DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 12 May 1980, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. VELLODI (India)

- Statement by the Chairman
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- Organization of work

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80-61224
The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: We are commencing the second substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. Let me, at the outset, extend to all of you my warm greetings and also express my sincere hope that our deliberations in the coming weeks will be conducted in a spirit of understanding and accommodation and that thereby we shall achieve positive results that we can report to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

We are passing through a very crucial and critical stage in the evolution of international relations, which have suffered somewhat in recent times as a result of various events that have taken place in different parts of the world. In the field of disarmament the outlook is far from encouraging. Practically all bilateral and multilateral negotiations have almost come to a halt, except in the Committee on Disarmament, where, thanks primarily to the perseverance and dedication of the members representing the third world, some progress, however marginal it may be, has been achieved. We do not hear anything more of the negotiations on the comprehensive test ban treaty. The SALT agreement, which was signed more than a year ago, has yet to come into force. Negotiations on almost all other issues are at a standstill. This is the situation we face today.

It has been said that this is not the best, the most propitious, time to hold meetings of the Disarmament Commission and that our deliberations at this stage will not only be fruitless but might even adversely affect the usefulness of this important forum. Personally, I do not subscribe to this pessimism, and I was very happy to find that all the members whom I have had the opportunity to consult during the last two weeks on the work of this session of the Commission share my view.

It is easy to sit back and let events take their course. But I believe that I am reflecting the views of all of you when I say that, notwithstanding the realities of the world situation - possibly even because of them - it is important that we should strive even harder to explore ways and means of preserving and strengthening international peace and security. I believe
that all of us, and the great Powers in particular, have a duty to the peoples of the world not to permit the unfortunate deterioration in international relations unduly to inhibit the pressing need to make progress in the field of disarmament.

People all over the world look to the United Nations to initiate and follow up measures aimed at defusing the crisis and to help in restoring conditions conducive to the attainment of the noble objectives enshrined in the Charter to which we are all committed. We must ensure that we do not fail them. What is it that we in this Commission can do to meet this challenge? We are, it is true, only a deliberate body, but I am convinced more than ever that we can provide new momentum for disarmament negotiations.
I believe that the issues we are required to consider at this session are important and provide the framework within which we should not only strive to give adequate expression to our common concern at the lack of progress in disarmament negotiations but at the same time provide positive and constructive inputs to the process of disarmament in keeping with the objectives, principles and priorities contained in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. I have no doubt that the understanding and co-operation that prevailed during the Commission's first substantive session, held last year, will once again be evident during our deliberations in the coming weeks.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The CHAIRMAN: With the Commission's indulgence, I should like to make a few observations on the provisional agenda and the organization of our work at this session.

Members will have observed that the provisional agenda before us is identical to the agenda we considered at the organizational session of the Commission held on 13 December 1979, distributed at that time in Conference Room Paper 3, but perhaps it would be useful if I were to go over the items one by one and indicate their origins.

Item 3, "Preparation of the elements of a draft resolution entitled 'Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade'", has been included in our provisional agenda in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 34/75, adopted at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, operative paragraph 2 of which directs the Disarmament Commission,

"at its substantive session of 1980, to prepare elements of a draft resolution entitled 'Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade' and submit them to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session for consideration and adoption".

Item 4 is in two parts. Item 4 (a) is operative paragraph 2 (a) of part II of General Assembly resolution 33/71 H, adopted at the thirty-third session of the General Assembly, in pursuance of which this time was included as item 4 of the agenda of our first substantive session, last year.
Since we could not discuss this item last year, we decided to include it in the agenda of this year's session.

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda is in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 34/83 H, adopted at the last session of the General Assembly. Operative paragraphs 3 and 4 of that resolution request the Disarmament Commission

"to continue the consideration of the agenda items contained in section II of resolution 33/71 H, with the aim of elaborating, within the framework and in accordance with the priorities established at the tenth special session, a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament"

and to

"submit a report on its work and its recommendations ... to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session".

