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

Second session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 24 June 1976, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden)

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76-82657
The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.

PRESENTATION OF REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/AC.181/2 and A/AC.181/3) (continued)

REVIEW OF THE UNITED NATIONS ROLE IN THE FIELD OF DISARMAMENT, INCLUDING INTER ALIA THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC ITEMS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 34/84 B (XXX):

POSSIBLE NEW APPROACHES FOR ACHIEVING MORE EFFECTIVE PROCEDURES AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK;

WAYS AND MEANS OF IMPROVING EXISTING UNITED NATIONS FACILITIES FOR COLLECTION,-compilation and dissemination of information;

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 PERIODICAL REVIEWS (A/AC.181/1 and Add.l-5; A/AC.181/L.1-L.5/Rev.1 and Add.1) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the fact that there had been a second reading of the working paper submitted by the delegation of Sweden (A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 and Add.1) did not imply that delegations could not express their opinions or submit working papers or amendments in connexion with the drafting of the final report which would be placed before the Committee at its third session. She also noted that as soon as the Committee's third session was concluded, delegations would have to take a final position on the various proposals.

2. Mr. CORREA (Mexico) said that he wished to place on record the reservations of his delegation regarding the way in which the second reading of document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 and Add.1 had been carried out because the activities of the Working Group had been limited to an exchange of opinions, and the important element of negotiation had been omitted. That being so, the Committee, at its third session, should consider on a footing of complete equality both document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 and Add.1 and any other proposal or working paper that had been submitted to the Working Group or would be submitted before the Committee's third session.

3. His delegation had, in general, been in agreement with most of the draft recommendations that had appeared in the first working paper submitted by the delegation of Sweden (A/AC.181/L.5), but it would now like to submit formally two proposals that had been advanced at previous meetings. The first was that the United Nations Centre for Disarmament, the establishment of which had been proposed in paragraph 12 of document A/AC.181/L.5, should be headed by an official - who would be a national of a third world country - with the rank, at least, of Assistant Secretary-General. The second concerned the ways and means of improving existing United Nations facilities for the collection, compilation and dissemination of information, and it related to the possible inclusion in the disarmament periodical - which, as suggested, would be published three times a year - of annotated bibliographies and brief summaries of books and articles
relevant to disarmament matters in order that Member States and the general public might be provided with an effective guide and a quick source of reference on the most important studies regarding those questions.

4. His delegation had, at the appropriate time, expressed reservations concerning some of the items in section A of document A/AC.181/L.5, and it wished to reiterate that, in its opinion, the text which had appeared in paragraph 4 of document A/AC.181/L.5 should be taken as the starting-point for the Committee's consideration of the suggestions for improved methods of work of the First Committee in disarmament matters. However, in the revised version of that document submitted by the delegation of Sweden, some elements appearing in the earlier version had been eliminated. For example, no reference was made to delegations being free, if they considered it necessary, to submit draft resolutions on disarmament topics which had been referred to the First Committee for its consideration; on the contrary, the provisions set out in the revised version of the document seemed to be directed mainly at limiting the right of Member States to submit draft resolutions. A point to be borne in mind is that regard was that the increase in the number of resolutions on disarmament not only reflected the growing concern of the international community in that question, but was likewise a direct outcome of the failure on the part of the militarily significant Powers, the nuclear Powers and the super-Powers to comply with those resolutions. Since the General Assembly of the United Nations was the only means available to world public opinion to bring pressure, even though only moral pressure, to bear on those Powers and to insist on the need for the adoption of specific and effective disarmament measures, any restriction of its possibilities for expression through the Assembly would certainly not be conducive to the fulfilment by the United Nations of its proper role in multilateral efforts to achieve disarmament.

