



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



UNITED NATIONS  
Centre for Disarmament  
Distr. LIMITED  
DEPARTMENT OF  
POLITICAL AND SECURITY AFFAIRS  
A/AC.101/E.5/REV.4  
Reference Library  
8 September 1976

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF  
THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
IN THE FIELD OF DISARMAMENT

WORKING PAPER

Submitted by the delegation of Sweden

1. Below, suggestions are made with regard to recommendations which the Ad Hoc Committee may wish to adopt as conclusions of its review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

I. Possible new approaches for achieving more effective procedures and organization of work in the field of disarmament, thereby enabling the United Nations to exercise its full role in multilateral disarmament efforts

A. Improved methods of work of the First Committee of the General Assembly in disarmament matters

2. The Ad Hoc Committee underlines that delegations are free to address themselves in the First Committee of the General Assembly to any disarmament issue on its agenda and to submit, when they deem it necessary, draft resolutions on each agenda item. At the same time, the Ad Hoc Committee makes the following suggestions in order to make the work of the First Committee more constructive and efficient:

(a) At the beginning of the First Committee's consideration of disarmament items, the Chairman should consider the carrying out of consultations with the members of the Committee in order to examine the advisability of submitting for consideration by the First Committee a schedule setting out a specific duration for the general debate and the debate on the draft resolutions presented under each agenda item, together with tentative dates for the voting on those draft resolutions. To the extent possible, this schedule should provide for the grouping together of matters that are closely related, provided that the State or States which brought the items in question to the attention of the General Assembly do not oppose such grouping;

(b) It would be useful for the work of the First Committee if delegations made all efforts to arrange for informal circulation of draft resolutions by the time the Committee starts its work during each session of the General Assembly. This could also help to promote the amalgamation, whenever possible, of draft resolutions with similar aims and content;

(c) The members of the First Committee could hold informal consultations to determine whether any delegation intended to request the adoption of any measure with regard to a given item. If those consultations showed clearly that no delegation would request any action by the General Assembly, the Committee could decide to include the item concerned in the provisional agenda for a subsequent session of the General Assembly;

(d) The First Committee should keep in mind the possibility of taking decisions instead of adopting formal resolutions on appropriate questions with a view to reducing the number of draft resolutions presented to the General Assembly;

(e) The Chairman of the First Committee should consult with the members of the Committee at the beginning of each session of the General Assembly on further measures that would make the Committee's deliberations more efficient and simplified;

(f) The Chairman of the First Committee should consult with members of the Committee in order to explore the possibility of amalgamating draft resolutions on the same item, with the consent of their respective sponsors, whether they had been circulated informally or submitted formally to the Committee.

B. The relationship between the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies in the field of disarmament

3. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that:

Before the annual report of the IAEA is dealt with by the General Assembly in Plenary, it should be made available to the First Committee. Sections of the report concerning the activities of the Agency that are of particular relevance to the prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons and related matters should, in the course of the First Committee's disarmament debate, be drawn to the attention of the Committee in connexion with the relevant items on its agenda.

C. Role of the United Nations Disarmament Commission

4. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that:

The General Assembly should at an appropriate time consider the future role of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

D. Role of the United Nations in providing assistance on request in multilateral and regional disarmament negotiations

5. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that:

States participating in multilateral and regional disarmament negotiations give serious consideration to the possibility of requesting conference servicing and other technical assistance from the United Nations.

E. The relationship between the General Assembly and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD)

6. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that:

(a) The CCD report, being an indispensable document of the General Assembly, should as a rule be available to delegations in New York not later than 15 September each year. The report should reproduce any decisions and conclusions reached and present in summary form the main substance of the discussions in the CCD, with a view to increasing its usefulness to delegations.

(b) All official CCD documents should be made available to all Members of the United Nations through their delegations in New York on a regular and continuing basis.

(c) The General Assembly, in entrusting tasks to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, should take into account the existing workload of the Committee as well as the progress achieved on the issues before it.

