AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Ninth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 39th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 13 September, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. NOVEYDA (Iran)

CONTENTS

General debate (continued)

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee

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The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that, following the conclusion of the general debate, delegates could discuss the content of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly, since the Working Group would welcome instructions from the Committee on the report which it was required to draft.

2. Mr. HOLLAI (Hungary) said that his delegation had from the beginning been an active advocate of the convening of a world disarmament conference, since such a conference was the most appropriate forum in which to discuss and initiate effective measures concerning disarmament. His Government therefore attached considerable importance to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, and he was pleased that the recent sessions of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament showed an increase in activities directed towards disarmament. The Ad Hoc Committee, which was meeting immediately after the conclusion of the third session of the Preparatory Committee, need not fear any overlap with the latter's work, since disarmament was a complex question which had to be dealt with in a number of ways, through bilateral, regional and global action. The achievement of positive results in one disarmament forum promoted progress in others, and success in the Ad Hoc Committee would contribute to success at the special session and the conference itself.

3. The special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the world disarmament conference were not mutually exclusive, but complementary. If the work of the special session was successful, it would create better conditions for holding a world disarmament conference. It was therefore essential for the Ad Hoc Committee to continue its work and for the General Assembly to extend its mandate. There was general agreement that the special session should continue with the task of convening a world disarmament conference, and paragraph 18 of the progress report of the Preparatory Committee to the General Assembly recommended that the Ad Hoc Committee should be asked to submit a special report to the special session on the state of its work. He was in agreement with those who wished the report of the Ad Hoc Committee to contain the views of States possessing nuclear weapons, as requested by General Assembly resolution 31/190, as well as appropriate references to the observations made by Governments since the last report of the Committee.

4. Mr. SMID (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation wished to express its satisfaction that the Committee's Chairman was a representative of Iran, a country with which the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic enjoyed very good relations. The joint communiqué adopted by Czechoslovakia and Iran following a visit to Czechoslovakia by the Shah of Iran showed the significance attached by the peoples of the world to the halting of the arms race and to the process of disarmament, as well as the timeliness of the Committee's mission for the convening of a world disarmament conference. The communiqué expressed support for the convening of the special session devoted to disarmament.
5. Some progress had been achieved at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session. The socialist countries had jointly submitted to the Preparatory Committee the drafts of two basic documents, "Basic Provisions of the Declaration on Disarmament" (A/AC.187/81) and "Basic Provisions of the Programme of Action on Disarmament" (A/AC.187/82). In the view of his delegation, those two documents should constitute the basic agenda of the entire special session. The provisions contained in them were a rational expression of the substance of the disarmament process and reflected many years of concentrated effort on the part of the socialist countries aimed at the espousal and assertion of those provisions in the practice of international relations. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic had always actively striven for progress in disarmament negotiations and had exerted considerable efforts, in both multilateral and bilateral negotiations, towards that end. His delegation was therefore interested in participating actively in the preparations for the eighth special session of the General Assembly as a full-fledged member of the Preparatory Committee.

6. Preparations for the special session were beginning to take concrete shape, although the drafting of the main documents was an important task for the next session of the Preparatory Committee. The convening of the special session was the result of efforts on the part of the non-aligned countries and should constitute a major step towards convening a world disarmament conference, which would lay a firm foundation for disarmament on the broadest possible basis and under strict international control. His delegation therefore wished to reiterate its appreciation for the highly constructive approach of the non-aligned countries in seeking a solution of those most pressing and difficult problems of current international relations. If all States Members of the United Nations, and especially all the nuclear Powers, took a responsible approach, the special session could become a watershed in the long history of disarmament negotiations and would provide an impetus for greater efforts by the progressive forces of the world, which were becoming increasingly aware of the terrible threat posed to the whole of mankind by the continued arms race.

7. It should, however, be emphasized that the special session must be understood to be only an intermediate stage; the main goal must remain the convening of a world disarmament conference. World developments since the last General Assembly had again proved the urgent necessity of convening such a conference. There were powerful circles which still believed that complex international problems could be solved, not by patience and rationally conducted negotiations, but by upsetting the balance of forces in the world and developing still more destructive weapons.

3. The Ad Hoc Committee had made a considerable effort to fulfil the mandate given to it by the General Assembly. Its work had, however, been hampered throughout by the attitude of the two members which did not participate in its work. A process of world-wide disarmament could be effective only if all countries participated in its preparation, especially those possessing nuclear weapons. All members of the Ad Hoc Committee, particularly the major Powers, should participate actively in the Committee's work in order to ensure progress.
9. The report of the Committee to the thirty-second session of the General Assembly should reflect all those facts and should appeal to all States Members of the United Nations for support in the fulfilment of the Committee's mandate. It should also contain a recommendation for the extension of the Committee's mandate.

