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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 28TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia)

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ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 39 to 56, 128 and 135 (continued)

Mr. MICHAELSEN (Denmark): Mr. Chairman, my delegation has already had the opportunity to congratulate you and the other Committee officers on your election. I should like to add my personal congratulations.

I wish to introduce the draft resolution sponsored by Denmark, entitled "Study on conventional disarmament" and contained in document A/C.1/36/L.3 of 5 November 1981.

In the Danish statement during the general debate in this Committee, we announced that this proposal would be put forward at a later stage. Several delegations came out in support of the proposal during the general debate; I should like to express our gratitude for that support. Furthermore, we have had intensive consultations with many delegations on the subject.

As I think all delegations recall, the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session adopted resolution 35/156 A of 12 December 1980, by which it approved, in principle, the carrying out of a study on all aspects of the conventional arms race. However, according to that resolution, the general approach to the study, its structure and scope were to have been worked out by the third substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its meetings in May and June of this year. Although the necessary total consensus was not reached in the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the thorough and useful discussions which took place, both in the plenary meetings and in the working group headed so ably by Ambassador Hepburn of the Bahamas, have provided us with a good basis on which to proceed with our work.

We must realize, however, that at present there is no mandate for the expert group, which, therefore, cannot be convened. This session of the General Assembly

is the last opportunity to decide on a mandate so that the work of the group can be started before the convening of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We and many other countries consider the question of conventional disarmament to be a very important item at this session.

Over the years, Denmark has taken a special interest in the question of conventional disarmament. We are all aware that a major part of the resources spent on the arms race goes to conventional armaments. It is therefore of paramount importance that this question be included in the agenda of the international disarmament negotiations. This study on conventional weapons should be seen as complementary to other studies already carried out or under way.

The implementation of the plans for a study does not imply that we intend to diminish our common endeavours to obtain progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. We recognize that nuclear disarmament must be given priority in the negotiations. Neither is the proposed study intended to preclude Member countries exercising their right to protect their own security or their right of self-defence.

Turning now to the text of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.3, I shall comment briefly on paragraph 1, which reads:

"The General Assembly Requests the Secretary-General to initiate the work of the expert group in accordance with the provisions contained in operative paragraph 1 of its resolution 35/156 A, taking as guidance on the general approach, scope and structure of the study the deliberations at the 1981 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, in particular reflected in paragraph 21 and annex III of the report of that session to the General Assembly".

(Mr. Michaelsen, Denmark)

That paragraph implies that the work of the expert group should be commenced immediately after the adoption of the present draft resolution at this session of the General Assembly. The guidance for the work is considered to be contained in the report from the 1981 session of the Disarmament Commission and, not least, in annex III of the report of that session.

Operative paragraph 2 reads as follows:

"Requests the Secretary-General in accordance with paragraph 4 of its resolution 35/156 A to submit a progress report on the study to the General Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament and a final report at its thirty-eighth session."

That paragraph implies that the question of conventional disarmament will be brought to the attention of the second special session. Although not finished at that time, the expert group will probably point to problems and areas which member countries will be able to address at the special session.

It is important that the international deliberations on disarmament cover all types of weapons. It is therefore necessary, in our view, that the huge category of weapons called "conventional weapons" also is given proper attention. The launching of the study decided on last year is a modest but urgent step that will give us a useful and solid basis for the discussions that, we hope, could lead to reductions in this important field. It is our hope that the Committee and the General Assembly will adopt the draft resolution.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt): The Disarmament Commission was established at the tenth special session of the General Assembly to underscore the importance of the collective effort required for progress in disarmament. Since its inception the Commission has played a constructive role in affording the membership of the United Nations a chance to participate in the deliberations on the various aspects of disarmament. Adequate deliberations are crucial, we believe, in that they pave the way for meaningful and constructive negotiations.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

The General Assembly has called upon the Commission to deliberate on a number of important items. Some of these items are discussed and recommendations are made thereon. The output of its work has been the input of efforts in other disarmament forums. Other items, such as those on the agenda of its 1981 session, have not yet been fully discussed. Important deliberations, however, have taken place on all of them, and it is our view that further deliberations are required before the Commission is able to make substantive recommendations.

It is against this background that we submit the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/36/L.4 on the report of the Disarmament Commission. It is of a procedural nature and based on the fact that the Commission was not able to conclude consideration of the items on the agenda of its last session. It requests the Commission to continue consideration of these items at its 1982 session. This, we hope, will afford the Commission the opportunity to make substantive recommendations on the items in question.

