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GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Conventional disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General

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\* A/41/150.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its fortieth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 40/94 C of 12 December 1985, the operative part of which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. Appeals to all Member States to make the widest use of the Study on Conventional Disarmament and its conclusions and recommendations;

"2. Invites Member States that have not yet informed the Secretary-General of their views regarding the Study to do so no later than 31 May 1986;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report for the General Assembly at its forty-first session containing further views of Member States received regarding the Study;

"4. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-first session an item entitled "Conventional disarmament".

2. The views received from Member States in response to resolution 40/94 C are reproduced in section II below.

## II. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

### BRAZIL

(Original: English)

[19 June 1986]

1. As contained in the report adopted by consensus by the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament, in 1978, the highest priority measures in the process of disarmament are those related to nuclear disarmament, since nuclear weapons, unlike conventional weapons, are in the possession of a small number of countries and threaten the very survival of mankind.

2. The production and stockpiling of conventional weapons in the nuclear-armed countries, as well as the size of their military forces, are immeasurably larger than those of all the other countries. Because of their undeniable superiority in this field, these countries have a special responsibility and, thus, must make the first move in any initiative towards reduction or elimination of conventional weapons. Efforts for conventional disarmament should therefore be concentrated in regions with larger numbers of armaments and armed forces, and should focus particularly on nuclear-armed countries.

/...

3. Measures of limitation and control of conventional weapons and military forces should be understood as complementary to the priority negotiations on nuclear disarmament, so as not to cause an even larger unbalance in favour of the nuclear-armed countries.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

[Original: English]

1. Owing to its geographical location in a region with a high density of armed forces and armaments of two military alliances and directly where these border on each other, the German Democratic Republic has a particular interest in far-reaching measures of disarmament. It gives priority to steps designed to halt the nuclear-arms race and bringing about nuclear disarmament, and it sees increasing significance attached also to conventional disarmament.

2. The development of sophisticated conventional weapons produced a new quality of their technical parameters. Their destructive effect has come close to that of weapons of mass destruction. Building on such modern conventional weapons, imperialist quarters have evolved new concepts for armed combat, whose major elements are surprise, offensive and the combined use of conventional, nuclear and chemical weapons. Such concepts, closely connected as they are with a doctrine of deterrence and the "strategy of direct confrontation", are bound to add to the danger of war and complicate ongoing negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and armaments.

3. Together with the other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty the German Democratic Republic has been working determinedly for measures of conventional disarmament. Its activities in the Vienna Talks on the Mutual Reduction of Armed Forces and Armaments in Central Europe as well as at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe are geared to facilitating the early conclusion of agreements to scale down military confrontation in Europe.

4. With their appeal addressed on 11 June last to the member States of NATO and to all European countries for the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe, the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty have submitted a detailed programme which, if implemented gradually within agreed time limits and with proper verification, would lead to substantial reductions in the forces and armaments of the two alliances. The risk of war both in Europe and in the world at large would be considerably lessened, and the military equilibrium would be ensured at ever lower levels without jeopardizing the security of any one side. Cutbacks in manpower levels and armaments should be attended by respective reductions in military spending of the participating States. The funds thus released could be channelled into programmes for economic and social development.

5. The German Democratic Republic would wish to see this appeal receive a positive response from the NATO countries so that early negotiations could be started on the proposals contained therein.

6. The German Democratic Republic supports all activities that are suited to progress on conventional disarmament. This approach determines its position on the United Nations Study on Conventional Disarmament, in the elaboration of which an expert from the German Democratic Republic was involved. The Study rightly underscores that nuclear disarmament shall be of priority, and it points out that progress on nuclear disarmament could create an atmosphere conducive to progress on conventional disarmament. Particularly noteworthy is the Study's conclusion that the stepped-up arms race leads to an increase in the level of confrontation and jeopardizes the security of States. Therefore the Study stresses the necessity of embarking upon the road towards collective security, which would result in substantial reductions in armaments and armed forces. This is the objective underlying the Soviet Union's proposal for establishing a comprehensive system of international security and its programme for the elimination of all nuclear weapons until the year 2000, which are both whole-heartedly endorsed by the German Democratic Republic. These proposals exemplify the new kind of approach that States should adopt in our times to deal with the issues of disarmament and international security.

7. The particular value of the Study lies in the fact that, in addition to principles and modalities for conventional disarmament, it outlines practicable concrete measures. That part of the Study is of direct practical import as it provides appropriate suggestions for the orientation of pertinent disarmament negotiations.

8. Great significance attaches, above all, to the following topics which were identified in the Study and which could be the subject of consultations and negotiations:

Measures to ensure that outer space will be used solely for peaceful purposes;

Non-increase and reductions in specified categories of major weapons and in numbers of military personnel;

Qualitative restrictions on armaments;

Reductions and restrictions on deployments of different types of armed forces;

Restrictions on or reductions in military budgets.

9. The prevention of an arms race in outer space is an essential prerequisite for deep reductions in nuclear weapons and for their elimination. Therefore, the German Democratic Republic would welcome it if the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, as a matter of priority, undertook to forgo the development, testing and deployment of space-strike weapons. Such a renunciation should lead up to a multilateral treaty. At the Geneva Conference on Disarmament the German Democratic Republic has been supporting the start of pertinent negotiations on the basis of resolution 40/87.

10. In conjunction with the other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty the German Democratic Republic has submitted a whole complex of proposals on conventional disarmament which should be the subject-matter of negotiations and accords:

(a) Pertinent measures to be taken by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America are of paramount importance. They should freeze the numerical strength of their armed forces, including those deployed outside their national territories, at the level of 1 January 1986. Moreover, they could undertake not to develop and manufacture new types of conventional weapons whose destructive effect would render them comparable to weapons of mass destruction.

(b) Measures aimed at limiting and reducing conventional weapons and forces, which should be taken by all nuclear-weapon States and their allies, would be of great significance. Also, new efforts are required on a global scale to achieve the removal of foreign military bases, the withdrawal of troops from foreign territories, and the containment of the naval arms race. Such steps would enhance the security of States in different regions and open up favourable prospects for establishing zones of peace.

In regard of the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments, the German Democratic Republic wishes to recall resolution 35/152 G, which was adopted upon its initiative. That resolution calls upon the States permanent members of the Security Council and to countries that have military agreements with them to resolve not to increase their armed forces and conventional armaments, effective from an agreed date, as a first step towards subsequent reductions.

(c) Of great importance are regional measures of conventional disarmament on the European continent. This is the place where the two biggest groupings of armed forces face one another at present. The States parties of the Warsaw Treaty have issued a constructive and practicable proposal. It envisages, by the early 1990s, the disbandment of military formations and units on both sides totalling over one million troops and their demobilization as well as the destruction or withdrawal of their armaments.

Implementation of this proposal with strict observance of the principle of equality and equal security and with dependable verification measures would ensure security through disarmament. Hence, the proposal is fully in line with the purpose of resolution 40/94 A: conventional disarmament on a regional scale.

At the Vienna Talks, the German Democratic Republic on 20 February submitted on behalf of the socialist States which are direct participants a draft agreement which is aimed at bringing the positions of the sides closer together. Also at the Stockholm Conference the socialist countries, focusing attention on those issues where a consensus would seem possible by autumn 1986, have furnished proof of their readiness for a viable compromise that is useful to all sides. Such a result would then enable the Conference at its second stage to proceed to the consideration and adoption of disarmament measures.

(d) Finally, in the framework of establishing a comprehensive system of international security as proposed at the twenty-seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the arms potentials of States would have to be reduced to reasonably sufficient levels with provision for strict verification. This objective should be reflected in the comprehensive programme of disarmament to be elaborated by the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

11. Limitations of and reductions in military budgets should become the subject of substantive and action-oriented negotiations. Here again, the German Democratic Republic, in conjunction with the other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, made a number of concrete proposals. A first step in this direction could be agreement between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the non-increase of their military budgets as from the beginning of the next fiscal year. Furthermore, the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty and the NATO member countries should agree not to increase their military expenditures and subsequently cut them either in percentages or in absolute terms. Finally, the deliberations that have been under way within the United Nations for more than 10 years on cuts in the military budgets of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and of other militarily significant States should produce relevant agreements. Practical actions are required to implement resolution 3093 A (XVIII). The German Democratic Republic welcomes the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission at this year's session achieved progress in working out principles for the reduction of military budgets. It would expect that States which continue to insist on unacceptable pre-conditions review their position and make possible a swift finalization of work on those principles.

12. The German Democratic Republic shares the view outlined in the Study, under the chapter on conclusions and recommendations, that all States have the duty to contribute their share to facilitate efforts towards conventional arms limitation and conventional disarmament. It would therefore expect that all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States, accord due attention to the recommendations of the Study by engaging in a negotiating process aimed at concrete agreements.

13. In conclusion, the German Democratic Republic wishes to observe that it would be favourable to conventional disarmament if the military doctrines of the politico-military groupings and of individual States would rely on defensive principles.

14. The German Democratic Republic, just as all other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, will never and under no circumstances wage war against any other States unless they become an object of aggression.

MEXICO

[Original: Spanish]

[19 June 1986]

1. The Government of Mexico believes that the Study on Conventional Disarmament is a valuable instrument which contributes to a better understanding of this very complex subject.

2. The Government of Mexico agrees with the statement in the Study concerning the pressing need for measures to halt and reverse the conventional arms race and prevent conventional war, which could degenerate into nuclear conflict.

3. In this regard, the Government of Mexico believes that the Study is correct in stating that conventional arms limitation would do much to reduce distrust and fear among nations and thus would have a positive effect on international relations. This would be reflected in an easing of tensions, which could improve prospects for measures of nuclear disarmament.

4. Mexico maintains that all States must contribute to efforts towards disarmament, as stated in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament. For this reason, the Government of Mexico endorses the statement in the Study that all States must participate in the struggle of the international community to remove the threat represented by the current escalation of the arms race in all its aspects.

5. The Government of Mexico believes it is necessary, as indicated in the Study, to give impetus to multilateral and bilateral negotiations and to encourage unilateral initiatives for the reduction and limitation of conventional weapons and armed forces.

6. Thus, the Government of Mexico concurs with the Study with regard to the advisability of the conclusion of international agreements, essentially between the countries that are major suppliers of conventional weapons, to limit the production of such weapons and prevent indiscriminate transfers that fail to take into account the consequences involved.

7. Furthermore, Mexico supports the suggestion in the Study that agreements on limitation of conventional weapons and armed forces should be concluded in geographical areas that are particularly conflict-prone. Mexico also supports the suggestion in the Study underlining the need to conclude agreements on reducing deployments of conventional weapons and armed forces in certain geographical regions where their size represents a serious threat to regional security and to international peace and security in general.

8. Another measure in the Study which Mexico believes would help to bring about a reduction of tensions is the withdrawal of forces and weapons perceived as being particularly threatening and the establishment of demilitarized zones.

9. The Government of Mexico endorses the statement made in the Study that conventional disarmament measures or unilateral initiatives taken in this field should not place any State at a disadvantage, in the interest of avoiding even greater mistrust, the principal motive for both the conventional and the nuclear arms race.

10. Concerning the contribution that the United Nations can make in this area, the Government of Mexico believes the Study is correct in suggesting that the Organization could provide accurate information to world public opinion on this subject, in order to promote a better understanding of the production and sale of conventional weapons. This type of publicity, through the World Disarmament Campaign, will make it easier to bring to the public's attention the approaches and measures by which conventional arms limitations may be achieved.

11. The Government of Mexico approves the recommendation in the Study that negotiations be expedited on reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces in Europe, which has the greatest concentration both of armed forces and conventional weapons and of nuclear weapons.

#### PHILIPPINES

[Original: English]

[13 May 1986]

1. The possibility of the world powers coming to an agreement on reducing their conventional armed forces world wide depends on too many variable factors to be feasible in the near future: threat assessment, strength and dependability of allies, offsetting factors (such as insularity and relative invulnerability to conventional force attacks/more effective nuclear weapons and "Star Wars" weapon systems), overseas strategic interests, etc. But if the "conventional forces disarmament" agreement is limited to a specific geographical area, such as Europe or the Middle East or the South-east Asian (ASEAN) region, then a "conventional forces disarmament agreement" becomes more feasible.

2. Significantly, the problems are formidable for an agreement to be made to reduce conventional military forces even within a limited area, as for example, Europe, where the contending forces are the NATO and Warsaw Pact military forces. The spaces to be defended are vast and the speed and destructive capabilities of modern conventional military forces require more, not less, military forces. To reduce military forces would require the reduction of the vast spaces to be defended and a reduction in the speed and power typical of even small modern military forces. But what if both NATO and the Warsaw Pact nations simultaneously reduce their conventional military forces? Given the large margin in conventional forces which the Warsaw Pact forces have enjoyed over the NATO forces during the past decades, it is hardly possible that they will agree to greatly reduce their forces to be on level with NATO forces. That would constitute "unequal reduction for equal results". On the other hand, it is not possible for NATO member nations to accept equal numerical reductions of military forces because such an agreement would result in greater imbalances in military force between NATO and the Warsaw Pact forces.

3. But perhaps the United Nations should not delve too deeply into studies of conventional military force reductions. Conventional military forces do not have the capabilities to destroy the entire world unlike nuclear weapons. Therefore, the United Nations should concentrate on the reduction, or even elimination, of nuclear weapons world wide. The United Nations should determine what is vital for the survival of the world, then concentrate the United Nations resources towards that single objective.

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