Note verbale dated 19 May 1980 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General and has the honour to transmit herewith, on behalf of the non-aligned countries participating in the work of the Disarmament Commission, a working paper containing elements of a draft resolution on the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade and kindly requests to have this paper circulated as a document of the Disarmament Commission.

(Signed) Ernesto LOPEZ Paz
Chargé d'Affaires
Annex

Working Paper

Elements of a draft resolution entitled "Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade"

In proclaiming the decade of the 1970s as the first United Nations Disarmament Decade, the General Assembly in resolution 2602 E (XXIV) enumerated its objectives as follows:

(i) that all Governments should intensify without delay their concerted and concentrated efforts for effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament and the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction and for a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control,

(ii) that consideration be given to channeling a substantial part of the resources freed by measures in the field of disarmament to promote the economic development of developing countries and, in particular, their scientific and technological progress.

Although these objectives were reiterated by the General Assembly in later years, the first Disarmament Decade ended without their accomplishment. While it is true that some limited agreements were reached, effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament has continued to elude man's grasp. Furthermore, no progress has been made in channeling any amount of the enormous resources which are wasted on the unproductive arms race for the purpose of economic and social development.

Through the Final Document adopted by consensus at the Special Session, the General Assembly, after expressing its conviction that disarmament and arms limitation, particularly in the nuclear field, are essential for the prevention of the danger of nuclear war, the strengthening of international peace and security and for the economic and social advancement of all peoples, laid down a Programme of Action "enumerating the specific measures of disarmament which should be implemented over the next few years".

In spite of the positive and encouraging outcome of the Special Session devoted to disarmament, the decade of the 1980s has started with ominous signs of deterioration in the international situation and further escalation in the arms race. International peace and security is threatened by the resort to the use or threat of force against sovereignty, national independence and territorial integrity of States, military intervention and occupation of States, interference in the internal affairs of States, and the denial of the right of self-determination of peoples and nations. It is clear that if the emerging trend were to continue
and meaningful efforts are not made to check and reverse this trend, international tensions will be further exacerbated and the danger of war will be greater than ever the pessimistic assessment of the Special Session on Disarmament had foreseen. In this connexion it is pertinent to recall that the Final Document had stressed on the one hand, that the arms race, particularly in its nuclear aspect, runs counter to efforts to achieve further relaxation of international tension, to establish international relations based on peaceful coexistence and trust between all States, and to develop broad international co-operation and understanding. The arms race impedes the realization of the purposes, and is incompatible with the principles, of the Charter of the United Nations, especially respect for sovereignty, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, peaceful settlements of disputes and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. On the other hand, the Final Document also stressed the special importance of refraining from the threat or use of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or against peoples under colonial or foreign domination seeking to exercise their right to self-determination and to achieve independence; non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States; the inviolability of international frontiers; and the peaceful settlement of disputes, having regard to the inherent right of States to individual and collective self-defence in accordance with the Charter. It is ironic that while intensive discussions are under way in various forums on global economic problems and on the depletion of resources available for coping with present international economic problems, military expenditures by the major military Powers are reaching ever-higher levels involving the greater diversion of resources which could have helped to promote the well-being of all peoples and proposals for an increase in resources devoted to the unproductive and wasteful arms race are being made by the same group of developed countries that have been complaining of economic recession.

The close link between disarmament and development has also been underscored in the Final Document of the Special Session devoted to Disarmament, which referred to the close relationship between disarmament and development and stated that the resources released as a result of the implementation of disarmament measures should be devoted to economic and social development of all nations and contribute to the bridging of the economic gap between developed and developing countries.

It is, therefore, only appropriate that simultaneously with the declaration of the Third United Nations Development Decade in the 1980s, the Second Disarmament Decade has been proclaimed.

The goals and objectives of the Second Disarmament Decade should be conceived in the context of the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process which is general and complete disarmament under effective international control as elaborated in the Final Document.
At its first substantive session, the Disarmament Commission drew up, by consensus, the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. While stressing that "the comprehensive programme of disarmament should be elaborated and implemented on the basis of the strict observance of the principles contained in the Final Document", the Commission recommended that "During the first stage of the implementation of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, special attention should be given to the immediate cessation of the nuclear arms race and the removal of the threat of a nuclear war" and that "such implementation should take place in such an equitable manner as to ensure the right of each State to security, inter alia, through the adoption of appropriate measures, taking into account the importance of nuclear and conventional disarmament, the special responsibility of the States with the largest military arsenals and the necessity for adequate measures of verification".

Consistent with these over-all objectives, the objectives and goals of the Disarmament Decade should be:

(i) Strengthening of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

(ii) The conclusion and implementation of effective agreements on disarmament particularly nuclear disarmament which will contribute significantly to the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control;

(iii) Channeling of substantial part of resources released by disarmament measures to promote the attainment of the objectives of the Third United Nations Development Decade and in particular the economic development of developing countries, so as to accelerate the achievement of the new international economic order.

Activities

General

The decade of the 1980s should witness renewed intensification by all Governments and the United Nations of their efforts to reach agreement on, and to implement effective measures that will lead to discernible progress towards the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In this connexion, special attention should be focused on certain identifiable elements in the Programme of Action as adopted by the Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament, which should, as a minimum be accomplished during the decade both through negotiations in the multilateral negotiating forum, the Committee on Disarmament, as well as in other appropriate forums. Adequate methods and procedures of verification should be considered in the context of international disarmament negotiations.

