DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 5 June 1980, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. VELLODI (India)

Statement by the Chairman

Agenda item 3:
Preparation of the elements of a draft resolution entitled "Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade"

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages, preferably in the same language as the text to which they refer. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also, if possible, incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room A-3550, 866 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.
The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: I should like, first of all, to make some brief comments on the Commission's programme of work and the steps we find ourselves at, keeping in mind the fact that the Commission must adjourn its current session some time tomorrow.

Considerable work remains on agenda items 3, 4 and 5, and we must also take some decisions on the remaining items. In addition we have to examine the skeleton of the draft report of the Commission. All of this must be completed today to give the Secretariat time to put all the papers together tomorrow morning, and so that tomorrow afternoon we may, it is to be hoped, adopt the report and give delegations the opportunity of making closing statements before the session ends.

I would request all delegations to co-operate in utilizing to the utmost the precious little time that we have left.

AGENDA ITEM 3

PREPARATION OF THE ELEMENTS OF A DRAFT RESOLUTION ENTITLED "DECLARATION OF THE 1980s AS THE SECOND DISARMAMENT DECADE"

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon Mr. Adeniji, the Chairman of the Working Group on this item, to present that body's report to the Commission.
Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria): As you recall, Mr. Chairman, this working group was set up to try to work on a draft declaration with a view to submitting to the Commission a clean text.

I must say, however, that we have not quite been able to achieve total success in our efforts to submit such a clean text to the Commission. As will be seen in document A/CN.10/CRP.11, dated 4 June 1980, there are still some paragraphs to be agreed upon, and because of the lack of consensus we have reflected in some cases various alternatives in square brackets so as to facilitate further work which you may wish to undertake on the document.

The working group held a total of 18 meetings between 16 May and 4 June, including 13 meetings of the drafting group, which met between 27 May and 4 June. The working group had before it various documents, including the replies, 35 in all, from Member States, and from four specialized agencies, to the Secretary-General's request for ideas and proposals to be included in the declaration.

There was also the note by the Secretary-General and working papers submitted by the Federal Republic of Germany on behalf of a number of countries, by the delegation of Cuba on behalf of the non-aligned countries and by Poland on behalf of the group of socialist countries.

The working group had agreed that the document it would present would be in the nature of a declaration which would form part of a resolution. The preambular part, as it were, of the resolution, we did not have time to discuss in the working group, even though a draft was prepared which was circulated in the final hours, so to speak, of the working group's work. We have therefore not reflected it here; but I hope that there may be a means of reflecting it either, if you have time, Mr. Chairman, by negotiation during your further consultations, or alternatively, by sending it on to the General Assembly for negotiation. It is a very short and not, I hope, controversial document.
But the main document itself consists of the introductory part, a section on goals and principles, a section on activities and a section on implementation, review and appraisal. As far as the introductory part is concerned, as will be seen in A/ CN.10/CRP.11, the working group managed to reach consensus on the various paragraphs in that section. Under the heading of goals and principles also, on pages 2 and 3 of the document, the working group has managed also to submit a clean text, indicating that consensus was reached. In the section on activities, which begins on page 3, there are various points of disagreement. The first of those falls on page 4 under the heading "Priorities", where the second sentence of the paragraph is reflected in three separate alternatives. These alternatives, of course, were included to indicate that not all delegations could agree on a formulation which several delegations had thought might provide the basis for a compromise formula.

Also under the heading "Priorities", in clause (iv) there are two alternatives for the expression of the kind of instrument needed to assure non-nuclear-power States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Later in the section, on page 5, there is another square bracket relating to the listing of various measures which should have priority. The alternatives there are, I think, quite self-explanatory.

On page 6 in clause (v) there is another square bracket at the end of the sentence which encloses the phrase: "...including those proposed in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia". I feel gratified to inform the Commission that there is now an agreement that that phrase should be deleted so that the sentence would end with the phrase: "...the relevant paragraphs of the Final Document".
(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

In clause (vii) there are again a number of square brackets. The point is that in this sentence there is no agreement on how to formulate the wording, although there is agreement on the reflection of the various elements that are contained therein, a reflection which was based on paragraph 58 of the Final Document.

The paragraph on disarmament and development has been agreed upon, as also have the paragraphs on disarmament and international security. The paragraphs on public awareness have also been agreed upon, as well as the paragraph on studies and the section on implementation, review and appraisal.

It is only left for me to express to the delegations that participated in the work of the working group my deep appreciation of the spirit of compromise which very often prevailed during our work. Perhaps the appearance of these various square brackets might give the impression that delegations were inflexible; that impression would be wrong. I wish, of course, that delegations had been more flexible so that we would have been able to present the Commission with a clean text and thereby relieve the burden which we seem now to be imposing on it towards the tail end of its working period.

