AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE
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on the World Disarmament Conference

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By its resolution 33/69 of 14 December 1978, the General Assembly requested the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference to maintain close contact with the representatives of the States possessing nuclear weapons in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee, especially having in mind paragraph 122 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session (resolution S-10/2), and requested the Committee to submit a report to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

2. The elected officers of the Ad Hoc Committee were as follows:

   Chairman:        Mr. Biyagamage J. Fernando (Sri Lanka)
   Vice-Chairman:   Mr. Carlos T. Alzamora (Perù)
                    Mr. Henryk Jaroszek (Poland)
                    Mr. Artémion Sinhananiye (Burundi)
   Rapporteur:      Mr. Fermin Zelada (Spain)

1/ By its resolution 3133 (XVIII) of 21 December 1976, 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 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. France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 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. The German Democratic Republic attended meetings of the Committee as an observer.

4. The Working Group established in 1974 continued to function.

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2/ The composition of the Working Group is as follows: Burundi, Egypt, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Poland and Spain (Chairman).

German Democratic Republic, Japan, Sweden, USSR and Yugoslavia participated in the Working Group as observers.
II. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

5. In accordance with its mandate mentioned in paragraph 1 above, the Ad Hoc Committee held two sessions in 1979.

6. During the first session the Committee held two meetings on 10 and 11 April 1979. At the first meeting the representative of Iran informed the Committee that Iran did not wish to hold the chairmanship of the Committee, and recommended that H. E. Ambassador Biyagamage J. Fernando, the Representative of Sri Lanka, be the new chairman. The recommendation was seconded by the Representative of Indonesia, and the Committee elected Mr. Fernando as its chairman by acclamation.

7. At the two meetings several States members of the Committee made statements on the subject (See A/AC.167/SR. 46 and 47), excerpts from which are included in the annex to the present report.

8. During the second session the Committee held three plenary meetings between 10 and 14 September 1979. The Chairman and a number of Member States made statements (See A/AC.167/SR. 48, 49 and 50), excerpts from which are included in the annex to the present report.

9. Members of the Committee were fully aware of the positions previously expressed by the Governments of other States on the convening of a world disarmament conference.

10. The Working Group held 3 meetings on 12 and 13 September 1979, and it elaborated the draft of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee.

11. The Ad Hoc Committee at its 50th meeting considered and adopted its report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

12. The Ad Hoc Committee was conscious of the fact that the idea of
holding a world disarmament conference was subject to consideration
in other fora both within and outside the United Nations. These included,
inter alia, the following:

(a) At its session held between 14 May and 8 June 1979 the Dis-
armament Commission adopted various recommendations on 'Elements of a
Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament'. Paragraph 17 of the recommen-
dations read as follows 3/:

At the earliest appropriate time, a world disarmament conf-
ference should be convened with universal participation and with
adequate preparation.

(b) In the joint US-USSR communiqué of the meetings of the President
of the United States Jimmy Carter and the President of the Presidium
of the USSR Supreme Soviet Leonid I. Brezhnev, issued on 18 June
1979 in Vienna, the relevant paragraph reads as follows 4/:

The sides noted their support for a second special session of
the UN General Assembly devoted to disarmament and for that session
to be followed by the convocation of a World Disarmament Conference
with universal participation, adequately prepared and at an appro-
priate time.

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, thirty-fourth Session,
Supplement No. 42 (A/34/42), para. 17.

(c) At its meetings held between 3 and 7 September 1979 in Havana, the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries adopted the Declaration. Paragraph 207 of the Declaration reads as follows:

The Conference welcomed the decision to hold a second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1982 and called upon the non-aligned countries to take an active part in the preparation of that session in order to ensure the best results. It supported the proposal to call for a world disarmament conference at the appropriate time with universal participation and adequate preparation.

13. In accordance with paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 33/69, the Ad Hoc Committee, through its Chairman, maintained close contact with the representative of States possessing nuclear weapons in order to remain currently informed of their respective attitudes and obtained the following summary of their positions:

China

The position of China remains unchanged and is reflected in/previous reports of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly.
France

France is always ready to act in favor of real and effective disarmament. The French Government has accordingly upheld the World Disarmament project. Such a project could effectively contribute to the global disarmament process, once all of the five nuclear-weapon Powers shall have made known their support. Although the objectives of either the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament held in 1978 or the one to be convened in 1982, are not identical to those of the World Conference project, these sessions must be taken into consideration.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

The Soviet Union believes that the convening of a world disarmament conference is of great international importance. This forum specially devoted to one of the most urgent problems of the present should be a further step forward in combining the efforts of states in the field of disarmament, which would supplement what was expressed and agreed on at the United Nations General Assembly's session.

The USSR is convinced that the world disarmament conference could elaborate effective decisions which would be a new incentive for all states for taking practical measures on halting the arms race. Universality of the world conference would ensure the joint participation of all countries of the world in consideration of disarmament issues.

As appears from the Final Document of the tenth special session
of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament and from the recommendations of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the idea of holding a world disarmament conference continues to enjoy more and more broad support.

The Soviet Union is of the opinion that the time has come to take concrete steps which would help to start directly a thorough preparation for the conference. Having this aim in mind it would be expedient to determine the date of convening the World Disarmament Conference and to establish a preparatory body for the Conference. A positive solution of these questions would be logical and timely. It would meet the interests of everybody who not in words but in practice aims at disarmament.

The task of convening the World Disarmament Conference would be facilitated although not in full measure, in our view, by the adoption at the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly the resolution entrusting the Ad Hoc Committee with starting a preliminary preparatory work for the Conference. We are prepared to consider and to approach in a constructive manner to such a proposal.

The Soviet Union supported the idea of holding the first special session on disarmament and took the most active part in it. The USSR has also agreed to convening the second special session in 1982. We believe, however, that the World Disarmament Conference would become a unique forum and get a historic meaning. Preparation and holding of the conference would make it possible to concentrate the attention of governments of all states of the world and the world public on the
the solution of question of how to halt the arms race and to move forward on the way of real disarmament. Therefore the Soviet Union considers that the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament should be followed by the World Disarmament Conference and that the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly should contribute to achieving this goal.

**United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

The United Kingdom takes the view that the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference should not undertake any substantive work until all the significant military states have indicated that in principle they support the convening of a World Disarmament Conference and would be prepared to participate in its work.

Although the United Kingdom recognises that at an appropriate time, and if carefully prepared, the convening of a World Disarmament Conference would serve a useful purpose, we are not convinced that the condition outlined in the above paragraph has been fulfilled.

**United States of America**

The position of the United States on the matter of a world disarmament conference remains unchanged. It is the United States' view that it is premature to set a date and begin preparations for the convening of such a conference.

As noted in the United States' views contained in the 1978 Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference to the General Assembly, we believe there is insufficient political agreement on the issues which would presumably be addressed at such
a conference and that this lack of agreement would probably hinder rather than assist efforts to reach concrete arms control agreements.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

14. In view of latest developments in the field of disarmament deliberations and negotiations in different fora, as indicated in para. 12 of the present report, the Ad Hoc Committee reiterated that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support by the membership of the United Nations, however with varying degrees of emphasis and differences on conditions and certain aspects related to the question of its convening. 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.

15. Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly may wish to decide that after its second special session devoted to disarmament, a world disarmament conference would take place as soon as the necessary consensus on its convening has been reached.

16. The General Assembly may wish to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and to request it to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the States possessing nuclear weapons in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee.