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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS
ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

Dissemination of information on the arms
race and disarmament

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to members of the General Assembly the report communicated to him by the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in accordance with paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 33/71G, dated 14 December 1978.

* A/34/150.

ANNEX

Report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization concerning the dissemination
of information on the arms race and disarmament

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 3 of resolution 33/71G, the General Assembly invited the Director-General of UNESCO to report to the Assembly, at its thirty-fourth session, on the preparations for the World Congress on Disarmament Education.

2. UNESCO has actively participated in the work of the Preparatory Committee since the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and it wishes to contribute in the most effective manner possible to the implementation of the Final Document of that session (resolution S-10/2, within the spheres of its competence. In that respect, the arrangements for the World Congress on Disarmament Education constitute UNESCO's most important contribution.

3. A meeting of experts was held in Prague from 4 to 8 June 1979, at the generous invitation of the Czechoslovak Government, to undertake preparations for the World Congress on Disarmament Education. Accordingly, this document contains relevant excerpts of the final report of the Prague meeting (SS-79/CONF.609/5).

4. UNESCO would appreciate any proposal or suggestion the General Assembly might wish to make with regard to arrangements for the World Congress on Disarmament Education or on follow-up activities eventually planned.

II. PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD CONGRESS ON DISARMAMENT EDUCATION

A. Background of the Prague meeting of experts

5. The meeting of experts convened by UNESCO from 3 to 7 April 1978 to discuss the obstacles to disarmament and the ways of overcoming them (final report - SS-78/CONF.613/17) recommended that UNESCO should organize a world congress on disarmament education to be held in 1980. Moreover, in his address to the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (A/S-10/PV.6, pp. 123-138), the Director-General informed the Assembly of the proposal to organize such a congress, which had already received the support of the UNESCO Executive Board in its decision 104 EX/7.1.5, adopted at the one hundred-fourth session. The Assembly welcomed that initiative and asked UNESCO to step up its programme aimed at the development of disarmament education as a distinct field of study.

6. The Director-General submitted the proposal for the organization of a world congress to the one hundred-fifth session of the Executive Board and to the twentieth session of the General Conference. The proposal was approved by both bodies in decision 105 EX/7.1.2 and in resolution 11.1, respectively. The General Conference also adopted resolution 3/2.1/1 concerning the social sciences programme with regard to peace research, contained in the programme and budget for 1979-1980 (20 C/5) and included the following paragraph 3152 concerning the Congress:

"An international congress (category IV) on education in support of disarmament will be organized away from Headquarters in 1980, in consultation with the Education Sector, with a view to identifying practical measures whereby education in support of disarmament may be developed in Member States, in accordance with the Final Document of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament (1978). It will be preceded by a preparatory meeting of experts, also organized away from Headquarters through the assistance of a Member State. In addition, other preparatory activities will be encouraged."

7. In accordance with the previous paragraph, the Director-General decided to accept the invitation of the Government of Czechoslovakia to hold a preparatory expert meeting in Prague.

8. Sixteen experts from different regions of the world, representing various disciplines relevant to education for peace and disarmament, were invited to attend the meeting. The United Nations and those specialized agencies that had concluded mutual representation agreements with UNESCO were also invited to send representatives to the meeting. Several non-governmental organizations were invited to send observers. (The complete list of participants is contained in the appendix of this report.)

B. General discussion

9. The opening meeting was held at Charles University. Mr. Zdeněk Trhlik,

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Deputy-Minister for Foreign Affairs, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Government which, as the representative of the Czechoslovak people, attached the utmost importance to efforts in favour of disarmament. Czechoslovakia had experienced both World Wars, and indeed the second had been triggered by an attack on Czechoslovakia. He expressed the conviction that UNESCO had a vital role to play in all disarmament efforts and in that connexion, he cited UNESCO's Constitution and resolution 11.1, adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session. He thanked the Chancellor of the University for his hospitality in hosting the meeting.

