

**REPORT
OF THE
DISARMAMENT COMMISSION**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: FORTY-THIRD SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 42 (A/43/42)



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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-second session, the General Assembly, by its resolution 42/42 G of 30 November 1987, took note, inter alia, of the report of the Disarmament Commission; 1/ requested the Commission to continue its work in accordance with its mandate, as set forth in paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2), the first special session devoted to disarmament; and requested the Commission to meet for a period not exceeding four weeks during 1988 and to submit a substantive special report, containing specific recommendations on the items included in its agenda, to the Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament as well as a report to the Assembly at its forty-third session.

2. At the same session, the General Assembly adopted the following resolutions that have direct relevance to the work of the Disarmament Commission:

- (a) Resolution 42/34 B, entitled "Nuclear capability of South Africa";
- (b) Resolution 42/36, entitled "Reduction of military budgets";
- (c) Resolution 42/38 E, entitled "Conventional disarmament";
- (d) Resolution 42/38 G, entitled "Conventional disarmament";
- (e) Resolution 42/38 K, entitled "Naval armaments and disarmament";
- (f) Resolution 42/38 O, entitled "Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament";
- (g) Resolution 42/39 F, entitled "Consideration of guidelines for confidence-building measures;
- (h) Resolution 42/42 F, entitled "Verification in all its aspects";
- (i) Resolution 42/42 G, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission";
- (j) Resolution 42/42 M, entitled "Implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the tenth special session".

3. The Disarmament Commission met at United Nations Headquarters on 1 December 1987 for a brief organizational session. During that meeting (122nd meeting), the Commission considered questions related to the organizational work for its 1988 substantive session and took up the question of the election of its officers, taking into account the principle of rotation of the chairmanship among the geographic regions. The Commission elected its Chairman and three Vice-Chairmen; the election of the other officers was postponed to the 1988 substantive session. The Commission also considered the provisional agenda (see para. 6 below) for the 1988 substantive session. The Commission further decided to hold its 1988 substantive session from 2 to 20 May 1988, in view of the convening of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament scheduled from 31 May to 25 June 1988. It was understood that the decision to shorten the duration of the session of the Commission should not be viewed as a precedent for the future.

II. ORGANIZATION AND WORK OF THE 1988 SESSION

4. The Disarmament Commission met at United Nations Headquarters from 2 to 20 May 1988. In the course of its session, it held nine plenary meetings (A/CN.10/PV.123-131).

5. At its 123rd meeting, on 2 May, the Disarmament Commission elected four more Vice-Chairmen of the Commission and its Rapporteur for 1988. The Bureau of the Commission was constituted as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Davidson L. Hepburn (Bahamas)

Vice-Chairmen: Representatives from the following States:

Australia	Jordan
Austria	Togo
Cameroon	Uruguay
Czechoslovakia	

Rapporteur: Mr. Istvan Sipos (Hungary)

6. At the same meeting, the Disarmament Commission adopted its agenda, contained in document A/CN.10/L.22, as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. (a) Consideration of various aspects of the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, in order to expedite negotiations aimed at effective elimination of the danger of nuclear war;

(b) Consideration of the agenda items contained in section II of resolution 33/71 H, with the aim of elaborating, within the framework and in accordance with priorities established at the tenth special session, a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament.
5. Reduction of military budgets:
 - (a) Harmonization of views on concrete steps to be undertaken by States regarding a gradual, agreed reduction of military budgets and reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries, noting the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly;
 - (b) Examination and identification of effective ways and means of achieving agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain, in a balanced manner, military expenditures, including adequate measures

of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned, taking into account the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 34/83 F, 35/142 A, 36/82 A, 37/95 A, 38/184 A, 39/64 A, 40/91 A, 41/57 and 42/36, with a view to concluding its work on the last outstanding paragraph of the "Principles which should govern further actions of States in the field of the freezing and reduction of military budgets".

6. Substantive consideration of the question of South Africa's nuclear capability as requested by the General Assembly and the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid (resolutions 37/74 B, 38/181 B, 39/61 B, 40/89 B, 41/55 B and 42/34 B and document A/CN.10/4).
7. Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.
8. Naval armaments and disarmament.
9. Substantive consideration of issues related to conventional disarmament, including the recommendations and conclusions contained in the study on conventional disarmament.
10. Consideration of the question of verification in all its aspects, including principles, provisions and techniques to promote the inclusion of adequate verification in arms limitation and disarmament agreements and the role of the United Nations and its Member States in the field of verification.
11. Consideration of guidelines for confidence-building measures.
12. Special report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament.
13. Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its forty-third session.
14. Other business.

7. At the same meeting, the Disarmament Commission approved elements of its programme of work for the session and decided to establish a committee of the whole to consider agenda items 4, 12 and 14. With regard to item 4, concerning various aspects of the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, as well as a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament, a contact group was established within the framework of the Committee of the Whole, under the chairmanship of Mr. Sergei Martynov (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), to consider the item. The Contact Group held nine meetings between 4 and 17 May and submitted its report to the Committee of the Whole at the 2nd meeting of the Committee, on 19 May.

8. The Disarmament Commission also decided, at the same meeting, to establish a consultation group to deal with agenda item 5, on the question of the reduction of military budgets, and to make recommendations thereon to the Commission. The Consultation Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Teodor Melescanu (Romania) and held seven meetings and a number of informal consultations between 4 and 18 May.

9. At the same meeting, the Disarmament Commission decided to establish Working Group I to deal with agenda item 6, on the question of South Africa's nuclear capability, and to make recommendations thereon to the Commission. Working Group I met under the chairmanship of Mr. Daya Perera (Sri Lanka) and held nine meetings between 4 and 17 May.