Concerning the duration of the 1982 session, my delegation feels that two considerations should be taken into account: first, it should conform to the workload as envisaged in the agenda and, secondly, it should take into account that 1982 is an eventful year in so far as disarmament is concerned, especially since the second special session on disarmament is scheduled to be held in the summer of that year.

It is for those reasons that my delegation has suggested in the draft resolution a flexible formula for the duration of the 1982 session, namely, that the Commission should meet for a period not exceeding four weeks. The exact duration will, we hope, be the subject of consultations and discussion by the Commission at its organizational session to be held in December this year.

In conclusion, we wish to express the hope that the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/36/L.4 will commend itself to the unanimous approval of the Committee.

Mr. DJOKIC (Yugoslavia): On behalf of a group of sponsors consisting of Algeria, Argentina, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Burma, Cuba, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Romania, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Venezuela, Zaire and Yugoslavia, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.5 on the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Second Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament.

The convening of the second special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on disarmament and the work of the Preparatory Committee have drawn great attention from almost all participants in the general debate in our Committee this year.

The unanimous view was expressed that the second special session will have great significance in regard to the further efforts of the international community in seeking solutions of disarmament issues and the questions relating to the strengthening of peace and security in the world. Concurrently, the need for the continuation of the work of the Preparatory Committee within the framework of its mandate was pointed out, as well as the indispensability of General Assembly decisions contributing most directly to both the successful completion of preparatory work and the holding of the second special session on disarmament.

In elaborating this draft resolution, the sponsors had in mind these very elements of an essential character.

In operative paragraph 1, the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Second Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament is endorsed, as well as the recommendation for the second special session to be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York between 7 June and 9 July 1982.

(Mr. Djokic, Yugoslavia)

Operative paragraph 2 relates to the further work of the Preparatory Committee. It expresses the endorsement of the recommendation of the Preparatory Committee to meet in New York for the period from 26 April to 14 May 1982 in order to continue consideration of substantive issues related to the second special session on disarmament, including the implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted by the General Assembly at its first special session on disarmament, for incorporation in the document or documents to be adopted at the second special session on disarmament. Moreover, the Preparatory Committee is to consider any remaining questions of an organizational and procedural character in connexion with the convening of the second special session on disarmament.

Operative paragraph 3 expresses the appreciation of the Assembly to the members of the Preparatory Committee for their constructive contribution to the work of the of the Committee.

Proceeding from the belief that in the next stage all members of the international community can also make a direct contribution to further successful preparations of the second special session, operative paragraph 4 invites Member States to submit their views to the Secretary-General not later than 31 March 1982 on the substantive issues related to the second special session, including those concerning the implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted by the General Assembly at its first special session on disarmament.

Operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution deals with those Member States engaged in bilateral, regional or multilateral negotiations on disarmament issues, outside the framework of the United Nations. In accordance with paragraph 27 of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, they are requested to submit appropriate information on such negotiations to the General Assembly before its second special session.

In conclusion, ~~under~~ operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, the Secretary-General of the United Nations is requested to render the Preparatory Committee all necessary assistance as may be required for the completion of its work.

(Mr. Djokic, Yugoslavia)

Having in mind the significance of the issues dealt with in the draft resolution, as well as the widely expressed wish of the Member States successfully to complete the preparations of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, I would like to express the belief - and the wish - of the sponsors that the draft resolution which has been submitted will receive general support in the Committee and that it will be adopted by consensus.

The CHAIRMAN: At the end of today's meeting, I should like to engage in some gentle prodding, not to be construed as arm-twisting.

Up to now, five draft resolutions have been submitted and introduced, a text of the Declaration has been submitted and a number of other draft resolutions are the subject of private consultations. Judging from the fact that last year the Committee adopted more than 40 resolutions, it is fair to expect that this year we shall adopt a very nearly similar number of resolutions.

The deadline for submission of draft resolutions is Monday, 16 November, at noon, and time is running short. Since there are no speakers inscribed on the list for this week, I submit that it might be wiser not to call any meeting for tomorrow morning or afternoon so as to allow more time for the intensive private consultations, which are useful and necessary and, in the final analysis, contribute to the work of the Committee. But I expect that after tomorrow there may be delegations that would like to submit and introduce their draft resolutions, and thus the Chair would suggest that we meet Thursday morning and afternoon to listen to the introduction of the draft resolutions. Naturally, since it would be very difficult to call those meetings with no speakers inscribed on the list, I hope that the Chair and the officers of the Committee will meet with the understanding of the members of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.