Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference

Note verbale dated 13 August 1974 from the Permanent Mission of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The position of the Government of Indonesia with regard to the proposal of convening a world disarmament conference is based upon its fundamental attitude of support for all measures which are likely to halt the arms race or otherwise further the cause of disarmament. In our opinion, a world disarmament conference will serve these purposes and produce constructive results. However, we also believe that our efforts should be strictly realistic and within the limits of what is practicable. Generally, it should consider all aspects of disarmament questions and examine their implications on a global and regional scale. It would be appropriate for such a conference to make a general survey of the problems facing arms control and disarmament. On the basis of such an over-all review, there will emerge a new and deeper perception of the problems, resulting in general political guidelines. Further, instead of undertaking actual negotiations on specific measures, the conference would make recommendations pertaining to the military, political and economic aspects of disarmament particularly the relations between military budget cuts and resources for development. These recommendations would have to reflect the basic security concerns and interests of all countries and should represent a sound basis for specific negotiations in the appropriate forums. Organs established for the conduct of negotiations may supplement and facilitate the work of the already existing forums, which by virtue of their experience and expertise may be called upon to translate the recommendations of the conference into specific draft agreements. The main task of the conference, then, is to unify the efforts of all countries to achieve progress by establishing basic guidelines for future activities.

Against the background of this general framework and, in the context of the Ad Hoc Committee's task, Indonesia wishes to offer the following suggestions:

1. The Ad Hoc Committee should renew its efforts and contact the two remaining nuclear Powers; their basic concerns must be taken into serious consideration in order to elicit their co-operation and participation.
2. In its task, the Ad Hoc Committee should analyse both the summary prepared by the Secretariat of the views and suggestions expressed by Governments (conference room paper 2, 5 June 1974) and the replies to the Secretary-General's communication FOI 31/3 (302) of 10 July 1974, and draw conclusions from areas of agreement.

3. Such an approach should facilitate the formulation of recommendations to the General Assembly.

4. The Government of Indonesia considers it essential that a permanent link should be forged between this disarmament conference and the United Nations. This would provide the United Nations with an effective disarmament system, capable of obtaining more encouraging results than those achieved so far.

5. If the CCD is called upon to implement the recommendations of the conference into specific agreements, the possibility of enlrging its membership may be considered in order to reflect more fully the political reality and regional representation. The question of Co-chairmanship of the CCD may be reconsidered against the background of such an enlarged membership, which will include all the nuclear Powers.

6. A body consisting of about 35 members, including the nuclear Powers and members of the CCD, should be formed and entrusted with the task of making necessary preparations.

7. The agenda of the conference should be flexible and comprehensive to include the consideration of all aspects of disarmament questions. While priority should be accorded to the consideration of nuclear disarmament, the question of conventional disarmament should also be dealt with simultaneously.

8. On organizational matters such as date, contemplated duration and the site, we feel that it is premature at this stage to take a position, since these will flow from a process of preparatory work. It is preferable that we should not bind ourselves to a date but that the conference will only be convened after we are reasonably assured of its chances of success, on the basis of findings resulting from careful preparatory work.

9. Before such a conference is convened, the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to prepare authoritative studies on substantive questions relating to the arms race and disarmament and considerations which bear on the outcome of the conference.

These are the views and suggestions of the Government of Indonesia on some substantive issues concerning the question of convening a world disarmament conference. It is the hope of the Government of Indonesia that a world disarmament conference will be convened without undue delay and after adequate preparations and open to all States, so that we can move forward in the direction of result-oriented steps.