10. Also at the same meeting, the Disarmament Commission decided to establish Working Group II to deal with agenda item 7, on the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, and to make recommendations thereon to the Commission. Working Group II met under the chairmanship of Mr. Paul Bamela Engo (Cameroon) and held five meetings and a number of informal consultations between 5 and 19 May. The Group also established a contact group under the chairmanship of Mr. Richard Butler (Australia), and held seven meetings during that period.

11. In addition, at the same meeting, the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission decided to follow last year's course of action and to hold, under his responsibility, substantive and open-ended consultations on agenda item 8, regarding the question of naval armaments and disarmament. Subsequently, the Chairman delegated the conduct of the consultations to Mr. Rolf Ekeus (Sweden). Eight meetings were held between 5 and 18 May for the purpose of these consultations.

12. At the same meeting, the Disarmament Commission decided to establish Working Group III to deal with agenda item 9, on the question of conventional disarmament, and to make recommendations thereon to the Commission. Working Group III met under the chairmanship of Mr. Skjold G. Mellbin (Denmark) and held seven meetings and a number of informal consultations between 4 and 17 May.

13. At the same meeting, the Disarmament Commission decided to establish Working Group IV to deal with agenda item 10, on the question of verification in all its aspects, and to make recommendations thereon to the Commission. Working Group IV met under the chairmanship of Mr. Douglas Roche (Canada) and held eight meetings between 5 and 18 May.

14. Also at the same meeting, the Disarmament Commission decided to establish a consultation group to deal with agenda item 11, on the question of confidence-building measures, and to make recommendations thereon to the Commission. The Consultation Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Davidson L. Hepburn (Bahamas) and held six meetings between 5 and 18 May.

15. On 2 and 3 May, the Disarmament Commission held a general exchange of views on all agenda items (A/CN.10/PV.123-126).

16. At its 125th meeting, on 3 May, the Disarmament Commission decided to retain the services of verbatim records by a vote of 43 in favour to 5 against (see A/CN.10/PV.125). The Chairman stated: "A precedent is not being set, but we have certain rules and procedures within our jurisdiction and we try to use them whenever possible" (A/CN.10/PV.126).

17. At its 129th and 130th meetings, on 19 and 20 May, the Disarmament Commission considered the reports of Working Groups I, II, III and IV on agenda items 6, 7, 9 and 10 respectively; the report of the Consultation Group on agenda item 5; the report of the Chairman of the Commission on agenda item 8 (A/CN.10/113); the report

of the Consultation Group on agenda item 11; and the report of the Committee of the Whole on agenda item 4. The reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission and the recommendations contained therein are included under the respective agenda items in section III of the special report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament (A/S-15/3). 2/

18. In accordance with past practice of the Disarmament Commission, some non-governmental organizations attended the plenary meetings as well as the meetings of the Committee of the Whole.

III. DOCUMENTATION

A. Reports and other documents submitted by the Secretary-General

19. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 42/42 G, the Secretary-General, by a note dated 10 February 1988, transmitted to the Disarmament Commission the report of the Conference on Disarmament 3, together with all the official records of the forty-second session of the General Assembly relating to disarmament matters (A/CN.10/105).

20. In accordance with paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 42/42 F, the Secretary-General submitted to the Disarmament Commission a report containing a compilation of the views received from Member States on the question of verification in all its aspects (A/CN.10/106 and Add.1 and 2).

B. Other documents, including documents submitted by Member States

21. In the course of the Commission's work, the documents listed below, dealing with substantive questions, were submitted.

22. A paper entitled "Naval armaments and disarmament: Chairman's paper on agenda item 8" (A/CN.10/113) was submitted.

23. A paper entitled "Verification in all its aspects: additional principles" was submitted by the Chairman of Working Group IV (A/CN.10/107).

24. A working paper entitled "Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament" was submitted by Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Poland and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (A/CN.10/108 and Corr.1).

25. A working paper entitled "Naval armaments and disarmament: confidence-building measures at sea" was submitted by Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (A/CN.10/109).

26. A working paper entitled "Negotiations on nuclear disarmament" was submitted by Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Mongolia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (A/CN.10/110).

27. A working paper entitled "Suggestions for additional principles respecting verification" was submitted by Canada (A/CN.10/111).

28. A working paper entitled "Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament" submitted by the Federal Republic of Germany on behalf of the twelve Member States of the European Community (A/CN.10/112).

29. A revised working paper entitled "Naval armaments and disarmament: naval confidence-building measures" was submitted by Finland (A/CN.10/90/Rev.1 and Corr.1).

30. A revised working paper entitled "Naval armaments and disarmaments" was submitted by Sweden (A/CN.10/101/Rev.1).

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

31. At its 129th and 130th meetings, on 19 and 20 May, the Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus the reports of its subsidiary bodies and the recommendations contained therein regarding agenda items 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 and agreed to submit the texts of those reports to the General Assembly. Subsequently, at its 130th meeting, on 20 May, the Commission adopted by consensus, its special report, as a whole, containing specific recommendations on the items included in its agenda, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament, for its consideration.

32. At the 131st meeting, on 20 May 1988, the Disarmament Commission recommended that the General Assembly, at its forty-third session, should consider the decisions and recommendations adopted at its third special session devoted to disarmament in connection with the agenda items of the Disarmament Commission. The Commission further recommended that, should the third special session devoted to disarmament make no decisions or recommendations on the special report of the Commission mentioned above, all the recommendations contained therein be resubmitted to the General Assembly for consideration, at its forty-third session.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/42/42).

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Special Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/S-15/3).

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/42/27).