LETTER DATED 18 MAY 1979 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SRI LANKA TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On behalf of the non-aligned countries, I have the honour to transmit herewith a working paper entitled "Elements of a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament".

I would request you kindly to have the paper published as a document of the Disarmament Commission.

(Signed) B. J. FERNANDO
Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations and Chairman of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries
Elements of a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament

Working paper submitted by the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka on behalf of the non-aligned members to the Disarmament Commission

Comprehensive Programme for Disarmament (CPD) should be an instrument, a carefully worked out package of interrelated measures in the field of disarmament, which should lead the international community towards the goal of general and complete disarmament (GCD) under effective international control proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 1378 (XIV) of November 1959. The CPD should not be identified with an agreement on GCD. CPD should be built upon the decisions and recommendations contained in the Final Document adopted at the tenth special session of the General Assembly. However, it should be different from the Programme of Action because it would also contain long-term objectives and encompass all disarmament measures. CPD would not replace the Programme of Action but supplement and complement it, by laying down an agreed framework for sustained international action in the field of disarmament including negotiations at different levels, i.e. bilateral, regional and international on specific measures of disarmament. Bilateral, regional and multilateral discussions and negotiations would have to be carried out for reaching binding agreements. The CPD would give expression to the commitment of the international community in the field of disarmament.

Objectives

The immediate objective of CPD should be to maintain and further the momentum generated by the tenth special session of the General Assembly and to expedite the initiation of urgent negotiations on halting the arms race in all its aspects and the opening of a process of genuine disarmament on an internationally agreed basis. The long-term objective, as stated above, is the realization of GCD under effective international control, the creation of conditions for a just and stable international peace and security and the establishment of the new international economic order.

Approach

The elaboration of CPD should take place as urgently as possible and parallel with the negotiations on concrete disarmament measures agreed in the Programme of Action adopted at the tenth special session and at the thirty-third session of the General Assembly. CPD should contain a phased programme in which the implementation of the first stage would effectively halt the arms race and open the process of genuine disarmament.

Principles and priorities

CPD should be elaborated and implemented on the basis of the strict observance of the fundamental principles contained in paragraphs 25 to 42 of the Final Document and in accordance with the priorities stated in paragraph 45 of the Final Document.

During the first stage of the implementation of CPD, special attention should be given to immediate cessation of the nuclear arms race and the removal of the threat of a nuclear war.
Disarmament measures

It would be necessary to enumerate all measures in the field of limitation, reduction and elimination of weapons and weapon systems and military installations of States and reduction of their armed forces to agreed levels necessary for ensuring the internal security of their citizens and for placing at the disposal of the United Nations agreed manpower for an international peace force. The list of disarmament measures should be presented separately for each category of weapons and weapon systems and in accordance with agreed priorities. In this respect the following measures should be elaborated:

(i) NUCLEAR WEAPONS:

- Conclusion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, to be concluded before the adoption of a CPD;

- Prohibition of the threat or use of nuclear weapons;

- Cessation of nuclear arms race in all its aspects;

- Cessation of the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and means of their delivery;

- Cessation of the production of all the types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery; and cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapon purposes;

- Progressive and balanced reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery within agreed time frames leading to their total elimination from the arsenals of States.

(ii) OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION INCLUDING CHEMICAL WEAPONS:

- Prohibition of the use of all weapons of mass destruction;

- Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction;

- Prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of radiological weapons;

- (Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and on destruction of all chemical weapons if such a convention is not concluded by the time of the adoption of CPD).

(iii) CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS:

- Cessation of the conventional arms race among States with largest military arsenals and among military alliances;

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- Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the use and on
destruction of all weapons which cause unnecessary suffering or have
indiscriminate effects;

- Prohibition of the development, production and deployment of conventional
weapons of great destructive power;

- Limitation and gradual reduction of armaments of all States to the agreed
levels, taking into account the need of States to protect their security
and to provide agreed manpower for a United Nations peace force.

(iv) REDUCTION OF ARMED FORCES:

- Agreements on the reduction of armed forces of States in particular
those of big Powers and of military alliances. Dissolution of military
alliances, dismantling of military bases on foreign territories.

(v) MILITARY EXPENDITURE:

- Reduction of military expenditure by agreed procedures.

(vi) NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONES

VERIFICATION

The basic principles of verification have been laid down in paragraph 31 of the
Final Document of the tenth special session. What is needed, however, is the
establishment of an international machinery for disarmament verification within the
United Nations system. Without prejudice to those principles, the establishment
of an international machinery for disarmament verification should be considered.
Elaboration of such machinery should take into account proposals submitted during
the tenth special session and on new proposals submitted in the course of the
elaboration of CPD. For example, the following existing proposals could be
examined:

(i) Establishment of a United Nations agency for the verification of
disarmament agreements;

(ii) Establishment of a world disarmament authority;

(iii) Establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY MEASURES

At the tenth special session of the General Assembly a close relationship
was recognized between disarmament and international security, in the sense that
progress in one field affects favourably developments in the other and vice versa.
A study on the relationship between disarmament and international security
is being undertaken and should be completed by the thirty-fifth session of the
General Assembly. The General Assembly has recommended that CPD should include
measures in the field of international security. Specifically the following
measures were mentioned:

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(i) Measures for strengthening institutions for maintaining peace and settlement of international disputes by peaceful means;

(ii) Measures for the maintenance of international peace and security;

(iii) Confidence-building measures;

(iv) Zones of peace.

DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT MEASURES

At the tenth special session the General Assembly recognized the close relationship between disarmament and economic and social development and the establishment of the New International Economic Order. In this connexion a study on the relationship between disarmament and economic development is being elaborated and should be completed by the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. CPD should contain practical measures for the reallocation of the resources released as a result of implementation of disarmament measures, particularly for the benefit of developing countries. It should also contain provisions concerning the promotion of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for economic and social development, especially in the developing countries, in accordance with the principles of General Assembly resolution 32/50 of 8 December 1977.

ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

All efforts should be exerted to elaborate and adopt CPD not later than at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1982.

CPD should provide for an agreed time frame for the implementation of its various phases. Every effort should be made to implement the provisions relating to nuclear disarmament within a decade.

ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations has played and should continue to play a central role in the consideration and adoption of a CPD. It must play the same role in its implementation. It is essential therefore that the General Assembly and through it the Disarmament Commission are regularly kept informed of the results of the negotiation on and elaboration of a CPD. The General Assembly should request the Committee on Disarmament to submit progress reports through the appropriate channels on the elaboration of CPD with a view to informing the Disarmament Commission thereon.

The United Nations should sponsor programmes to promote public awareness of the dangers of the arms race, its effects on international peace and security, its economic and social consequences and its effect on the attainment of a New International Economic Order.