5. His delegation had serious reservations regarding paragraph 3 (a) of document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1, which would appear, for example, to make it possible for the Chairman of the First Committee to propose a programme of work regardless of his consultations with members of the Committee if, in his opinion, that programme of work was a faithful reflection of the opinion of the Committee members. Furthermore, it was difficult to understand what purpose would be served by the grouping together of closely related matters, as called for in paragraph 3 (a), and the various delegations seemed to have very different ideas on how the grouping together ought to be achieved. It was thus unclear what criterion would be followed by the General Assembly in the grouping together of items, since all of them were closely related. What was more, the specific relationship of one item to another depended upon the interests of each particular State. His delegation accordingly regarded the proposal for the grouping together of disarmament items as unacceptable and considered preferable the system thus far followed by the First Committee, namely, that each delegation could refer to any of the agenda items and could group them together in whatever way suited its own interests.

6. His delegation proposed that paragraph 3 (b) of document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 should be deleted, for it felt that it would give rise to interminable procedural
discussions that would leave no time for consideration of the substantive aspects of disarmament. Consultations with other delegations showed, moreover, that no clear idea had emerged on what criterion should be used to determine the items that should be given the greatest attention. On the other hand, his delegation fully agreed with the suggestion in paragraph 3 (c), which, in its opinion, was a constructive one that could help to simplify the debates of the First Committee and reduce the number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly without thereby affecting any of the rights of Member States.

7. The wording of paragraph 3 (d) seemed to be somewhat vague, since it did not specify whether the delegations directly concerned or the Committee itself should pass judgement on the need for action with regard to a particular item. According to the present text, it would appear to be the Committee, but in his delegation's view it should be for the delegations directly concerned to determine whether or not any action should be taken on an item. His delegation accordingly proposed that the first part of paragraph 3 (d) should be amended to read: "When, as the result of informal consultations in which the delegations directly concerned take part, action on a particular item does not appear necessary ...".

8. Paragraph 3 (e), as presently worded, was unacceptable to his delegation for the reason that draft resolutions on substantive questions of disarmament would be reduced to the category of decisions and be relegated to the final pages of the volumes containing the resolutions, along with other decisions of minor importance. If the intention of the paragraph was that the Assembly should adopt decisions, rather than resolutions, on purely procedural matters, then that intention should be clearly apparent from the text. He therefore proposed that paragraph 3 (e) should be redrafted to read as follows: "The possibility of taking decisions instead of adopting formal resolutions, on procedural matters, should be kept in mind with a view to presenting to the General Assembly a limited number of draft resolutions on those matters."

9. Finally, with regard to paragraph 3 (f) of the revised version of the working paper, it was the understanding of his delegation that proposals which the Chairman of the Committee made for further measures to increase the efficiency and simplify the proceedings of the Committee must be based solely on consultations with Committee members. It was therefore imperative for the proposals already put forward in the Working Group to be submitted formally - namely, that the Ad Hoc Committee should recommend, firstly, that the Chairman of the First Committee should carry out consultations with the members of that Committee at the beginning of each session of the General Assembly in connexion with possible suggestions for increasing the efficiency and simplifying the proceedings of the Committee, and, secondly, that the Chairman of the First Committee should carry out systematic consultations with the delegations concerned in order to explore the possibilities of amalgamating draft resolutions relating to the same item, with the agreement of the relevant sponsors, irrespective of whether those draft resolutions had been informally circulated or had been formally submitted to the Committee.
10. **Mr. SCALABRE** (France) proposed that paragraph 9 (b) should be deleted and that a new subparagraph should be added to paragraph 9 (a), reading as follows: "an up-to-date bibliography of works relating to disarmament, including those issued by non-governmental organizations". In addition, he expressed a general reservation by his delegation on the financial implications of the proposals and recommendations contained in document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1, in particular those in section IV. Moreover, in the opinion of his delegation, that section should be confined to expressing a wish similar to that in paragraph 8 (b).

11. **Mr. ONKELINX** (Belgium) expressed a general reservation by his delegation on those provisions which had financial implications. His delegation hoped that the report by the Secretary-General mentioned in paragraph 4 (b) of document A/AC.181/L.6 would be circulated as far in advance as possible, for example before 15 August.

12. **Mr. GALLAGHER** (Canada) reserved his delegation's position on those provisions with financial and administrative implications until such time as the Secretary-General's report on the subject was submitted.

