DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

NUCLEAR CAPABILITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Working paper presented by Mauritius on behalf of the African States members of the Disarmament Commission

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 6

1. Against the background of the sovereign right of all peoples to self-determination and independence enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the establishment and perpetuation of a racist minority régime in South Africa over the majority of the population represent not only an illegal act but also criminal and immoral conduct.

2. South Africa's adoption of apartheid, an institutionalized form of racial discrimination, as an instrument of public policy runs counter to the human rights provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and its objective of universality of membership through decolonization. As a result, South Africa's policy of apartheid has been and remains universally condemned as a crime against humanity and a challenge to international conscience.

3. It has become clear that in its isolation and desperation as an international pariah, the Pretoria régime has resorted to a frenzied pursuit of a military option as an instrument of internal oppression and external aggression. The pursuit of its military capability in the direction of increased sophistication and ominous dimensions placed emphasis on the development and acquisition of nuclear weaponry, which has been made possible through the active nuclear collaboration with it by certain member countries.

4. In the event, the issue of South Africa's nuclear capability has been brought to international attention and included in the agenda of the Disarmament Commission since its first substantive session in 1979 at the instance of the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid (A/CONF.10/4) following the conclusion of the United Nations seminar on nuclear collaboration with South Africa held in London in February 1979 (S/13157).
5. In consideration of the item, the Commission affirms the conviction already established by consensus in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament that the massive accumulation of armaments and the acquisition of armaments technology by racist régimes, as well as possible acquisition by them of nuclear weapons, present a challenging and increasingly dangerous obstacle to a world community faced with the urgent need to disarm. It is therefore essential for purposes of disarmament to prevent any further acquisition of arms or arms technology by such régimes, especially through strict adherence by all States to the relevant decisions of the Security Council. In this connection, the Security Council should assume its fully responsibility.

6. The Commission is of the firm view that nuclear weapons in the possession of racist régimes can become instruments of public policy, state terrorism and blackmail and thus portend danger to international peace and security. It therefore notes with grave concern the danger and serious threat which the established capability of South Africa to produce nuclear weapons and its reported development of a cruise missile and various delivery systems in collaboration with Israel pose to the security of African States as well as to international peace and security.

7. The Commission notes that the overt evidence concerning the two nuclear events of July 1977 in the Kalahari Desert and 22 September 1979 in the South Atlantic in particular and other data, including the report of the Secretary-General on South Africa's plan and capability in the nuclear field (A/35/402 and Corr.1) have caused legitimate and particular concern to the African States and the international community in general, the more so since this nuclear capability has been put at the service of the abhorrent policy of apartheid.

8. The Commission, in fulfilment of its mandate, considers it its responsibility to alert the General Assembly, and through it the Security Council, to the deleterious consequences of South Africa's capability to produce nuclear weapons and its actual possession of nuclear weapons and their implications on the security perception of African States, international peace and security, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the collective decision of the African States regarding the denuclearization of Africa.

9. The Commission considers it at variance with the declared principles of international law relating to the development of friendly relations and co-operation among States to allow, enable and encourage South Africa to continue its policy of aggression and destabilization against the countries of the African continent through the development of a nuclear-weapon capability which has been achieved through collaboration in the military and nuclear fields with certain Western countries and Israel in particular.

10. The Commission holds the view that the current exploitation of Namibian uranium by South Africa violates the accepted principle of international law which recognizes a people's sovereignty over its natural resources for the benefit of its socio-economic development. It further holds the view that South Africa should not be allowed to continue its illegal exploitation of Namibian uranium, which strengthens its nuclear base and hence reinforces its policy of apartheid.
11. The Commission recommends to the General Assembly to call on Israel to terminate forthwith its nuclear collaboration with South Africa and urges the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and the United Kingdom, among others, to desist, in the interest of peace and stability in Africa and in the world, from further collaboration in the nuclear field with South Africa.

12. The Commission recommends to the General Assembly to take suitable decisions to ensure that South Africa's nuclear power plant is dismantled and that its nuclear programme, designed to further its nuclear-weapon capability, is discontinued.

13. The Commission recommends to the General Assembly to request the Security Council to take mandatory action by extending and enforcing its arms embargo against South Africa to include a ban on any nuclear collaboration with South Africa, such as supply of nuclear material, equipment and technology, computers, etc., and termination of existing and future nuclear contracts, loans, technical assistance, foreign aid and investments in South Africa which help to sustain its intransigence and enhance its nuclear capability.