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MONITORING OF DISARMAMENT AGREEMENTS AND STRENGTHENING
OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-third session, the General Assembly adopted, under the item entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session", resolution 33/71 J, the operative part of which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

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"1. Requests the Secretary-General to obtain, not later than 31 March 1979, the views of Member States on the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency, as explained in a memorandum dated 30 May 1978 submitted to the General Assembly at its tenth special session; 1/

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to undertake, as from 1 May 1979, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, a study on the technical, legal and financial implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session on the replies received from Governments and the preliminary conclusions of the group of experts."

2. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of the resolution, the Secretary-General submits herewith the report on the replies received from Member States concerning the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency.

1/ A/S-10/AC.1/7.

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

ARGENTINA

[Original: Spanish]

[19 March 1979]

1. The Argentine Republic considers that the French initiative represents a notable step forward in the monitoring of the implementation of disarmament agreements and, accordingly, during the thirty-third session of the General Assembly, it was one of the sponsors of the draft of what has become resolution 33/71 J. The Argentine Government is also of the opinion that the study provided for in paragraph 2 of that resolution should be begun as soon as possible and that the group of governmental experts should be given the time and the necessary resources to enable them to discharge their functions successfully.

2. With regard to the French memorandum contained in document A/S-10/AC.1/7, the Argentine Government wishes to state that in general it agrees with its underlying goals and basic methodology. In particular, it supports the definitions contained in paragraphs 5, 11, 23 and 32.

AUSTRIA

[Original: English]

[10 May 1979]

1. In view of the manifold difficulties encountered in the pursuance of efforts to achieve concrete steps towards disarmament, in particular the lack of mutual confidence between States, Austria has always employed its best endeavours to promote confidence-building measures aimed at a reduction of distrust and tensions and thereby facilitate genuine disarmament measures. At the same time, Austria maintains the view that arms control and disarmament agreements can only be effective and yield positive results if they are sufficiently verifiable as to strengthen the confidence in the correct and mutual compliance with the obligations assumed on the part of all contracting parties. Finally, in the interest of a successful implementation of disarmament agreements existing technological achievements should be explored and utilized.

2. On the basis of these considerations the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his statement at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, supported in principle the proposal of the French Government to establish an international satellite monitoring agency. Furthermore, Austria co-sponsored Assembly resolution 33/71 J. The realization of this proposal would constitute an important contribution to the strengthening of international verification procedures and would at the same time result in beneficial confidence-building effects.

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3. The de facto exclusion of almost all States from the possibility to observe, for instance, the current status and deployment of strategic nuclear-weapon systems, which jeopardize the security of all States of the world, is one of the main reasons for the uneasiness and distrust of many States vis-à-vis those States that possess these weapon systems in unimaginable quantities and which at the same time are in the sole position to verify each other's nuclear capacities.

4. The proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency, therefore, not only corresponds totally with the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly and, in particular, with its paragraph 31, concerning verification measures acceptable to all interested parties, but would also contribute considerably to increasing international confidence and reducing international tensions. Such an increase of confidence would in the final analysis also be in the self-interest of those Powers which currently dispose of military means of observation by satellites and strategic nuclear-weapon systems and which are the main object of apprehension and fear on the part of various sides. The establishment of a satellite monitoring agency could contribute to the reduction of this distrust.

5. Furthermore, in establishing such an international agency, the risk of unleashing a nuclear-strategic war by error could be somewhat reduced. In a crisis situation the Powers concerned with analysing data obtained with the help of their own national means of verification could, because of subjective erroneous estimations and negative expectations concerning the attitude of the adversary, unleash a military conflict by error. The existence of an independent supplementary international system of verification could in such a situation give a more objective and uninfluenced judgement and through its mitigating impact constitute a sort of international safety net for world peace.

6. One of the essential tasks of the group of governmental experts established in accordance with resolution 33/71 J will have to be the examination of the question of which areas of armaments and which disarmament agreements are suitable for verification by satellites. Only after such examination will it be possible to establish which kind of satellite systems is necessary for the purpose of verification.

7. Furthermore, in order to ensure as broad a technological and financial basis as possible for the realization of the proposal in question, it will be necessary to obtain the interest of as many States as possible in eventual participation in the work of the agency. It would be especially desirable to obtain close co-operation on behalf of those States which already now dispose of experience on the basis of their own military observation satellites.

8. The agency, without any doubt, will have to have its own centre for analysing the data obtained. This centre must be in a position to scrutinize and analyse these data objectively. This task should be carried out by independent experts which are not subject to any political instructions. Otherwise an objective and speedy analysis would be impossible right from the beginning.

9. The Austrian Government is aware that a number of important issues will have to be considered in connexion with the establishment of the proposed agency. Among such issues, the following seem to be of particular relevance:

- (a) Which activities will have to be observed and which disarmament agreements can be verified through the agency;
- (b) Access to and distribution of data received;
- (c) Ways and means of ensuring impartial and correct interpretation of data;
- (d) Organizational aspects;
- (e) Financial aspects.

10. The Austrian Government would like to express the hope that these and all other relevant questions will be adequately studied by the group of governmental experts.

11. The Austrian Government is of the opinion that the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency will also have to be considered in connexion with other institutional proposals in this field, such as the proposal for an international disarmament agency.

BELGIUM

/Original: French/

/28 March 1979/

1. The Belgian Government welcomes any suggestion to improve the effectiveness or acceptability of verification which, in its opinion, should accompany any disarmament or arms control measure. It is, therefore, favourable to the plan to establish an international satellite monitoring agency.