Finally, I should also like to place on record my appreciation of the very great support and help which was provided by the team from the Secretariat which assisted the working group, Messrs. Efimov and Sattar, who were very helpful, as was also the dedication of Mrs. Crewell who was always willing and very capable as our secretary in producing the up-to-date versions of our documents as we went along.
The CHAIRMAN: May I, on behalf of the Commission and on my own behalf, tell Ambassador Adeniji how grateful we are to him for the tremendous effort which he personally and his delegation have made in the Working Group. I quite realize that it was not an easy task. I myself had the opportunity to see the work of drafting, and I quite understand the problems to which it gave rise.

As Ambassador Adeniji has indicated to us, there are still several parts of the draft report on which further consultations and negotiations should be attempted. As all members realize, the time constraint is such that we may not be able to resolve all the points, but it is my hope that we can make one last effort to do so.

It is for this reason that I propose that we should meet as an informal group to try to see whether some of these unresolved points in the draft can be settled. I think this effort is called for, and therefore I should like to suggest that we meet in Conference Room 11 immediately after this meeting.

Does any delegation wish to make a statement at this stage?

Mr. PFEIFFER (Federal Republic of Germany): Mr. Chairman, you have proposed that we should continue our informal discussions on the remaining outstanding items of the working paper which was received this morning, and I certainly agree with the proposal. I think we should now make a very great effort to sort out the possible remaining differences.

I should like to say further that my delegation associates itself whole-heartedly with the kind words addressed to the Chairman of the Working Group, Ambassador Adeniji, to his colleagues and to the Secretariat, who have done an excellent job, so that we have received this morning a report in clear language, with only a few square brackets left open. I think this is a remarkable achievement that testifies to the efficiency of our Chairman, the Secretariat, and also, if I may say so, the members of the drafting group. They also had much to contribute to this success.
I think that the compromise so far is a balanced one, and if we submit it to the General Assembly for further action during the next decade, which has already started, we shall have a good basis for further action.

Before we go to the informal meeting, may I just say a word or two with regard to the remaining brackets. I think that if we are all guided by a spirit of compromise and by the feeling that we should, if possible, agree on a bracket-free draft declaration, it should be possible to do that. If we then refer to successful efforts we have made in the past to agree on some formulations, I think it would very much facilitate the work in the informal group if we could take as a basis for our compromise language accepted in the past which can also easily be included in this draft declaration.

I say this to underline the readiness of my delegation and others to help the Chairman, Mr. Adeniji, and the members of the group which will meet shortly in their efforts to produce a text acceptable to all parties. We realize that it requires some readiness to accept compromise formulations, but I think that if we make a common effort we can reach the expected result.

I would just explain that my delegation and others will certainly feel bound by this obligation.

The CHAIRMAN: May I make an appeal to members to permit the Chair to conduct the informal consultations as soon as possible. We have very little time.

Mr. SHUSTOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Our delegation is ready to continue the effort to agree on questions still unresolved within the informal Working Group, as you suggest, Sir, and will do so immediately after the official meeting. Together with this, at the informal meeting when we continue the work of agreeing on recommendations in the text of the draft declaration proclaiming the 1980s
as the second Disarmament Decade, we should like to give our point of view on one question included in the introductory part of document A/CN.10/CRP.11. On page 2 an attempt is made to give a certain characterization to the present international situation. Making such an evaluation is difficult, and it is not fully understandable because the evaluations of different States or groups of States differ from each other, and to agree on any kind of general point of view on such questions is extremely complicated.

Therefore, at the very start of the working consultations we stated that the Soviet delegation considered it essential to concentrate all the efforts of the members of the Working Group on agreeing on situations directly relating to the programme for disarmament for the next decade. The General Assembly of the United Nations, when taking a decision on this question, did not give the Commission a mandate to concern itself with formulating political evaluations of the international situation. The mandate of the Commission was quite clear and precise — to prepare the elements of a draft resolution entitled "Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade".