10. Mr. PUNTSAGNOROV (Mongolia) said his delegation believed that the problem of halting the arms race and achieving disarmament was particularly pressing, especially in view of the urgent need to supplement political détente with military détente and of the real danger of the appearance of more destructive weapons.

11. His delegation had already stated that the time had come for decisive international action to halt the arms race on a universal basis. The proposal to convene a world disarmament conference was widely supported, as was apparent from the replies of many States to the Secretary-General presenting their views concerning the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. His delegation felt that the report of the Ad Hoc Committee should reflect the views of States in favour of a world disarmament conference, as indicated in those replies.

12. At the April session of the Ad Hoc Committee, his delegation had stated that it was logical for the General Assembly to request the Committee to submit a report to the special session. The Preparatory Committee had already recommended that the General Assembly should ask the Ad Hoc Committee to submit a special report to the special session on the state of its work, and that proposal should be reflected in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the thirty-second session of the General Assembly.

13. The special session should constitute a major step forward towards the convening of a world disarmament conference. It should decide what practical measures were to be taken to prepare and organize the conference. The Ad Hoc Committee could make a real contribution to that decision, particularly by proposing in its report to the special session a specific date for the convening of the conference and by giving its views on the establishment of a preparatory committee for the practical organization of the conference. Regarding the Chairman's note concerning contact with representatives of States possessing nuclear weapons, his delegation deeply regretted that two nuclear Powers had not changed their well-known positions concerning a crucial measure aimed at preserving the security of mankind. His delegation would fully support the Chairman's efforts to fulfil the mandate of the Committee.

14. Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria) said that the People's Republic of Bulgaria had consistently favoured the convening of a world disarmament conference. His country was profoundly convinced that the need for such a conference was growing daily more urgent in view of the unceasing arms race, which was supported by certain well-known militarist circles. He fully agreed with the statement made the previous day by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the effect that the reasons for convening the conference were still valid and were constantly
increasing in significance. The rate at which the arms race was accelerating tended to overtake measures to reduce and control it, which was understandably causing universal anxiety. The special task with which the world was now faced was to direct the will and efforts of all countries, and particularly of the nuclear countries, towards reaching a satisfactory solution to that cardinal problem.

15. The People's Republic of Bulgaria was convinced that the convening of such an authoritative international forum as the world disarmament conference would give major impetus to a thorough discussion of all aspects of disarmament, would highlight the most pressing current tasks in that field and would indicate the practical measures to be taken to achieve success. The special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament was a step in the right direction and should be a significant stage in preparing for the conference. He was satisfied with the work of the Preparatory Committee, which had adopted a number of important and constructive recommendations.

16. It was regrettable that two nuclear Powers were continuing to create obstacles to the successful preparation of the conference. The efforts of the Ad Hoc Committee, reflecting the hopes and aspirations of the great majority of States Members of the United Nations, should be continued and intensified. The report to be prepared by the Working Group should reflect the views stated by Governments following the submission of the preceding report. It should also contain a recommendation for the submission of a special report by the Committee to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in accordance with the recommendation of the Preparatory Committee. The report would, of course, be of an interim nature; he was convinced that the Working Group would promptly and successfully complete the task of preparing it.

17. Mr. FLORIN (Observer of the German Democratic Republic) said that it was not surprising that the socialist countries had expressed themselves with particular insistence in favour of a world disarmament conference, for the struggle to halt the arms race in the interests of mankind was in harmony with the social structure of the socialist countries. Since 1917, following the October Revolution, the Soviet Union had advocated general disarmament and had supported the increasing number of other States which had made proposals to that effect. In recent months, it had become clear that the idea of a world disarmament conference was receiving increasingly wide support. Certain circles had sought to prevent the inclusion of the question of a conference in the agenda of the special session, but that attempt had failed. The Preparatory Committee had also decided to recommend to the thirty-second session of the General Assembly that the Ad Hoc Committee be asked to submit a report on the matter to the special session, an idea already raised in the Ad Hoc Committee itself. The recommendation was a logical one. The question now arose whether the Committee's mandate should be widened by the General Assembly to cover specific preparations for the conference. His delegation would support a recommendation to that effect.