2. It wonders, however, how the achievement of such a plan can best be ensured. It believes that it would be useful to undertake a prior inquiry, principally involving States which possess the appropriate technology and which have already managed to gain some experience in its practical application.

BOLIVIA

/Original: Spanish/

/27 March 1979/

The Government of Bolivia fully agrees with the French proposal, since it believes that it is time for the surveillance capabilities of satellites to be made

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available to the international community because, in the well-chosen words of His Excellency President Giscard d'Estaing, "the problem of supervision, as everyone knows, is crucial to disarmament: there can be no real disarmament without effective control".

CANADA

/Original: English/

/2 May 1979/

1. The Canadian Government has always held that arms control and disarmament agreements require adequate verification if they are to inspire confidence among the parties concerned that their terms are being observed. Canada also believes that, in relation to specific arms control and disarmament proposals, different verification methodologies may be found to have a particular application. The technique of remote sensing by satellite gives promise of greatly enhancing the ability to monitor compliance with specified undertakings. It is in this context, therefore, that the Canadian Government supported General Assembly resolution 33/71 J, adopted on 14 December 1978, which requested the views of Member States on the proposal to study the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency.
2. The Canadian Government has studied with care the memorandum presented by the Government of France to the tenth special session of the General Assembly on this subject (A/S-10/AC.1/7). It agrees with paragraph 10 of that memorandum which states that: "The purpose of the international satellite monitoring agency shall be to advance disarmament efforts and the strengthening of international security and confidence", subject to the following preliminary comments.
3. In regard to the functions of the proposed agency, it is noted that these would differ depending on whether the agreements to be monitored are new or old. In the case of the latter, as stated in paragraph 17 of the memorandum, an inventory of existing agreements would be made in order to determine which might be appropriate for satellite monitoring. It is suggested that this subject is one to which the group of consultative experts might wish to give priority attention; clearly, the nature of the work to be done must be established with reasonable certainty before steps are taken to create new machinery. The actual results from the use of this technique for arms control purposes should be weighed, furthermore, if its application is to be envisaged with confidence for new agreements.
4. It may be remarked that in this, as in other aspects of this proposal, the co-operation of those States which have practical experience in this field will be essential if the study is to provide guidance to others. At the same time, it may be unrealistic to expect the most technically advanced States to reveal the full extent of their expertise in this area.

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5. Existing remote sensing by satellite tends to gather a broader scope of information than is strictly necessary for the verification of any given arms control and disarmament agreement. Some discretion, therefore, may be necessary with respect to the scope of the data required.

6. In regard to the statute of the proposed agency, it would be advisable to reserve judgement until questions of organization and costs can be assessed. The United Nations system is already facing difficult problems of co-ordination and apparent duplication. Priorities are not agreed. Decision-making powers, especially in regard to situations affecting peace and security, are matters of dispute. The powers of the international satellite monitoring agency would therefore be a critical issue. The costs associated with any such agency are also likely to be highly significant.

7. One aspect of the proposal that will require careful consideration in this regard is the kind of organization that would, in effect, become the "library" for the information accumulated. Much of the data's significance would be derived by comparison over time, which raises questions not only related to accumulation, storage and retrieval, but continual processing as well. While it may be relatively easy to estimate costs associated with individual satellites and their launching operations, at least an equally significant factor will relate to continuing costs, particularly in the longer term.

8. The Canadian Government therefore sees merit in considering some of these problems which are intended to be illustrative only. It may then be possible to determine whether the use of satellites is a viable tool for the multilateral observation and verification of arms control and disarmament agreements.

CENTRAL AFRICAN EMPIRE

/Original: French/

/21 March 1979/

1. As the United Nations Disarmament Decade (1970-1980) draws to a close, it is very encouraging to note that new political and scientific conditions have combined to bring about a more resolute advance by the international community towards the elimination of the arms race and towards general and complete disarmament.

2. Essentially, these new conditions are, on the one hand, the unprecedented conclusions reached at the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and, on the other, the enormous scientific and technical strides made in the field of observation by artificial satellites.

3. The special session brilliantly reflected mankind's deep aspirations for peace and disarmament through proposals made both by the non-aligned countries, who initiated the session, and by the industrialized countries.

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4. Among these proposals, the Central African Empire wishes to refer to those aimed at instituting international monitoring of disarmament, because it feels that it is this area which has least often been the subject of fruitful thinking thus far.
5. The Government of the Central African Empire feels that there will be no true disarmament until an authority is first established to exercise strict and effective monitoring and control on a world-wide scale.
6. This role could be delegated to an international satellite monitoring agency which, in carrying out its task, would have at its disposal the immense possibilities offered by techniques of earth observation by artificial satellite.
7. However, in order to inspire trust in all States which would be under observation under the disarmament programme, it is important that the preliminary studies of the technical, financial and administrative implications of establishing such an agency should cover certain important legal aspects, especially international measures of a non-discriminatory character as well as non-interference in the internal affairs of States.
8. Consequently, the Central African Empire supports paragraphs 2 and 3 of General Assembly resolution 33/17 J, which requests the Secretary-General to undertake, as from 1 May 1979, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, an exhaustive study of the question of the establishment of the above-mentioned agency with a view to making recommendations to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

CUBA

/Original: Spanish/

/13 March 1979/

1. The Government of the Republic of Cuba attaches the greatest significance to the manner in which the implementation of disarmament agreements can be adequately and effectively monitored. For such monitoring to enjoy the confidence of States, it must be carried out carefully and be directly linked to effective disarmament measures.
2. The monitoring of disarmament agreements must not in any way constitute interference in the internal affairs of States, and it would therefore seem that the most suitable way of resolving the existing differences on the subject would be to decide on a specific means of monitoring for each disarmament measure which would be acceptable to the States parties to that measure.
3. The project described in document A/S-10/AC.1/7 on the establishment of an international satellite monitoring organization does not ensure the fulfilment of the above-mentioned requirements since its implementation could lead to delays in the adoption of more effective measures; thus, far from enhancing, it would impede the proper implementation of disarmament agreements.

