DRAFT REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

(Submitted by its Working Group)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By its resolution 3469 (XXX), the General Assembly decided to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference and requested it to submit a report on its work to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, including an analytical study of the conclusions contained in the Committee's report to the thirtieth session, 1/ as well as any observations and recommendations it may deem appropriate relating to its mandate. The resolution reaffirmed in its entirety resolution 3260 (XXIX) (see para. 3 below).

2. Originally, by resolution 3183 (XXVIII) of 18 December 1973, the General Assembly decided to establish an Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference 2/ to examine all the views and suggestions expressed by Governments on the convening of a world disarmament conference and related problems, including conditions for the realization of such a conference, and to submit, on the basis of consensus, a report to the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session. The General Assembly invited the States possessing nuclear weapons to co-operate or maintain contact with the Ad Hoc Committee, it being understood that they would enjoy the same rights as the appointed members of the Committee. The General Assembly also invited all States to communicate as soon as possible to the Secretary-General, for transmission to the Ad Hoc Committee, any views and suggestions they deem pertinent to submit for the purpose defined in this paragraph.


2/ The General Assembly decided that the Ad Hoc Committee should consist of the following 40 non-nuclear-weapon Member States appointed by the President of the General Assembly after consultation with all regional groups: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire and Zambia.
3. At its twenty-ninth session, by resolution 3260 (XXIX), the General Assembly invited all States to communicate to the Secretary-General 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 annexed to the 1974 report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference. By the same resolution, the General Assembly decided that the Ad Hoc Committee should resume its work in accordance with the procedure established in General Assembly resolution 3183 (XXVIII) and that, in discharging its assigned task, it should give priority: (a) to the preparation, on the basis of consensus, of an analytical report, including any conclusions and recommendations that it might deem pertinent concerning the comments received pursuant to paragraph 1 of resolution 3260 (XXIX); and (b) to maintaining close contact with the representatives of the States possessing nuclear weapons, in order to keep currently informed of any change in their respective positions.

4. In accordance with its mandate mentioned in paragraph 1 above, the Committee in 1976 held __________ meetings at the United Nations Headquarters between 1 March and ____________.

5. The elected officers of the Committee were appointed to serve as follows:

   Chairman: Mr. Pereydoun Hoveyda (Iran)

   Vice-Chairmen:
   - Mr. Patrice Mikanagu (Burundi)
   - Mr. Henryk Jaroszek (Poland)
   - Mr. Carlos T. Alzamora (Peru)

   Rapporteur: Mr. Antonio Elias (Spain)

6. France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics participated in the work of the Committee by virtue of paragraph 3 of resolution 3183 (XXVIII). Under the same provision, China and the United States of America maintained contact with the Ad Hoc Committee through its Chairman.

   ... ... attended meetings of the Committee as observers.

7. The working group established in 1974 continued to function and held 29 meetings between 10 March and 12 July 1976. 3/

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3/ For the composition of the Working Group, see the report of the Ad Hoc Committee for 1974 (A/9628, para. 9).
II. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

8. In submitting its third report to the General Assembly, the Ad Hoc Committee considers it appropriate to review its work in some detail. Since its establishment, the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference has been mainly concerned with the examination of all views and suggestions expressed by Governments on the convening of a world disarmament conference and related problems, including conditions for the realization of such a conference. In 1974, the Committee accordingly provided a comprehensive presentation (A/9628) of those views and suggestions, covering the following aspects:

   (a) Main objectives of the conference;

   (b) General views and suggestions on the convening of a world disarmament conference and related problems: conditions for the realization of the conference;

   (c) Adequate preparations for the conference, including such questions as agenda, structure and organization of a world disarmament conference.

9. The Committee furthermore has also analysed those views and suggestions expressed by Governments. Its report to the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly thus contained a general description of the approaches discernible as well as a synthesized version of those views and suggestions.

10. At its twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly requested all States to communicate their comments on the main objectives of a world disarmament conference and requested the Ad Hoc Committee to prepare an analytical report of the views thus received. The Committee's report (A/10028) included extensive comments received from States and the analysis requested by the General Assembly. The report included also sections containing conclusions and one recommendation in accordance with the said resolution.

11. As a result of its review of the comments by States on the main objectives of a world disarmament conference and its contacts with the representatives of States possessing nuclear weapons, it was made clear to the Ad Hoc Committee that although a world disarmament conference convened at an appropriate time with adequate preparation and with universal participation, including especially that of the nuclear-weapon States, continues to be supported by a large majority, there are differences of emphasis over some aspects of such a conference among the non-nuclear-weapon States. At the same time, basic divergence of opinion on many aspects of the convening of a world disarmament conference continues to exist among the nuclear-weapon States.

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12. The Ad Hoc Committee has thus provided the General Assembly with a thorough presentation of the views of Governments on all relevant aspects of the convening of a world disarmament conference and related problems including conditions for the realization of such a conference.

