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### DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

#### VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Monday, 3 December 1984, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. GBEHO

(Ghana)

- Adoption of the provisional agenda
- Election of the Chairman and other officers of the Disarmament Commission
- Review of the draft resolutions adopted by the First Committee of the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session relating to the Disarmament Commission
- Draft provisional agenda for the 1985 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission
- Other business

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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 3.25 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: The Commission has been convened today for a brief meeting to deal with organizational matters including, in particular, the election of new officers for 1985 and the adoption of the provisional agenda of that session.

ADOPTION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA (A/CN.10/L.15)

The provisional agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND OTHER OFFICERS OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that some regional groups have reached agreement on their nominees and some are about to do so, while the others are still consulting to agree on the nomination of their candidates. I shall try to proceed with the election of the officers in one meeting rather than piecemeal.

I have received a letter from the Chairman of the Asian Group informing me that the Group has agreed to submit the candidacies of Pakistan and Iran for the chairmanship and vice-chairmanship of the Commission, respectively.

The process of election will take place at our next meeting. It will include any other available candidates from other regional groups after the appropriate preparations.

I have just been informed verbally that the Group of Eastern European States has decided to nominate the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the German Democratic Republic for the vice-chairmanship.

REVIEW OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS THIRTY-NINTH SESSION RELATING TO THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

The CHAIRMAN: As members of the Commission are aware, the First Committee at its current session has adopted six draft resolutions which have direct relevance to the Commission's work. Those draft resolutions are to be adopted at a plenary meeting of the General Assembly soon. For the sake of clarity and for the benefit of the members of the Commission, I shall refer to them one by one.

In the first, draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.19, adopted by the First Committee under item 61 entitled, "Reduction of military budgets", operative paragraph 5 reads as follows:

(The Chairman)

"5. Requests the Disarmament Commission to continue, at its next substantive session, the consideration of the item entitled 'Reduction of military budgets' on the basis of the relevant working paper annexed to its report as well as other proposals and ideas on the subject-matter, with a view to finalizing the identification and elaboration of the principles which should govern further actions of States in the field of freezing and reduction of military expenditures, keeping in mind the possibility of embodying such principles in a suitable document at an appropriate stage".

In the second, draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.41, adopted by the First Committee under item 65, entitled "General and complete disarmament", regarding review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, operative paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 read as follows:

(The Chairman)

"1. Invites all States to communicate to the Secretary-General, not later than 15 April 1985, their views and suggestions on ways and means by which the United Nations can more effectively exercise its central role and primary responsibility in the field of disarmament;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit those views and suggestions to the Disarmament Commission before the convening of its substantive session in 1985;

"3. Requests the Disarmament Commission, at its substantive session in 1985, as a matter of priority to carry out a comprehensive review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, taking into account, among other things, the views and suggestions of Member States on the subject;

"4. Requests further the Disarmament Commission to submit its report on the subject, including findings, recommendations and proposals, as appropriate, to the General Assembly at its fortieth session;

"5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fortieth session an item entitled 'Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament: report of the Disarmament Commission'."

Thirdly, operative paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.51, adopted by the First Committee under item 57 (b), entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa: nuclear capability of South Africa", reads as follows:

"7. Requests the Disarmament Commission to consider, as a matter of priority, South Africa's nuclear capability during its 1985 session, taking into account, inter alia, the findings of the report of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research on South Africa's nuclear capability".

Fourthly, operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.55, adopted by the First Committee under agenda item 65 (g), entitled "General and complete disarmament: curbing the naval arms race: limitation and reduction of naval armaments and extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans", reads as follows:

"5. Requests the Disarmament Commission to consider this question and to report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session".

Fifthly, operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.58/Rev.1, adopted by the First Committee under agenda item 59 (g), entitled "Review of the

(The Chairman)

implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session: implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the tenth special session", reads as follows:

"6. Calls upon the Disarmament Commission to intensify its work in accordance with its mandate and to continue improving its work with a view to making concrete recommendations on specific items on its agenda".

Sixthly, operative paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.65, adopted by the First Committee under item 59 (g) (i), entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session: implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the tenth special session: report of the Disarmament Commission: review of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade", read as follows:

"1. Decides to undertake at its fortieth session, in 1985, a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1980s as the second Disarmament Decade;

"2. Requests the Disarmament Commission at its session in 1985 to make a preliminary assessment of the implementation of the Declaration as well as suggestions to ensure progress, and to submit a report to the General Assembly;

"3. Calls upon the Disarmament Commission to include in its assessment any relevant matters which, in the view of any Member State, require such review;

"4. Requests Member States to submit to the Secretary-General their views and suggestions;

"5. Calls upon the Secretary-General to give all necessary assistance to the Disarmament Commission in implementing the present resolution."