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DENMARK

/Original: English/

/19 March 1979/

1. The Danish Government agrees that consideration should be given to the possibility of making further use of modern technology, including observation satellites, in the process of international verification of disarmament agreements. Progress in space technology, if gradually diverted towards refining monitoring systems, could contribute significantly towards strengthening international confidence and security.

2. Accordingly, the Danish Government welcomes the decision of the General Assembly under resolution 33/71 J to request the Secretary-General to undertake, with the assistance of qualified governmental experts, a study on the technical, legal and financial implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency, and expects this study to provide relevant information with a view to further consideration of the feasibility of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

/Original: Spanish/

/2 April 1979/

The Government of the Dominican Republic is of the opinion that the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency could be very useful. It therefore believes that the greatest consideration should be given to the draft submitted by the French Government to the General Assembly at its tenth special session (A/S-10/AC.1/7).

EGYPT

/Original: English/

/11 April 1979/

1. In the opinion of the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency is an extremely valid one and will be positively conducive to the solution of problems of monitoring. The creation of such an agency will, for the first time, provide the international community under the auspices of the United Nations with an additional method of verification that is based on non-discriminatory measures without constituting an interference in the internal affairs of States.
2. The utilization of techniques of scientific research and progress in earth observation satellite technology will help towards solving intricate problems of mankind through the consolidation and maintenance of international peace and security.
3. The Government of Egypt, however, wishes to make the following observations:
 - (a) It is necessary to clarify the system and technical description that will constitute the basic functions of the agency. Questions such as retrieval of data - from the United Nations data handling or through the receiving stations - must be answered. In this respect concrete regulations must be worked out to solve problems like access to and exchange of such information.
 - (b) Questions such as defining the sources of financing the new agency must also be answered. Therefore, Egypt believes that the proposed study that will be conducted by the Secretary-General with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts will be crucial to determine and help solve most of these legal, technical and financial matters.
 - (c) In addition, Egypt confirms the principle of universality of the application of the verification methods utilized by the proposed agency and believes that this principle must be stipulated in the charter of the new agency. It is useful, therefore, that the principles of guarantees embodied in the charter of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) be reflected in the charter of the new agency. In this respect, and since verification is not based only on inspection, it becomes necessary to combine the guarantees and the verification methods utilized by IAEA and those which could be embodied in the charter of the new satellite agency in order to achieve greater accuracy of verification methods and control.
 - (d) Egypt would also like to emphasize the importance it attaches to conventional methods of verification as a concrete step towards arms limitations and control. The proposed satellite agency should complement such methods by supplying data from a more advanced and technologically superior method of verification.
4. Finally, the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt would like to state its readiness to participate in the aforementioned study.

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FINLAND

/Original: English/

/2 August 1979/

1. Questions related to the verification of compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements and their solution to the satisfaction of all parties concerned are an intrinsic element of the process leading to such agreements. The modalities of verification of individual agreements are, in general, contingent upon the contents and scope of the agreements themselves.
2. The Government of Finland supported resolution 33/71 J adopted by the General Assembly on the subject of the monitoring of disarmament agreements and strengthening of security. It did so because, in its view, the proposal by the French Government on the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency merited further consideration and because it concurred with the stated purpose of the proposed agency, the advancement of disarmament efforts and the strengthening of international security and confidence.
3. A number of legal, financial and technological problems connected with the establishment of the proposed agency would have to be considered before further decisions on the proposal could be made. The proposal and its elements should, above all, be appraised in the light of its envisaged effects on facilitating negotiations aimed at concrete disarmament measures.
4. In particular, States possessing technology relevant to the proposed agency would be in a crucial position as to the feasibility and practicability of the proposal.

FRANCE

/Original: French/

/2 April 1979/

1. In his address to the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the President of the French Republic stressed that the problem of verification was crucial to disarmament and expressed the hope that up-to-date means of monitoring in the form of earth observation satellites might be made available to the international community. To that end, he proposed studies on the creation of an "International Satellite Monitoring Agency".
2. This idea was referred to in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly. At the thirty-third regular session of the Assembly, it was the subject of a resolution providing for a study on the matter, submitted by France and 26 other States and adopted by a very large majority.