13. **Mr. YANGO** (Philippines) expressed his delegation's satisfaction with document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1, for it dealt with all the aspects of the matter in which his country had shown an interest. He referred particularly to paragraphs 3, 7, 9 (a) and (b) and 11.

14. **Mr. MEERBURG** (Netherlands) said that, for the time being, his delegation could not support document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 and wished to study it in greater detail, in particular paragraph 11 and the provisions on new publications.

15. **Mr. LOGAN** (United Kingdom) said his delegation would reserve its position on the provisions which had administrative and financial implications until the Secretary-General's report on that subject was issued.

16. **Mr. LAY** (Italy) reserved the right of his delegation to state its position at the third session of the Committee, on the understanding that the conclusions reached at the present session were of a purely preliminary nature. His delegation hoped that the report by the Secretary-General mentioned in paragraph 4 (b) of document A/AC.181/L.6 would be made available well in advance of the third session.

17. **Mr. ADAMS** (New Zealand) said that, in general, his delegation supported document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 as a basis for further consultations but reserved its position on those proposals which had financial implications until the relevant report of the Secretary-General was issued.

18. **Mr. DJOKIC** (Yugoslavia) said that the exchange of views which had taken place during the discussions had been most fruitful. His delegation would make its position known at the third session of the Committee.
19. Mr. Oxley (Australia) said that, in general, his delegation supported document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 and would give careful consideration to the Secretary-General's report on the document's administrative and financial implications.

20. Mr. Sucharipa (Austria) said that, although he would have preferred the recommendations on simplifying the working methods of the First Committee and improving the report of the Conference of the Disarmament Committee to be more precisely formulated, his delegation considered that document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 provided a sound basis for a compromise. He awaited with interest the report by the Secretary-General mentioned in paragraph 4 (b) of document A/AC.181/L.6.

21. Mr. Neubert (Federal Republic of Germany) expressed his delegation's reservations on those provisions which had administrative and financial implications, in particular those of paragraphs 9 and 11. The relevant report by the Secretary-General should be made available as soon as possible.

22. Mr. Mulvee (India) said that document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 provided a most appropriate basis for the final adoption of decisions at the third session of the Committee.

23. Mr. Vitzthum (Finland) expressed his delegation's general satisfaction with document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1. With regard to section IV, he stressed the importance which his country attached to strengthening the resources of the Secretariat, in particular in the case of the Disarmament Affairs Division, and said he thought that the Committee should rely mainly on guidance from the Secretary-General in that connexion. He therefore awaited with interest the report mentioned in paragraph 4 (b) of document A/AC.181/L.6.

24. Mr. Thompson (United States of America) said that, although he had reservations on some recommendations he thought that document A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 provided a sound basis for the adoption of final decisions at the third session. He considered it essential for the Secretary-General's report on the administrative and financial implications of the proposals contained in that document to be made available in advance of that session.

25. Mr. Banyador (Iran) said that the revised version of the working paper and its addendum provided a basis for the final formulation of the Committee's recommendations to the General Assembly. Generally speaking, his delegation therefore supported the text as it now stood, on the understanding that that would not hinder consideration of the amendments submitted by a number of delegations.

26. Mrs. Castro de Barish (Costa Rica) pointed out that the revised version of the working paper submitted by the Swedish delegation offered the possibility of reaching a consensus. Section A contained a number of useful suggestions which would make it possible to rationalize the work of the First Committee. Paragraph 9 was generally acceptable but her delegation would have preferred a specific reference in subparagraph (c) to the participation of non-governmental...
organizations in view of the important contribution which they could make in that area. With respect to section 4, she reaffirmed that although it was important for the Disarmament Affairs Division to have the resources necessary to carry out its tasks, the financial implications of increasing those resources should not be overlooked. Her delegation would therefore reserve its position until it had the Secretary-General's reports on that matter.

27. **Mr. Palma** (Peru) said that the revised version of the working paper adequately reflected his delegation's views. Nevertheless, he still felt that it was necessary to re-examine paragraph 3 on the basis of the proposal submitted by Mexico, and paragraph 8 (a) in the light of the suggestion made by Spain at the informal meetings of the Working Group of the Committee to the effect that the question of the armaments race should be the subject of in-depth studies. Similarly, paragraph 9 (b) should be amended in accordance with the considerations which the Secretariat felt appropriate regarding the objective and content of a disarmament periodical of the United Nations.

