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# International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development

24 August-11 September 1987  
New York

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/CONF.130/33  
11 September 1987

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 11 SEPTEMBER 1987 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE NETHERLANDS TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE  
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement I made in today's session of the plenary of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, and to request you to have it circulated as a document of this Conference.

(Signed) A. P. R. JACBOVITS DE SZEGED  
Permanent Representative

Annex

STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NETHERLANDS TO  
THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE 14TH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE, ON 11 SEPTEMBER 1987

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In view of the importance of the two issues addressed by this Conference it is gratifying that we have been able to adopt a final document with consensus. Ambassador Bierring, speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Communities, has already expressed our views. I have to add a few remarks, however.

The document before us does not meet with our full approval. We cannot subscribe to the suggestion in the document that there is a direct operational link between disarmament and development. Disarmament and development are distinct processes which should be promoted independently and on their own merits. To the extent that they are interrelated, they are interrelated via the concept of security in its broadest sense. It is this concept that should guide us in our further deliberations. Ignoring this triangular relationship will only lead to false expectations. The Netherlands cannot agree with the incorrect use of United Nations Charter language in some parts of the document.

The economic analysis contained in the document tends to be rather general and furthermore to point to the military expenditures of the industrialized countries as the main cause of problems in world economy. This is not a view which my country shares.

Finally, we find it difficult to accept the binding nature of some of the commitments in the action programme, as we doubt their feasibility. This is particularly so for the obligation to inform the United Nations about a regular analysis of the economic and social consequences of military spending. In the Netherlands the distribution of public resources to social security, military security and other needs is a matter of public debate, about which the Netherlands public is fully informed. We doubt, however, that this complicated decision-making process can be reported to the United Nations in a practical manner.

The Netherlands acknowledges that in a process of give and take compromises have to be found. It is in that spirit that my country has joined the consensus on this important issue.

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