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3. France, of course, welcomes the interest thus shown by the international community in a practical project the implementation of which, it continues to believe, would be conducive to progress both in the field of disarmament and with respect to the strengthening of security.
4. On 1 June, France submitted to the tenth special session a memorandum (A/S-10/AC.1/7) containing suggestions relating to the main features of its proposal. It will refrain from repeating all the details, but wishes to emphasize the following points.
5. The agency would act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and would respect the sovereign rights of States. Its functions would be participation in monitoring the implementation of international disarmament and security agreements, and participation in the investigation of specific situations. In the first case, the parties to a disarmament agreement would jointly specify the link to be established between the agreement in question and the agency's monitoring work. In the second case, the agency might be called in by the Security Council in accordance with Article 34 of the United Nations Charter.
6. The agency would be established as a specialized agency of the United Nations. The representative of France in the group of governmental experts will submit a draft statute for the agency.
7. The agency would gradually expand its technical resources to keep pace with the expansion of the functions assigned to it, as laid down in its statute.
8. France is aware of the complexity of the undertaking in which it is asking its partners to join. For that very reason, it feels that the studies to be undertaken on the subject must be carried out in the most effective manner possible. It trusts that the work of the group of qualified governmental experts which is scheduled to meet twice, in June and in September, will fulfil this expectation. To that end, it might be desirable for the experts to be able to grant hearings to specialists of every origin.

GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF

/Original: English/

/24 April 1979/

1. The Federal Republic of Germany attaches great importance to adequate verification of arms control measures. Adequate verification is all the more important the more these measures affect national security. The Federal Republic of Germany proceeds on the understanding that verification measures must take into account the specific terms of each agreement. To be effective, verification should make use of all available scientific and technical possibilities.

The Federal Republic of Germany has therefore approved resolution 33/71 J requesting the Secretary-General of the United Nations to obtain the views of

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Member States on the proposal "to establish an international satellite monitoring agency" (A/S-10/AC.1/7) and to undertake, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, a study on the technical, legal and financial implications of establishing such an agency.

2. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany welcomes the proposal to establish a satellite agency since it is in line with the objectives of its policy, as set out by Federal Chancellor Schmidt on 26 May 1978 at the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In the view of the Federal Government there will be less danger of an acute crisis and greater predictability of the political and military conduct of the parties involved. A prerequisite to such predictability is openness and transparency. A greater degree of openness and transparency would at the same time help to increase confidence in the observance of arms control agreements. Our own security is enhanced if the security requirements of others are adequately taken into account.

3. As regards its feasibility, it is, however, obvious that the proposal raises a number of questions which need to be thoroughly looked into, such as:

- (a) Technical prerequisites for such a satellite agency;
- (b) Status of such an institution within the United Nations system;
- (c) Amount and allocation of the costs involved;
- (d) Participation of countries already having experience in the field of satellite monitoring;
- (e) Use to be made of the data concerned as well as their protection against abuse.

The Federal Republic of Germany appreciates therefore that these problems will be examined within the framework of the proposed group of experts and reserves the right to comment on relevant questions in due course.

GREECE

/Original: French/
/31 March 1979/

1. The Hellenic Government is in principle in favour of setting up a group of qualified governmental experts to carry out an in-depth study of the technical, legal and financial implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency.

2. It is also of the opinion that the governmental experts should be appointed by the Secretary-General in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. It would, moreover, be advisable to ensure the participation in the above-mentioned group of experts of countries which possess the appropriate technology.

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INDIA

/Original: English/

/18 April 1979/

1. India appreciates the need for setting up an international satellite monitoring agency under United Nations auspices and, should such an agency be established, India would be willing to participate in it as a member.
2. In India's view, the proposed study by the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, of the technical, legal and financial implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency would be very useful in clarifying the various issues involved and reaching international agreement thereon.

IRAQ

/Original: English/

/16 March 1979/

The Government of Iraq approves the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency as explained in the memorandum dated 30 May 1978 submitted by the French Government to the tenth special session of the General Assembly (A/S-10/AC.1/7).

ITALY

/Original: English/

/20 March 1979/

1. Italy, which co-sponsored General Assembly resolution 33/71 J, greeted with favour the French memorandum presented at the tenth special session of the General Assembly on 30 May 1978 (A/S-10/AC.1/7). The Italian Government is convinced of the need to strengthen confidence and international security through the establishment of adequate verifications at the international level. This view corresponds, furthermore, with the philosophy expressed in the Italian working paper contained in document A/AC.18/110, in which was suggested, inter alia, the establishment of a permanent body entrusted to verify disarmament measures.
2. While the Government of Italy wishes to confirm its positive opinion of the French initiative, it would also like to stress the special importance it attributes to the envisaged study on the legal, technical and financial aspects of the creation of an international satellite monitoring agency - a study, furthermore, whose results could become one of the basic elements of an agency of broader scope for the verification of disarmament and arms control agreements.

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JAPAN

/Original: English/

/14 April 1979/

1. The Government of Japan, having been keenly interested in resolving the question of verification of disarmament measures, hopes that a proposal to set up an international satellite monitoring agency may prove to be an important contribution to the solution of the question.

2. However, as the representative of Japan stated in the explanation of vote on the resolution regarding this subject adopted on 14 December 1978, the Government of Japan believes that there are a number of technical, legal and financial problems involved which require careful study before putting such a proposal into practice, and that it is essential to get the concurrence from those States which are capable of launching satellites.

3. Accordingly, the Government of Japan hopes that a group of qualified governmental experts, as referred to in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 33/71 J, will conduct a study on the possibility of establishment of such an agency from various aspects, taking fully into account the views of the United States of America, the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics and other States with the capability of launching satellites.

KENYA

/Original: English/

/19 June 1979/

Our position remains in favour of continued support to the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency, as explained in a memorandum dated 30 May 1978 submitted by the French Government to the tenth special session of the General Assembly.

KUWAIT

/Original: English/

/13 March 1979/

The Government of the State of Kuwait is in principle in favour of the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency and is looking forward to the findings of the study to be undertaken by the Secretary-General on the technical, legal and financial implications of establishing the said agency. It, however, reserves its final views on this matter until the study is published and the implications of establishing the proposed agency are fully understood.

