AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Sixth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 32nd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 5 March 1976, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. SMID (Czechoslovakia) said that the question of disarmament was doubtless the most important task for the strengthening of international peace and security facing all countries of the world. The struggle to stop the feverish arms race and to achieve general and complete disarmament continued to be the most topical problem of the day, as was manifested by the activities of the delegations of the States Members of the United Nations during the thirtieth session of the General Assembly and by a great number of positive decisions adopted on the questions of disarmament, among them a resolution on the World Disarmament Conference renewing the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and further enhancing its role and importance. Czechoslovakia fully supported the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2633 (XXVI) on the convocation of the World Disarmament Conference, and in that connexion he quoted the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly. Since the adoption of that resolution, four more sessions of the General Assembly had been held and further resolutions had been adopted. The Ad Hoc Committee had already been working for three years. During that time, more and more criticism had been heard concerning the activity of the United Nations and its organs, the lack of realism of the measures and resolutions adopted and the inadequacy of the practical steps taken in the field of disarmament. His delegation realized that the disarmament talks were prolonged and difficult and that a number of proposals had not yet been put into effect, but it also saw the true reasons why that had been so. The military imperialist circles and the opponents of détente were dragging their feet on the effective disarmament process. They were the forces causing the expenditure of vast sums on armaments, which, according to the latest information, had reached the astronomical figure of $300 billion. Those were the forces which, in spite of the peaceful efforts of the peoples of the world, poisoned the international atmosphere and created new hotbeds of war.

2. His delegation agreed with the statement of the representative of Peru, in which he had underlined the major role and task of the nuclear Powers regarding the success of the talks on measures of disarmament. Everyone was acquainted with the position of the individual Powers on the questions of disarmament; the attitude to disarmament was a yardstick of the goodwill of Governments, their sense of responsibility and their sincerity of approach to the vitally important questions of peace and security. The Twenty-fifth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had reaffirmed that the struggle to halt the feverish arms race, the struggle for disarmament, had been and remained one of the main directions of the activities of the foreign policy of the Soviet Government. In that connexion, the Congress had also stressed the importance of the convocation of the World Disarmament Conference.

3. It had been many times confirmed that the forces of peace and progress were stronger than the war endeavours of the imperialist circles and their allies, as was attested by the historically important document signed at Helsinki in 1975

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by the highest representatives of 33 States of Europe, the United States and Canada. The Helsinki Declaration on Security and Co-operation in Europe represented a victory of common sense. That document had proved that there were conditions in the favourable international atmosphere which made possible the solution of such important questions as those of peace and security in Europe. The agreement achieved in Helsinki would have a positive effect on the attitude of States regarding disarmament questions.

4. The overwhelming majority of States was for a speedy convocation of the World Disarmament Conference. Three nuclear Powers were participating in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee and only two nuclear Powers had been absent, one of them being still in doubt as to the ripeness of time, the other setting some arbitrarily selected pre-conditions for the Conference. Needless to say, consultations with the nuclear Powers continued to be an important task for the Committee, but he asked whether the majority of countries should be subordinated to the situation characterized at the moment by the absence of two nuclear Powers, and whether they should further tolerate those two States' either impeding or obstructing the convocation of the Conference. His delegation considered that the Ad Hoc Committee should now begin formulating practical concrete proposals which would accelerate the convocation of the Conference. Three years of the Committee's work, and knowledge of the detailed positions of Governments on the convocation of the Conference, were enough for the Committee to recapitulate the results of its work and adopt concrete recommendations for submission to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session in the framework of the mandate which had been set by General Assembly resolution 3469 (XXX). His delegation fully associated itself with what it considered the most important and encouraging points in the statements of preceding speakers, namely, that the General Assembly at its thirty-first session should be recommended to convene the Conference in the nearest future and that the Committee should commence practical preparation for the Conference in terms of agreed items to be discussed by the Conference. His delegation was of the opinion that such recommendations were realistic and corresponded with the needs and aspirations of the vast majority of countries, and that their realization would fulfil the mission entrusted to the Committee. His delegation recommended that for the July session of the Ad Hoc Committee the working group should prepare a draft report which would contain the proposals submitted. In conclusion, he expressed his delegation's conviction that the time had come to initiate concrete preparations for the speediest convening of the World Disarmament Conference. It was necessary and urgent to take advantage of the current state of gradual relaxation of international tension and purification of the political climate in the world, and to add to that a détente in the military sphere.