Item 5 of the provisional agenda is also in two parts. Item 5 (a), like item 4 (a), is carried over from the agenda of our substantive session of last year. Item 5 (b) is in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 34/83 F, operative paragraphs 1 and 2 of which request the Disarmament Commission to examine and identify effective ways and means of achieving agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain, in a balanced manner, military expenditures, including adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned.

Agenda items 6 and 7 are also carried over from the agenda of our first substantive session, held last year.

Agenda items 8 and 9 do not need any special explanation.

Does any member wish to comment on the provisional agenda contained in document A/CN.10/L.5? If not, I shall declare the agenda adopted.

The agenda was adopted.
ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: On Thursday last, the Bureau of the Commission held a meeting and considered various aspects of the organization of our work. The suggestions in this regard that I should like to submit to the Commission are as follows.

While all the items of the agenda are equally important, item 3, relating to the Second Disarmament Decade, in a sense has some urgency in as much as, under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 34/75, we are required to submit our recommendations to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly for consideration and adoption. Therefore we are required to complete our consideration of this item at this current session, and in view of that the first suggestion I should like to put before the Commission is that the item on the Second Disarmament Decade be considered in a working group to be set up for that purpose. The working group, which would be open-ended, would, if agreed upon by the Commission, start its work towards the end of this week, following informal consultations regarding its chairmanship and the organization of its work.

Secondly, we shall commence consideration of agenda item 4 in plenary meetings, I hope beginning tomorrow. There will be a general exchange of views in formal meetings, with verbatim records. Those who wish to make statements in the general exchange of views should do so during the next four or five meetings. It is my hope that that exchange of views will provide the material for inclusion in our report to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. It may become necessary to set up a working group at a later stage, to help in drafting our report on this item. But I would suggest that we leave that decision to a later date.
In the exchange of views under item 4, as far as I am concerned as Chairman, I should have no difficulty if members wished to make comments relating to the Disarmament Decade, so that those comments might help the working group which, I hope, will start work towards the end of this week. After we complete the preliminary consideration of item 4 in plenary meetings, we shall take up item 5 and deal with it in the same manner, beginning with a general exchange of views. There again, after the general exchange of views, we may have to consider then how best to go about drafting our report on that item to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

I do hope that members wishing to submit specific proposals or suggestions relating to items 4 and 5 will do so as soon as possible, so as to make the general exchange of views on those items useful and constructive. In connexion with the submission of proposals, I wish to bring to the attention of representatives one practical problem that we have: namely, the difficulty, as far as the Secretariat is concerned, of reproducing documents in all languages overnight. That will not be possible and I should therefore request all those delegations or groups of delegations which might wish to submit proposals in writing relating to the items in question to try to do so as soon as possible. I should also like to make an ardent appeal to all members to ensure that the statements they wish to make in the general exchange of views are confined to the agenda items under consideration.

Item 6 of our agenda relates to the letter of 1 February 1979 from the Secretary-General, which, as members will recall, relates to paragraph 125 of the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. As far as the various proposals are concerned — and there are quite a number of important proposals — I believe there was general agreement last year that it was up to the authors of those proposals to bring them up, if they wished, for substantive consideration by the Commission. I think I should also recall the fact that, while the Secretary-General has communicated paragraph 125 to the Disarmament Commission, he has also done so to other organs. I believe: both to the Committee on Disarmament and possibly even to the Security Council.
With regard to item 7 of our agenda, I wish only to draw the attention of representatives to the fact that under the provisions of resolution 24/76 D, adopted at the last session of the General Assembly, a Group of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General is currently engaged in the preparation of a comprehensive report on the plans and capability of South Africa in the nuclear field. That report will be considered by the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

I should like now to refer to one or two practical difficulties facing us with regard to the work of this session. The Secretariat has informed me that the Commission can have only one meeting at a time — either of the plenary Commission or of the working groups — with full conference facilities, including simultaneous interpretation. That means that if a working group is set up to consider agenda item 3 and, perhaps at a later stage, to consider other items, we cannot have meetings of the working groups and of the plenary Commission concurrently. I have also been told by the Secretariat that we can have in all a total of 37 formal meetings between now and the end of our session. If we hold two meetings a day starting tomorrow. The number is 37 because we missed one meeting this morning and also because 26 May, that is, two weeks from today, is a holiday.

