AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Ninth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 42nd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 14 March 1978, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran)

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78-55436
The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. **Mr. SLAHA (Czechoslovakia)** said that his Government attached great importance to the convening of a world disarmament conference, which, if open to all States, would provide a suitable forum in which the efforts of all the peace-loving forces of the world could be co-ordinated. His delegation noted with satisfaction that progress had been achieved in clarifying, classifying and unifying the main objectives of such a conference. It believed that the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament would be a major factor in the preparation of the conference, particularly if the special session succeeded in formulating the principles governing the implementation of disarmament. The conference should be held on a suitable date without any unnecessary delays, so that it could follow up on the results of the special session.

2. The special report which the Committee was to submit to the special session should include all the views which had been expressed on the subject of a world disarmament conference in the Committee itself, in notes submitted by Member States to the Secretary-General and in the General Assembly. The report should also sum up the conclusions reached by the Committee in its deliberations and should contain the Committee's recommendations on disarmament to the special session. In that connexion, the Committee and its Working Group should make maximum use of the time remaining in order to establish the best possible conditions for the convening of a world disarmament conference.

3. **Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic)** said that the special report of the Committee would assist the special session in working out the programme of a world disarmament conference and would promote the success of the conference. The convening of the conference was long overdue, especially in view of the specific decision on the matter adopted by the General Assembly. The time had now come to make direct preparations for the conference in an effort to halt the arms race, which was consuming ever-increasing sums and valuable raw materials and was diverting research efforts from important non-military tasks. Plans to develop new systems of weapons, especially the neutron bomb, caused great concern among the peoples of the world, including the people of his country, and posed further obstacles to the holding of disarmament talks. For that reason, his delegation had been among the sponsors of a draft treaty submitted in Geneva which prohibited the manufacture, stockpiling and use of the neutron bomb.

4. He drew attention to the many constructive and realistic proposals on disarmament, especially those which had been submitted by the socialist countries in an effort to formulate a comprehensive programme of disarmament based on the principle of equal security, which served the interests of all States. His delegation hoped that efforts to prepare and convene a world disarmament conference would stimulate discussion of disarmament issues. He stressed in that connexion that the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly could not replace the convening of a world disarmament conference.
5. Reverting to the subject of the Committee's special report to the special session, he suggested that it should contain a proposal to establish a preparatory committee on the world disarmament conference; such a committee should include the nuclear States and others on the basis of geographical distribution and could prepare a draft agenda for the conference and a programme of work. His delegation felt that it was essential to approach the question of preparing a world disarmament conference in a constructive manner and with specific action.

6. Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria) noted that significant progress was now being made in the disarmament field and cited in that connexion the new initiatives undertaken by the Soviet Union, especially with regard to the prohibition of nuclear testing and of the neutron bomb. He stressed that the Committee could render important service to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and could provide continuity between the special session and a world disarmament conference. He felt that the preparation of a special report on the state of the Committee's work and deliberations, as requested by the General Assembly, was an urgent task in view of the limited time remaining. The report should cover all aspects of the problem, including information on the Committee's work up to the present time, the views of Governments with regard to the convening of a world disarmament conference, and specific conclusions and recommendations which could assist the special session in its deliberations.

7. He felt that the Committee should follow its previous practice in assigning the preparation of its report to the Working Group.

8. Mr. HALASZ (Hungary) said that his delegation attached great importance to the work of the Committee and to the convening of a world disarmament conference as a decisive step towards strengthening international peace and security. Under resolution 32/89, the Committee was required to report on the state of its work and deliberations to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and he believed that that report should deal substantively with the matter entrusted to the Committee.

9. His delegation was aware of the objections of some States to the convening of a world disarmament conference but felt that those objections were more political than substantive in nature. It was to be hoped that the position of those States which were not in favour of convening a world disarmament conference would change. His delegation felt that the special session of the General Assembly would help greatly to improve the international atmosphere, which would in turn make it possible for States to implement the principles and programme of action to be adopted by the special session. The latter would provide an excellent opportunity to advance preparations for a world disarmament conference.

10. Mr. PUNTSAGNOROV (Mongolia) expressed his delegation's satisfaction that the Committee had resumed its effort to carry out the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. In that connexion, his delegation attached great importance to the special report requested by the General Assembly for submission to the special
session devoted to disarmament. The report should reflect the useful work accomplished by the Committee in studying the views of Governments on the convening of a world disarmament conference. It should also include conclusions and recommendations on the substantive aspects of the convening of such a conference; in that connexion, it was essential to begin practical preparations for convening the conference. He stressed his delegation's concern with regard to the arms race, in particular the development of new systems of weapons such as the neutron bomb.

11. His delegation felt that constructive decisions to deal with disarmament would be possible only at a world-wide conference. He stressed that the special session of the General Assembly and the world disarmament conference were not mutually exclusive but rather complementary. The special session was an important stage on the road to the convening of a world disarmament conference and would be of assistance in finding solutions to problems of concern to all States. On the basis of recommendations submitted by the Committee, the special session could take decisions with regard to the convening of a world disarmament conference.

12. His delegation shared the view that the Committee's Working Group should begin work as soon as possible on the special report to be submitted to the special session.

13. The CHAIRMAN said he felt that there was general agreement in the Committee with regard to the Peruvian proposal that the Working Group should meet immediately to prepare a draft report for submission to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The Working Group should use the facilities available to the Committee and should remain in touch with the Chairman. If it was able to complete its work before the end of the current session, he would call a plenary meeting of the Committee to consider its report. Otherwise, he would permit the Group to go on with its work. When necessary, he would consult members of the Committee, especially the nuclear States. The officers of the Committee would consult the Secretariat and members of the Committee concerning the best date for holding the next meeting of the Committee.

14. He took it that, if he heard no objection, the Committee wished to adopt that suggestion.

15. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.