10. The Director-General of UNESCO, Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, then officially opened the meeting. In his address, he placed the work of the meeting within the framework of UNESCO's follow-up activities to the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. While responding directly to the wishes of the Assembly, as expressed in paragraph 107 of the Final Document of that session (resolution S-10/2), the Congress on Disarmament Education planned by UNESCO also responded to the concern expressed by the UNESCO General Conference - in particular in resolutions 13.1 and 11.1 adopted at its nineteenth and twentieth sessions, respectively - to create a climate of public opinion favourable to the halting of the arms race and to the transition to disarmament. The role of education and information - and thus of UNESCO - was a decisive factor, but it had not yet been adequately employed in that process. The aim of the Congress, like that of the congress UNESCO had organized in Vienna in September 1978 on the teaching of human rights, was to give a new impetus to efforts in that field made by UNESCO, by Member States and by the different specialized bodies.

11. Finally, he suggested three approaches to disarmament education:

- (a) To organize the whole educational process in the spirit of disarmament;
- (b) To teach disarmament in the framework of those disciplines which, by their very nature, best lent themselves to it;
- (c) To teach disarmament as a separate discipline.

12. Mr. Karel Vasak, Director of the Division of Human Rights and Peace, presented a general outline of UNESCO's mandate and of its activities in the field of disarmament. He made a distinction, in that respect, between:

- (a) The general mandate of UNESCO in the field of peace and human rights, which derived from its Constitution;
- (b) The specific mandate relating to questions of disarmament, set forth primarily in resolutions 19 C/12.1 and 13.1 and 20 C/10.1 and 11.1 of the General Conference and in decisions 104 EX/7.1.5, 105 EX/7.3 and 107 EX/5.1.7, adopted by the Executive Board.
- (c) The particular mandate concerning disarmament education, which could be found in paragraph 107 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of

General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) and in paragraph 3152 of UNESCO's programme and budget for 1979-1980.

13. Before formulating concrete suggestions on arrangements for the Congress, some participants deemed it useful to examine the meaning of the words "disarmament education". Without attempting to be exhaustive, but rather in order to orient the work of the Congress towards concrete results, they underscored the fact that education for disarmament was an essential element of the more general concept of education for peace. Peace education was not merely an appeal for more rational, non-violent behaviour on the part of individuals, groups or entire nations; nor should peace education be improperly used for political or ideological propaganda. Peace education could not be simply decreed by Governments or other authorities. Before any concrete results could be expected, peace education required a positive attitude, among government and social officials as well as among educators, towards the goals of such education and a positive climate conducive to the maintenance and consolidation of peace in the world. Just like any other discipline, peace education required the effective education of educators. Disarmament education thus formed part of peace education and should be carried out in the spirit of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its nineteenth session (1974). a/ It should take into account all the facts of the disarmament problem and, accordingly, the Congress should be oriented towards projects that were as concrete and realistic as they were creative.

14. Disarmament education was, in itself, a very complex process, comprising political, economic, scientific, psychological and didactic aspects, all of which were equally important. While involving several disciplines, it could also become a field of specialized study, since it required that special attention should be paid to the most relevant disciplines, such as history, geography, international relations, political science, civics, sociology and international law. Emphasis was placed on the need to treat the subject from a human angle, through psychological understanding, and not exclusively from a legal standpoint. However, equal emphasis was placed on the necessity of elaborating an international law of disarmament. The question was also raised of whether a genuine right to disarmament, closely linked to the right to peace and the right to development, should be included among the human rights of a new generation. It would be especially desirable for thinking on the subject to be stimulated and pursued in depth by universities, and in particular by faculties and schools of law.

15. Several participants raised the problem of defining the notion of disarmament itself. Reference was made in that connexion to the various resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, in particular, the Final Document of the tenth special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament, and to conventions concerning armaments limitation. It was pointed out that there were a number of

a/ Records of the General Conference, Eighteenth Session, Paris, 17 October-23 November 1974, Vol. I, Resolutions, pp. 147-154.

definitions of disarmament, but that disarmament itself must, in any event, be distinguished from armaments limitation. Considered as a process aimed at transforming the existing system of armed Nation-States into a new international system in which the State would no longer be armed, disarmament was necessarily linked to the problems of security and development.

