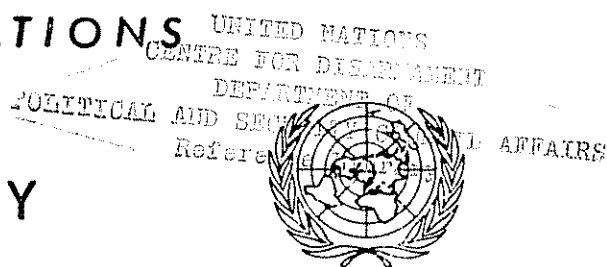




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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FORTY-FIRST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 8 December 1980, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. KOSTOV
(Vice-Chairman)

(Bulgaria)

- Opening of the session
- Adoption of the agenda
- Election of the Chairman and other members of the Bureau
- Review of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session relating to the Disarmament Commission
- Provisional agenda for the session of the Disarmament Commission to be held in May 1981
- Other business

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The meeting was called to order at 3.50 p.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The CHAIRMAN: May I say at the outset that I have the honour and the privilege to preside over this short organizational session of the Disarmament Commission, not by choice, but because the Chairman of the Commission, Ambassador Vellodi, was not able to be present in New York owing to previous commitments. In accordance with existing practice the meeting, in the absence of the Chairman, should be presided over by the representative of the country which is first on the list of Vice-Chairmen in English alphabetical order.

Austria, the first country on the list, has informed the Secretariat that its representative and Vice-Chairman of the Commission would be unable to preside over the meeting in view of his heavy work-load. Consequently Bulgaria, the next country on the list, now has the honour to do so.

As Members are aware, we are meeting today for a brief session to consider the organization of the work of the Commission during 1981.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU

The CHAIRMAN: Before proceeding to consideration of this agenda item, I should like to recall that during the organizational session of the Commission held in December 1979,

"The Commission decided that the present Bureau should continue to serve for a further year, namely during 1980, with the understanding that a principle of rotation would apply as from 1981 as regards the chairmanship of the Commission." (A/35/42, para. 5)

Accordingly, it is our task to elect a new Chairman and other members of the Bureau. I should like to point out in this respect that consultations are still under way between some regional groups for the selection of their candidates for the Bureau. Therefore, pending the conclusion of those consultations, I suggest that we put off the election of the Chairman and other members of the Bureau to a later stage.

It was so decided.

REVIEW OF THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION RELATING TO THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

The CHAIRMAN: As members of the Commission are aware, at the current session of the General Assembly, the First Committee adopted four draft resolutions that have a direct bearing on the Commission's work; they will be considered and are likely to be adopted by the General Assembly at its plenary meeting scheduled for 12 December.

The first draft resolution under General Assembly agenda item 48, entitled 'General and complete disarmament,' concerns the study on conventional disarmament and is contained in document A/C.1/35/L.2/Rev.1. Operative paragraphs 2 and 3 of the draft resolution read as follows:

2. "Agrees that the Disarmament Commission, at its forthcoming third substantive session, should work out the general approach to the study, its structure and scope;

(The Chairman)

3. "Requests the Disarmament Commission to convey to the Secretary-General the conclusion of its deliberations which should constitute the guideline for the study".

The second relevant draft resolution concerns the question of the reduction of military budgets under agenda item 32 and is contained in document A/C.1/35/L.9. Operative paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of that draft resolution read as follows:

"3. Requests the Disarmament Commission to continue at its 1981 session the consideration of the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets," taking into account the provisions of resolution 34/83 F as well as those of the present resolution and, in particular, to identify and elaborate on the principles which should govern further actions of States in the field of the freezing and reduction of military expenditures, keeping in mind the possibility of embodying such principles into a suitable document at an appropriate stage;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to invite Member States to express their views and suggestions on the principles which should govern their actions in the field of the freezing and reduction of military expenditures and to prepare on this basis a report to be submitted to the Disarmament Commission at its 1981 session;

"5. Considers that this action to be carried out by the Disarmament Commission should be regarded as complementary to any other ongoing activity within the framework of the United Nations related to the question of reduction of military budgets as well as to any possible unilateral initiatives which may be undertaken by States in this field".

