



General Assembly

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A/CONF.131/SR.1
11 November 1985
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

THIRD UNITED NATIONS PLEDGING CONFERENCE FOR THE WORLD
DISARMAMENT CAMPAIGN

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday,
31 October 1985, at 3 p.m.

Temporary President: Mr. PEREZ DE CUELLAR (Secretary-General
of the United Nations)

President: Mr. KOUASSI (Togo)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared open the Third United Nations Pledging Conference for the World Disarmament Campaign. Although disarmament questions were very complex, the public should take an interest in them and balanced and factual information was indispensable to make United Nations efforts in that area understood. Apart from serving as the framework for such efforts, the Campaign made it possible to reach the public in a systematic way.

2. For three years the Campaign had constantly served the purpose for which it had been established, but it could be even more effective if it were organized on the basis of a long-term strategy; that would require adequate funding. The active participation of Member States was also necessary. To date, 42 States had made financial contributions for the implementation of the programme of activities of the Campaign and some of them had made contributions to the Trust Fund, but additional funds were necessary to maintain the momentum achieved.

3. Echoing the numerous appeals made on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Organization to free the human community from the threat of war, he stressed the need to adopt genuine disarmament measures and to involve the public in such action.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (A/CONF.131/L.1)

4. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT proposed that the agenda of the Conference should be adopted in accordance with Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure.

5. The agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

(a) PRESIDENT

6. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT said that following consultations it had been proposed that Mr. Kouassi (Togo) should be elected President of the Conference.

7. Mr. Kouassi (Togo) was elected President by acclamation.

8. Mr. Kouassi (Togo) took the Chair.

9. The PRESIDENT thanked the members of the Conference. The very first resolution adopted by the United Nations had been concerned with the elimination of atomic weapons, but since then, the nuclear and traditional arms race had been constantly speeding up in spite of several arms limitation treaties. Moreover, a world which spent close to \$1,000 billion dollars a year for military purposes, while the number of people starving had passed the 800 million mark and more than

(The President)

50 million people died of hunger every year was without doubt a world whose sense of priorities was severely unbalanced. It was also a world that was not secure because of the stockpiling of both traditional and nuclear arms and the risk of the arms race being extended to outer space.

10. Faced with the threat of a nuclear apocalypse the peoples of the world expected that the United Nations would dedicate itself with renewed fervour to the constant search for peace among nations and peoples. A total ban on all testing would have the effect of slowing down the arms race and would allow time for negotiations to be undertaken. In addition, it was to be hoped that disarmament would allow the volume of aid to be increased, under the supervision of an appropriate international body, and thus enable the gap that separated the rich nations from the poorest to be progressively bridged.

11. Disarmament also had a spiritual dimension. There was always a close relationship between a State's aggressivity and militarism and the moral climate prevailing in it. It was a recognized fact that people's judgements were largely influenced by the education and training that they had received. The conscience of mankind should therefore be directed towards respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the media should be mobilized to transmit the disarmament message to all.

12. Lastly, the success of the Campaign would depend largely on the contributions of Member States and international organizations. Since 1986 had been proclaimed the International Year of Peace, steps must be taken to ensure that it marked the beginning of general and complete disarmament.

(b) VICE-PRESIDENTS

13. The PRESIDENT recalled that in accordance with Rule 5 of the rules of procedure for United Nations Pledging Conferences, the Conference should elect a president and not more than four vice-presidents from among the representatives. Following consultations in the regional groups, the following candidates had been proposed as vice-presidents: Mr. Maher Nashashibi (Jordan) for the group of Asian States; Mr. Zachmann (German Democratic Republic) for the group of Eastern European States; Mrs. Castro de Barish (Costa Rica) for the group of Latin American States; and Mr. Aqstner (Austria) for the group of Western European and other States.

14. Mr. Nashashibi (Jordan), Mr. Zachmann (German Democratic Republic), Mrs. Castro de Barish (Costa Rica) and Mr. Aqstner (Austria) were elected Vice-Presidents by acclamation.

STATEMENTS REGARDING PLEDGES (A/CONF.131/L.1-L.3, A/CONF.40/443)

15. The PRESIDENT said that in accordance with Rule 21 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary-General would in due course issue a list of the pledges made or announced at or after the Conference. He also recalled that under rule 13,

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(The President)

paragraph 1, of the rules of procedure, statements regarding pledges should be made in the English alphabetical order of the names of the States participating, starting with the State seated first at the current session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. However, in accordance with the practice followed at the first Conference, he proposed not to apply that rule.

16. It was so decided.

17. The representative of the GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC said that his country attached great importance to the World Disarmament Campaign. The measures already taken as part of the Campaign had helped to inform world public opinion of the dangers of a nuclear war and the need to prevent the militarization of outer space and terminate the arms race on earth, especially in the nuclear field.

18. His country, which had already contributed to the Campaign, had decided to make another contribution of 100,000 marks and to participate actively in the Campaign. The United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament, to which the German Democratic Republic had been host in 1982, had considerably improved the understanding of the current international situation and spread the idea of disarmament world wide. His Government invited those scheduled to participate in the 1987 Programme to come once again to the German Democratic Republic.