Those are the suggestions I wished to submit to representatives at the present time. I have one or two other points which I should like to bring to your attention a little later. But if any member wishes to seek clarification on any of the suggestions that I have made, or wishes to comment on them, I shall call on him at this stage.

Mr. MUTUKWA (Zambia): I should like to seek a clarification with regard to agenda item 7. You simply mentioned that there is a Group of Experts that is studying the problem. What is the specific suggestion with regard to our present meetings? Will that matter be considered here?

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the representative of Zambia will recall that that item was included on the agenda of our first substantive session which was held last year. Unfortunately, owing to lack of time we were not able to
give consideration to it and there was no discussion whatsoever on the item. It is up to the members of the Commission to consider how we should deal with the item when we come to it. I simply mentioned the Group of Experts because I thought their work was relevant. The item is on our agenda and, in the normal course, if we have the time I am quite certain that we shall have discussion on that item later on as we progress in our discussions of items on the agenda.

Mr. RUJEZINOVIC (Yugoslavia): I should like first of all to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your very lucid introductory remarks concerning the general task of our Commission at this substantive session. My delegation wishes to associate itself with your concerns and, at the same time, with your optimism. We are looking forward to working under your chairmanship, Sir, along the lines you have suggested.

I shall have an opportunity later on to express the views of the Yugoslav delegation concerning the items on the agenda. I should like now just to seek some clarification. Under the item "Organization of work", you said, Mr. Chairman, that we should have plenary meetings and that towards the end of the week we should set up a working group to deal with item 3 and then, in the middle of next week we might - and I am trying to quote what you said - consider the need to organize the results of the general debate, especially on item 4 and subsequently on item 5, in an appropriate manner. You also mentioned the possibility of setting up a small working group or groups for that purpose.

I was in full agreement with you, Mr. Chairman, until you came to the very end of your explanation, when you said that the Secretariat had informed you that we could have only 37 formal meetings and that the Commission could not work concurrently in plenary meetings and in working groups because it had allocated to it only one team of simultaneous interpreters. I am a little confused, Mr. Chairman, about how you visualize completing the programme you have set forth and how you think the work can be organized properly if we have, say, three working groups for the items on the agenda and if the necessity arises of coming to a plenary meeting for an exchange of views on general items and problems on the agenda. I should be very grateful if you could enlighten me as to how you visualize this.
The CHAIRMAN: I shall try to give a satisfactory reply to the representative of Yugoslavia. I said that we cannot have formal meetings of the plenary Commission and meetings of the working group with interpretation facilities taking place at the same time. In other words, if we start with a general debate or exchange of views on item 4 tomorrow, and if the Commission agrees to the setting up of the open-ended working group on the Second Disarmament Decade towards the end of this week, then from that time on - say Friday - we shall have to organize our meetings so that if the working group meets in the morning the plenary Commission will meet in the afternoon to continue with the general exchange of views, or vice versa. It is my hope - and I trust members will co-operate with me in this - that this stage of the general exchange of views will not be unduly long. Obviously, at this point I cannot give even an indication of how long the general exchange of views will last because I do not know how many members may want to take part.

I was going to suggest towards the end of our meeting that I would appreciate it very much if those who wished to do so, at least with respect to item 4, would so indicate to the Secretariat before tomorrow evening. We should then have a clearer picture of how long the general exchange of views on that item might take. The same would apply to item 5.