5. **Mr. Rydbeck** (Sweden) said that past efforts within the United Nations context towards universal disarmament had been far from adequate. One reason for that had been the lack of full participation by all nuclear States. The Swedish Government had approached with an open mind and in a positive spirit all proposals that might give the work on disarmament new impetus and produce new ideas, in particular proposals concerning some forum where all nuclear States could contribute
to the debate on disarmament issues. One such proposal was the project of a World Disarmament Conference, and Sweden had, since the idea had been presented, supported the holding of such a Conference with universal participation. The Swedish Government hoped that the convening of a major disarmament event, such as a World Disarmament Conference or a special session of the General Assembly, would make up for the previous lack of universality in the participation and offer a new point of departure for the cause of disarmament. He would emphasize that, for progress in the disarmament efforts to be achieved, it was crucial that all nuclear States should participate in any international meeting devoted to disarmament.

6. His delegation did not believe that such an international gathering as a world conference or a special session of the General Assembly could achieve any long-lasting and realistic results if it was hastily and insufficiently prepared. Thorough preparations might require more time, but they were necessary. Sweden considered that to be a fundamental prerequisite for the success of any international meeting on disarmament. It was therefore his delegation's conviction that an extraordinary gathering of that kind could profit from the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament recently set up on the basis of a decision of the General Assembly at its last session. It was to be hoped that that Committee could produce proposals for strengthening the United Nations machinery and services which were inevitably needed for an adequate preparation of such gatherings, and it could thus play a most useful and positive role in that context.

7. Mr. CARRANCO AVILA (Mexico) said that in taking the floor his delegation recognized that the arms race was the product of the human mind and of the concern generated by living in a nuclear arsenal equivalent to a million atomic bombs like the one dropped on Hiroshima, bombs which could destroy the earth's inhabitants several times over.

8. One of the major objectives yet to be attained was the promotion of the establishment of international peace and security, with the minimum possible diversion of human and economic resources for weapons. The differences which might exist in the Ad Hoc Committee or in any other United Nations body concerned with disarmament questions, and which were used to justify indifference, could not be used to deny the United Nations guidance to enable it to validate the Charter, maintain truly peaceful relations among Member States and serve as a focal point for harmonizing the efforts of nations to attain that common goal.

9. The escalating arms race was incompatible with efforts to establish a new international economic order as proposed in, among other basic documents, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. That was an obvious truth if it was borne in mind that in 1975 over $300 billion had been spent on weapons, while more than 500 million human beings had suffered from acute malnutrition and some 1.5 billion had had no access to proper medical attention. He recalled in that regard the statement to the General Assembly by the President of Mexico, Mr. Luis Echeverría, on 7 October 1975.

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10. In the 30 years since the establishment of the United Nations and the dawn of the nuclear era it had been impossible either to halt the arms race, let alone reduce its rate of growth, as regarded both nuclear weapons and conventional weapons. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, to the agenda of which new items were added each year, was paralysed on the most urgent issues, such as the cessation of nuclear weapons tests and the prohibition of chemical weapons. Moreover, the negotiations on strategic arms limitations, apart from having set high limits on strategic nuclear weapons, did not offer much hope of imposing a limit on the qualitative development of weapons, and the Vienna negotiations on the mutual and balanced reduction of forces in central Europe had shown no signs of progress whatsoever. In order to attain the objective of general and complete disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, it was essential, after appropriate preparations, to convene and institutionalize the world disarmament conference, all aspects of which had been under review since 1971. His delegation had given ample proof of its determination to bring about the convening of a world disarmament conference open to all States without exception, in which all nuclear Powers obviously must participate on an equal footing, and had stated that it was convinced that such a conference, which should be convened speedily, would constitute the appropriate forum in which to give new impetus to negotiations on disarmament.

