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

Elements of a draft resolution on the Declaration of the 1990s
as the Third Disarmament Decade

Working paper submitted by Costa Rica

1. In its resolution 43/78 L, the General Assembly directed the Disarmament Commission, at its substantive session in 1989, 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.

2. The delegation of Costa Rica believes that the disarmament process must be speeded up not only by conducting multilateral and bilateral negotiations on specific weapons aspects or on the promotion of general and complete disarmament, but also by tackling the global arms problem at its very roots: awareness. It finds it strange, therefore, that neither of the two decades so far devoted by the United Nations to the cause of disarmament placed sufficient emphasis on what may be the most important issue in the struggle for a world without weapons, namely, disarmament education.

3. In the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, "Governments and governmental and non-governmental international organizations are urged to take steps to develop programmes of education for disarmament and peace studies at all levels" (resolution S-10/2, para. 106). Apart from the landmark World Congress on Disarmament Education organized by UNESCO from 9 to 13 June 1980 and the resolutions on the World Disarmament Campaign and the preparation of societies for life in peace, as far as we recall no other plan has been set in motion aimed at putting into practice the concerns expressed by the General Assembly. What is more, were it not for the tireless action of non-governmental
organizations and certain prestigious institutions devoted to tackling this problem, the results would be less than negligible.

4. Disarmament education, especially the programmes which all United Nations organs, Governments of Member States, existing peace research and education institutions and non-governmental organizations must jointly carry out, must figure prominently among the elements of the draft resolution that we are to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. To this end, the draft resolution must include a preambular paragraph that reflects the concerns about this issue and two operative paragraphs, one calling on Member States to intensify their efforts to design and implement formal and non-formal disarmament education programmes and the other requesting the Secretary-General to set in motion a plan for the co-ordination of efforts in this field among the main organs of the United Nations General Assembly and with UNESCO, peace education institutions and non-governmental organizations. The latter paragraph should specifically request UNESCO to give thorough consideration to this issue at its next General Conference and to arrange for the holding of a second world congress on disarmament education to evaluate the results achieved and to put into effect the idea, already approved, of a disarmament education handbook.