Letter dated 22 May 1979 from the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations presents its compliments to the United Nations Secretariat and has the honour to transmit herewith, on behalf of a number of countries, a working paper entitled 'Elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament' and to kindly request to have this paper published as a document of the Disarmament Commission.
ELEMENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE DISARMAMENT PROGRAMME

Working paper submitted by the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany on behalf of a number of countries

Introduction

1. General and complete disarmament under effective international control is the goal which the Member States of the United Nations have solemnly pledged themselves to achieve. The special session devoted to disarmament laid the basis in its Final Documents for an international disarmament strategy and indicated priorities for the measures to be included in a comprehensive disarmament programme. It gave the Disarmament Commission the task of considering the elements of such a programme to be submitted as recommendations to the General Assembly and through it to the Committee on Disarmament for further action.

2. The goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control can only be achieved step by step as a result of a long-term process based on a whole series of measures in different fields. In this context it has to be borne in mind that as well as measures to reduce the size of military arsenals and armed forces, associated measures should also be envisaged designed to increase the confidence between States and to create the climate for comprehensive disarmament and arms control negotiations.

3. International efforts to promote knowledge and information about disarmament should be encouraged in order to create an international atmosphere, free from political posturing, conducive to the implementation of practical measures with regard to the cessation of the arms race and to disarmament.

4. In order to achieve its objectives a comprehensive disarmament programme would have to meet the following requirements:

- Safeguarding the integrity and security of the States concerned;

- Ensuring a balance between the measures to be taken in different disarmament fields, in particular between the nuclear and conventional armaments, in order to avoid destabilizing effects;

- A flexible and realistic step-by-step approach, in keeping with the priorities set out in paragraph 45 of the Final Document of the special session on disarmament and taking into account especially the particular conditions and requirements of the different regions;

- Effective measures to verify, as appropriate, under international control, that disarmament commitments are carried out by all parties;

- Disarmament negotiations should take into account both the quantitative and the qualitative aspects of disarmament.

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Elements of a Comprehensive Disarmament Programme

The elements may be divided into different categories, without prejudice to their priority of treatment:

I. Disarmament and Arms Control measures;

II. Associated measures (creation of the conditions and the climate for disarmament and arms control measures);

III. Form of negotiations;

IV. Role of the United Nations.

I. Disarmament and Arms control measures

1. Measures relating to nuclear weapons
   - Cessation of the nuclear arms race;
     Nuclear disarmament as a result of negotiation of agreements at appropriate stages and with adequate measures of verification satisfactory to the States concerned for:
     cessation of the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapon systems,
     cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and of the production of fissile material for weapons purposes,
     a comprehensive, phased programme with agreed time-frames, whenever feasible, for progressive and balanced reductions of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, leading to their ultimate and complete elimination at the earliest possible time;
   - A comprehensive test-ban treaty;
   - Continuation of the strategic arms limitation negotiations between the two parties concerned, leading to agreed significant reductions of and qualitative limitations on nuclear arms;
   - Promoting wider adherence to and support of the existing non-proliferation regime, including the strengthening of IAEA-safeguards;

Strengthening the security of non-nuclear-weapon States:

- Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, where appropriate, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States in the region.

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2. Measures relating to other weapons of mass destruction

- Prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction.

- Prohibition of the development, production and use of radiological weapons.

- Prevention of the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction based on new scientific principles.

- Consideration of further steps to prevent an arms race in outer space, on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof, on the basis of the existing international treaties.

3. Measures in the conventional weapons field

- Cessation of the conventional arms race.

- Agreement on the reduction and limitation of conventional weapons and armed forces.

- Consultations among and between supplier States and recipient States with a view to obtaining agreements on the limitation and reduction of the international transfer of conventional weapons.

- The restriction or prohibition of the use of certain conventional weapons which may be indiscriminate in their effects or may cause unnecessary suffering.

- Agreements or other measures on a regional basis, aimed at strengthening peace and security, in particular urgent efforts to contribute to more stable relationships at a lower level of military potential.

4. Other measures

- Establishment of a standardized reporting system, aimed at reducing military budgets.

- Consideration of verification measures and machinery to assure compliance with disarmament agreements and to strengthen international security and confidence.

- Broadening adherence to existing multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements.
II. Associated measures

- Strengthening of international procedures and institutions for peacekeeping and peaceful settlement of disputes, for conflict-containment and effective crisis management.

- Along with the disarmament process, strengthening of the security system of the Charter of the United Nations.

- Confidence-building measures such as agreements on the notification of manoeuvres, the invitation of observers and the exchange of information.

- Steps to use resources released through disarmament measures for social and economic purposes, taking into account the needs of the developing countries.

- The preparation of disarmament measures by thorough studies and reviews as appropriate of all the factors involved.

III. Form of negotiations

Since all disarmament and arms control measures as well as associated measures have to be agreed upon in negotiations, it is crucial for their outcome that States are ready to participate constructively. These negotiations can be conducted on a bilateral, regional or multilateral level depending on how in each case effective disarmament agreements can most readily be achieved. The international disarmament machinery should ensure that all disarmament issues are being dealt with in an appropriate context.

IV. Role of the United Nations

In this connexion the United Nations has an important task. It should help to facilitate the conclusion and implementation of disarmament and arms control agreements. It can encourage the parties involved to enter into negotiations. It can also help to establish a climate in which successful negotiations can be conducted. It is essential to maintain and strengthen the will of the member States to negotiate disarmament and arms control agreements in order to make progress towards the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.