their mutual complementarity, for the adoption of effective measures leading inter alia to an agreement on the comprehensive prohibition of nuclear tests;

3. The strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation régime;

4. Enhancing the status of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, and creating new ones;

- The prevention of an arms race in outer space by the conclusion of an appropriate international agreement;

- The full and universal prohibition of chemical weapons by the immediate conclusion and implementation of a comprehensive global convention on the complete prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. The Third Disarmament Decade must become the decade in which chemical weapons disappear forever from the face of the earth;

- Measures to prevent the appearance of new types of weapons of mass destruction and the use of scientific and technological progress for the creation and development of new kinds of weapons and weapons systems;

- The adoption of specific measures for deep reductions in conventional armaments, particularly in Europe, but also in other regions;

- Restrictions on the sale and supply of conventional weapons;

- Halting the naval arms race, the elimination of military bases and withdrawal of foreign forces from the territory of other States;
Specific actions for the strengthening of a monitoring system under United Nations auspices and a transition to a broad policy of trust and the wider dissemination of objective information on military matters;

Specific steps for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development in 1987, including the establishment within the United Nations framework of a "Disarmament for Development" fund;

Enhancement of the role of the United Nations and its machinery, especially the Security Council, in the field of disarmament; strengthening the effectiveness of United Nations research activities and the initiation of practical studies on the conversion of military production to civilian needs.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

[Original: Russian]

[April 1989]

In the closing stages of the Second Disarmament Decade, qualitative improvements have occurred in the development of the international situation. Through the collective efforts of States, and by applying the principles of the new political thinking, the threat of war has been made more remote. Confrontation is gradually giving way to constructive international co-operation. The negotiating processes, despite all the objective difficulties, have yielded their first results, laying the foundations for genuine disarmament through the settlement of regional conflicts and a steady improvement in the international atmosphere. A new historical reality is taking shape - the switch from over-armament to reasonable sufficiency for defence. The beginnings of a transition from the arms economy to a disarmament economy are apparent.

All this indicates that forces have already emerged in the world which in one way or another are ushering in an era of peace, and their aspirations are beginning to be transformed into policy.

However, this trend has not yet become irreversible. Further steps are needed so as to bring about a decisive change in international life and in the way of thinking and acting, above all in respect of the basic problem of our time - halting the arms race and making the disarmament process that has begun continuous and progressive in nature, so as to build a nuclear-free and non-violent world.

Purposeful action by all States at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels will contribute to the achievement of this goal. The proclamation of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade will also be an integral part of these efforts.

In the view of the USSR, the Declaration on this question should ensure continuity between the second and third disarmament decades, and in one way or another reflect everything positive that was achieved during the previous period.
The formulations employed in the consensus resolutions of the General Assembly, embodying a balance of interests of all members of the international community, could serve as a good basis for this document.

In our view, the conceptual aspects of ensuring solidarity in the world and making international relations stable and dynamic, above all in the military and political spheres, should be assigned a prominent place in the Declaration. The burgeoning multilateral dialogue on these matters was a major achievement of the Second Disarmament Decade. A key theme of this dialogue was the question of a comprehensive approach to strengthening international peace and security in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

The logic of world development — the logic of growing interdependence between States and the increasing oneness of our civilization — dictates the need to come up with a new model of security. Given the realities of the nuclear and space age, a build-up in military strength does not make any Power omnipotent. Furthermore, one-sided reliance on military force ultimately weakens the other components of national security. True security today is to be had not by building up armaments, as it almost always used to be, but instead by cutting them on an agreed basis. Force, or the use of force, can and must no longer serve as an instrument of foreign policy. Self-restraint and total renunciation of the external use of force by all States is called for.

Political and legal means of settling emerging problems are taking precedence over military means. What is needed is more intensive and more open political dialogue which goes to the heart of the issues, and does not seek confrontation. Considering the global nature of today's problems, it is becoming imperative to make this dialogue, and the entire negotiating process, international in scope.