With respect to the programme after the general exchange of views is completed, again I hope that the working group on the declaration will not need the whole two or three weeks to complete its work, and will be able to expedite it. But even so, if, after the general exchange of views is completed, the Committee decides to set up another working group for item 4, then the working groups on item 3 and item 4 will have to meet in the mornings and afternoons. This, of course, does not exclude the possibility at some stage of meetings being organized without interpretation facilities - meetings perhaps of drafting groups or of smaller groups. That can always be done.

I can see the thrust of the point made by the representative of Yugoslavia. I shall certainly take it up with the Under-Secretary-General in charge of Conference Services to see whether there is any possibility of our being able to have concurrent meetings with interpretation facilities - at least starting next week if it is not possible this week -- and I shall report to the Commission on the results of my talks with the Under-Secretary-General. I felt that it was necessary to mention this problem at this stage.
Mr. IMAM (Kuwait): I also would like to associate myself with the expressions of gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, on the manner in which you have presented our work programme this afternoon. You stated that there might be a debate, and then you mentioned an exchange of views on specific items. You also said that remarks should be confined to specific items. Debates normally tend to spread over the whole expanse of disarmament issues and they are likely to take on a political character. If an exchange of views is to be confined to specific items, then it would have to be action oriented and take the form of some type of negotiation. That is what would distinguish this Commission from the First Committee of the General Assembly.

You also mentioned constraints with respect to Conference Services, and the fact that we can hold only one meeting a day. In the circumstances, could we not first of all dispense with the general debate at the outset? In other words, if a general debate is to take place let it take place not at the beginning but at the end of our session. And if we are to have an exchange of views, why should we have it twice, once in plenary meetings with verbatim records, and again at the level of the working group? If the working group is open-ended, then everybody will take part. In that case, we hope the meetings will be held in a large room like this one so that the word "open-ended" will apply not only in theory but also in practice.

In the circumstances, therefore, my delegation would make an appeal to the effect that we should dispense with the general debate now and approve an exchange of views not in plenary meetings but in open-ended informal meetings, postponing the general debate until the very end when either delegations would be enabled to analyse the work of the Commission in the working groups and to decide what should be done to expedite our proceedings in the future, or, if time permitted, no constraints need be imposed on the general debate at the end, which could take on any character, including a political character. Those are the suggestions that my delegation would like to make at this stage.

The CHAIRMAN: I fully share the concerns of the representative of Kuwait and his views. First, I should like to make it clear that I have not suggested that we begin with a general debate. I said that we should have a general exchange of views on item 4. Item 3 will be sent to the working group, which I hope can start its work towards the end of this week. When this matter
was discussed in the Bureau, I was told by several members, who were speaking also for certain groups, that a number of delegations wished to make statements at the early stage of the Commission's proceedings. They also said that these meetings should be formal, with verbatim records. I must confess that, like the representative of Kuwait, I had some misgivings about starting a general exchange of views with verbatim records, where representatives would be encouraged to make statements for the record. However, I hope the representative of Kuwait will appreciate my difficulty when I am specifically told that there are delegations that wish to make statements, even tomorrow and the day after. In the circumstances, all I could do was to appeal to those delegations to the effect that their statements could be made not under a general debate item - I specifically did not include a general debate item in the provisional agenda - but under specific agenda items, and they have agreed to this. Hence I did have to accommodate the wishes of a number of delegations that wanted to make statements immediately but have agreed - let me repeat - to make those statements under item 4, or perhaps later under item 5.

