



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/43/650
5 October 1988

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-third session
Agenda item 64 (a)

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Contribution of the specialized agencies and other organizations
and programmes of the United Nations system to the cause of arms
limitation and disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 2	3
II. CONTRIBUTION OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY	3 - 13	3
A. International Atomic Energy Agency	3 - 6	3
B. International Labour Organisation	7 - 8	4
C. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	9	4
D. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	10 - 12	5
E. World Health Organization	13	5
III. CONTRIBUTION OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMMES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM	14 - 26	6
A. United Nations Headquarters	14	6
Department of Public Information	14	6

CONTENTS (continued)

	Paragraphs	Page
B. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	15 - 19	6
C. United Nations Development Programme	20 - 22	7
D. United Nations Environment Programme	23 - 25	8
E. United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research	26	8

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-first session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 41/59 D of 3 December 1986. Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. Reaffirms its invitation to the specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to continue, within their areas of competence, the activities aimed at promoting the cause of arms limitation and disarmament;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, to continue to co-ordinate such activities and to submit an updated report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-third session."

2. Information relevant to the above request is submitted below. Additional information is also given in the reports of the Secretary-General submitted in pursuance of resolution 39/151 E (A/41/491), on the World Disarmament Campaign (A/43/642), and on World Disarmament Week (A/43/508 and Add.1). These reports will be reviewed at the forthcoming meeting of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters) in October 1988.

II. CONTRIBUTION OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

A. International Atomic Energy Agency

3. IAEA contributes actively to the cause of arms limitation and disarmament within its area of competence (arts. II and III.B.1 of the Agency's statute).

4. IAEA continues to implement its international safeguards system in accordance with its responsibilities under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Tlatelolco Treaty and various other bilateral and multilateral agreements. About 98 per cent of the nuclear installations known to IAEA outside the nuclear-weapon States are at present under IAEA safeguards. Extensive safeguards activities in 1987 resulted in almost 2,200 inspections being carried out at more than 600 nuclear installations in 56 States.

5. Verification of non-proliferation commitments by way of IAEA safeguards is an important confidence-building measure. By bolstering international confidence that safeguarded activities serve only peaceful purposes, safeguards help to reduce tensions that otherwise might exist. At the same time, through its safeguards activities IAEA has acquired valuable experience in the techniques and operation of systematic on-site verification. Where relevant this experience might be of use in connection with future arms limitation agreements.

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6. Each year IAEA hosts the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme at Vienna, consisting of several days of lectures and information exchange. It also participated in the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

B. International Labour Organisation

7. In 1986-1987, the ILO programme of disarmament research addressed the issue of conversion and of its employment consequences in individual regions. Since armament production tends to be concentrated in specific regions, the work focused on a limited number of these regions with a high intensity of military production and of defence-related employment, situated in five countries (Federal Republic of Germany, Israel, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America; a regional study was also commissioned on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and is about to be commissioned on China). As a first step, the degree of dependence on defence contracting was assessed for each region. Then, the skill and occupational profile of the defence industrial work-force were examined. As a third step, the structure of the labour force in the region as a whole was established, in order to determine the regional economy's capacity to absorb labour released from the military industrial sector. Finally, the effects of reductions in defence procurement at enterprise level and the strategies envisaged by the management in such a case (switch to civilian production, redundancies, etc.) were surveyed. A comparative analysis of the findings made in the different regions and countries is in preparation and will be published in book form. Most country cases have been issued as ILO working papers.

8. In 1988-1989, it has been proposed that ILO research should focus on an analogous study examining the lessons to be drawn from adjustment to structural change in heavy industrial (non-military) branches for the reduction in armament production. Five country-industry cases are to be examined, with particular reference to the adjustment strategies that have been followed by enterprise managements in the restructuring industries, as well as to trade union policies, and to various government measures that have been adopted. Their critical evaluation should throw a useful light on the policies to be followed in the case of defence production cuts.

C. Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

9. FAO referred to its contribution to the 1987 edition of the United Nations Disarmament Yearbook and said that it had no additional information to provide on this subject. The relevant information contained in the organization's contribution to the Yearbook reads as follows:

The constitutional mandate of FAO to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living, to secure improvements in efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products and to better the condition of rural populations, thus contributing towards an expanding world economy and ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger, is closely linked with peace and disarmament.

There is a growing awareness that hunger and poverty on a massive scale, accompanied by environmental disasters, pose a dangerous threat to peaceful relations within and between States.

FAO has made specific reference to the relationship between development and disarmament on numerous occasions, in such publications as Ceres (1986), and through World Food Day, which is celebrated on 16 October every year throughout the world.

In 1987, FAO was represented at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development held in New York from 24 August to 11 September.

D. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

10. In 1988, UNESCO, in close co-operation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), reproduced and disseminated widely the comprehensive survey of research in the social and human sciences in UNESCO's fields of competence on all activities in the field of disarmament, including the causes and consequences of the arms race and the relationship between peace, security, development and disarmament. This study was prepared in 1987.

11. Furthermore, an informal consultation of researchers in the field of disarmament will be organized at UNESCO headquarters to consider ways of increasing research capacities in the social and human sciences and exchanges of knowledge on these questions.

12. Finally, in 1989 and in close co-operation with the above-named institutions of the United Nations, an interdisciplinary study group of researchers and experts will be convened with a view to promoting a study of the relationship between peace, security and disarmament, and the possible links between disarmament and educational, scientific and cultural development.

E. World Health Organization

13. WHO referred to its contribution to the United Nations Disarmament Yearbook 1987, which summarized as follows the activities of the WHO Management Group "WHOPAX":

Established in compliance with the World Health Assembly resolution WHA36.28 adopted in May 1983 on "The role of physicians and other health workers in the preservation and promotion of peace ...", the WHOPAX Group, composed of international scientists, studied the effects of nuclear war on health and health services. The first results of their studies were published in 1984, and since then the WHOPAX Group has continued its investigations, which have led to the second edition of its earlier findings. These findings incorporate new data and insights that have been gained by group members

through the participation in numerous scientific studies on matters such as physical effects of nuclear war; climatic effects of nuclear war; biological effects of nuclear war; acute effects of radiation; different nuclear-war scenarios; the psycho-social aspects of nuclear threat and nuclear war; analogies from disaster research; health problems in the short term; casualty management; and, finally, intermediate and long-term health aspects. These findings were published in 1987 in the document "Effects of Nuclear War on Health and Health Services" (2nd ed., Geneva, 1987).

The second edition of the report was presented to the World Health Assembly in May 1987. The Assembly, in its resolution WHA40.24, decided to continue, in collaboration with interested United Nations bodies and other international organisations, the investigation of other health aspects of the effects of nuclear war that are not reflected in the report. It also requested the Director-General to make the report of the Management Group widely known by publishing it with all its annexes. The publication, which is now finalised, is available in the English original as well as in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish translations. It has been circulated to WHO member States, the United Nations and other related bodies.

III. CONTRIBUTION OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMMES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

A. United Nations Headquarters

Department of Public Information

14. The Department of Public Information has continued to give wide coverage of the work of the United Nations in the field of arms limitation and disarmament in its various periodicals and publications as well as through radio, film, television, photo and interpersonal contacts. All these activities are covered in the Department's contribution to the report of the Secretary-General on the World Disarmament Campaign (see A/43/642).

B. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

15. UNCTAD's contribution derives from research and analysis work by the secretariat and deliberation by its intergovernmental organs that are related to the linkage between disarmament and development. These activities remain modest in scope but the following outputs are relevant to the subject.

16. The UNCTAD secretariat report to the seventh session of the Conference in July last year, entitled "Revitalising development growth and international trade - Assessment and policy options", contained a section devoted to "Some aspects of the relationship between militarisation and economic security" (TD/328/Rev.1, paras. 61-69). In addition, both the UNCTAD Secretary-General's report (TD/329/Rev.1) and his statement to the Conference (TD/L.276) addressed the need to devise practical ways of diverting human and economic resources from the

fabrication of means of destruction to socially productive uses, a task that promises to bear more fruit with the improving prospect of nuclear-arms reductions.