Further world progress can be made only by seeking global consensus in the movement towards a new world order and combining the efforts of all States in a collaborative undertaking which could more accurately be called "co-creation" and "co-development".

"De-ideologizing" international relations is another requirement of this new phase; the conflict of ideologies must not carry over into relations between States. Otherwise mankind will be incapable of resolving any of the problems affecting the planet.

These and other fundamental conclusions and assessments which are increasingly finding acceptance as multilateral dialogue progresses should, in our view, be taken into account when the Declaration is drawn up, inasmuch as the changes taking place in philosophical approaches afford a serious opportunity, taking advantage of objective processes on a world scale, to give a powerful boost to the efforts to establish new relations between States.

Besides this, the USSR believes it important that the Declaration should clearly spell out the specific objectives of the forthcoming Decade, which might include the following:
Finalization and implementation of the agreement between the USSR and the United States of America on a 50-per-cent cut in, and limits on, strategic offensive arms, subject to compliance with the terms of the 1972 ABM Treaty;

Supplementing bilateral moves in the area of nuclear disarmament with efforts at the multilateral level to bring about the complete and universal abolition of nuclear weapons and the creation of a nuclear-free, non-violent world;

More active work by the Conference on Disarmament, involving effective action in pursuit of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, combined with more intensive, full-scale, phased Soviet-American talks on the limitation and cessation of nuclear tests, so that the multilateral and bilateral negotiations on these subjects complement each other and lead towards the common goal;

The further strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation régime as a cornerstone of global strategic stability;

Enhancing the status of existing nuclear- and chemical-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, and creating new ones;

Effective measures to avert an arms race in outer space by means of an international agreement or agreements, such as a treaty banning space-based strike weapons, a treaty banning anti-satellite weapons, a treaty on means of guaranteeing the immunity of space objects, or a treaty establishing an international system for verifying an undertaking not to deploy weapons of any type in space;

The creation of a world space organization to assist States with peaceful activities in space and monitor compliance with a comprehensive régime of peaceful activity in space;

The immediate conclusion and subsequent application of a comprehensive global convention banning chemical weapons entirely and calling for their destruction, thus making the 1990s the decade of total chemical disarmament;

The strengthening of stability and security in Europe by means of deep cuts in the conventional weapons, including conventional armaments and technology, belonging to the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty and the States members of NATO, establishing equilibrium at a reduced level where both military alliances would be left with just enough forces and resources for defence, but not enough to mount a surprise attack or conduct offensive operations, and a reform of the structure and disposition of their armed forces along strictly defensive lines;

Implementation of conventional disarmament measures in other regions;

Restrictions on the sale and supply of conventional weapons;

A systematic assessment of scientific and technological advances, with a view to the timely formulation of recommendations to prevent new technologies from being used in the manufacture of weapons;
- Halting and reversing the naval arms race, beginning with agreement on such relatively simple measures as confidence-building and ensuring the safety of shipping;

- The elimination of military bases and withdrawal of foreign forces from the territory of other States;

- Action on the establishment of an international monitoring system under United Nations auspices;

- A shift from the formulation and implementation of individual confidence-building measures in individual areas of military activity to a broad policy of trust covering the entire range of military activity;

- Wider dissemination of objective information on military matters, so that openness in this area becomes a norm of international life;

- Implementation of the action programme adopted in 1987 at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development;

- The establishment within the United Nations of an international "disarmament for development" fund;

- The submission to the United Nations of national conversion plans by all States, and in the first place by the major military Powers;

- Measures to enhance the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and increase the efficiency of the negotiating machinery.

These are the broad views of the Soviet Union regarding possible elements for inclusion in the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. We are prepared to give constructive consideration to any alternative proposals designed to ensure that the document produced represents a worthy contribution to the attainment of universal security through disarmament.

Notes


2/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.IX.8, para. 35.


4/ A/44/88, annex.