If the Commission agrees, the working group on the Second Disarmament Decade might start its work on Friday. A little time is needed before it can begin because of practical considerations, including the questions of who will be the Chairman and of the manner in which it will organize its work.
We shall not hold a general exchange of views on the Disarmament Decade in the plenary Commission. However, I have said that agenda item 4 is a very comprehensive one, as all representatives can see from the wording of its two sub-items. I do not think that there is anything that cannot be said relating to disarmament under it - and I hope that all statements will be confined to the field of disarmament. The two sub-items together form an adequate framework within which representatives can make statements. I hope that the number of such statements in the plenary Commission will not be too great, and that is the reason why I have requested that those who wish to speak on the item should indicate their desire to the Secretariat before tomorrow. I am not suggesting any formal closing of the list of speakers or anything like that, but I hope that representatives will co-operate.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): On behalf of my delegation, I should like, first of all, to express our gratification at seeing you, Mr. Chairman, and the other officers once again guiding the work of the Disarmament Commission. We are confident that, under your leadership, we shall fulfil the hopes and expectations reposed in this body.

Mr. Chairman, we have listened very carefully to your suggestions regarding the organization of work and to the comments made on them. I should like to say that, by and large, my delegation can go along with the sort of arrangements that you have outlined, and we agree to give priority to the drafting of the elements of the Second Disarmament Decade and to the establishment of a working group on that question.
By one specific comment relates to your suggestions with regard to agenda items 4 and 5. If I heard you correctly, you said that we would have a general exchange of views on these questions and then at a later stage consider the exact modalities in which the Commission's report would be drafted on those specific agenda items. The question that I should like to ask is: Do you have in mind the Commission's forwarding some recommendations on agenda items 4 and 5, or do you at this stage envisage merely a factual reflection in the Commission's report of the debates that will be held on them, either here or in a smaller working group? As far as my delegation is concerned, we think that the Commission should make every possible effort not only to hold an exchange of views on those two items but also, if possible, to formulate agreed recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly.

Lastly, as far as the question of simultaneous meetings of the plenary Commission and working groups is concerned, my delegation, for very selfish reasons, because of its limited size, would be quite prepared to accept the status quo, that is, that the two bodies do not meet concurrently. I believe that many other delegations might find themselves in the same position. Nevertheless, we are prepared to be flexible and to accommodate as many meetings as the Secretariat can allow the Disarmament Commission to hold during its current session.

The CHAIRMAN: In answer to the points raised by the representative of Pakistan, I draw the Commission's attention to General Assembly resolution 34/33 H, which is relevant to agenda item 4 (b). That resolution, after asking us in its operative paragraph 3

"...to continue the consideration of the agenda items contained in section II of resolution 33/71 H, with the aim of elaborating, within the framework and in accordance with the priorities established at the tenth special session, a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament", in the next operative paragraph:
"Requests the Disarmament Commission to submit a report on its work and its recommendations on paragraph 2 above to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session."

So, as far as this item is concerned, that General Assembly resolution is very clear: we are required to submit a report - and, as the representative of Pakistan said - even to make specific recommendations regarding this item to the thirty-fifth session. That is our goal, and I hope that we shall at least succeed to a substantive degree in implementing that resolution.

With reference to agenda item 5, the relevant General Assembly resolution is 34/83 F. In its operative paragraphs there is no specific call to the Disarmament Commission to submit a report or recommendations to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. But, as I read its operative paragraphs it seems to me that, although there is no specific call for us to submit a report to the General Assembly - and I was not present at the relevant First Committee meetings - I think it was perhaps the hope of its authors that the Commission would be able to hold a substantive discussion on agenda item 5 also and submit some suggestions to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. I say that because in operative paragraph 4 of that resolution, the General Assembly:

"Decides to consider at its thirty-fifth session, under the item entitled 'Reduction of military budgets' to be included in its provisional agenda ... the most effective ways and means of adopting practical measures in this field."

In other words, the issue relating to military budgets will be on the agenda of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. I suppose, therefore, that if the Commission could, on this item also, arrive at agreed conclusions and recommendations, the discussion of the problem at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly would certainly benefit from that.