11. His delegation recognized that since the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee, some delegations had grown impatient and would like specific steps to be taken to enable the Ad Hoc Committee to begin preparations for the conference. In that connexion, he recalled the work of the United Nations committees and commissions whose efforts had had the desired results when they had proceeded prudently and imaginatively, taking into account all viewpoints of the States Members of the United Nations. Failure to learn from those experiences would be tantamount to abandoning the very objective which the Ad Hoc Committee was pursuing.

12. He recalled the statement by the representative of Mexico in the First Committee of the General Assembly on 30 October 1975 in which that representative had asserted that if more tangible progress was not possible in 1976, the General Assembly would have to decide at its thirty-first session to convene a special session to consider, inter alia, the question of convening a world disarmament conference. That would reflect the spirit of the declaration of the ministerial meeting of the non-aligned countries held in Lima.

13. Mr. ORTIS de ROZAS (Argentina) said that his country initially had been in favour of convening a carefully prepared world disarmament conference which met certain basic requirements, such as the participation of all nuclear-weapon States and of countries of military importance. However, some countries had indicated opposition or hesitation, and their opinions could not be ignored. On 30 December 1975, in the First Committee, his delegation had warned of the danger of convening a world disarmament conference without the presence, or in the face of the opposition, of one or more nuclear Powers. Naturally, those countries would not calmly accept decisions adopted without their participation, and the effort
would prove useless or would lead to a dead end. The conference was not an end in itself, but rather, a means of achieving general and complete disarmament, a point which frequently was forgotten in discussions of disarmament. If such was the case, it was necessary to proceed cautiously and reflect seriously on the consequence of haste.

14. His delegation knew that it was difficult to arrive at a consensus. That was borne out by its experience, not only in the laborious negotiations which had followed its initiative in calling for the establishment of the Special Committee which had been the immediate predecessor of the current Ad Hoc Committee, but also in the adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 3469 (XXX), pursuant to which the Ad Hoc Committee was now meeting. That resolution represented progress, and he drew attention to paragraph 3, which should guide the activities and work of the Ad Hoc Committee. Members should not diverge from that mandate and attempt, for example, to get involved with the preparations for the conference. If they did so, there would be no consensus and it would not be possible to get the General Assembly, at its next session, to approve the continuation of the Ad Hoc Committee's work. In conclusion, he suggested that the Working Group should meet in July and that it should be left to the discretion of the Chairman and the Bureau to decide whether to convene the Ad Hoc Committee in plenary. The Working Group would be opened to all delegations, which thus would have the opportunity to state their positions. Subsequently, at its next session, the Ad Hoc Committee could review the results of the Working Group's efforts in a general debate, for which purpose it might be necessary to make the session a couple of days longer than now envisaged.

15. Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria) said that, in reply to a letter from the Secretary-General, his Government had indicated nearly four years earlier the need to convene a world disarmament conference in 1976. That conference appeared even more remote now, in 1976. At first glance, it would seem easy to find the cause of that failure. Since a world disarmament conference could not be useful without the participation of all the nuclear Powers, the responsibility must be attributed to those nuclear Powers which refused to participate. However, a more thorough analysis indicated that not enough of the required imagination had been displayed to resolve the problem. Firstly, the real reasons for the negative attitude of those nuclear Powers had not been examined and, secondly, it had perhaps been a mistake to adopt an all-or-nothing strategy. Indeed, by envisaging a major conference at the highest possible level which would be entrusted with the task of solving all disarmament problems, perhaps too lofty an objective had been established, thereby facilitating negative criticism. In the consultations held during the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, various delegations had suggested the possibility of abandoning efforts to bring about disarmament, since those efforts risked causing further frustration. For two years the Ad Hoc Committee had considered the major issue, namely, the attitude of the nuclear Powers on the convening of the conference. The current pessimism appeared to reinforce the idea that that subject had been exhausted. Accordingly, the solution should be sought elsewhere. The Ad Hoc Committee should maintain its contacts with the
nuclear Powers, for two important reasons: firstly, in order to perceive possible changes in their attitude and, secondly, so that it was not forgotten that nuclear disarmament was a fundamental concern of all States which did not possess nuclear technology. That task naturally should be discharged in the most practical and economical way possible and, accordingly, the Chairman should continue to maintain those contacts, with the assistance of the Bureau.