The third draft resolution concerning the work of the Commission is the Declaration as the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade under agenda item 36, and it is contained in document A/C.1/35/L.34. Paragraph 25 of the Declaration states:

(The Chairman)

"In addition, the General Assembly will undertake at its fortieth session, in 1985, a review and appraisal, through the Disarmament Commission, of the progress in the implementation of the measures identified in this Declaration".

The fourth relevant draft resolution, under agenda item 44 (b), concerns the report of the Disarmament Commission, document A/C.1/35/L.40. Operative paragraphs 1 through 4 of the draft resolution outline the general framework of the Commission's work during 1981:

"1. Endorses the report of the Disarmament Commission and the recommendations therein;

"2. Requests the Disarmament Commission to continue its work in accordance with its mandate, as set forth in paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and to that end to meet for a period not exceeding four weeks during 1981, beginning on...;

"3. Also requests the United Nations Disarmament Commission to continue the consideration of the agenda items contained in resolution 34/83 H, with the emphasis on the preparation of a report to the second Special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament;

"4. Further requests the Disarmament Commission to submit a report on its work and its recommendations on paragraphs 2 and 3 above to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session".

(The Chairman)

As far as item 4 of today's agenda is concerned, I believe I have indicated in some detail the draft resolutions adopted by the First Committee which will be formally adopted by the General Assembly and which have a bearing on the work of the Disarmament Commission.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE SESSION OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION TO BE HELD
IN MAY 1981

The CHAIRMAN: In considering the question of the draft provisional agenda for the substantive session to be held in May 1981 we shall take into account not only the resolution adopted at the current session of the General Assembly, but also the items carried over from our last substantive session held from 12 May to 6 June this year. In this connexion, I should like to draw the attention of members of the Commission to paragraph 23 of the report of the Disarmament Commission to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly (A/35/42), which reads as follows:

"Since the Disarmament Commission was unable to consider items 6 and 7 of its agenda (see para. 8 above), it recommended that those items should be included in the agenda of the Commission's session of 1981." (A/35/42, para.23)

Items 6 and 7 referred to in that paragraph are listed under paragraph 8 of document A/35/42, and read as follows:

"6. Letter dated 1 February 1979 from the Secretary-General addressed to the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission (A/CN.10/3)

"7. Letter dated 8 March 1979 from the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid addressed to the Secretary-General (A/CN.10/4)."

(The Chairman)

In view of various relevant tasks requested by the General Assembly, and taking into account all of the aspects to which I have just referred, a draft provisional agenda for the 1981 session of the Disarmament Commission (A/CN.10/CRP.12) has, I think, been distributed to all representatives as a basis for discussion and consideration.

Before inviting members of the Commission to comment on that document I should like to point out that item 5 of the draft provisional agenda for 1981, "Reduction of military budgets", could take all the relevant language of resolution A/C.1/35/L.9 adopted by the First Committee, entitled "Reduction of military budgets":

"... to identify and elaborate the principles which should govern further actions of States in the field of the freezing and reduction of military expenditures, keeping in mind the possibility of embodying such principles into a suitable document at an appropriate stage".

(A/C.1/35/L.9)

That is the full text of the relevant part of the resolution. If it is acceptable, we can supplement item 5 of this draft provisional agenda accordingly.

Mr. NAMBIAR (India): Permit me at the outset, on behalf of my delegation, and particularly on behalf of Mr. Vellodi, the Chairman of the meetings of the United Nations Disarmament Commission earlier this year, to express Mr. Vellodi's apologies for not being able to attend this meeting because of certain preoccupations that have kept him in India.

I should like to address myself to item 5 of the draft provisional agenda for the 1981 session of the Disarmament Commission. The delegation of India will have detailed comments to make on the order of the various items on the draft provisional agenda, as well as on the wording of individual items. I should like now to make some general comments on how we view the present wording of document A/CN.10/CRP.12.

