UNited Nations
General Assembly

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Telegram dated 7 June 1974 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to present to you the view of the Government of the German Democratic Republic with regard to the convocation of a world disarmament conference:

The Government of the German Democratic Republic attaches great importance to the fact that the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on 18 December 1973 unanimously adopted resolution 3183 (XXVIII) in which the Member States of the United Nations recorded their position to have a world disarmament conference convoked and a committee to prepare such a conference constituted.

This resolution is viewed by the Government of the German Democratic Republic as a clear obligation for all Member States of the United Nations to start preparations for a world disarmament conference without delay.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic reiterates its readiness to actively co-operate in the preparations for and the holding of the world disarmament conference. In doing so, it will be as constructive as it has been in the numerous contributions made jointly with the USSR and other socialist States to international détente in recent years. With the conclusion of the treaties of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Polish People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic with the Federal Republic of Germany, and with the signing of the Quadripartite Agreement on West Berlin, important moves have been made in the process of normalizing the relations between States having different social orders. This set of treaties, the world-wide recognition of the German Democratic Republic in terms of international law and the admission of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations as Member States independent of each other and enjoying equal rights have brought the post-war period in Europe to an end. The German Democratic Republic holds the view that there is a real chance now for the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to consolidate the progress achieved and, by taking top-level decisions, to inaugurate an era of peace and mutually beneficial co-operation in Europe. That will be of great international importance and will also improve conditions for solving the problems of disarmament.
The Government of the German Democratic Republic feels that every effort should urgently be made for the tendency towards détente to remain the determinant element not only in Europe but all over the world. To reach this objective it is, above all, necessary to settle conflict situations such as in South East Asia and in the Middle East by political means and on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations. Progress in this direction would, as much as the speedy conclusion of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, prepare the ground for convoking and successfully holding a world disarmament conference.

Since the USSR proposed in 1971 that a world disarmament conference should be convened, real results were achieved not only in the process of political détente, but progress was also made in the fields of arms limitation and of controlling the arms race.

Particular importance is attributed by the Government of the German Democratic Republic to the treaties concluded between the USSR and the USA to prevent nuclear war and to limit strategic offensive weapons. These agreements between the strongest military powers of our time are undoubtedly essential steps to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war and to create real guarantees for international security.

At the session of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons the representatives of many States pointed to the positive effects of the Treaty. The Government of the German Democratic Republic shares this view and is positive that the non-proliferation Treaty is one of the trail-blazing agreements of our time towards the limitation of armaments.

An encouragement to expect success of a world disarmament conference is, in the view of the Government of the German Democratic Republic, the proposal of the USSR to reduce the military budgets of the permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent, which was adopted by a large majority at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. On account of this vote, all States should feel obliged to champion the implementation of that proposal, which is of direct benefit to the peoples and States, and to support also other initiatives aiming at arms limitation and disarmament.

The sixth special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations made it clear once again that large financial resources are required to accelerate the economic and social progress of the developing countries. The Government of the German Democratic Republic takes the view that a world disarmament conference could also adopt effective measures to solve these and other tasks set by the sixth special session of the General Assembly.

It is the firm conviction of the Government of the German Democratic Republic that the successes achieved in the process of détente in the last few years are highlighting the urgent need for a world disarmament conference, because, despite those successes, it has not yet been possible to check decisively the spiralling...
arms race. Détente, however, can only be stabilized if it is possible to bring about a cessation of the arms race which will involve all States. On account of the complex character of the problems of arms limitation and disarmament, the Government of the German Democratic Republic considers a world disarmament conference to be the appropriate forum to put a stop to the arms race by adopting universal measures and thus to give a decisive impetus to the efforts of all peoples for lasting peace and for economic and social progress.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic was gratified to note that the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference has begun to execute its mandate. It expresses its hope that all States, including the two nuclear Powers not participating in the Ad Hoc Committee so far, will contribute to preparing and holding a world disarmament conference. The German Democratic Republic assures that it will, through its constructive participation in the Vienna talks on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in central Europe and through its activities in the United Nations and other international organs, contribute to creating most favourable conditions for the convocation and the success of a world disarmament conference.