Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

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INTRODUCTION

1. By resolution 3260 (XXIX), the General Assembly invited all States to communicate to the Secretary-General, before 31 March 1975, their comments on the main objectives of a world disarmament conference, in the light of the views and suggestions compiled in section II of the summary appended to the 1974 report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference. 1/

2. By note verbale dated 6 January 1975, the Secretary-General invited all States to communicate to him, before 31 March 1975, their comments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3260 (XXIX).

3. At its 18th meeting on 7 April 1975, the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference requested the Secretariat to circulate, on 16 April 1975, all the comments received from States up to 15 April 1975 2/ and all other communications received at a later date as an addendum to the first document. Communications received prior to 30 May 1975 were reproduced in document A/AC.167/1/Add.1. Communications received thereafter are reproduced below.

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2/ Issued by the Secretariat on 16 April 1975 as document A/AC.167/1.
Pursuant to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 3260 (XXIX) on the World Disarmament Conference and having regard to the lofty motives of the States which support such a conference, my Government believes that it should bring to your attention some of the considerations in favour of this initiative, since it would bring into being a highly influential world forum for promoting peace.

Bolivia is a country with a proven tradition of service to peaceful ideals; for that reason, it has at every opportunity supported the search for solutions based on understanding and comprehension, with respect both to its own international problems and to those affecting other peoples.

Leaving aside the inevitable suspicions of those who try to read between the lines and form the pre-judgement that projects of this nature and scope always have hidden motives, my Government feels that the World Disarmament Conference would in a sense bring this serious and fundamental concern once again within the decision-making ambit of the international community. In recent years, this question, by its very nature a delicate one and of general interest, has been virtually confined to the exclusive competence of the Disarmament Committee established by resolutions 1660 (XVI) and 1722 (XVI), which was subsequently enlarged from 18 to 26 members when its name was changed to "Conference of the Committee on Disarmament". The reports of the Disarmament Committee have been considered at each session of the General Assembly and cover such complex problems as the nuclear arms race and nuclear and thermonuclear tests, the use of napalm and other incendiary weapons, chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the most recent threat of contamination of the environment and atmosphere for military purposes. There is no question, however, that a problem of such wide scope as the strengthening of peace through disarmament should be studied by the entire international community, particularly since the era of localized conflicts with a limited area of action is increasingly a thing of the past.

Our Organization has been unflagging in its determination to eliminate the dangers to the maintenance of peace inherent in the arms race. This effort has not, however, been an integrated one; it has been characterized by the adoption of isolated measures in each particular case as determined by the exigencies of the situation. My Government believes that the World Disarmament Conference could be the appropriate forum for negotiating agreements on a world scale which would be binding on all the peoples of the world, since it would have neither the exclusive nature of the Security Council nor participation limited, as in the case at the Disarmament Committee, to a fifth of the membership of the United Nations.

While realizing that the World Disarmament Conference could not eliminate the differences existing between the great Powers which have the power of decision and the other Members of the United Nations and that it might provoke political confrontations with negative results for the currently prevailing détente, my
Government would prefer to be optimistic and trust that the possible benefits would outweigh the risks, and it therefore believes that the Conference should be held. Furthermore, there have already been some very positive steps along the road to disarmament, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its recent revision, the acceptance of international control over general and complete disarmament and the declaration of peaceful intent which led to the present decade being proclaimed the Disarmament Decade, in close association with the Second United Nations Development Decade.

Recent events, which seem to have been given new and powerful impetus by the development of science and technology, call for a new approach to peace which is devoid, as far as possible, of political passion; they call for joint action aimed at clarifying the problems of the present day at a special conference convened in keeping with the principles of the Charter at which all Members of our Organization can participate with equal rights.

My Government regards as highly useful any international forum in which nations can express their ideas and proposals for disarmament, thus reaffirming the resolutions adopted to that end, which up to the present have not been duly implemented.

Bolivia has missed no opportunity to demonstrate its steadfast devotion to peace. Throughout its history, a firm will to peace has prevailed, often sustained by sacrifice involving sacred interests whose defence could have led the country to incur heavy expenses in order to build up arsenals of war at the price of neglecting its most pressing needs. Thus, Bolivia can today state with legitimate pride that the largest item in its budget goes to education.

True to our peaceful calling, we supported the draft resolutions considered at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly under the title "General and complete disarmament", encompassing everything relating to the manufacture, stockpiling and use of weapons which, because of their dangerous, cruel and destructive effects not only on human beings but also on the ecology, should be eliminated once and for all as decisive factors in conflicts arising among peoples.

Our only concern is that political considerations may turn this conference into yet another forum which, instead of searching for the equitable, pragmatic solutions sought by mankind, will serve only to increase ill will and deepen existing grievances. But, even so, an attempt should be made to provide a new opportunity for nations to demonstrate their maturity in a matter of such crucial importance as the arms race, representing as it does an imminent threat to the maintenance of peace.
The Government of Indonesia continues to support the idea of convening a well-prepared world disarmament conference at an appropriate time and open to all States. Indonesia is convinced that such a conference would result in the emergence of a new and deeper perception of the multifaceted problem and would generally further the cause of disarmament. More detailed views of the Indonesian Government on this question have been outlined in note verbale A/AC.167/L.2/Add.6 dated 13 August 1974, as well as in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference (A/9628). The views expressed then remain valid regarding the main objectives, preparation, agenda etc.

It is, however, necessary to reiterate that although disarmament is the concern of all States, the main responsibility rests with the nuclear Powers. From that point of view, their participation in the preparations of the conference and in the conference itself is a matter of necessity, if only due to the fact that agreement and co-operation among States possessing nuclear weapons would ensure its success. It is in this context that Indonesia shares the general understanding that the conference would serve its purpose only if all militarily significant countries, particularly the nuclear Powers, and the main arms-producing countries were to participate and an essential logic of the conference is to bring them together in a common forum.

A basic objective of such an international forum would be that a broad and comprehensive exchange of views would clarify various aspects of disarmament, while at the same time, determine the nature of the combined efforts required to promote agreement on specific disarmament measures. While priority should be accorded to the consideration of nuclear disarmament, the question of conventional disarmament should also be dealt with simultaneously within the ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament. Finally, the work of the conference would enable States to determine those urgent issues most frequently mentioned in disarmament debates like universal and non-discriminatory arms control, relations between defence expenditures and development etc., and to find mutually acceptable ways and means of solving those issues.

Recent events in the field of arms control and disarmament have convinced the Indonesian Government that the need to convene without delay a world disarmament conference is greater than ever before. The Government of Indonesia is encouraged by the prospects that, after several years of discussion on the question of convening a world disarmament conference, a consensus would finally emerge at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly, resulting in the formulation of proposals which would receive widespread and general endorsement.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

[Original: English]
[20 June 1975]

In view of the fact that the position of the United States Government on the question of a world disarmament conference remains unchanged, it has no comments on the possible objectives of such a conference.

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