18. Two States in particular were opposed to the holding of a world disarmament conference, a serious factor which cast doubt on the sincerity of the views
expressed by those States concerning disarmament. The States in question currently envisaged measures which would tend to accelerate the arms race. Those States which genuinely favoured the holding of a world disarmament conference should speak out more strongly in support of the idea, for the two States which opposed the conference must not be permitted to define the course of international events in a manner contrary to the common will. The Ad Hoc Committee had been effective in promoting the idea of a world disarmament conference, and he hoped that the report of the Committee to the thirty-second session of the General Assembly would clearly draw attention to the positive international situation relating to the conference.

REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE

19. Mr. LOPEZ-CHICHERI (Spain), Rapporteur, said that the Working Group would find it difficult to produce a report of sufficient substance because it had so little to discuss. Its only guides to date were the Committee's mandate, as contained in General Assembly resolution 31/190, and the proceedings of two short sessions of the Committee. Members of the Working Group had, however, reached general agreement on the format of the report.

20. An introductory section would set out the mandate of the Committee. It would also present the background of that mandate, as reflected in resolutions adopted at the twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions of the General Assembly and in previous mandates given to the Committee.

21. The first paragraph of the second part of the report would outline the work of the Committee in fulfilling its mandate to "consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee". It would refer to the Committee's deliberations in April 1977 and at the current session.

22. The second paragraph would deal with the fulfilment of the essential part of the Committee's mandate: to maintain close contact with the representatives of States possessing nuclear weapons. It had been proposed in the Working Group that that paragraph should be worded roughly as follows: "The Committee through its Chairman has established contact with the Powers possessing nuclear weapons ...". The exact wording would be chosen with a view to being as acceptable as possible to the nuclear States.

23. The report would reflect the opinions expressed in the Committee by the delegations of non-nuclear countries during its debates. Some members of the Working Group had suggested that the report should also reflect all the views expressed by States on the convening of a world disarmament conference.

24. Mention should be made of the fact that the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament had recommended in its report that the General Assembly should request the Ad Hoc Committee to submit a report to the special session. That would necessitate a concluding section, in which it would be stated that, in the light of the views expressed by States and
the recommendation of the Preparatory Committee, the General Assembly should renew
the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and instruct it specifically to prepare a report
for the special session.

25. The Working Group would welcome guidelines and instructions as to the substance
of the report.

26. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that it had a very precise and clear
mandate: to consider any comments and observations which might be made to it. So
far, it had heard only prepared statements by certain States. If more proposals
for the substance of the report were not forthcoming, the Rapporteur's task of
preparing a report to reflect the Committee's work for the year would be extremely
difficult.

27. Concerning the recommendation contained in the report of the Preparatory
Committee, he felt that the Ad Hoc Committee was not entitled to prejudge an issue
on which the General Assembly must decide. He therefore suggested that the final
section of the Committee's report, as outlined by the Rapporteur, should be couched
in very general and conditional language, stating merely that if the General
Assembly adopted the report of the Preparatory Committee in full it would then have
to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee and provide it with a new, and preferably
precise, mandate.

28. Mr. PALMA (Peru) agreed with the views expressed by the Chairman and with the
Rapporteur's outline of the Committee's report. He pointed out, however, that only
the General Assembly could decide how the Ad Hoc Committee was to proceed. The
Committee's present mandate was the result of long and sensitive negotiations at
the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, and it was unlikely that advice
and recommendations from the Committee not specifically solicited by the mandate
would be readily acceptable to all States.

29. Mr. VAVILOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Committee's
report must reflect the real positions of delegations on the convening of a world
disarmament conference. It would be very one-sided if it presented the views of
only half-a-dozen States. In order to assist the Working Group and the Committee
in their deliberations, he suggested that the Secretariat might prepare a
compendium of all the views expressed on the convening of a world disarmament
conference, under four headings: those views expressed at the thirty-first session
of the General Assembly, those expressed by States in response to the request from
the Secretary-General, those expressed in the Preparatory Committee for the Special
Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, and those expressed in the
Ad Hoc Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee's report should adopt much the same formula.

30. The CHAIRMAN observed that the Committee's mandate was to consider any
relevant comments and observations which might be made specifically to the Committee
and that the Soviet proposal would go beyond that mandate.

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31. **Mr. JAROSZEK** (Poland) reminded the Committee of the proposals he had made at its previous meeting. He felt that they did not prejudice the issue of extending the Committee's mandate, since that was an issue which the General Assembly alone could decide.

32. The Soviet proposal was both fair and reasonable. The General Assembly should be as broadly informed as possible on all aspects of the convening of a world disarmament conference, and a compendium of all the views expressed would be very useful to it. If members of the Committee were concerned that the compilation of such a document would be going beyond the mandate of the Committee, the compendium could be annexed to the report instead of being included in it. It was his own view that the Committee would not be exceeding its mandate in taking such a step.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*