16. It seemed necessary, therefore, to couple each step toward disarmament to corresponding steps enhancing security, by adopting, in particular, confidence-building measures and exploring further alternative approaches to defence, such as non-violent civilian action. At the same time the concept of "security" should be broadened. The time had long since passed when security was an exclusively military term. Security meant the protection of individuals, societies and mankind as a whole from any threat, the military threat being only one specific aspect. Famine, underdevelopment, social and political injustices, the suppression of human rights (individual and collective), ruthless exploitation and waste of resources, the pollution of the environment and an unjust international order were other facets of the world-wide threat to humanity. The strengthening of security in those fields meant building up confidence among men and peoples in a way which was conducive to friendly relations and co-operation between peoples. It also meant making an effort to ascertain what the prerequisites were for a feeling of security for different peoples.

17. The question obviously entailed different aspects in different situations and different regions of the world. Consequently, in the context of education, a critical attitude should be adopted as regards the specific characteristics of the problem in each region. In the various States and regions, disarmament was associated not only with international security but also with such other problems as development, social justice, economic and political liberation, political democracy and participation in economic and political life. The kinds of weapons taken into account and the consequences of possessing them could also vary. However, disarmament meant in the long term the general and complete elimination of arms. It should, therefore, be conceived of as an end, whereas education, which made it possible to disseminate the ideas, principles and values of disarmament, constituted the means toward that end.

18. Disarmament education should not be limited to educational institutions: it should also encompass education of the general public, and to that end, the co-operation of the mass media should be actively sought. As regards education of the public, non-governmental organizations had a key role to play. The education of disarmament specialists, including military personnel, should also be included. Lastly, such education required respect of the right to be informed. One expert summed up the unanimous view of his colleagues when he remarked: "Information is a prerequisite for education, especially where minds are to be changed".

C. Discussion concerning arrangements for the Congress

1. General questions

(a) Definition of a Congress

19. The representative of the Director-General pointed out to the meeting that in accordance with the regulations for the general classification of the various categories of meetings convened by UNESCO, a "Congress" belonged to the category of "non-representative" meetings, i.e., meetings at which participants attended in a personal capacity and did not represent States. Participants were either designated individually by the Director-General or accepted by him on the suggestion of Member States or learned societies. It should be noted that these rules did not provide for payment by UNESCO of travel and subsistence expenses of the participants but, as in the case of the International Congress on Education relating to Human Rights, UNESCO would endeavour to provide assistance for the travel of some participants from third world countries. Non-governmental organizations were to be invited to be represented at the Congress by observers. The hope had been expressed, however, that the precedent set at the Congress held in Vienna would be followed and that no distinction would be made in practice between participants and observers.

(b) Current state of preparations for the Congress

20. As regards the dates and venue of the Congress, and the number of participants, the following particulars were provided: it was envisaged at the current stage that the Congress would be held in Panama in spring 1980. It was hoped that there would be at least as many participants as at the International Congress on Teaching on Human Rights, that is, approximately 300 participants.

(c) Aims

21. The aim of the Congress should be to promote disarmament education and not disarmament itself. This should be done by taking specific steps to inform and mobilize those forces capable of contributing effectively to the halting of the arms race and the transition to disarmament. The ultimate objective of the Congress, therefore, would be to increase the attention given to disarmament in the educational process and to encourage a critical attitude among pupils and students so that they would be better prepared to resist propaganda for war and militarism and to exercise their own judgement in respect of the issues involved.

