DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

GENERAL APPROACH, STRUCTURE AND SCOPE OF A STUDY ON CONVENTIONAL DISARMAMENT

Working paper: German Democratic Republic

I. INTRODUCTION

1. According to the relevant resolutions, the General Assembly agreed in principle that the Disarmament Commission should work out the general approach to the study, its structure and scope, and requested the Disarmament Commission to convey to the Secretary-General the conclusions of its deliberations, which should constitute the guidelines for the study.

II. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE STUDY

2. The study should be made in the context of the current situation in the field of disarmament, and of the importance of disarmament for international peace and security and for détente. A genuine and effective process of disarmament is imperative. In this respect the study should aim:

(a) To promote disarmament relating to conventional armaments and contribute to concrete actions in this field;

(b) To inform about the growing danger of the arms race in the field of conventional armaments and about effective ways and means which lead to conventional disarmament.

3. The study should be carried out on the basis of the following principles:

(a) The relevant provisions of the Programme of Action in connexion with the principles and priorities set out in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament are of primary importance and should be strictly observed.
(b) Effective measures of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war have the highest priority. To this end, it is imperative to remove the threat of nuclear weapons and to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race until the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems has been achieved. However, parallel to nuclear disarmament, it is necessary for world peace and security to arrive at effective measures of conventional disarmament.

(c) The contribution of all countries to conventional disarmament is necessary, first of all by the freezing and reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments of the States permanent members of the Security Council and the countries which have military agreements with them.

(d) Based on the principle of undiminished security of all States and their right to self-defence, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, disarmament measures should be adopted so that no individual State or group of States would obtain advantage over others at any stage. In this context, negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and of conventional armaments should aim at promoting or enhancing stability at lower military levels.

(e) Agreements on reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments should include provisions for verification in such agreements, bearing in mind paragraph 31 of the Final Document.

(f) The study should take into account the importance of reaching concrete results in the limitation and eventual cessation of the arms race in the field of conventional armaments on a global as well as a regional and bilateral basis and, to that end, of initiating concrete negotiations at the earliest possible date.

(g) The work on this study should not delay ongoing or new negotiations on disarmament problems and should not in any way interfere with these negotiations.

(h) The study should be undertaken by the Secretary-General with the assistance of a group of qualified experts appointed by him on a balanced geographical basis.

(i) The expert group should be guided by the principle of consensus.

III. SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

4. The scope and structure of the study should include the following elements:

(a) A description of the relevant political, social and economic effects and consequences of the conventional arms race on the international situation and the need for and effects of disarmament measures in this field.

Particular attention should be given to:

(b) The analysis of proposals and suggestions made by States in the field of conventional disarmament and on recommendations for their implementation.
(c) The question of international conventional arms transfer.

(d) The analysis and elaboration of measures which can facilitate disarmament, e.g. non-use of force, confidence-building measures, non-expansion of military alliances.