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Comprehensive programme of disarmament

Having been recognized as an important element in an international disarmament strategy the comprehensive programme for disarmament should be elaborated with the utmost urgency. The Committee on Disarmament should expedite its work on the elaboration of the programme with a view to its adoption no later than the Second Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament scheduled for 1982.

Priority items

Certain specific measures of disarmament which have been identified constantly by the General Assembly as worthy of priority negotiation by the multilateral negotiating organ should be concluded without further delay. The accomplishment of these measures will create a very favourable international climate for the Second Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament in 1982. All efforts therefore should be exerted by the Committee on Disarmament to negotiate and submit to the General Assembly as soon as possible and in any case before its next special session devoted to disarmament agreed texts on:

(i) A Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty which will be valid for all time and in conformity with the aspiration of the international community by making a significant contribution to the aim of ending the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and the development of new types of such weapons and of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons;

(ii) A treaty on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction;

(iii) A treaty on the prohibition of radiological weapons;

(iv) Conclusion of a binding international legal instrument to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

In the category of measures that should be accomplished within the time-frame indicated above are two issues which are the subject of negotiations outside the Committee on Disarmament:

(a) Parties concerned should ratify the SALT II agreement and commence negotiation for a SALT III agreement;

(b) The United Nations Conference on the Prohibition or Restriction of Certain Conventional Weapons Which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects should arrive at far-reaching agreement on this category of weapons at its next session which should also lay the basis for further work in this important area.

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Other priority items that should be carried out within the first half of the decade include:

(1) Commencement of negotiations leading to:

(a) the cessation of the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear-weapons systems;

(b) the cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery and the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes;

(2) Commencement of negotiations on the progressive and balanced reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, leading to their ultimate complete elimination;

(3) Agreement on the prohibition of the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons;

(4) Conclusion of SALT III agreement, leading to agreed significant reductions of, and qualitative limits on, strategic arms and thereby constituting an important step in the direction of nuclear disarmament and ultimately of establishment of a world free of such weapons;

(5) Development of an international consensus of ways and means, on a universal and non-discriminatory basis, to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the Final Document;

(6) Strengthening of the existing nuclear-weapon-free zone and the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the Final Document;

(7) Establishment of zones of peace, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Final Document;

(8) Conclusion of an agreement prohibiting the use or threats of use of nuclear weapons;

(9) Commencement of negotiations on agreements and measures, multilateral, regional and bilateral on the limitation and reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Final Document. In particular, every effort should be made to conclude agreement on appropriate mutual reductions and limitations of armaments and armed forces, contributing thus to the strengthening of security in Europe and constituting a significant step towards enhancing international peace and security;

(10) Conclusion of agreements relating to the reduction of military expenditures.

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Disarmament and Development

During the decade, considerable progress should be made in the implementation of the specific measures whereby disarmament will contribute effectively to economic and social development and thus facilitate full and early realization of the new international economic order. To this end, renewed efforts should be made to reach agreement on the reduction of military expenditures, reallocation of resources from military purposes to economic and social development especially for the benefit of developing countries. Efforts should also be made to strengthen international co-operation for the promotion of the transfer and use of nuclear technology for economic and social development, especially in the developing countries in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the Final Document. In this context, disarmament agreements should be conceived and concluded in a manner which would in no way constitute a hindrance to economic and social development particularly in developing countries.

Disarmament and International Security

An essential condition for progress in the field of disarmament is the preservation and strengthening of international peace and security and the promotion of confidence among States. All States Members of the United Nations have in the Final Document reaffirmed their full commitment to the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and their obligation strictly to observe its principles as well as other relevant and generally accepted principles of international law relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. Disarmament, relaxation of international tension, respect for the right to self-determination and national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the strengthening of international peace and security are directly related to each other. Progress in any of these spheres has a beneficial effect on all of them; in turn, failure in one sphere has negative effects on others. In the decade of the 1980s all Governments should therefore take such steps as will contribute to the widening of trust among nations of the world as well as in the various regions. This implies a commitment on the part of all States, in particular the two most advanced military Powers, to avoid actions likely to increase tension or create new areas of threats to international peace and security and, in their relationship with the other countries, to strictly respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, and the right of peoples to self-determination and national independence.

Public Awareness

As rightly pointed out in the Final Document of the Special Session devoted to Disarmament, "it is essential that not only governments but also the peoples of the world recognize and understand the dangers" in the present world arms situation with a view to mobilizing world public opinion on behalf of disarmament.
In the course of the decade of the 1990s therefore, governmental organizations, in particular organs of the United Nations and its specialized agencies as well as non-governmental organizations should undertake further programmes of information relating to the danger of the armaments race as well as to disarmament efforts and negotiations and their results. These actions should constitute a large-scale programme to further alert world opinion to the danger of war in general and nuclear war in particular. In keeping with its central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament, the United Nations should intensify its programme of publications, audio-visual materials, co-operation with non-governmental organizations and relations with the media. Among its activities, the United Nations should also, in the course of the decade, sponsor seminars in each of the regions of the world at which issues relating to world disarmament in general and of the particular region especially, will be extensively discussed.

Review and appraisal

The General Assembly will undertake in 1985 a review and appraisal through the Disarmament Commission, of the timely implementation of measures identified in this Declaration.