16. The Ad Hoc Committee's new mandate called for an analytical study of the conclusions contained in its last report. It had been stated in that document that a world disarmament conference could have less ambitious objectives than had originally been envisaged. It should not be forgotten that two other bodies, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament, were considering similar organizational questions. Another possibility, first suggested in the Ad Hoc Committee and supported by the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries held in Lima, was to convene a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament questions. His country had supported and continued to support the idea of convening a world disarmament conference, and at the same time urged that a sense of realism prevail as work progressed. It was true that the vast majority of countries wished to convene a world disarmament conference and that only a small number of States objected; however, it must be borne in mind that those States represented a third of the world's population and possessed more than half of the existing nuclear weapons. Accordingly, instead of attempting to take a giant step towards the conference, the Ad Hoc Committee should endeavour to approach it gradually, and at least should not lose what had already been gained.

17. In the introduction to his report to the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General had stated that the role which the United Nations was playing in disarmament was far from adequate. Therefore, any result, however modest, would constitute progress. Serious consideration should be given to the Chairman's proposal that the Ad Hoc Committee not meet during the next session.

18. Mr. AKHUND (Pakistan) said that his delegation was in favour of holding a world disarmament conference. It was depressing to note that, as efforts aimed at disarmament had increased, there had been a simultaneous increase in expenditure on the creation of ever more destructive weapons. Moreover, the arms race was taking place not only between the great Powers, but also between medium-sized countries, which could ill afford it. Nations renounced certain luxuries and in some cases even the necessities to stock their arsenals, because they felt insecure and sometimes also because they wished to intimidate their neighbours or dominate a region. His delegation favoured all measures that would lead to a relaxation of global and regional tensions and had therefore welcomed the agreements concluded between the United States and the Soviet Union to limit the number of strategic weapons. Relaxation of tensions and measures aimed at disarmament were interconnected. Consequently, while the question of convening a world disarmament conference was being considered, concrete steps should be taken within and outside the United Nations to eliminate the causes of international conflicts and tensions.
19. The World Disarmament Conference should be held with the participation of the nuclear Powers. The elimination of the nuclear weapons possessed by those great Powers should be the first task in the field of disarmament, and the Conference should devote most of its attention to the question of the complete prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and the destruction of existing stockpiles.

20. The proliferation of nuclear weapons had become particularly serious since India had exploded a nuclear device. It was obvious that the problem could not be solved by halting the spread of nuclear technology, since it was neither possible nor desirable to establish a monopoly in the field of knowledge and technology, but a uniform system of restraints could be established, based on international safeguards and equally applicable to all countries, to ensure that nuclear facilities intended for peaceful purposes were not diverted to military purposes. It was also necessary to provide security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

21. The two main military alliances, NATO and the Warsaw Pact, were devoting enormous resources to the development, production and deployment of new conventional weapons and other weapons based on new technology. Evidently the Conference would also have to formulate specific proposals in that regard. Since 40 per cent of total expenditure on armaments was being incurred by the medium and small nations, that problem should be examined and measures formulated to promote the settlement of regional conflicts, the declaration of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the adoption of other regional measures. His delegation considered that the Conference should not only make a general review of disarmament measures but also propose specific measures. The Conference would be more useful if the specific proposals were discussed and formulated beforehand in suitable forums.

22. His delegation shared the scepticism and discouragement of the delegation of Austria, but thought that the lack of enthusiasm derived not from a lack of interest, but rather from concern about the delicate balance that had to be maintained and from the differences of opinion among the nuclear Powers concerning the usefulness of a conference as a means of attaining an objective on which there was general agreement. His delegation greatly hoped that the Conference would be successful, and considered that proper preparation was necessary to that end.

23. Mr. VALDEERRAMA (Philippines) said that his delegation supported the convening of an adequately and thoroughly prepared world disarmament conference, with the participation of all the nuclear-weapon States and the militarily significant States. His delegation reiterated its support for the consultations being held by the Chairman with the nuclear-weapon States, especially those that had not participated in the Committee's work, as well as its support for the work of the Working Group.