19. The representative of CHINA observed that people the world over desired to build a world of peace, security and prosperity. Hence it was necessary to stop the arms race and promote disarmament. By providing information on disarmament issues and organizing regional conferences and training programmes, the World Disarmament Campaign had, since its inception in 1982, given the international community a better understanding of the dangers of the arms race and helped it support efforts to halt the arms race and promote disarmament.

20. The Chinese people were actively engaged in disarmament activities. A people's association had come into being early in 1985, and in June a forum on safeguarding world peace had brought together, in Beijing, peace activists from many countries to exchange their views on and experience in ways of opposing the arms race and maintaining world peace.

21. China appreciated the work done by the United Nations and announced a further contribution of 60,000 yuan renminbi to the Trust Fund for the World Disarmament Campaign. Furthermore, it was ready to host a regional conference in connection with the Campaign in Beijing in the first half of 1987.

22. The representative of KUWAIT stressed the great importance that his country attached to the question of disarmament. Kuwait, in fact, was located in an area of military conflicts, fanned by the Zionist entity and its arsenal of conventional and nuclear weapons, which it used to retain its hold over the Arab territories it was occupying in defiance of United Nations resolutions and the principle of arms limitation.

(Representative of Kuwait)

23. The essential aim of disarmament was to usher in justice and peace in the world and prevent the recourse to force in international relations. The only way of putting an end to the power struggles between the great Powers and eliminating the centres of tension that they created was to continue to arouse world public opinion and Governments to the need for disarmament, so as to induce them to support the United Nations efforts in the field. Kuwait, which was already convinced of that need, planned to make a contribution equal to that it had made the previous year.

24. The representative of CAMEROON recalled the recent Ministerial Regional Conference on Security, Disarmament and Development in Africa, held in Lomé, which had been an important milestone on the road to the peace and security desired by the African nations.

25. The World Disarmament Campaign was a way of alerting international public opinion to the dangers of the arms race and the advantages of arms limitation and disarmament. While not themselves participating in the arms race, the developing countries, particularly in Africa, nevertheless felt its effects at a time when they wanted to be able to devote all their efforts to development and offer their people a better life. Cameroon therefore was ready, despite its limited resources, to make a modest contribution of 1 million CFA francs as a token of its full support for the objectives of the Campaign, and it hoped that those funds would be used to set up a regional bureau in Africa responsible for promoting peace and disarmament in the region.

26. The representative of AUSTRALIA announced that his Government, which had always supported the Campaign, was ready to make a third contribution. Indeed, the Australians, a peace-loving people, were well aware that disarmament was necessary to maintain peace in a world that was currently armed to the teeth. His Government therefore attached the highest priority in its foreign policy to the conclusion of disarmament agreements.

27. The documents issued as part of the World Disarmament Campaign had done much to inform the public on issues relating to peace and disarmament, and that activity should continue. Therefore, the Australian Government had decided to contribute 50,000 Australian dollars, to the Trust Fund for the World Disarmament Campaign, \$30,000 of which were intended for the Campaign itself and \$20,000 for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.

28. The representative of SWEDEN emphasized the importance for peace and disarmament of bilateral and multilateral negotiations on arms limitation, which must be supported by public opinion. Indeed, the purpose of the World Disarmament Campaign was, inter alia, to inform public opinion and generate support for United Nations action in the field. It had already produced very positive results.

29. In Sweden, activities by non-governmental organizations to promote disarmament and peace had been expanding substantially, and the Government was helping to finance them.

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(Representative of Sweden)

30. As part of the preparations for the International Year of Peace, a national delegation had been appointed, and had already outlined the main themes for the Year.

31. In April 1985, a subregional Conference for the Nordic countries had been held in Sweden, and his Government also wished to underscore its support for the Campaign by a further contribution of 100,000 Swedish kronor. It hoped that the major military Powers would contribute to the Campaign, because even a substantial contribution from them would be insignificant in comparison to their military expenditures.

32. The representative of CANADA said his Government firmly supported the objectives of the World Disarmament Campaign, to which it had made two previous contributions of \$100,000 each in 1983 and 1984. In 1985, Canada had decided to make a further contribution of \$100,000 to be allocated in the following way: \$50,000 to assist information activities, \$40,000 to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research to finance studies relating to the verification question, and \$10,000 to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the International Year of Peace.

33. Canada took the opportunity to encourage other Member States to contribute to the Campaign. It welcomed the Secretary-General's report (A/40/443) and noted with satisfaction that, as Canada had requested the previous year, it provided a greater breakdown of expenditures for the Campaign.

34. In conclusion, he said that one of the means used by his Government to develop public opinion on disarmament issues was the Disarmament Fund, a governmental body, which in 1985 had received grants amounting to more than \$700,000, and had, during the last fiscal year, made contributions totalling \$753,000 to 149 groups or individuals for the purposes of organizing conferences or seminars, conducting research and publishing information material. In addition, government funding of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security had amounted to \$2.5 million in 1985 and would be increased to \$5 million in 1988. In addition, a standing grant of \$100,000 was provided annually to the Canadian Centre for Arms Control and Disarmament.

