DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN
THE FIELD OF DISARMAMENT

Addendum

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

[11 October 1985]

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic has always noted the importance of strengthening the central role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament in accordance with its Charter and advocated the further enhancement of the prestige and effectiveness of the Organization regarding this major priority.

In the 40 years since its establishment, the United Nations has made a positive contribution to the maintenance of peace, the strengthening of international security, the development of mutually beneficial co-operation and the solution of a range of problems in the area of limiting the arms race and achieving disarmament.

However, under the present conditions of a sharply exacerbated international situation caused by the actions of the imperialist forces, especially the United States of America, the United Nations assumes still greater responsibility for the destiny of the world. The international community today has no more important or urgent task than to prevent an arms race in outer space, end such a race on earth and ultimately remove the threat of nuclear catastrophe. This is a truly global task and to accomplish it without delay requires the fullest use of all available instruments, including the entire potential of the United Nations.

A major priority of United Nations work in the field of disarmament, in the opinion of the Ukrainian SSR, is to assist in solving the issues of nuclear disarmament. The urgency of these problems has grown particularly in view of
A sensile alternative to this course is the proposal of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics regarding international co-operation in the peaceful exploitation of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization, which has been submitted for consideration at the fortieth session of the General Assembly. The United Nations can and should do its utmost to ensure that outer space, which is the common property of mankind, is placed not in the service of war but in the service of peace and security and the economic and social progress of all peoples. The way to achieve this is through joint collective efforts by all world States.

Enhancing the prestige and effectiveness of the Organization would assist efforts to implement the General Assembly resolutions providing for the adoption of substantial measures to curb the arms race, inter alia, by means of halting the buildup of nuclear-weapons arsenals, banning nuclear-weapons tests, prohibiting the manufacture and destroying the stockpiles of chemical weapons, and limiting the naval arms race. The Ukrainian SSR believes that it is of extreme importance that the resolutions which have been adopted should not remain on paper and that all States, regardless of their social systems, should demonstrate the political will and genuine desire to redirect developments along a healthy course, to strengthen mutual confidence and, on a step-by-step basis, to deal with the problems of arms limitations and reductions. On a range of major disarmament problems the opportunity already exists to finalize and conclude international agreements and treaties, and the efforts of Member States should focus on this in the immediate future.

In the opinion of the Ukrainian SSR, the adoption of practical measures in the field of arms limitation and disarmament can in conjunction with far-reaching political undertakings, make a tangible contribution to removing the nuclear threat. Great importance in this respect attaches to the United Nations declaration regarding the condemnation of nuclear war and the resolutions calling for no first use of nuclear weapons and a nuclear-weapon freeze which have been approved by the General Assembly.

The elaboration of agreements in the field of the limitation and cessation of the arms race is also facilitated by relevant unilateral undertakings on the part of States. Thus, for example, in a desire to put an end to dangerous competition in the growth of nuclear-arms stockpiles, the USSR on a unilateral basis ceased all nuclear explosions as from 6 August of this year. The whole world is well aware, too, of other unilateral steps made by the Soviet Union, such as an undertaking not to be the first to place anti-satellite weapons in outer space, a moratorium on the further deployment of medium-range missiles and the suspension of other countermeasures in Europe.

The United Nations could make a substantial contribution to resolving disarmament issues by encouraging other States, especially the nuclear-weapon
States, to follow the example of the USSR and recognize the importance of unilateral acts of good will in this area.

The Ukrainian SSR expects positive results helping to curb the arms race from the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The success of the session's work and therefore the greater prestige of the Organization depend to a considerable extent on starting thorough preparatory work in good time.

A major task for the United Nations now is that, in the face of a universal danger, there is more need than ever to unite the efforts and capacity of States and to engage in concrete and really effective action to remove the threat of nuclear war and eliminate nuclear weapons totally and in all areas. For this purpose, it is essential to make the fullest use of the established machinery and procedures of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and to promote an atmosphere conducive to the adoption and practical implementation of radical measures of disarmament.

Existing procedures for the discussion of disarmament matters at sessions of the General Assembly have fully proven their worth. The attempts being made by certain Western countries to alter them under the pretext of "rationalization" are designed to limit consideration of the major issues and hinder the adoption of effective solutions.

An important aspect of the question of enhancing the Organization's role in the field of disarmament is the need to broaden the contribution made by the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system to arms limitation and disarmament. They could also play a more active part in mobilizing world public opinion in favour of disarmament, especially within the framework of the World Disarmament Campaign. In this connection, further opportunities are afforded by the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and the observance of the International Year of Peace.

The Ukrainian SSR believes that a fitting commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of victory over the forces of fascism and militarism and the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, as well as the enhancement of its role and prestige, will be served through the intensification of efforts by all States to accomplish the crucial task of today - to prevent a thermonuclear war and preserve life on earth. After all, the solution of all other pressing problems and the very survival of human civilization depend on whether the world can avoid a nuclear catastrophe.