24. There was no place for failure in connexion with a life-and-death question such as disarmament. Cynical and negative attitudes should be set aside, because the alternative to negotiation, patient dialogue and reason would be catastrophic. It had been said that the proliferation of nuclear power and nuclear weapons was likely to lead to some form of nuclear war. His delegation refused to accept that

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pessimistic attitude, because man could control the nuclear weapons he had created. The nuclear Powers should limit their nuclear arsenals and as a result the other countries would lose some of their interest in the arms race. His delegation also agreed with the representative of Peru that the acceleration of the arms race at the expense of the legitimate aspirations of millions of human beings sparked tensions fraught with danger for world security.

25. Mr. BAYANDOR (Iran) observed that very little progress had been made with regard to the World Disarmament Conference since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2930 (XXVII) three years before. That might not reflect a lack of ability or interest, but it must shed some light on the prospects for the Committee's work and the time that remained to wind up the exploratory stage.

26. At the thirtieth session of the General Assembly unease had been expressed about the performance of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and a new Committee had been established to look into the possibilities of increasing the efficiency of the Organization in that field. The existence of the Ad Hoc Committee itself had been extended, although a sizable body of opinion had pondered new alternatives. Those circumstances showed that the Committee should take a highly responsible and disciplined approach to its mandate. Firstly, it should not attempt to stretch its mandate beyond what was politically feasible. The Committee could not be turned into a preparatory organ, because experience had shown that that would lead to failure. Secondly, the Committee should proceed with a full understanding of the complexities of the problem it faced and of its own limitations and constraints.

27. At the same time, the various alternatives and options should be outlined more directly, ideas and preferences should be expressed less timidly and difficulties should be explained candidly. The main focus of the current year's report should be the elucidation of the conclusions set forth in the previous report, which had contained two distinct approaches. According to one approach, the aim of the Conference should be the realization of concrete disarmament measures, and according to the other it should be a forum for reviewing and appraising the progress achieved in the field of disarmament, re-examining methods, priorities and guidelines, and revising and streamlining the machinery for the conduct of disarmament negotiations. That second approach had generated a measure of optimism, on the grounds that a conference with more limited objectives would not come up against the obstacles that would impede the holding of a conference of wider scope. However, the fundamental problems remained. It had been made clear to the Committee that under current conditions participation of all the nuclear Powers in the Conference or its preparatory work was not feasible. Although the refusal of one of the nuclear Powers encompassed participation in any type of world disarmament conference, that of the other nuclear Power had been more ambiguous. That area of ambiguity could perhaps be explored in order to reach a realistic assessment of the prospects of holding a world disarmament conference of limited scope. Should the problem of participation prove to be insurmountable, however, his delegation would be prepared to consider other alternatives, including that of holding a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament problems.

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28. By the same token, his delegation believed that the Swedish initiative concerning the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to review the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field was a step in the right direction. The work of that Committee would be a valuable source for the World Disarmament Conference or any substitute arrangement. It would, however, be a pity if a hasty decision prompted by frustration or opportunism were to impede or frustrate the efforts of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference before it had exhausted all possible courses. The serious approach it took to its work would exert a definitive influence on the attitude of the other parties concerned.

29. The representative of Spain had mentioned the relationship between disarmament and security, a subject which his own delegation had emphasized for some time. The lack of progress in disarmament was regrettable but it was due to the facts of the world situation. Disarmament was merely the other side of the coin of international security. So long as the world was subject to disputes, uncertainties and conflicts, countries could not but be the final arbiters of their own defence needs. Thus, before tackling the problem of arms proliferation, the United Nations must attack the profound causes of the conflicts which unfortunately made armaments a necessary ingredient of national survival. His delegation wished to reiterate that it supported the idea of a world disarmament conference and all the efforts being made to remove the obstacles still standing in its way.