(Mr. Nambiar, India)

As you have had occasion to mention, Mr. Chairman, in the course of your explanatory statement in relation to the fourth item on today's agenda, 'Review of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly ...', resolution A/C.1/35/L.40 contains a relevant paragraph whereby the Assembly would request the Disarmament Commission to continue the consideration of the agenda items contained in resolution 34/83 H.

In this context, I would suggest that we might try and cover as far as possible the phrasing adopted in this year's agenda relating to the various items we have considered. Doubtless, the Disarmament Commission has considered at its earlier meetings this year the various sub-items under agenda items 4 and 5, but in my delegation's view at least, the exchange of views on those items was by no means complete, and some of the items which appeared with the same wording as items 4 (b) and 5 (a) and (b) of May of this year relate precisely to what would be considered under items 5 and 6 of the draft provisional agenda.

My delegation would prefer it if the wording adopted in our earlier agenda in May could be, mutatis mutandis, used in this particular case. This is not to suggest that we should not completely do away with any reference to the wording as appears in certain resolutions which have been adopted in the First Committee, but I am sure that the overall thrust of this wording is already comprehended in the wording as appears in items 4 (b), 5 (a) and 5 (b) of the May 1980 agenda.

The CHAIRMAN: I may assure the representative of India that we all very much miss Ambassador Vellodi's presence in this Commission.

Mr. VUKOVIC (Yugoslavia): My delegation had intended to raise the same point that has just been raised by the representative of India.

Mr. Chairman, as you yourself mentioned when introducing item 4 of the present draft provisional agenda, reference was made in draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.40 to continuation of "the consideration of the agenda items contained in resolution 34/83 H".

My delegation feels that it would be in the interest of Member States to include that provision in the agenda for the next session of the Commission, so that members could have an opportunity to deal with various aspects which have already been discussed at the previous session of the Commission but not exhausted.

I therefore propose that we take that into consideration and reproduce last year's agenda in the way suggested by the representative of India.

Mr. TINCA (Romania): I support the views expressed by the representatives of India and Yugoslavia. My delegation has nothing against mentioning the Commission's agenda of last year, but at the same time we feel that in the agenda for the next session the new items and questions the Commission will be called upon to consider in the near future should be properly reflected.

Accordingly, I presume that the Secretariat could prepare a document containing both the remaining items of last year's agenda and the items the Commission will be called upon to take up in pursuance of the draft resolution adopted in the First Committee during the current session of the General Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN: As I understand it, we have a proposal by the delegations of India and Yugoslavia to reproduce in document A/CN.10/CRP.12 the same language on the items discussed last year as appeared in the agenda then, and not to innovate. Is there any objection to that proposal?

Mr. FLOWEREE (United States of America): I have two points I should like to make.

The first has to do with what our task is this afternoon. Are we here to put the finishing touches on the language of this draft provisional agenda or are we simply to make recommendations regarding the language of the agenda which would then be taken up by the Bureau when it meets next year before the United Nations Disarmament Commission session?

If the latter is the case, I suggest that we let the Bureau know about the suggestion by the representative of India, which was seconded by two other delegations. But, if we are now being asked to decide, I think that my delegation would prefer to follow the language of the most recent draft resolution we have adopted on the subject, which you have just mentioned, Mr. Chairman, and from which you suggested extracting some language. It seems to us that that is the proper way to proceed, since that draft resolution was adopted in full recognition of what had been achieved and what had been discussed in the 1980 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission on the same subject.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no further comments on this matter, I suggest that we refer the final drafting of our agenda to the meeting of the Bureau preceding the next substantive session in May, taking into account all suggestions made at this session. If I hear no objections, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: If no other delegation wishes to speak at this time, we shall hold our next meeting tomorrow morning, in the hope that consultations will be concluded by then and that we shall be able to proceed to the elections. In order to give more time to the regional groups, I suggest that we meet at 11 a.m.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.