To sum up, it is my hope that under both those items it will be our aim to try and come up with agreed conclusions and recommendations. It was for that reason I said that perhaps after the general exchange of views on them it might become necessary to set up a smaller group to see how best the items and views that emerge from the general exchange can be reflected in our report to the thirty-fifth session.
With reference to the last point raised by the representative of Pakistan, I have explained that, from the Secretariat's point of view, the outlook is not very bright; but I did say that I would talk to the Under-Secretary-General. In any case, the members of the Commission will have other opportunities to consider the practical aspects of the question to which the representative of Pakistan referred when we decide at a later stage on our organization of work, after the general exchange of views has been completed.
Mr. MARINESCU (Romania) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, I wish, on behalf of my delegation, to join those who have thanked you for the introductory remarks you were kind enough to make to this Commission. I hasten to emphasize that my delegation fully concurs with the spirit in which those remarks were made and, above all, shares the optimism apparent in your approach to the problems inscribed on our agenda. At the same time, we thank you for the suggestions you have made concerning the organization of work. As far as my delegation is concerned, we have no difficulty in agreeing to them.

Nevertheless there is one point about which we are somewhat concerned, as is the Yugoslav delegation. We fear that at a certain stage of our work we may have some difficulty in proceeding to the proposed exchange of views and in advancing the work of one or perhaps several working groups. I say "perhaps several" because, without wishing to prejudge the situation, it does seem to me that, given the limited time in which to dispose of this rather heavy agenda, we might be hard pressed to conclude our work on time.

I should be grateful to you, Sir, if you could convey this concern to the Secretary-General. Perhaps, when necessary, an extra effort could be made to provide additional services so that the Commission may discharge its task of dealing with the extremely important issues on its agenda in the best possible circumstances.

In conclusion, I wish to say, Mr. Chairman, that I fully concur with your interpretation of item 5 of the agenda, relating to military budgets. Having participated, together with other Member States, in the elaboration of resolution 34/83 F, my country deems it both logical and necessary for the exchange of views which is to take place in this Commission on the question of military budgets to be transmitted in good and due form to the next session of the General Assembly.
In our view, the terms of that resolution are very clear, both in operative paragraph 4 and in operative paragraph 2, in which the General Assembly:

"Requests, ... the Disarmament Commission to undertake during 1980 to examine and identify effective ways and means of achieving such agreements"

relating to the reduction of military budgets. Hence it is all the more necessary for the results of our discussions to be reported in good and due form. To be sure, that does pose the practical problem of the drafting of the conclusions on our work. In that respect, we think that another working or drafting group should be established which, after the general exchange of views has taken place, would be able to put in writing, for the Commission's report, the results of our debates.

Having said that, Mr. Chairman, I should merely like to tell you how pleased we are to be working once again under your wise and competent guidance.
The CHAIRMAN: As far as the practical issues are concerned, I will explore the possibilities of having more than one meeting at a time. But it is my hope that, irrespective of the decision that will be taken on that, we can get going on the general exchange of views on item 4 as soon as possible, and it is in this context that I wish once again to appeal to all those who wish to speak on this item to try to do so within the next three or four days.

As I said, I cannot at this point say how long this exchange of views on item 4 will take: it will depend on the number of speakers. But I should like to put to members the thought that perhaps we could start the consideration of item 4 tomorrow afternoon so as to give those delegations that might wish to participate in the exchange of views an opportunity to work on their statements tomorrow morning. A few representatives have asked to be allowed to speak tomorrow, although I have no clear indication now of how many there are. But if the Commission agrees with me that there may be an advantage in not meeting in the morning so as to permit representatives to work on their statements, then we can meet tomorrow afternoon.

As for the organization of our work from the middle of next week on, this is a point that I am certainly quite concerned with; I will do whatever I can as Chairman of the Commission to ensure that all the items on the agenda — which, as I said, are all important items — get the consideration they deserve. If we could complete the general exchange of views on items 4 and 5 perhaps by the middle — or, say, by Thursday — of next week, then we could, even before that, in one of the plenary meetings, get back to this question of the organization of our work.