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MAURITIUS

/Original: English/

/19 March 1979/

The Government of Mauritius supports the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency.

MEXICO

/Original: Spanish/

/28 March 1979/

In principle, and subject to the results of the study on the various aspects of the monitoring of disarmament agreements and strengthening of international security referred to in General Assembly resolution 33/71 J, Mexico favours the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency, since it believes that that method of control could thus be used to serve the international community in the monitoring of disarmament agreements.

NETHERLANDS

/Original: English/

/5 April 1979/

1. The Netherlands Government welcomes the French proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency as a positive contribution to the search for adequate verification of international disarmament agreements. In cases where the verification of such agreements is vitally dependent on so-called "national means", in particular satellites, such an agency could obviously fill a need of all those parties which are unable to launch satellites on their own. The French proposal is thought-provoking also in the context of the peaceful settlement of disputes. On the other hand it raises complex problems of a technical, financial, legal and political nature, as well as questions of security.

2. At this stage the Netherlands Government is not in a position to comment on these questions in any detail. However, in line with its efforts to promote international co-operation in the field of applications of space technology, the Netherlands would attribute considerable interest to see the proposal of France being studied in all its aspects.

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NEW ZEALAND

/Original: English/

/29 March 1979/

In principle New Zealand welcomes proposals designed to establish a broad basis of international co-operation in the verification of general multilateral disarmament and arms control agreements. The proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency is one of a number of proposals of this nature which were put forward at the tenth special session of the General Assembly. Others are to be studied further in the Disarmament Commission and the Committee on Disarmament. In New Zealand's view the desirability and the feasibility of all such proposals, as well as possible linkages or interrelationships among them, should be studied before a decision is taken to implement any one of them in isolation. It is not suggested that the study called for by General Assembly resolution 33/71 J, for which New Zealand cast a favourable vote, should be delayed or postponed; indeed New Zealand would wish to see the study proceed so that its conclusions and any recommendations which may be put forward may be taken fully into account in the examination of other proposals for the establishment of international machinery for the supervision of disarmament and arms control agreements.

NORWAY

/Original: English/
/30 March 1979/

At the thirty-third session of the General Assembly the Norwegian Government supported the idea of a study of the technical, legal and financial implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency. Such an agency could contribute to a strengthening of international security and confidence and thereby increase security for the world community at large. It could also contribute to a solution to the questions relating to information, monitoring and verification of arms control and disarmament measures. If the agency is to fulfil its task, information must be collected on a non-discriminatory basis and this must be adequately ensured by the organizational framework of the agency. A further condition must be that such an agency will strengthen the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

PAKISTAN

/Original: English/
/29 March 1979/

The Government of Pakistan supports the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency pursuant to paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 33/71 J. Further views of the Government of Pakistan having a bearing on the functioning, etc. of the international satellite monitoring agency will, if necessary, be communicated at a later stage.

PERU

/Original: Spanish/
/10 April 1979/

1. Peru welcomes the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency as a method of monitoring in the field of disarmament.
2. In this connexion, Peru is of the opinion that, when the proposal is studied, it is important to give priority to consideration of the technical and financial implications of giving effect to the proposal and to ensure proper participation by those countries which possess advanced technology in that field so that the progress they have achieved may contribute to the full implementation of the proposal.

PORTUGAL

/Original: French/

/2 August 1979/

1. In approving the final document of the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly, the international community demonstrated a new determination to pursue its efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament. The Portuguese Government therefore believes that the establishment of machinery for the monitoring of bilateral or multilateral disarmament agreements is an urgent task since without effective control the security of the States parties to such agreements remains uncertain. The result is an obvious deterioration in the atmosphere of trust which is essential to the pursuit of disarmament efforts.

2. In this context, the Portuguese Government believes that the development of technology for the launching and effective operation of earth-observation satellites - which could be the function of an international agency for the monitoring of disarmament agreements - can make a positive contribution to solving this sensitive problem.

3. The Portuguese Government therefore believes that the study provided for in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 33/71 J of 14 December 1978 will be most useful.

4. Although Portugal, for its part, is convinced that an agency of the kind which it is proposed to set up will make a positive contribution, it nevertheless feels that the international community will not be able to form a clear idea of the actual significance of that contribution until the above-mentioned study has been completed. The study must therefore give concrete, specific answers to all questions regarding the viability of such an agency and must first analyse, inter alia, the following problems:

(a) Acquisition of the necessary technology, which only a limited number of countries have at their disposal;

(b) Processing of the data gathered by satellites, taking account of the possibility of differences of opinion regarding their interpretation and of the need to resolve such differences;

(c) Access to the information obtained, particularly in the case of countries which lack the means to acquire such information;

(d) Development of adequate means of distributing this information, due regard being had to the security of all States (and, in particular, the principle of non-interference in internal affairs) and the right of every State party to be informed of any violations that may be detected;

(e) Estimating what the cost of the project would be and obtaining the necessary financing.

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5. The memorandum submitted by the French Government (A/S-10/AC.1/7 of 1 June 1978) can serve as a basis for the experts who undertake the study provided for in resolution 33/71 J. The group of experts must, in the opinion of the Portuguese Government, answer the questions explicitly or implicitly raised in the memorandum by studying in depth the relevant problems and, if necessary, examining possible alternative approaches.