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE 1985 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

The CHAIRMAN: I now turn to the fifth item on our agenda, namely, the draft provisional agenda for the substantive session to be held in May 1985. In preparing this paper, account has been taken of the relevant draft resolutions approved by the First Committee and to be adopted later by the General Assembly, as

(The Chairman)

I indicated a little while ago, as well as the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission to the thirty-ninth session, contained in document A/39/42, Supplement No. 42. For the convenience of the members of the Commission the elements of the draft provisional agenda have been included and circulated in document A/CN.10/1984/CRP.8.

I now invite members of the Commission to comment on the draft provisional agenda or any other matter before us.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): Mr. Chairman, I should like to start by recalling with warm gratitude the services you personally rendered to the Commission during its session earlier this year.

In looking at document A/CN.10/1984/CRP.8, one word is particularly important for my delegation; it is the word "provisional", and we would attach value to a formal decision on this agenda being deferred to a later time, possibly at the beginning of the substantive session in May 1985.

There are several reasons for this. The first one is that we should not foreclose the possibility that the Commission might wish to reword some of the excessively complicated connotations given to some of the agenda items. I recall in this connection earlier attempts, which were welcome to my delegation, at formulating a new draft agenda item 3 (a) and (b), which does not make quite clear what the Commission will have to discuss under these sub-items; and certainly a clearer distinction between (a) and (b) and generally a more concise description of the agenda item could be thought of.

One might also wish to simplify somewhat the language of draft agenda item 4, but since we have a pretty good grasp of what is to be discussed under that item I find it less urgent.

However, the main purpose of my asking to speak under this item of our current agenda is to remind delegations of resolution 37/78 H of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly, in which, with the intention of purposefully restructuring the work of the Commission, the General Assembly decided that the Commission should, at at each substantive session, select a number of agenda items from among those before it for specific consideration; and at the time - and I am sure that you, Mr. Chairman will concur and many representatives as well - that decision was considered to be a particularly useful one and has already borne some fruit during the most recent session of the Commission under your chairmanship.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal  
Republic of Germany)

I remind representatives of that resolution because we should keep open our selection of the items. From among the items that now appear in document A/CN.10/1984/CRP.8, certainly in the time available only a limited number can be treated with the hope of working out concrete recommendations for the benefit of the General Assembly.

In selecting agenda items for more specific consideration at the appropriate time, one of the criteria for my delegation will certainly be whether the underlying draft resolution transferring this item to the Commission is adopted by consensus. Only when non-controversial items are entrusted to the Commission can we hope to have purposeful and fruitful work leading to draft recommendations to the General Assembly. In that regard, my delegation wishes to keep its prerogatives fully open as to which of the items to select for specific recommendations next year when the Commission's substantive session convenes.

Mr. BATSANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation is grateful for the preparation of the Commission's draft provisional agenda for 1985. We of course understand that that document is of a provisional nature and merits further study.

I asked to be allowed to speak to put a question on item 8 in document A/CN.10/1984/CRP.8 entitled "Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade". The relevant draft resolution to be adopted by the General Assembly contains the words "preliminary assessment of the implementation of the Declaration". That is the language of the draft resolution. So there is clearly a difference in the wording, and that is the question I have. I should like an explanation of that.

The second point on which the Soviet delegation thinks it necessary to make a specific comment is the following. A proposal was just made to the effect that two categories of resolutions be singled out to serve as a basis for the work of the General Assembly, in particular that the consensus ones be put in one series and the non-consensus in another. In that connection, the following consideration comes to mind. The General Assembly adopts specific resolutions, sometimes by consensus and sometimes not. Apparently, the United Nations Disarmament Commission, first and foremost, should take into account the contents of those messages to it contained in one or the other of those resolutions. This year it

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

appears that several resolutions will be adopted, but not by consensus. However, in the Soviet delegation's view they are of great significance and should not be relegated to the background as compared with the so-called consensus resolutions.

Mr. MARTYNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to associate myself with the expression of gratitude conveyed to the Secretariat for its timely preparation of document A/CN.10/1984/CRP.8 and to you, Mr. Chairman, for the considerable work done during the course of the Commission's labours on substantive problems.