35. The representative of NORWAY said that his Government had supported the World Disarmament Campaign since its inception. Convinced that the United Nations had an important role to play in the dissemination of objective information on disarmament issues in all parts of the world, the Government of Norway had decided to pledge a contribution of \$US 10,000 to further the objectives of the Campaign, in addition to the \$US 40,000 already granted to the Campaign in 1983 and 1984. Those amounts were above and beyond the substantial resources allocated annually by his Government for information and research on disarmament issues in Norway.

36. The representative of INDIA said that his Government attached great importance to the objectives of the World Disarmament Campaign and welcomed, in that connection, the report of the Secretary-General on the subject. As part of the Campaign, an Asian regional conference had been held at New Delhi in August 1983 and had given encouraging results.

(Representative of India)

37. The Government of India had already made two generous contributions of \$US 100,000 each in 1982 and 1983, and was seriously considering the possibility of a third contribution to the Campaign. As one of the principal contributors to the Campaign, India was encouraged to see that more countries had pledged contributions, and hoped that countries which had not yet done so, would do so in the near future.

38. The representative of AUSTRIA said that the World Disarmament Campaign, which was being carried out in a factual, balanced and objective manner by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, helped to promote public understanding of the objectives and the problems in the field of arms limitation and disarmament, especially through the various regional and subregional conferences and publications in a variety of languages, including German. Since Austria was situated in the heart of the continent with the greatest concentration of armed forces and conventional weapons, a subregional conference on disarmament in Central Europe could be held there at a future date as part of the World Disarmament Campaign. As a sign of its support for the Campaign, the Austrian Government had decided to pledge a contribution of \$US 10,000, subject to the approval by its parliament.

39. The representative of INDONESIA said that his country was deeply committed to the idea of the World Disarmament Campaign and, his Government would contribute, as it had done last year, \$US 5,000.

40. The representative of the FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY said that his Government had always given its support to the World Disarmament Campaign. However, with regard to the dissemination of information, needs were not the same in all countries. While all sectors of free and democratic societies had free access to objective information and took part in exchanges of views in open public debates, that was unfortunately not the case in some other countries. It was therefore precisely in those countries - and in the third world countries where inadequate communications facilities limited access to information - that the Campaign had an important role to play.

41. His Government was deeply committed to the objectives of the Campaign and employed various means - publication of documents, organization of lectures, research - to further its success. However, since it was experiencing a period of budgetary stringency, it was not able to make a pledge at the present time, but hoped to be able to do so before the closing of the list on 31 March 1986. In conclusion, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany wished to emphasize the many advantages of contributions made in convertible currency.

42. The representative of SENEGAL expressed the deep commitment of the Senegalese Government and people to effective disarmament, since Senegal required a stable environment for its development. In spite of the difficult economic situation, Senegal was determined to work for international peace and security, and pledged a token contribution of \$US 1,000 as part of the tireless efforts which it made in favour of good-neighbourliness, confidence among States, and peace.

43. The representative of GREECE said that, since the World Disarmament Campaign could make a significant contribution to ending the arms race by providing balanced, objective and factual information on the issue, the Greek Government, in spite of its financial difficulties, pledged a contribution of \$US 10,000.

44. The representative of TOGO said that the growing interest in disarmament reflected the profound concern of his Government at the danger posed by the arms race. As an expression of its support for the Campaign, Togo had held in August 1984, a national seminar aimed at informing national opinion. That seminar had, in particular, recommended the convening of a regional conference, which had been held at Lomé in August 1985, with the support of the Organization of African Unity and the Department for Disarmament Affairs. In the declaration which had been adopted, Lomé had been chosen as a United Nations centre for disarmament and that choice had been confirmed by the non-aligned movement. That centre would be the regional branch of the Department for Disarmament Affairs in Africa. In spite of the economic crisis prevailing in Africa, his Government pledged a contribution of 15 million CFA francs to the Campaign for the survival of mankind and offered to make available a very imposing building for the Lomé Centre.

45. The representative of COSTA RICA said that she could not announce a pledge at the current stage, since that would require authorization from the legislative body, but wished to express her Government's enthusiastic support for the World Disarmament Campaign.

46. The representative of the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC said that he too wished to express his Government's interest in the World Disarmament Campaign, although he was unable, at the current stage, to announce the exact amount of his Government's pledge.

47. The CHAIRMAN announced that, during the Conference, 12 Member States had pledged contributions amounting to \$US 255,591, while others had made pledges although they had been unable to state an exact amount at the current stage.

ADOPTION OF THE FINAL ACT (A/CONF.131/L.2)

48. The Final Act of the Conference was adopted.

CLOSURE OF THE CONFERENCE

49. The CHAIRMAN declared closed the Third United Nations Pledging Conference for the World Disarmament Campaign.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.