28. **Mr. Arteaga-Acosta** (Venezuela) said that in general his delegation agreed with the revised version of the working paper, but it would have preferred some reference in paragraph 9 to the role which non-governmental organizations could play in the area of disarmament and to the fact that the Office of Public Information should give priority to the dissemination of information on disarmament matters.

29. **Mr. Ortegaúi** (Argentina) stressed the importance of the proposals made orally by the Mexican delegation, since they reflected his own delegation's views, especially with respect to paragraph 3. He also supported by and large the suggestion regarding paragraph 8 made by the representative of Spain at the meetings of the Working Group and the interpretation given at those meetings by the delegation of Peru to paragraph 8 (a) to the effect that the words "whenever appropriate" meant "when the General Assembly so suggests". Finally, his delegation agreed in general with the wording of paragraph 11 as it stood and supported the suggestion by the representative of Mexico that the proposed United Nations Centre for Disarmament should be directed by a national of a developing country. Furthermore, he hoped that the Committee's report would reflect the favourable opinion of a number of delegations regarding that suggestion.

30. **Mr. Tulinov** (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that since the Committee's recommendations were provisional in nature, his delegation would determine its final position at the Committee's third session on the basis of all the suggestions which had been made and of the documents submitted by the Secretary-General. For the time being, he wished to state his delegation's reservations with respect to the addendum to paragraph 9 (a) proposed by the delegation of Sweden (A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1/Add.1), since its inclusion contradicted the very concept of dissemination of information.

31. **Mr. Bandaranayake** (Sri Lanka) said that his delegation would determine its
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final position regarding the revised version of the working paper at the Committee's
third session after thorough study and in the light of the need to reach a
consensus.

32. Mr. BUENO (Brazil) said that his delegation wished to place on record its
reservations concerning the financial and administrative implications of the
working paper submitted by Sweden and especially concerning the participation in
in-depth studies on disarmament of sources of assistance outside the United Nations
system, as referred to in paragraph 8.

33. After a procedural discussion in which Mr. BAYANDOR (Iran),
Mr. OXLEY (Australia), Mr. MULYE (India) and Mr. TULINOV (Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics) participated, the CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, she
would take it that the Committee had decided: firstly, to conclude its
consideration of the revised version of the working paper submitted by Sweden
(A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 and Add.1); secondly, to invite the Secretary-General to
submit, at his earliest convenience, information on the administrative and
financial implications of the working paper and of the other proposals which had
been made at the second session; thirdly, to request the Rapporteur to carry out
the task entrusted to him in paragraph 2 of the working paper; and, fourthly, to
regard as concluded the consideration of items 4 and 5 of the agenda.

34. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK AND AGENDA OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE
(A/AC.181/L.6)

35. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document A/AC.181/L.6
containing the provisional agenda of the Committee's third session, and announced
that a proposal had been made to amend the wording of item 4 as follows:

"Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament:

(a) Preliminary conclusions and proposals of the second session as well as
all other proposals submitted at the second session.

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on administrative and financial
implications of documents A/AC.181/L.5/Rev.1 and Add.1 and of all other
working papers submitted at the second session.

(c) Other working papers submitted to the Ad Hoc Committee."

36. If there were no objections, she would take it that the Committee decided
to approve the provisional agenda for the third session as amended.

37. It was so decided.
ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE SECOND SESSION

38. The CHAIRMAN, in reply to a question put by the representative of Italy, said that the Rapporteur of the Committee would prepare a draft final report on the first and second sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee.

39. She suggested that for the time being the summary records of the Committee's second session should serve as a preliminary report until the final one was prepared. If there were no objections, she would take it that the Committee approved that suggestion.

40. It was so decided.

CLOSURE OF THE SECOND SESSION

41. The CHAIRMAN declared the second session of the Ad Hoc Committee closed.

The meeting rose at 7 p.m.