I also have a proposal to make on item 5 of the provisional agenda, which provides for consideration of the question of South Africa's nuclear capability as requested by the General Assembly, and in parentheses follows a list of resolutions and documents. In our view, what is clearly missing here is the relevant draft resolution that will be adopted at the present session of the General Assembly and which at present bears the symbol A/C.1/39/L.51. In operative paragraph 7 of that draft resolution the General Assembly would request:

"... the Disarmament Commission to consider ... South Africa's nuclear capability during its 1985 session ...".

Clearly, a reference to this draft resolution also should be included in this agenda item.

Mr. DUARTE (Brazil): My delegation has listened with great attention to the statements made on the draft agenda that you, Mr. Chairman, have submitted to the Commission. This is certainly a matter of interest to which most delegations will be giving attention before the agenda is finally adopted, probably at the beginning of the substantive session.

As you, Mr. Chairman, know - and certainly the Commission is aware of it - at past sessions the Assembly adopted resolutions that tried to instil in the Commission's work a certain sense of priority in dealing with the items that it normally considers. That was done by the Assembly in an attempt to bring the Commission to focus in a more organized and action-oriented way on the issues that had been and still are under its consideration, so that it could make specific recommendations to the Assembly on those items and then move on to consider others. On that - at least as my delegation sees it - there was no other criterion

(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

than the General Assembly's decisions. In other words, it is for the Assembly to decide what the Commission is to do. The Commission is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and depends directly on the Assembly.

If at the Commission's next substantive session, to be held in 1985, it finds itself having to deal with a larger number of items, we should take into consideration that it was and will be the Assembly's decision that the Commission should do so. There is no other criterion, I think, at which the Commission should look. Since it is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, whatever the Assembly tells the Commission to do that is what the Commission should do.

(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

My delegation in particular - as it took part in the efforts to try to streamline the Commission and bring it to focus directly on a smaller number of items as a way of increasing its efficiency - would certainly like the Commission to continue that tendency. If the Assembly, in its wisdom, requires the Commission to do otherwise, then that is the Assembly's business; the Assembly is the sovereign organ, because the Commission is a subsidiary organ of the Assembly and there is nothing, in the view of my delegation, that the Commission can do but to obey what the Assembly tells it to do. I think this is the spirit in which my delegation will look at the proposed agenda.

Finally, I would like merely to call the attention of the Commission to the fact that, as one of the previous speakers reminded us, the final agenda of the Commission can only be looked at and examined after the Assembly has taken the decisions that deal with the Commission, so I ask representatives what is in their mind as to the relationship between the decisions of the Assembly which have not yet been taken and the preliminary consideration that we are carrying out now on the items that may be before the Commission for consideration?

The CHAIRMAN: Since no other delegations wish to speak now, let me take a moment or two to clarify some of the issues just raised. Perhaps I should take them in inverse order to that in which they were raised.

First of all, with regard to document A/CN.10/1984/CRP.8, I would like to inform the Commission that the Secretariat will do its best to find the language that truly reflects the mandate as it is going to be given to us by the General Assembly and it is the language of the resolution that will be reflected in the final version of the agenda item.

Secondly, as far as operative paragraph 5 is concerned, I would like to assure representatives that after the debate in the General Assembly the paragraph will be brought up to date and the numbers of the resolutions as they were adopted in the General Assembly will be reflected. I also take the suggestion made about the omission of one particular resolution. I am sure that the Secretariat will look into that.

Finally, as regards the question of how tentative the draft resolution that representatives have in front of them is, this meeting of the Disarmament Commission, as I said at the beginning, is an attempt to reach some agreement on ordering the affairs of the 1985 session of the Commission. As representatives

(The Chairman)

realize, it is only a tentative procedure, since the General Assembly itself has yet to take final decisions on the matter, but inasmuch as time is of the essence now, I am required to give some attention to this matter with a view to simplifying procedures when the substantive session convenes in 1985. I have no doubt that, at its first substantive session, the Commission will adopt the draft provisional agenda that will be put in front of it as part of its own procedure. However, I believe also that it quite clear to all members of the Commission that the Commission takes its instructions from the General Assembly and will of course not depart from the instructions that the General Assembly might give it, either in the area of what kind of priority should be given to agenda items or the scope of those items. I hope that the situation is quite clear to members now.

OTHER BUSINESS

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to know whether any member wishes to speak regarding other business at this stage? There are no speakers.

I have been informed that at least three regional groups have reached agreement on their nominees. Nominations from one more region will be needed to complete the Bureau. I hope this will happen very soon so that we can take up the election very shortly. Also in this connection I should like to inform members that the Commission will hold a meeting on Wednesday, 5 December, at 10.30 a.m. in Room 4 to elect the candidates from the regional groups which would by then have notified the Chairman of their agreement in addition to the one already received. An announcement will appear in the Journal.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.