QATAR

/Original: Arabic/

/29 March 1979/

The State of Qatar is one of the developing countries and firmly believes in the close link between development, on the one hand, and disarmament and the strengthening of international security, on the other. It is therefore in favour of anything that may contribute to disarmament efforts and to the strengthening of international security and confidence. Accordingly, Qatar supports in principle the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency, because it would be a means of effective international control which would help to guarantee general and complete disarmament. However, the Government of Qatar awaits the results of the study which must be undertaken on all the legal and financial implications of this proposal and the international obligations deriving therefrom. It will then be able to give its final view on this matter.

ROMANIA

/Original: French/

/14 May 1979/

1. In the context of the policy of détente, security and progress pursued by Romania, and in keeping with the outlook and work of President Nicolae Ceaușescu, constant priority is given to the adoption of a series of effective measures to put an end to the arms race and build a world without weapons and without wars.

2. Romania regards the adoption of specific disarmament measures as an inseparable part of the process of improving the international political climate and strengthening détente, trust and peaceful co-operation among States, based on equality of rights, respect for the principles of independence and national sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, territorial integrity, mutual advantage, and the non-use of force or threat of its use in the relations among States.

3. In the view of our country, the implementation of all measures which aim at halting the arms race and achieving the transition to disarmament must be carried out under appropriate control. This control must be agreed upon by all States, whether or not they possess nuclear weapons; it must ensure the scrupulous, honourable and comprehensive fulfilment of the obligations undertaken by States.

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4. From this point of view, the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency could be an effective and universally acceptable means of achieving the desired objective.

5. In the view of the Romanian Government, any machinery for the verification and control of the implementation of disarmament measures must meet the following criteria:

(a) It must form an integral part of disarmament agreements and they must indicate specifically, for each stage and each measure, the purpose of control and the means of ensuring it;

(b) It must be open to participation by all States involved in the implementation of agreed disarmament measures and ensure the access of all those States, on an equal footing, to the data assembled through control.

6. The Romanian Government envisages that the international satellite monitoring agency will operate within the framework of the United Nations.

7. As to the work of the international satellite monitoring agency, the results of the monitoring and surveys carried out must be communicated to all States and to the general public.

8. The findings resulting from the work of the agency must have probative value within the bodies and mechanisms responsible for ensuring compliance with disarmament agreements.

9. At a later stage, the services of the agency could also be used for peaceful purposes, so as to make use of the advantages offered by remote sensing.

10. The agency could be financed from funds released by disarmament measures. During the first stage, the most heavily armed countries should make available to the agency, free of charge, a system of monitoring satellites. The services from which member States will benefit must be provided free of charge.

11. The Romanian Government considers that, at the same time as specific disarmament agreements are being negotiated, a study should be undertaken at the expert level of all the technical, economic, financial and legal aspects involved in the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency. For this purpose, the Secretary-General of the United Nations could be requested to submit a preliminary study to the General Assembly.

SPAIN

/Original: Spanish/

/11 April 1979/

General considerations.

1. The monitoring of the implementation of arms limitation and disarmament agreements is undoubtedly an essential factor, and the fact that the question has

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never been effectively resolved has in many cases prevented such agreements from reaching a successful conclusion. Any initiative aimed at facilitating such monitoring should therefore be carefully considered. It must also be remembered that the satellites in question can be used not only to monitor the implementation of certain agreements relating to disarmament and arms limitation, but are also capable of providing valuable data on any kind of aggressive activity which a State belonging to the agency might attempt to carry out against another State, whether or not it is a member of the agency.

2. The Government of Spain feels that the study referred to in paragraph 2 of resolution 33/71 J should be carried out with the utmost care. To that end, it would be advisable to divide the proposed group of experts into three subgroups to analyse the various aspects of the problem, since it is difficult to see how a global approach could be taken to the technical, legal and financial questions which must be considered as a basis for a sound evaluation of the viability of an international satellite monitoring agency.

3. Since at the present time only a small number of countries have observation satellites, it would be particularly desirable to have the co-operation of those countries since, without it, it would take a considerable amount of time to develop the system (launching vehicles, satellites and launching bases).

4. All the countries which participate in the agency should do so on a basis of equality and, if a small governing body is established, it should include representatives, firstly, of those countries which possess advanced technology in the field and, second, of the various geographical groups, within which members would be selected on the basis of balanced rotation.

5. Methods should be devised to prevent the data supplied by the agency from being used by any member to jeopardize the security of any country in the international community, whether or not it is a member of the agency.

6. If it appears from the study that the new agency would be feasible, it would be useful, for the purposes of actually establishing such a body, for the General Assembly to consider the desirability of convening a diplomatic conference to prepare a convention on the subject.

7. The Spanish Government is ready to participate to the extent of its abilities in any action aimed at the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency; however, it feels that the complexity of the various legal, technical and financial problems involved requires that the establishment of the agency should be taken into account among the elements of the comprehensive programme for disarmament to be considered by the Disarmament Commission.

Technical measures

8. Paragraph 27 of document A/S-10/AC.1/7 provides a valuable focus on these questions.

9. The interim solution proposed in paragraph 28 of that document would establish machinery which is far from perfect. Only in the proposed third stage (para. 30), that is to say when the agency has its own satellites (although no reference is made to launching bases) would the agency be completely autonomous in its operation and consequently fully effective.

10. The complete autonomy which, it is felt, is absolutely necessary implies autonomy in: (a) launching; (b) data reception; (c) processing; and (d) interpretation.