13. In fulfilling its tasks, the Ad Hoc Committee has examined the views expressed by Governments and reported on them. In order to facilitate progress in this respect, the Ad Hoc Committee found it appropriate to establish in 1974 an open-ended Working Group composed of Burundi, Egypt, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Poland and Spain, with the mandate to prepare the draft of the Committee's reports to the General Assembly. Representatives of a number of Member States have attended the meetings of the Working Group and several of them have participated in its debates. The deliberations of the Working Group have permitted an informal exchange of views in which the positions of States could be examined in depth and detail.

14. One important aspect of the Committee's work has been the adoption of decisions on the basis of consensus, a principle which was already laid down in resolution 3183 (XXVIII) and subsequently reaffirmed in resolution 3260 (XXIX). This fact has been essential for involving all five nuclear-weapon States in the work of the Committee, including approval of its reports to be submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly (see paras. 2 and 6, above).

15. At present, this is a unique feature of the work of the Committee. No other forum exclusively dealing with problems related to disarmament has formally established similar contacts with all five nuclear-weapon States. Under the circumstances now prevailing and given a basic diversity of opinion among nuclear-weapon States (see part III, below) on the convening of a world disarmament conference, an examination of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee may take due account of this fact.

16. Finally, under its present mandate, the Ad Hoc Committee is required to make an analytical study of the conclusions contained in part III of its report presented to the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, and to formulate any observations and recommendations it may deem appropriate relating to its mandate.

17. Sections IV and V of the present report deal with these two questions.

18. It would seem appropriate to stress the political complexity associated with the Committee's work. Realistic and intensive efforts and consultations are therefore necessary for further progress. The Ad Hoc Committee has established, through its work over the past years, a machinery that has been used to this end.
III. REVIEW OF THE VIEWS OF GOVERNMENTS

19. The Ad Hoc Committee in compliance with its mandate deems it appropriate to present the following general outline of the current state of thinking with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference based on the views of Governments contained in documents A/9628 and A/10028, and as expressed during the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, as well as in the present session of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference. The views which have been expressed since the issuing of the last report of the Ad Hoc Committee are reproduced in extenso in the annex to the present report.

20. A large group of States demand that a world disarmament conference be convened as soon as possible after due preparation and have moreover proposed resolutions to that end. The participation of all nuclear-weapon States in such a conference is deemed essential, although it is stressed that participation of all States should be on an equal footing. In the opinion of these States a world disarmament conference so convened could approve guidelines for universal disarmament, in particular with respect to nuclear disarmament, together with utilization of resources thus freed for international economic co-operation. In this context, these States consider that if it becomes evident that it will not be possible to convene a world disarmament conference, a special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament issues should be convened.

21. Other States favour negotiation and implementation of concrete disarmament measures and, in this connexion, consider as useful the idea of convening a world disarmament conference which might play a catalytic role in stimulating action in international fora, provided it were adequately prepared and the participation of all nuclear-weapon States were assured.

22. Another group of States decisively support the holding of a world disarmament conference and have moreover proposed resolutions to this end. They maintain that the idea of a world disarmament conference assumes ever greater momentum and political relevance each year. The members of this group are convinced that political conditions for the convening of a world disarmament conference, being especially promoted by the relaxation of international tension and the ever-increasing importance of disarmament, have become ripe. The conference should be convened as soon as possible, with preparatory steps to be taken without delay, which should include as their primary element the concrete definition of the questions to be discussed at the conference. It is further believed that issues advanced as the pre-conditions could more appropriately be dealt with by the conference itself.

23. Some States expressed the view that the Ad Hoc Committee had completed the study of the attitudes of States and that the General Assembly at its thirty-first session should take a decision on an appropriate course of action towards the convocation of a world disarmament conference.

24. Another viewpoint expressed by some States was the following: the Ad Hoc Committee should draw the attention of the General Assembly to the fact that while
mindful of the uniqueness of certain features of its work, and despite the collective efforts by the membership of the Ad Hoc Committee, in particular its Chairman, aimed at achieving progress in the task before it, it nevertheless feels that the mechanism it provides for this purpose, although significant, is far from adequate.

25. One nuclear-weapon State has expressed the opinion that the General Assembly could note by consensus that a world disarmament conference could play a role in the disarmament process at an appropriate time. In the view of this nuclear-weapon State, however, under current circumstances it is not the lack of a suitable forum but the lack of political agreement that constitutes the principal obstacle to progress in disarmament. A world disarmament conference would be unlikely to overcome this lack of agreement and thus would more probably hinder, rather than assist, efforts to reach concrete arms control agreements. It, therefore, would be premature at this time to convene, to set a date for, or start preparations for a world disarmament conference.

