DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 18 May 1982, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. WYZNER (Poland)

- General exchange of views (continued)
- Election of the Rapporteur
- Organization of work (continued)

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82-60544
The meeting was called to order at 11.00 a.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. Ott (German Democratic Republic): Mr. Chairman, I should like at the outset to express my pleasure that a representative of our sister nation, Poland, is chairing this session. We have known your high skill and experience for many years and we wish you all success. My congratulations are also extended to the other officers of the Commission.

More than ever the peoples are alarmed and concerned about the threat of a nuclear war. The world public demands effective measures to halt and reverse the arms race. It is obvious that this background gives a special importance to the present session of the Disarmament Commission, which is starting its work on the eve of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Therefore it is my delegation's expectation that our session will give a substantial impetus to a successful second special session. Regarding the concrete tasks before us I should like to make the following remarks.

First, the report of the Disarmament Commission to the second special session should be drafted on the basis of the Commission's reports to the General Assembly and should correctly reflect its deliberations and recommendations. The recommendations for the Second Disarmament Decade give proof of the creative work of the Commission. They are striking evidence that the Commission can succeed in defining specific objectives, principles and activities aimed at ending the arms race and starting disarmament, particularly in the nuclear field.

Secondly, we deem it imperative to start the work of the expert group on the study of conventional disarmament on the basis of agreement on the general approach to and the structure and scope of such a study. During our session last year our delegation already explained its position. I should like to stress some of its elements once more: the study should serve as a basis for concrete action in the disarmament field; it should fully comply with the principles and priorities of the Final Document of the first special session, especially with the principle that nuclear disarmament and the prevention of a nuclear war have the highest priority; it should further recognize that the States which are permanent members of the
Security Council and the States which have military agreements with them should make a permanent contribution to conventional disarmament; it should proceed from the principle of equal and undiminished security, and the expert group should be guided by the principle of consensus.

Thirdly, concerning item 4 of our agenda, we emphasize again the priority of halting and reversing the nuclear-arms race. The opinion of my country in that respect was explained in the answer to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in connexion with General Assembly resolution 36/31 B. In order to enhance progress in the nuclear field, parallel political and legal steps to strengthen the security of States, as well as measures to halt and reverse the conventional arms race, are imperative.

Fourthly, as far as item 5 of the agenda is concerned, I should like to pledge the support of my Government for measures to reduce the military budgets of the permanent members of the Security Council and other militarily important States. This reduction could be agreed upon, for example, in absolute figures or in percentage points, as provided for in the Final Document of the first special session. We support the elaboration of principles with a view to concluding practical measures to diminish the arms expenditure which is burdening the peoples.

Fifthly, we regard the situation in southern Africa with deep concern. The nuclear arming of South Africa must be considered urgently in the light of the apartheid régime's undeclared war against sovereign African States and the resulting increased threat to peace and international security. Those States which contribute directly or indirectly to the nuclear arming of South Africa by their political, economic and military collaboration should live up to their responsibility under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. They should support the achievement of results which respond to the security interests of the peoples of Africa and of the world.

I should like, in concluding my remarks, to express the conviction that a constructive approach, mutual understanding and serious negotiations on the most urgent problem concerning international relations - disarmament - should be the answer of the United Nations to the expectations and hopes of the peoples.
ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

The CHAIRMAN: Members of the Commission will recall that on 7 May, at our 57th meeting, we elected the officers of the Commission. The Commission may now wish to consider electing the Rapporteur of the Disarmament Commission since it is my understanding that there is agreement among the groups on the post of Rapporteur. Are there any comments or nominations?

Mr. FATH-ALLA (Egypt): My delegation has the honour to present the candidature of Mr. Max de la Fuente, a Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations, for the post of Rapporteur. Mr. de la Fuente, an eminent colleague in the mission of Peru, has been a career diplomat since 1970. He obtained his doctorate in international law at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid in 1972. He has held many important positions. He was head of the section on Latin American political affairs in the Political Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lima in 1978. He was head of the international organizations section in the International Organizations Department in 1979. He has represented Peru at many international conferences and meetings. He was a member of the Peruvian delegation during the Peruvian presidential visit to Argentina in 1979; a member of the Peruvian delegation to the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna in 1978-1979; a member of the Peruvian delegation to the General Assembly of the Organization of American States in La Paz, Bolivia, in 1979; he is the Peruvian representative in the First Committee of the General Assembly and, as we all know, he was Vice-Chairman of the Preparatory Commission and Vice-Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. I hope that this candidature will be approved by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other members who wish to comment or make further nominations? I hear none. Mr. Max de la Fuente, a Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Peru has been nominated as Rapporteur of the Disarmament Commission. Since this is the only nomination may I take it that it is the wish of the Commission to elect him by acclamation?

Mr. Max de la Fuente, Peru, was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.
The CHAIRMAN: I should like to extend my personal and very warm congratulations to our new Rapporteur, whom I invite to take his place on the podium.

Mr. DE LA FUENTE (Peru), Rapporteur (interpretation from Spanish): I wish simply to say that in taking on the post of Rapporteur of the United Nations deliberative body on disarmament, I do so with the conviction that the Disarmament Commission has an extremely important role to play in the urgent task of laying the foundations for general and complete disarmament, a process in which the United Nations must play an increasingly significant part.

I am very grateful for the kind terms in which the delegation of Egypt submitted my candidature for this important post. Those generous comments will no doubt be an encouragement to me in carrying out the important task entrusted to me.

The CHAIRMAN: I sincerely believe that the Commission has made a wise choice in electing Mr. Max de la Fuente as its Rapporteur.

The officers of the Commission who were elected yesterday will, of course, be the Vice-Chairmen of the Commission.
The CHAIRMAN: The only remaining business as regards the organization of work is the election of the Chairman of working groups. I understand that as a result of informal consultations the following candidates were suggested for the various working groups and for the topics before us:

Working Group I dealing with item (a) the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament — Dr. Orenski Novak of Yugoslavia. Working Group I dealing with item (b) South Africa's nuclear plans and capability — Dr. Salim Rehman of Pakistan.

Working Group II dealing with item (c) reduction of military budgets — Mr. Ion Bacau of Romania. Working Group II dealing with item (d), elaboration of a mandate for the study group on conventional disarmament — Dr. Davidson Under of Britain.

If I hear no other nominations I shall take it that those four gentlemen have been elected by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Mr. WEINSTEIN (United States of America): I hope that the Committee will forgive me as I arrived last night and may not be fully familiar with what went on here yesterday. My understanding is that the Commission agreed to have two working groups. Therefore I was somewhat surprised to hear the names of four candidates for the chairmanship of those two working groups. I hope that my surprise will not be interpreted as any objection to any of them, but to me at least it sounds like a rather unusual procedure to have four chairmen for two working groups. Perhaps I may be enlightened on the rationale for that.

The CHAIRMAN: In response to the question put by the representative of the United States who was absent from yesterday's meetings I should like to inform him that it was agreed that we should create two working groups,
which will start their work today. At the same time, it was agreed that we should have chairmen for individual items within each working group, the chairmen acting as leaders of discussion. Thus, for each working group we had to elect two chairmen for the respective items under consideration.

That completes the business for today's meeting, but I should like to draw attention to Conference Room Paper 1982/1, of 14 May 1982, entitled "Draft Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its Second Special Session Devoted to Disarmament - Note by the Secretariat".

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.