30. Mr. GHORRA (Lebanon) said that the exhortations of the Chairman had led the members of the Committee to believe that there was a certain lack of interest or a sense of lethargy within the Committee regarding the important and vital subject before it. At times representatives had put forward in the debate arguments which had been heard on many other occasions. Obviously, the Committee was facing an impasse, a fact which explained the reluctance of certain representatives to express their views before the Committee. Neither the General Assembly, nor the First Committee nor the present Committee had devised any new ways of advancing the proposal to convene a world disarmament conference. The General Assembly had heard 110 statements and had elaborated 25 draft resolutions on the 19 items concerned with disarmament. The agenda of the General Assembly was becoming increasingly overloaded and that would happen again at the thirty-first session because of the desire of delegations to refer to the past, present and future aspects of the arms race. Unfortunately, no progress had been made in the work of disarmament which so far had remained on the periphery of the real problems facing the United Nations. The Organization was beginning the second half of the so-called Disarmament Decade but, instead of moving closer to its objectives, it had moved farther away from them. Recent studies showed that the world was now spending annually $300,000 million on arms, whereas at the beginning of the decade it had spent only $200,000 million. If that progression was maintained, by the end of the decade the world would be spending $400,000 million on arms every year. Unfortunately, some developing countries had had to increase their military expenditure or had been inundated with weapons from the arsenals of the arms-producing countries. The major military powers were continuing to increase their arsenals with increasingly refined types of weapons. It was abominable to observe that the methods of destruction of death were becoming more and more advanced. The amount of
explosives now in existence for every human being, which had been mentioned by the representative of Mongolia and emphasized by the Chairman of the Committee, was frightening, and explained why peoples were discouraged by the increase in armaments and why they felt sceptical about the ability of the United Nations to halt the arms race.

31. The concept of international security had been sufficiently developed in the past and its indissoluble link with disarmament had been established. Apparently, the idea of convening a world disarmament conference had been widely accepted since the initiative taken by the non-aligned countries in Cairo in 1964 and since the submission of specific proposals by the Soviet Union. However, the United Nations was still meeting the same obstacles regarding the participation of all the nuclear Powers and some countries were continuing to impose requirements that were difficult to fulfil. It was important to break the present deadlock and to achieve universal participation, and particularly that of the nuclear Powers, which could mark the difference between the success or failure of the conference. He recalled the limitation of 10 years approved in Washington in 1922 concerning naval forces and another of five years approved in London in 1930. The world was now facing the same problem and was hoping for a limitation on nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, it was impossible to take decisions on behalf of countries not participating in the discussions. His delegation thought that a gradual approach should be adopted: first there should be a preparatory stage; then a stage for the approval of decisions, with a sufficient interval for their application; and, finally, a conference should be held at the end of the decade to consider the results achieved and to prepare measures for the following decade. The question was really complex and its solution required time. In that respect, at the beginning of the decade Lebanon had probably been too ingenuous or idealistic. Ingenuousness could not be justified because the facts had shown that too much had been expected in too short a time; however, idealism was justified because no true progress could be made without it.

32. With regard to future activities, his delegation supported the convening of the conference provided that it was carefully prepared. On the other hand, it did not seem appropriate to convene a special session of the General Assembly to deal with disarmament questions, because it would merely be a forum for fruitless debate which would culminate in the production and reproduction of resolutions without any effect. His delegation considered that General Assembly resolution 3469 (XXX) was a step forward, especially the request that the Committee should submit to the Assembly an analytical study as well as any observations and recommendations it might deem appropriate. At the same time, the Committee should set a date for the conference, which might be 1978, 1979 or 1980, i.e., at the beginning of the Second Disarmament Decade. Meanwhile, preparations for the conference should continue. The United Nations should establish a preparatory committee and perhaps also a sub-committee of major Powers, composed of a maximum of five States, entrusted with the task of holding talks with the nuclear-weapons States, especially those not represented on the Committee. The progress in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks between the United States and the Soviet Union and the rapprochement between the West and the East created an international climate...
favourable to the preparations for the conference. Perhaps at its next sessions the General Assembly should abandon its practice of dealing with many disarmament questions and confine itself to four or five items, with a view to considering specific measures related to each of the items on the agenda of the proposed world disarmament conference. Time-limits could be fixed for the preparation of the world disarmament conference by the Conference of the Disarmament Committee. Those efforts should be co-ordinated and should create the necessary impetus which would culminate in the holding of the conference.

33. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Committee had a precise mandate to perform. The fact that no spectacular progress had been achieved in four years was not a subject for pessimism.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

34. Mr. OVINNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that from the comments made in the Committee there appeared to be two opinions concerning the continuation of its work. One proposal was that the Working Group should continue to meet and that the Committee should be convened for 11 days in July. The other proposal, put forward by the representative of Argentina, was to concentrate the discussions within the Working Group. He himself felt that a compromise could be reached between those two viewpoints. The Working Group could begin its discussions at the end of June, meet for two or three weeks and prepare a working paper for consideration by the Committee, which would meet for two days, perhaps on 12 and 13 July, to give the paper a preliminary study. Subsequently, the Working Group would meet for a week to continue consideration of the document in the light of the comments made in the Committee and the Committee would meet again for two days, perhaps on 22 and 23 July, to study the results of the discussions in the Working Group. That proposal would have the advantage of ensuring that the Working Group's discussions were closely linked with the discussions of the Committee itself.

35. Mr. ORTIZ DE ROZAS (Argentina) said that his proposal was not merely to concentrate the discussions within the Working Group but to combine the original proposal of the Soviet Union with the system followed the previous year. The Working Group would meet on the date suggested and it would be left to the discretion of the Bureau to decide whether to convene a meeting of the Committee after consulting with its members. The Soviet Union proposal had its merits but in practice it would be difficult to follow, because when the time came most delegations would request a delay in order to inform their Governments. The best plan would be to follow the procedure of the year before, without excluding the possibility of convening a meeting of the Committee if that would appear appropriate. The convening of the Committee would be left to the discretion of the Chairman who would consult the members of the Committee before doing so.

36. Mr. LAY (Italy) said that the Working Group might meet in July to prepare the draft report, within the limits laid down in General Assembly resolution 3469 (XXX), for submission to and approval by the Committee at the end of August. The Soviet representative's proposal could be accommodated by holding one or two meetings of the Committee in July to provide the Working Group with any guidance
it might need before preparing the draft report. In the time remaining before July, informal consultations could be held within the Working Group; that would not require any servicing by the United Nations, but the Secretary of the Committee would be present.

37. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Economic and Social Council would be in session in July, which meant that some or all of the officers of the Committee would be away from New York, and that plenary meetings of the Committee would depend on the progress made by the Working Group. The Committee must therefore adopt a practical and flexible approach. As suggested by the representative of Italy, the Working Group could begin its work immediately, using the conference services available in the United Nations. It might even be able to perform some of its tasks without those services, as experience had shown that they were not always needed. One or more plenary meetings of the Committee would be scheduled for July to provide guidance to the Working Group before the final drafting of the report.

38. Mr. JAROSEK (Poland) noted that the consensus seemed to be that the Committee should meet on 12 July, consider the progress of the work and decide what it would do next. He was willing to accept other suggestions, provided that the Committee would meet on 12 July.

39. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that most of the officers of the Committee, and most of its members, would be away in July. Perhaps it would be advisable to provide for the possibility of the Committee's meeting in July if necessary, without rigidly applying any hard and fast schedule.

40. Mr. MULYEP (India), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, noted that the representative of Pakistan had said that nuclear proliferation had become more serious after India had detonated a nuclear device in 1974. The Government of India had repeatedly given its assurances that it would use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes, and those assurances had been conveyed to the Government of Pakistan at the highest level.

41. It was surprising that those who were scouring the world in an attempt to purchase nuclear material, including reactors, and were having difficulty in convincing suppliers that their purposes were peaceful should now express concern over nuclear proliferation. It was regrettable that the Committee had once again been used as a forum for hackneyed propaganda, when all efforts should be concentrated on the work at hand.

42. Mr. AKHUND (Pakistan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said he had simply stated that, since India's nuclear explosion, the question of proliferation had become more acute. He was pleased to hear that the explosion had been for peaceful purposes, although its consequences had not been peaceful.
43. Mr. MULIE (India) asked what the representative of Pakistan had meant when he had said that the explosion had been for peaceful purposes but that its consequences had not been peaceful.

44. The CHAIRMAN said he understood the representative of Pakistan to mean that there had been some apprehension about nuclear proliferation after the nuclear explosion in India.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.