11. Furthermore, autonomy in launching implies that the agency should have its own: (a) launching vehicles; (b) satellites; and (c) launching bases (or an area of an existing base which has been transferred to the agency).

12. There would be two types of launchings, depending on the two applications of the proposal.

(a) The monitoring of disarmament agreements requires continuous observation by means of scheduled launchings for which the amount of equipment needed can be projected (including replacements to make up for failures).

(b) The monitoring of conflicts requires a certain amount of equipment which can be estimated on the basis of statistics, and the ability to carry out launchings on an emergency basis, which would be one of the special features of this application. This capability is essential to the success of the agency, since provision must be made for an immediate reaction before the outbreak of a conflict.

13. With regard to launching vehicles, the fact is that there is a limited range of vehicles which could be used and the choice of a vehicle for the agency would have to be made from among the following: (a) the European Ariane; (b) the Soviet Soyuz and Zond; and (c) the United States STS.

14. As for the type of satellite needed for observation, there is a broad range of possibilities.

15. With regard to the systems used to receive information, the two existing systems should, if at all possible, be used simultaneously: (a) radio transmission to earth stations; and (b) the ejection by satellites of capsules which contain exposed film and can be recovered in the air. It should be pointed out that this system gives better resolution.

SWEDEN

/Original: English/
/20 April 1979/

1. The Swedish Government supported and co-sponsored General Assembly resolution 33/71 J concerning the proposal to establish an international satellite monitoring agency. This support is in line with Sweden's efforts to seek effective methods and mechanisms for verification of international agreements in the field of

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disarmament. Sweden and other countries have earlier proposed in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament the establishment of an international verification agency encompassing all aspects of verification. A satellite monitoring agency could be an important element in a comprehensive system of control and verification of disarmament measures.

2. An international satellite monitoring agency would have an important function for the strengthening of international confidence and security. Furthermore, the information gathered by observation satellites could contribute to settling disputes between States by providing data on facts giving rise to such disputes.

3. In Sweden's view it is of great importance that the proposed agency be given an independent position in the United Nations system. The proposed status as a specialized agency would guarantee the independence of the institution.

4. When the implications of the establishment of a satellite monitoring agency are examined by the group of experts several questions need to be considered. Among these:

(a) What types of activities lend themselves to observation by satellite, and consequently, which of the existing arms-control agreements, as well as those agreements likely to be concluded within the foreseeable future, could be controlled by satellite?

(b) To what extent is information from satellites sufficient to get a reliable picture of disarmament measures?

TURKEY

[Original: French]

[30 March 1979]

1. In the context of efforts to achieve the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament, Turkey attaches particular importance to the question of verification. Indeed, "where effective verification measures could be agreed upon, arms control arrangements have come into being" (A/S-10/PV.15; p. 11).

2. It is in this belief that Turkey has always given its full support to any initiative aimed at establishing effective verification systems or at improving existing methods related to the preparation or implementation of concrete disarmament measures. 2/

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Tenth Special Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/S-10/1), vol. VII, annex II, 36th meeting.

3. In the same context, Turkey welcomed with interest, and supported from the outset, the French initiative for the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency which, concurrently with other methods of control, could in future contribute to the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of mankind, by placing in orbit international satellites to verify, with the participation of all States, the implementation of international disarmament and security agreements, and to ensure dissemination of the data thus obtained to all countries.

4. Although Turkey will not, at the present stage, take part in any purely technical work that may be undertaken, it will follow its progress with close attention.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

/Original: English/

/9 April 1979/

1. The United Kingdom acknowledges the important role which surveillance satellites have come to play in the verification of arms control agreements. The British Government hope that this factor will help to stimulate further progress on balanced measures of arms control and disarmament, under which the parties can have full confidence in each other's compliance.
2. The establishment of any agency should be designed to increase the likelihood that further measures of arms control can be achieved. Care should be taken to avoid any move which might prejudice the effective verification of existing arms control agreements.
3. The United Kingdom notes that the Secretary-General will carry out, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/71 J, a study of the technical, legal and financial implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency. The British Government suggest that the questions noted below should be among those borne in mind in the execution of that study.
4. It will be necessary to consider what State or authority would build, operate and pay for satellites assigned to an international agency. There would need to be balanced international arrangements for determining the priorities in an agency's work - in particular, the areas of the world which should be observed by the satellites - and for co-ordinating, processing and disseminating the resulting data. Care would be needed to prevent difficulties or disputes concerning agreed interpretations of the data. It would also be necessary to devise methods which would ensure that the question of access to information from satellites would not become a matter of contention among Member States of the United Nations. The important question of the costs of operating an agency will need careful consideration. In view of the advanced technology involved, the annual cost could be very high and it would be necessary to determine whether and how the Member States of the United Nations could meet it.

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5. While some of these questions may present difficulty and all will require detailed analysis, the United Kingdom hopes that the results of the forthcoming study will clarify the prospects for the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency for the purpose of facilitating progress in arms control.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

/Original: English/

/12 April 1979/

1. The United States of America welcomes the opportunity to present its views on this proposal. The United States has long recognized and maintained that adequate verification of compliance is a critical dimension of arms control. However, after careful consideration and consultation with others we have concluded that an international satellite monitoring agency would be neither feasible nor desirable in the foreseeable future.

2. Substantial - in the United States view overwhelming - political, organizational, technical and financial difficulties would be associated with an international institution charged with collecting and assessing satellite information pertinent to verifying arms control agreements.

3. The establishment of satisfactory decision-making procedures in a new international agency is always a difficult matter; in an international satellite monitoring agency the problems would appear to us exceedingly difficult and probably insoluble. Procedures would have to be agreed on for all of the difficult and predictably contentious issues confronting the agency. These would range from the establishment of priorities and decisions about targeting to the analysis, assessment and dissemination of collected data. It is not likely that States would place the power of decision on such matters entirely in the hands of the staff and the director of an international satellite monitoring agency. Rather, they would reserve key decisions, as well as the establishment of guidelines, to a plenary body or executive organ. In either case, decision by consensus would lead quickly to paralysis; while decision by vote - weighted or not - on matters having a close bearing on vital national security concerns would not likely be acceptable to many States, large and small.

4. Irresolvable disputes within the agency over judgements about compliance with agreements could erode public confidence in the verifiability of arms control agreements, weakening rather than strengthening support for the disarmament process. This would also be the likely effect of inevitable disparities between the voted or politically negotiated judgements of the international agency and conclusions arrived at independently by individual Governments directly concerned, using their own resources. Moreover, the prospect of an international body passing judgement in a potentially politicized way on questions related to compliance with arms control arrangements could create reluctance on the part of some Governments to entering into such arrangements.

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5. Control over and access to monitoring data within an international satellite monitoring agency would be another possibly intractable issue. The proposal set out in A/S-10/AC.1/7 stipulates that membership would be open to any State Member of the United Nations or any member of a specialized agency. Yet, in the case of given disarmament agreements which might be monitored by the agency, many of the members would not be parties. Unrestricted access by all agency member States to all data, some of it sensitive, would present obvious problems. However, compartmentalization of data or restriction of access would be difficult to agree on and probably impossible to enforce.

6. Beyond these political and organizational difficulties, an international satellite monitoring agency would face serious technical problems. Interpretation of monitoring data is a very complex task. Not only does it require extensive experience, but it may also be dependent upon access - which an international satellite monitoring agency would not have - to a variety of information gathered from many different sources. Furthermore, there is a close relationship between the design of technical monitoring systems and the specific elements or activities they are intended to monitor. An international satellite monitoring agency would be confronted with the problem of selecting satellite systems for the verification of agreements not yet in existence, whose terms cannot be anticipated, between parties still unknown. Technical capabilities acquired at great expense could well prove ill-suited to the agency's actual tasks.

7. The overall cost of an international satellite monitoring agency - encompassing not only the procurement and launching of satellites but also the establishment of technical capabilities for processing data and the maintenance of a highly expert staff - would be quite considerable, possibly equal to the entire present United Nations budget. In a world with such pressing human needs, the United States can see no justification for diverting resources on this scale to a project whose promised benefits are highly uncertain at best. At the same time, it would be unrealistic to contemplate an international satellite monitoring agency which had no technical collection capability of its own and was therefore dependent on raw data selected and provided by individual States drawing upon national resources. Nor would it be realistic to expect States to provide raw data, essential to their own arms control verification requirements, whose release could compromise the capabilities of the systems involved and facilitate evasion of agreements.

8. While recognizing the critical role of verification in the arms control process, the United States continues to believe that capabilities and procedures for monitoring compliance must be tailored to meet the needs of specific agreements and that this can most effectively be accomplished by the parties to agreements themselves.

URUGUAY

/Original: Spanish/
/3 May 1979/

The Government of Uruguay is in favour of the project for the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency as a new means of ensuring the international control of disarmament programmes.

VENEZUELA

/Original: Spanish/
/15 June 1979/

By a resolution of the Government of Venezuela, a group of governmental experts has been established to study the technical, legal and financial implications of the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency; the group began its work on 1 May 1979.

YUGOSLAVIA

/Original: English/
/29 May 1979/

1. Yugoslavia has always considered that effective verification of the implementation of disarmament agreements is one of the significant elements of the system of international relations. Therefore, it feels that the establishment of appropriate instruments of control in the field of disarmament deserves full attention of the international community.
2. Yugoslavia is one of the co-sponsors of General Assembly resolution 33/71 J which envisages the elaboration of a study on the establishment of "an international satellite monitoring agency". It is encouraging that the international community widely supported that proposal. There is no doubt that it is in accordance with a unanimously expressed wish of all Member States at the tenth special and thirty-third regular sessions of the General Assembly that more significant progress in the field of practical disarmament measures be made.
3. Deeming that it would be too early to enter into details at this stage of consideration, we would like to point out only a few elements that we hold relevant to this question. The establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency, as the instrument of the whole international community, with its own organization and activities, must be in line with full respect for the sovereign rights of all States Members of the United Nations. One of the basic criteria should be the acceptability of the agency's activities for the countries whose armaments, military forces or military activities are the object of verification.

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At the same time, it is necessary to provide the instruments and methods for complete objectivity of interpretation of information received through the verification process.

4. The main purpose of the agency should be the verification of disarmament measures under the auspices of the United Nations. Its activities should be in full accordance with the principle of universality, the widest possible democratization of decision-making and equal rights of all the members of the international community, which pre-supposes equal access to all information obtained by the agency's activity.

5. It is evident that technical and financial aspects of the establishment and functioning of the agency are very complex. We consider that a group of experts should make a thorough examination of them and prepare appropriate proposals. The agency's statute may be attempted only after the completion of the examination.

6. The broadness and complexity of the problem require serious work on the part of governmental experts on the basis of an agreed upon programme. Yugoslavia is ready to contribute to it by engaging one of its experts.