The representative of Zambia referred to another item on the agenda. We have to keep that possibility open also — the possibility of permitting those members who may wish to comment on other items on the agenda to do so — so we do have a difficult task ahead, in terms of the workload and the constraints on time.
I should like at this point to refer to another problem. It is an important issue and relates to the participation of the non-governmental organizations in the Commission's work. I think all members will recall that the non-governmental organizations participated very actively in the work of the tenth special session, in 1978, and I believe that all of us benefited a great deal from their participation. The role of the non-governmental organizations generally in the field of disarmament is extremely important, because in a way the non-governmental organizations are the channel through which we have to make efforts to mobilize world public opinion on behalf of disarmament.

I have had some consultations on this matter with the members of the Bureau, and there certainly is general agreement that certain facilities should be extended to the non-governmental organizations right away - that is, even from tomorrow, when we start the general exchange of views. Those facilities would be similar to those extended to the non-governmental organizations at the last substantive session.

One question has been brought to my attention. It concerns the possibility of earmarking one plenary meeting of the Disarmament Commission to permit those non-governmental organizations that wish to do so to make oral presentations on their own activities in the field of disarmament. This is a matter that other members of the Bureau and the Secretariat and I are exploring. I shall certainly come back to the Commission with specific suggestions on it. I am not asking the Commission at this moment to express views on this question of the participation of non-governmental organizations; there are several practical aspects that I have to explore. But I thought I should mention the matter to the Commission.

I also want to inform the members of the Commission on the documentation for the current session of the Commission. Apart from the agenda, which we have adopted, we have before us the following documents.

First, there is document A/CN.10/9, which contains a note by the Secretary-General transmitting to the Commission, as required by General Assembly resolution 34/83 H, the report of the Committee on Disarmament and all the official records of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly as far as disarmament is concerned.
Secondly, there is document A/CN.10/10, which contains a report by the Secretary-General on the replies received by him from Member States and specialized agencies to a communication he sent out on 7 January 1980 soliciting their views and suggestions on possible elements of the declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade. So far, three addenda to that report have been circulated, and I am told that a fourth will come out in a day or two. I am also told that up to now a total of 27 replies from Member States and seven from specialized agencies have been received.

Document A/CN.10/11 contains a note by the Secretary-General in pursuance of operative paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 34/75, on the Second Disarmament Decade, in which the Secretary-General was requested to give all necessary assistance to the Disarmament Commission in implementing the resolution, including the preparation of a working paper. Document A/CN.10/11 also contains that working paper. I have gone through it, and I think it contains extremely useful information for which I should like on behalf of the Commission to express gratitude to the Secretary-General.

That is the status of the documentation. Since I am talking about documentation, let me once again request those delegations that wish to submit proposals or working papers on any of the agenda items to do so, if possible, before the end of this week. I am pressing them to do so for two reasons. First, I feel that those working papers would assist in the general exchange of views and make it more agenda-item-oriented, or action-oriented, as somebody has put it. But even more important than that is the practical difficulty, to which I have referred, for the Secretariat to circulate those proposals, some of which may run into several pages, in all the languages in a very short time. Depending on the proposals that are received I might at a later stage ask the Commission whether it would like the documents to be circulated as and when they are ready even if they are not available in all the languages. I am aware of the sensitivity on this issue, so I do not want to start a discussion, but I mention this matter because I have been told—so far by only a very few—that some members do intend to submit papers. That is why I would request them and others who may have similar intentions to do so, if possible, before the end of the week.
(The Chairman)

Before concluding, I should like to ask the Commission whether the suggestion I have made concerning holding a meeting tomorrow afternoon instead of tomorrow morning is acceptable to it. Are there any objections? I see none. The next meeting of the Commission will therefore take place tomorrow afternoon at 3 o'clock.

I should like to end this meeting by saying that I am extremely glad to see the good attendance. I hope it will continue for the rest of the session.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.