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

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6TH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 29 January 1976, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden)

CONTENTS

Organization of work (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3:40 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (continued)

1. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly his delegation had expressed reservations about the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee in the belief that it would not help to solve the problems of disarmament; objectively, it would merely divert attention from the substantive matters of disarmament to organizational and other subsidiary problems. Past experience had shown that the real reason for lack of progress in the sphere of disarmament lay in the stubborn refusal of several major Powers to approach the problem seriously. If the United Nations turned its attention to organizational matters, the opponents of disarmament would be able to avoid discussing concrete measures in the field of disarmament and thus sabotage the relevant United Nations decisions. That would disrupt established procedures for discussing disarmament, adversely affect the work of the Committee on Disarmament and impede concrete efforts being made by States in that field.

2. The role of the United Nations in disarmament should be strengthened through more effective support for the efforts of Member States on a bilateral, regional and multilateral basis. Instead of indulging in academic discussions on new organizational structures, the United Nations should concentrate all its efforts between the thirtieth and thirty-first sessions of the General Assembly in the already existing Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference. Since a world disarmament conference, with the equal participation of all States, including non-member States, would examine general and complete disarmament, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Conference could make a positive contribution to strengthening the role of the United Nations in the sphere of disarmament.

3. As had been shown at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, when 25 resolutions relating to disarmament had been adopted, the problem of strengthening international peace and security was inseparable from the question of disarmament. The USSR shared the general concern over the arms race and had consistently taken the initiative in raising relevant questions in United Nations bodies. At the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, it had proposed resolution 3479 (XXX) on the "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and of new systems of such weapons" and resolution 3478 (XXX) on the "Conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests", which had been supported by the vast majority of Member States but not, unfortunately, by all nuclear-weapon States.

4. If all Member States, including the nuclear-weapon States, concentrated their efforts on implementing existing decisions on disarmament, the question of the role of the United Nations in that field would not arise. It was to be regretted that the opponents of disarmament had prevented the implementation of such decisions.

5. The problem of disarmament could not be solved by improving United Nations information services, by involving the Secretariat in discussions on disarmament...
or by reviewing the role of non-governmental organizations: it required political will and a firm commitment to international peace and security on the part of States.

6. The basis on which the Committee was to fulfill its mandate, as set out in General Assembly resolution 3484 B (XXX), and the topics of discussion for the next two sessions should be decided in accordance with the replies of Member States, which were to be submitted by 1 May 1976. His delegation reserved the right to comment further on the various questions raised in document A/AC.181/L.3. It had doubts about many of them, including the proposal for United Nations participation in the implementation of agreements on disarmament, particularly in the light of the far-reaching explanations provided by the sponsors. It also doubted that the Secretary-General could report on the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, as that would lie outside the Committee's terms of reference, as set out in General Assembly resolution 3484 B (XXX). In any case, the Secretary-General could express a point of view on any question without special instructions.

7. While the proposal on the Secretariat's role in disseminating information on disarmament was useful, it would be difficult to implement, since the prime function of the Secretariat was to meet the organizational needs of the numerous United Nations bodies discussing concrete proposals on disarmament. To impose new research tasks on the Secretariat would have serious consequences in terms of the nature of its functions and of expenditures without ensuring concrete results. As he had already pointed out, the only alternative to existing bodies and procedures in the field of disarmament was a world disarmament conference.

8. His delegation would present its views on the question in greater detail at a later stage of the Committee's work.

9. The CHAIRMAN said that, since there were no more speakers on the list, the Committee should return to its consideration of the decision-making procedures it wished to adopt. She read out the following statement, as amended in the light of informal consultations:

"In view of the importance of the matters that have been entrusted to this Committee, it is most desirable that we achieve the widest measure of agreement on the issues before us. At the same time, it is also important that all points of view and recommendations presented in the Committee are adequately reflected in the report so that Members of the General Assembly can give them due consideration. It is my understanding that delegations accordingly wish to make every effort to achieve the broadest agreement on as many of the issues before them as possible, with the provision that delegations may have their own comments and proposals recorded in the report in addition to those findings and proposals that are adopted without objection by the Committee."

/...
10. If she heard no objection, she would take it that that formula had been agreed upon.

11. It was so decided.

12. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should turn its attention to document A/AC.181/L.3.

13. Mr. BAYANDOR (Iran) proposed that in paragraph 1 (e) the words "the following items specified in resolution 3484 B (XXX)" should be replaced by the words "the following specific items, in accordance with resolution 3484 B (XXX)", as the three proposals contained in the paragraph were abbreviated versions of the formulations used in the resolution itself.

14. Mr. BACHROUCH (Tunisia) said that the suggestion was pertinent and acceptable to the sponsors of the proposal.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no further proposals, she would take it that the Committee had approved document A/AC.181/L.3, as amended.

16. It was so decided.

17. The CHAIRMAN said she took it for granted that the Secretary-General would circulate the reports, summary records and other records of the Committee's first session to Governments of Member States.

18. She had consulted the Chairmen of the Committee on Conferences, who had undertaken to make every effort to organize the Committee's second session at an earlier date than originally planned, possibly between 14 and 25 June 1976. The decision would be made known as soon as possible.

19. After thanking delegations for their co-operation, she declared that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament had completed its work for the first session.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.