Accordingly, as I recalled, at the outset we proposed that we eliminate the phrase in the draft document submitted by the group of non-aligned countries relating to the evaluation of the international situation. But the sponsors of that document insisted on the need to have a brief evaluation of such a kind. After some thought we decided to meet that request and to try to work out an agreed formula although, I repeat, we considered that this matter was extremely complicated. The discussions on this formula took up a large part of the time of the Working Group on item 3 of the agenda.
Finally, the Commission has before it for consideration the formula which is contained in the first two sentences of the first paragraph on page 2 of document A/CN.10/CRP.11. While not giving its final agreement to this formula, the Soviet delegation, however, expressed its readiness to consider it further. After studying the wording, specifically the second sentence to which I have referred, we came to the conclusion that it is not completely satisfactory but is ambiguous and contradictory in its contents and that, as a result, it does not reflect the real state of affairs. However, the Soviet delegation would like to state that we are ready to accept this text in its entirety if the following clause is inserted at the beginning: I formally propose its inclusion in the introductory part of the text of the document worked out by us. My addition would be as follows. After the first sentence, with which we agree, the next sentence would begin with the words: "As a consequence of the further activation of the imperialist political forces, the confrontation and the accumulation of unresolved international questions". The rest of the text would remain as it stands. We consider that this addition would eliminate the shortcomings in the text and make it more complete and objective.

We should like that addition to be made to the text of the document that the Commission is now considering. However, I repeat, in conclusion, that, if it is difficult to agree on this question, then, as my delegation sees it, it would not be difficult to delete the second sentence of the first paragraph on page 2 of document A/CN.10/CRP.11.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): We have noted with interest the report of the Working Group on the draft declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade. I should like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's deep appreciation for the work that was done so admirably by Mr. Adeniji in the Working Group and which has enabled that Group to submit a text which is largely free of brackets. This text is one that, as will be readily seen, was based on the discussions on the document of the non-aligned countries (A/CN.10/16) as well as on the other documents that were submitted in the Working Group, and I can readily say that, as a result of this
cross-fertilization of ideas between various proposals, the working paper before us has been enriched and is now a very useful basis upon which the General Assembly would be able to declare the 1980s a Disarmament Decade.

From the very beginning of our work my delegation, as well as several members of the non-aligned group and of other States, have stated that at this stage when the General Assembly would be declaring the 1980s a Disarmament Decade it could not in its recommendations escape an evaluation or description of the current international situation, which directly affects the disarmament picture. As was recognized by the Final Document, there is, I believe, an integral relationship between international peace and security and disarmament. For that reason my delegation from the start has expressed an opinion which is different from that voiced by the representative of the Soviet Union, who feels that the mandate of this Commission with regard to this item does not entail any evaluation of the current international situation. We are glad that our opinion is shared by the members of the non-aligned group and by the overwhelming majority of the States represented in this Commission. It was in that light that the drafting group considered the portion of the paper in the introduction that concerns the present international situation. The formulations appearing in that part of the paper are a composite of proposals contained in document A/CH.10/16, on the one hand, and also proposals that were put forward mainly by the representative of the Soviet Union. The compromise text that is reflected here includes substantial additions made by the representative of the Soviet Union in the text. And it was at least our understanding and, I think, a general gentleman’s understanding in the drafting group that this text was accepted as the basis of a consensus on this paper.

This morning the representative of the Soviet Union has chosen to reopen the question and has put forward an amendment to this text which, I should like to state for the record, was in fact considered in the Working Group and was not included - I would hesitate to state that it was rejected, but it was not included - because of its patently partial nature. Therefore it is very difficult for my delegation to understand the motivation of the representative of the Soviet Union in bringing forward this amendment at this late stage in our work on a point that he must know is of crucial importance to several
delegations. If the delegation of the Soviet Union insists on reopening this question, my delegation would be quite prepared to reopen it and to bring forward such other amendments as we consider are necessary to describe the international situation more fully and more specifically. We have hesitated to do so, particularly because of our deep regard for the Soviet delegation, but if the Soviet representative insists on construing the present paragraph as applying to some specific events and some specific situations, where his delegation finds itself in a difficult position, I should not be loath to name names and name situations which have disturbed international peace and security in recent months.
I would submit that there could be a process that would lead to a very different kind of atmosphere in the drafting group and in our Commission in these last two days. It might lead to a situation which could change the basic procedures and methods of work which this Commission has followed up to the present time in the last two sessions, but if we are obliged to do so we are prepared to put forward our point of view more specifically and to invoke the rules of procedure which are available to us, in order to see that the views of the overwhelming majority of States in this Commission is reflected in the documents that are submitted to the General Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN: I may appeal once again to delegations not to engage at this stage in a debate here. We have heard the point of view of the representative of the Soviet Union. The representative of Pakistan has stated his views. I shall therefore make a strong appeal to other delegations, particularly in the very difficult situation in which we find ourselves, to help the Chair by not prolonging this discussion at this stage. We shall have occasion to discuss this in the informal consultations and certainly later in the Commission. I would therefore make a strong appeal to delegations to permit the Chair now to adjourn the meeting and have informal consultations.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.