26. According to the viewpoint of another nuclear-weapon State, a world disarmament conference can only be convened if certain prerequisites for the creation of conditions conducive to genuine disarmament are met. The convening of a world disarmament conference, or preparation for such a conference, could only be acceptable if all the nuclear-weapon States, in particular the two nuclear-weapon Powers, would undertake an obligation: (a) not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, particularly against the non-nuclear-weapon States; and (b) to end all forms of military presence on the territory of other countries by those concerned. If such pre-conditions are met, a world disarmament conference can be convened with a clear aim, namely, to consider the question of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all nuclear weapons.

IV. ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE CONCLUSIONS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT SUBMITTED AT THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

27. In fulfilment of this part of its mandate, the Ad Hoc Committee offers the following analytical study of the conclusions contained in paragraphs 40-44 of its report of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly.

28. It will be recalled that a world disarmament conference was perceived by many Governments as a universal forum to seek agreement on general and complete disarmament under effective international control both in nuclear and conventional fields.

29. While the concept thus perceived enjoyed wide support among States, they considered its realization to require:

(a) Universal participation including, in particular, the participation of all nuclear-weapon States, and

(b) Adequate preparations.

/...
Among the nuclear-weapon States a basic divergence of opinion with regard to the appropriate time and conditions for the convocation of the conference emerged which continues to the present date (see relevant paras. of the present report).

30. In their response to the Secretary-General's communication in pursuance to resolution 3260 (XXIX), some States envisaged a different function for a world disarmament conference, according to which the aim of the Conference could be to provide the United Nations with an effective disarmament system. In order to achieve this and make tangible progress, it was considered necessary by them to strengthen principles, review guidelines, develop procedures and up-date international machinery dealing with the question of disarmament.

31. In reviewing the comments received from the States on the main objectives of a world disarmament conference the Ad Hoc Committee took note, inter alia, of the following views:

(a) Governments envisaged different objectives for a world disarmament conference. Such objectives range between two specific conference models: (i) a conference aimed at arriving, during its course, at agreements on concrete measures of disarmament in nuclear and conventional fields; (ii) a conference streamlining the machinery, proposing guidelines and providing impetus to disarmament negotiations.

(b) The scope and nature of the conference would vary with the function that might be assigned to it.

(c) Some of the political conditions that might apply to a conference aiming at actual measures of disarmament might not of necessity be essential for the convening of a conference with more limited goals. For a conference of this nature a particular international political climate might not be required.

(d) Preparations for a conference of this nature would be less complex compared with the preparation for a conference which sought to resolve major disarmament problems.

32. An overwhelming majority of States continued to believe, however, that irrespective of the task assigned to the world disarmament conference, adequate preparation and participation of all nuclear-weapon and militarily significant States were essential. Also, according to another view, 4/ in the absence of certain pre-conditions for the convening of a world disarmament conference, there could be no such conference or its preparatory work in any form.

33. It was within such a framework that the conclusions contained in paragraphs 40-44 of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the thirtieth session of the General Assembly were drawn.

4/ For the elaboration of this view, see annex, pp. 8 and 9.
34. The Ad Hoc Committee in discharge of its mandate under paragraph 2 (b) of resolution 3260 (XXIX) continued its consultations with representatives of all States possessing nuclear weapons. As a result of these consultations it was made clear to the Ad Hoc Committee that the USSR firmly believed in the necessity for an immediate convocation of a world disarmament conference. The United States continued to believe that political conditions for convening a world disarmament conference have not yet become ripe (see para. 25, above). The position of China on all aspects of this question is fully explained on pages 6 and 9 of the annex to the present report. France and the United Kingdom felt that a world disarmament conference could play a useful role in the field of disarmament provided it is convened with the participation of all nuclear-weapon and militarily significant Powers, and after adequate preparation.

V. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE RELATING TO ITS MANDATE

35. From its study of the views of Governments concerning various aspects of the convening of a world disarmament conference and related developments, it is evident to the Ad Hoc Committee that the Members of the United Nations in general are anxious to see progress made in the field of disarmament and have supported proposals deemed to be conducive towards that end.

36. In this connexion the idea of a world disarmament conference to deal with disarmament problems, which originated in the First Summit Conference of the Heads of State and Governments of the Non-Aligned Countries in 1961 in Belgrade, has received wide support by the membership of the United Nations Organization, however, with varying degrees of emphasis and differences on conditions and certain aspects related to the question of convening the conference. An outline of the main approaches to this problem has been presented in chapter III of the present report.

37. No consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference under present conditions has yet been reached among the nuclear-weapon States whose participation in a world disarmament conference has been deemed essential by most Members of the Organization. It appears, therefore, to the Ad Hoc Committee that efforts towards creation of appropriate conditions for convening a world disarmament conference should continue and in this connexion opportunities which present themselves and which in the view of the general membership of the Organization could be conducive to the achievement of progress in the field of disarmament should be seized and fully explored.

38. In the light of the contents of the present report and the foregoing remarks, the Committee considers that the General Assembly may wish to examine the advisability of the continuation of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference.