

**REPORT
OF THE
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE
WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: FIFTEENTH SPECIAL SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 4 (A/S-15/4)



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New York, 1988

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[5 May 1988]

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-second session, by its resolution 42/41 of 30 November 1987, the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference 1/ to submit a report to it at its third special session devoted to disarmament. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.
2. At its twelfth special session, held in 1982, the General Assembly had before it the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the state of its work and deliberations, 2/ submitted pursuant to the request contained in Assembly resolution 36/91 of 9 December 1981. In that same resolution, the Assembly noted with satisfaction that the Committee reiterated, inter alia, that "Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly might wish to decide that, after its second special session devoted to disarmament, a world disarmament conference would take place as soon as the necessary consensus on its convening has been reached". 3/
3. At its thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth and fortieth sessions, the General Assembly continued its consideration of the agenda item entitled "World Disarmament Conference" and, having taken note of the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee submitted to it at those sessions, 4/ renewed the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee by its resolutions 37/97 of 13 December 1982, 38/186 of 20 December 1983, 39/150 of 17 December 1984 and 40/154 of 16 December 1985.
4. At its forty-first session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 41/61 of 3 December 1986, by which it, inter alia, renewed the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee, and requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its forty-second session on the results of consultations undertaken by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States, as well as with other States, in order to remain currently informed of the developments of their positions on the question of convening a world disarmament conference.
5. By resolution 42/41, the General Assembly took note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General (A/42/542 and Add.1), renewed the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and requested it to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States, as well as with all other States in order to remain informed of their positions on the question of the convening of a world disarmament conference and to consider any relevant comments and observations that might be made, especially having in mind paragraph 122 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session (resolution S/10-2).
6. Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, Principal Officer in the Department for Disarmament Affairs, has served as Secretary of the Ad Hoc Committee since 1982.
7. The elected officials of the Ad Hoc Committee during the period from 1982 to 1988 were the following:

Chairmen:

Mr. Ignatius Benedict Fonseca (Sri Lanka)	(1981-1983)
Mr. S. W. Arthur de Silva	" (1984)
Mr. Nissanka Wijewardane	" (1984-1987)
Mr. Daya Perera	" (1988-)

Vice-Chairmen 5/

Mr. Celso Pastor de la Torre (Peru) (1983)
Mr. Ryszard Krystosik (Poland) (1982-1984)
Mr. Kazimierz Tomaszewski (Poland) (1985-)

Rapporteurs

Mr. Arturo Laclaustra (Spain) (1982-1985)
Mr. Pablo Barrios " (1986)
Mr. Francisco Viqueira " (1988-)

8. At the 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985 and 1986 sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics participated in the work of the Committee by virtue of paragraph 3 of resolution 3183 (XXVII) of 18 December 1973. Under the same provision, China, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America kept the Committee informed of their positions on the convening of a world disarmament conference (see also para. 20). The German Democratic Republic, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam attended meetings of the Committee as observers.

9. The Working Group established in 1974 continued to function after the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. 6/

II. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE BETWEEN THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ITS THIRD SPECIAL SESSION
DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT

10. In accordance with its mandate the Ad Hoc Committee has held nine sessions since September 1982 in order to continue its work.

11. During those sessions statements were made on the subject by the Chairman and by the representatives of a number of States. 3/

12. In the work of the Committee since 1982, the members of the Ad Hoc Committee were fully aware of the positions previously expressed by the Governments of other States on the convening of a world disarmament conference. 7/

13. At its 1983, 1984, 1985, and 1986 sessions, the Ad Hoc Committee took into account that, in the Declaration of the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade from 25 to 29 July 1978, the Ministers had noted "with approval the idea of convening a world disarmament conference at an appropriate time with universal participation and with adequate preparation" (A/33/206, annex I, para. 148).

14. In accordance with its mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 37/97, the Ad Hoc Committee held two sessions in 1983: from 4 to 7 April and from 5 to 8 July. The Working Group met on 6 and 7 July under the chairmanship of Mr. A. Laclaustra (Spain). The Ad Hoc Committee considered and adopted its report to be submitted to the Assembly at its thirty-eighth session. 8/

15. In accordance with its mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 38/186, the Ad Hoc Committee also held two sessions in 1984: from 2 to 5 April and from 2 to 6 July. During the latter session the Working Group met from 3 to 5 July and elaborated the draft of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. In accordance with Assembly resolution 38/186, the Ad Hoc Committee continued to maintain close contact with nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes. At its 81st meeting, on 5 July, the Ad Hoc Committee considered and adopted its report to be submitted to the Assembly at its thirty-ninth session. 9/

16. In accordance with its mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 39/150, the Ad Hoc Committee held two sessions in 1985: from 22 to 25 April and from 15 to 19 July. During the latter session the Working Group held two meetings, on 16 and 17 July, under the chairmanship of Mr. Laclaustra (Spain) and prepared the draft report of the Ad Hoc Committee. At its 89th meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee considered and adopted the report to be submitted to the Assembly at its fortieth session. 10/

17. In accordance with its mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 40/154, the Ad Hoc Committee held two sessions in 1986: from 7 to 11 April and on 10 July. The Working Group held two meetings, on 8 and 9 July, under the chairmanship of Mr. P. Barrios (Spain) and elaborated the draft of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. At its 96th meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee considered and adopted the report to be submitted to the Assembly at its forty-first session. 11/

18. In its resolution 41/61, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its forty-second session on the results of consultations between

the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee and representatives of nuclear-weapon States as well as all other States; accordingly, no meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee was convened during 1987.

19. Pursuant to that request, the Chairman consulted with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States as well as with all other States in order to remain currently informed of the development of their positions on the question of convening a world disarmament conference. The results of those consultations were reflected in the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-second session (A/42/542 and Add.1).

20. In accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 42/41, the Ad Hoc Committee, through its Chairman, maintained close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed on their positions on the question of convening a world disarmament conference and obtained the following updated positions:

China

China has always stood for the convening of an international conference to discuss disarmament. As early as 1963, China proposed to hold a world summit conference to discuss the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. The two super Powers that possess the largest arsenals of both nuclear and conventional weapons are still continuing their arms race, posing a grave threat to world peace and security. It is therefore a matter of utmost urgency to urge them by various means to reduce their armaments. If the majority of the member States are in favour of a world conference to discuss how the two super Powers should take the lead in drastically cutting their armaments, China will be ready to support the idea.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

The USSR is in favour of the idea of a World Disarmament Conference which, through the collective endeavours of all States, could arrive at effective means of curbing and reversing the arms race. Accordingly, we have called repeatedly on the other nuclear Powers to adopt a constructive attitude to this question so that the opportunities afforded by the Conference should be exploited to the full. Nevertheless, the divergence of views on this matter has not yet been overcome.

In view, therefore, of the persistent differences between the nuclear Powers regarding the objectives, agenda and dates for the World Disarmament Conference, we would consider it advisable to return to the idea of holding the Conference and reactivating the Ad Hoc Committee at a later time, when the entire world community is ready for it.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland does not believe that any useful purpose would be served by the convening of a World Disarmament Conference. The United Kingdom therefore continues to doubt the usefulness of further meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee. As a consequence of this view the United Kingdom suggests that the General Assembly at its Special Session be asked to discontinue meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE FROM 1982 TO 1988
BY THE AD HOC COMMITTEE

A. Conclusions and recommendations made in 1982 12/

21. The Ad Hoc Committee reiterated that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support by the membership of the United Nations, however, with varying degrees of emphasis and differences on conditions and certain aspects related to the question of its convening, including aspects related to the deteriorating international situation. It was also evident from the updated indications of positions of the nuclear-weapon States, as reflected in paragraph 15 of the present report, some of which confirm certain elements requiring careful consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee, that no consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference under the present conditions has yet been reached among the nuclear-weapon States whose participation in such a conference has been deemed essential by most States Members of the Organization.

22. Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly in accordance with paragraph 64 of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Twelfth Special Session 13/ should take up the question at its thirty-seventh regular session for its further consideration, bearing in mind the relevant provisions of resolution 36/91, adopted by consensus, in particular paragraph 1 of the said resolution.

23. The General Assembly may wish to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and to request (it) to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes, as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee.

B. Conclusions and recommendations made in 1983 14/

24. The Ad Hoc Committee reiterated that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support by the membership of the United Nations, however, with varying degrees of emphasis on and differences concerning conditions and certain aspects related to the question of the convening of such a conference, including aspects related to the deteriorating international situation. It was also evident from the updated indications of positions of the nuclear-weapon States, as reflected in paragraph 12 of the present report, 8/ some of which confirm certain elements requiring careful consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee, that no consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference under the present conditions has yet been reached among the nuclear-weapon States, whose participation in such a conference has been deemed essential by most States Members of the Organization.

25. Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly should take up the question at its thirty-eighth regular session for further consideration, bearing in mind the relevant provisions of resolution 36/91, adopted by consensus, in particular paragraph 1 of that resolution, and resolution 37/97, also adopted by consensus.

26. The General Assembly may wish to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and to request it to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes, as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee.

C. Conclusions and recommendations made in 1984 15/

27. The Ad Hoc Committee reiterated that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support by the membership of the United Nations, however, with varying degrees of emphasis on and differences concerning conditions and certain aspects related to the question of the convening of such a conference, including aspects related to the deteriorating international situation. It was also evident from the updated indications of positions of the nuclear-weapon States, as reflected in paragraph 12 of the present report, 9/ some of which confirm certain elements requiring careful consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee, that no consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference under the present conditions has yet been reached among the nuclear-weapon States, whose participation in such a conference has been deemed essential by most States Members of the Organization.

28. Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly should take up the question at its thirty-ninth regular session for further consideration, bearing in mind the relevant provisions of resolution 36/91, adopted by consensus, in particular paragraph 1 of that resolution, and resolution 38/186, also adopted by consensus.

29. The General Assembly may wish to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and to request it to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes, as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee.

D. Conclusions and recommendations made in 1985 16/

30. The Ad Hoc Committee reiterated that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support by the membership of the United Nations, however, with varying degrees of emphasis on and differences concerning conditions and certain aspects related to the question of the convening of such a conference, including aspects related to the deteriorating international situation. It was also evident from the updated indications of positions of the nuclear-weapon States, as reflected in paragraph 12 of the present report, 10/ some of which confirm certain elements requiring careful consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee, that no consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference under the present conditions has yet been reached among the nuclear-weapon States, whose participation in such a conference has been deemed essential by most States Members of the Organization.

31. Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly should take up the question at its

fortieth regular session for further consideration, bearing in mind the relevant provisions of resolution 36/91, adopted by consensus, in particular paragraph 1 of that resolution, and resolution 39/150, also adopted by consensus.

32. The General Assembly may wish to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and to request it to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes, as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee.

E. Conclusions and recommendations made in 1986 17/

33. The Ad Hoc Committee reiterated that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support by the membership of the United Nations, however, with varying degrees of emphasis on and differences concerning conditions and certain aspects related to the question of the convening of such a conference, including aspects related to the deteriorating international situation. It was also evident from the updated indications of positions of the nuclear-weapon States, as reflected in paragraph 12 of the present report, 11/ some of which confirm certain elements requiring careful consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee, that no consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference under the present conditions has yet been reached among the nuclear-weapon States, whose participation in such a conference has been deemed essential by most States Members of the Organization.

34. Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly should take up the question at its forty-first regular session for further consideration, bearing in mind the relevant provisions of resolution 36/91, adopted by consensus, in particular paragraph 1 of that resolution, and resolution 40/154, also adopted by consensus.

35. The General Assembly may wish to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and to request it to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes, as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee.

F. Conclusions and recommendations made in 1988

36. The Ad Hoc Committee took note of the important developments in the field of disarmament, particularly in the bilateral sphere, since the convening of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1982.

37. The Ad Hoc Committee recognizes the continuing validity of the initiative for the convening of a World Disarmament Conference. However, taking into consideration the divergence of views as to the immediate convening of the World Disarmament Conference, the Ad Hoc Committee has decided to recommend to the General Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament that the work of the Committee be suspended until such time as the Assembly deems it appropriate to reactivate it.

Notes

1/ By its resolution 3183 (XXVIII) of 18 December 1973, the General Assembly decided that the Ad Hoc Committee should consist of the following 40 non-nuclear weapon States Members of the United Nations appointed by the President of the Assembly after consultation with all regional groups: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire and Zambia.

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Special Session, Supplement No. 4 (A/S-12/4).

3/ Ibid., Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/36/28), para. 16.

4/ Ibid., Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/37/28); *ibid.*, Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/38/28); *ibid.*, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/39/28) *ibid.*, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/40/28); and *ibid.*, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/41/28).

5/ In 1983, one post of vice-chairman was vacant; since 1984, two posts of vice-chairmen remain vacant.

6/ The composition of the Working Group is as follows: Burundi, Egypt, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Spain and Sri Lanka. Participants in the Working Group as observers in respective years since 1982 are listed in the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly listed in footnote 4 above.

7/ The views of Member States are reflected in the reports mentioned in footnote 4. See also Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Special Session, Supplement No. 4 (A/S-12/4); A/S-12/AC.1/PV.4-15; A/S-12/PV.1-29; and General Assembly resolution S-12/24.

8/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/38/28).

9/ Ibid., Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/39/28).

10/ Ibid., Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/40/28).

11/ Ibid., Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/41/28).

12/ Ibid., Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/37/28), paras. 16-18.

13/ Ibid., Twelfth Special Session, Annexes, agenda items 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13, document A/S-12/32.

14/ Ibid., Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/38/28), paras. 13-15.

Notes (continued)

15/ Ibid., Thirty-ninth session, Supplement No. 28 (A/39/28),
paras. 13-15.

16/ Ibid., Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/40/28), paras. 13-15.

17/ Ibid., Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/41/28),
paras. 13-15.

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