F. Studies

7. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that:

(a) The General Assembly consider making increased use of in-depth studies of the arms race, disarmament and related matters on an ad hoc basis conducted by the Secretary-General with the assistance of qualified experts nominated by Governments and with the assistance, whenever appropriate, from other sources.

(b) The capacity of the United Nations Secretariat should be such as to ensure that it can effectively carry out the responsibilities given to it in connexion with such studies.

II. Ways and means of improving existing United Nations facilities for collection, compilation and dissemination of information on disarmament issues, in order to keep all Governments, as well as world public opinion, properly informed on progress achieved in the field of disarmament

8. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that:

(a) The United Nations publish annually before the regular session of the General Assembly in all the working languages of the General Assembly a United Nations Disarmament Yearbook. This publication should contain a descriptive review of the main developments and ongoing negotiations in the field of disarmament, including a summary of the General Assembly resolutions adopted and of the proposals made in this connexion. It should further contain inter alia:

- texts of new treaties and agreements in the field of disarmament as well as drafts of such texts submitted to the United Nations or the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD);
- a report on the status of the existing disarmament agreements;
- decisions and conclusions on these matters reached by, inter alia, the CCD, the IAEA and possible Review Conferences;
- factual information, as communicated by Governments or appearing in their official publications, on such topics as military expenditures, armed forces and armaments, military production, arms trade and foreign aid in the military field, with full citation of the sources. Such information should be contained in the Yearbook in a useful and standardized format once appropriate and generally applicable criteria for the measurement, reporting, and evaluation of relevant internationally comparable data on the above topics are developed and agreed upon by the United Nations;

(b) The Secretary-General should report to the General Assembly on the publication of the Yearbook and on the basis of that report, the United Nations should consider publishing a disarmament periodical in all the working languages of the General Assembly. The publication would present in highly readable form current facts and developments in the field of disarmament, such as summaries of new proposals and of important relevant statements and communiques. It would also contain, inter alia, summaries of in-depth studies undertaken by the United Nations or the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. It should further provide annotated bibliographies and brief summaries of important books and articles on disarmament questions and related matters;

(c) To the extent that these tasks are entrusted to the United Nations with regard to the compilation and dissemination of information on disarmament for the benefit of Member States and public opinion, appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that the United Nations Disarmament Affairs Division can effectively carry out these responsibilities;

(d) The United Nations Secretariat, through the appropriate channels, continue to disseminate to the general public information on disarmament questions and related matters including information contained in the periodical and the Yearbook.

III. Ways and means to enable the United Nations Secretariat to assist, on request, States parties to multilateral disarmament agreements in their duty to ensure the effective functioning of such agreements, including appropriate reviews

9. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that:

(a) States participating in multilateral disarmament negotiations consider the possibilities of entrusting appropriate functions to the United Nations, its specialized agencies or the IAEA with respect to the implementation of multilateral disarmament agreements. The capacity of these organizations to assist States, on request, to meet their obligations arising out of agreements concluded in such negotiations should be commensurate with the tasks which might be entrusted to them;

(b) As a general rule such States may request the Secretary-General to assume the depositary role for multilateral disarmament conventions and treaties;

(c) States participating in multilateral and regional negotiations of disarmament agreements should give serious consideration to the inclusion of a Review Conference provision. In making the necessary preparations for Review Conferences the States parties should consider requesting the United Nations to provide facilities, conference services and other assistance in connexion with such conferences. The United Nations should have the capacity necessary to meet such requests.

IV. Strengthening of the resources of the United Nations Secretariat

10. In view of these important new tasks to be entrusted to the United Nations in the field of disarmament comprising functions of committee and conference services, studies on disarmament matters, compilation and dissemination of information, and the follow-up of disarmament resolutions and agreements, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends that:

(a) The Disarmament Affairs Division be transformed into a United Nations Centre for Disarmament (UNCD) within the framework of the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs;

(b) The Centre be headed by an official with the rank of Assistant Secretary-General;

(c) The Centre to be staffed accordingly.