17. In paragraph 28 of its Final Act (TD/350), the Conference registered the following finding:

"In a climate of greater security there would be increased opportunities for diverting resources from expenditures on armaments towards more socially productive uses, including development finance."

18. The most recent UNCTAD activity in this area was the Round-Table Meeting of High-Level Experts on Peace, Trade and Development, held in Moscow in October 1987. Twenty-five experts, including two former heads of State, participated in the Meeting, which was organized by the UNCTAD secretariat.

19. It is the intention of the secretariat to seek the approval of the appropriate intergovernmental bodies for provision to be made in the next programme budget for work relating specifically to intersectoral issues, including the relationship between disarmament and development.

C. United Nations Development Programme

20. As disarmament implies reduction of military expenditures, it means the release of funds and also human skills and materials that can be mobilized for economic and social development. During the twelfth special session of the General Assembly, in June 1982, the Administrator of UNDP, observing that the release of funds and human skills and materials through disarmament should augment the resources for multilateral development assistance, proposed: (a) to issue annually to the General Assembly a development implications study accompanying a report on the year's world armaments expenditures; (b) to use UNDP mechanisms for multilateral aid allocation and co-ordination to channel redeployed resources for development purposes; and (c) to establish various United Nations "corps" to which individuals with technical skills gained in the military services would be attached and which would be available to meet development needs.

21. The report of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session (A/39/229) discussed various options about the establishment of an international disarmament fund for development. It observed that, should such a fund be established and its resources remain limited, it would be advisable to link it at least in the initial phase to an existing development assistance organization. In this regard, the report identified UNDP as the most capable organization to administer such a fund. UNDP has expressed its willingness to accept such a responsibility should the General Assembly so decide.

22. UNDP also co-operated with the Department for Disarmament Affairs in the preparation for the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development held in New York from 24 August to 11 September 1987, and contributed a paper as its input to the documentation for the Conference.

D. United Nations Environment Programme

23. UNEP activities in relation to arms limitation and disarmament fall under the programme area "Peace, security and the environment". The overall goal of this programme is to promote environmental security as a basis for sustainable development. UNEP objectives in this regard are: (a) to increase governmental and public awareness of the environmental impacts of military activities and the arms race; and (b) to increase knowledge and awareness of the impact of environmental deterioration on regional and global security.

24. During the biennium 1986-1987, UNEP collaborated with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on several studies related to militarisation and the environment. One important outcome was the publication of a book entitled Global Resources and International Conflict, which shows how the geographical distribution, availability and degradation of the world's natural resources influence the international security perceptions that govern strategic policies and the use of military force. Global deficiencies, coupled with the uneven distribution of resources, can lead to unlikely and therefore unstable alliances, to national rivalries, and even to war. Another joint UNEP/SIPRI project was the production of a book entitled Cultural Norms in Relation to War and the Environment (in press). This book explores cultural norms regarding militarism and war on the one hand, and nature and environment on the other. UNEP also commissioned a publication entitled Disarmament, Environment and Sustainable Development: A Time for Action (1986) as a contribution to the World Disarmament Campaign.

25. In the current biennium 1988-1989, UNEP is collaborating with the Peace Research Institute, Oslo, to develop widespread understanding of: (a) the concept of international environmental security; and (b) the security dimension of sustainable development. The concept of environmental security has begun to receive attention in recent years, and is addressed in the United Nations document Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond (resolution 42/186, annex), and in Our Common Future, report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987).

E. United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

26. In pursuance of paragraph 6 of resolution 39/148 H, the Director of UNIDIR reports annually to the General Assembly on the activities carried out by the Institute that are aimed at promoting the cause of arms limitation and disarmament. The last report in this regard is contained in document A/42/607 and a further report covering the period September 1987 to September 1988 will be submitted to the Assembly at its forty-third session.