22. In that perspective, the exchange of experience, materials and methods from various regions or countries should occupy an important place in the agenda of the Congress. The same was true of the dissemination of principles, ideas, values, knowledge and facts relating to disarmament in the context of the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security. That was why it was not enough to think of disarmament as opposed to the arms race; it was also and above all necessary to think about non-military alternatives for ensuring security and bringing about mutual trust. One of the objectives of the Congress

was also to establish a network for the exchange of information and experience with a view to the effective development of disarmament education. The Congress should present different perspectives on disarmament and could include an element of debate with experts who were critical of the concept of general and complete disarmament as commonly conceived. An open discussion should be encouraged since an over-simplified presentation of the problems of disarmament would serve no useful purpose.

(d) Participants

23. In order to attain those objectives, it was essential that every effort be made to secure the active participation in the Congress not only of specialists on disarmament but also, and above all, organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, which had specialized expertise or were able to have an impact in this field, as well as organizations concerned with the mass media. In particular, the Congress should provide an opportunity for contacts between those responsible for educational planning at the national level, the leaders of teachers and youth organizations and representatives of trade union, religious and other organizations active in the disarmament field.

(e) Themes of the Congress

24. As to the themes to be dealt with at the Congress, the potential "clientele" of disarmament education should be kept in mind. This "clientele" was to be found within and outside of the educational system and at various levels of the educational process. It could be identified in terms of the particular situations of different regions or countries, in the following manner:

(a) Within the educational system, attention should be paid to curricula, materials and content of education, but especially to the educators themselves; special emphasis should be placed on the socio-affective process. The training of educators in the spirit of disarmament should receive particular attention, as should the teaching of disciplines more directly concerned with disarmament.

(b) Outside the educational system, efforts should be focused on formal, non-formal and informal education of adults, and, in general, on lifelong education, and on information and training through the mass media. The meeting was of the opinion that education in the family and the education of young people and adults should not be neglected.

(f) Financing

25. The participants were aware of the inadequacy of the funds available for the preparation and organization of the Congress. Nonetheless, they expressed the firm hope that at least the same level of resources would be made available for the Congress as had been made available for the Vienna Congress on Education relating to Human Rights. The participants therefore requested the Director-General of UNESCO:

- (a) to release supplementary funds for the Congress in accordance with paragraph 16 of decision 105 EX/7.1.2 of the Executive Board and with paragraph 3b of resolution 20 C/11.1 of the General Conference;
- (b) to encourage Governments to defray the expenses of participating experts from their own countries and to make voluntary contributions towards facilitating the participation of experts from other countries;
- (c) to encourage non-governmental organizations to take similar measures.

2. Preparatory activities for the Congress

(a) Regional meetings

26. Aware of the modest means at the disposal of UNESCO, the majority of participants were of the opinion that regional meetings should be organized preferably after the Congress, whilst hoping that initiatives would be taken in various parts of the world to organize such preparatory meetings.

(b) Specialized meetings

27. Non-governmental organizations of different categories, and especially those whose members were educators and research workers, were invited to organize seminars, study meetings, etc. dealing with the themes of the Congress in order to gather and develop materials, ideas and proposals which could be presented to the Congress and used in disarmament education.

(c) Preparatory documents

28. With regard to preparatory documents, the experts considered particularly important the documents already prepared by UNESCO in this field, as well as reports of meetings of experts, such as the meeting on the obstacles to disarmament and the ways of overcoming them. The same was true for the final document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and certain United Nations studies such as the one on the social and economic consequence of the arms race.

29. The meeting was informed of ongoing studies and surveys being undertaken by UNESCO which the Secretariat would disseminate during the Congress and felt that other papers on the state of disarmament education should be prepared. It was suggested in that connexion that the UNESCO national commissions should be invited to present papers to the Congress concerning the teaching of disarmament in their respective countries.

30. The meeting thought that the survey on the state of disarmament education at the university level should be supplemented by another survey dealing with other levels of education, including teacher training institutions.

31. In addition, several participants expressed the hope that the Congress would be used for displaying teaching materials, including in particular audio-visual ones, and that an inventory of such materials would be prepared for the Congress.

(d) Publicity

32. Prior to the Congress, the mass media and all other means available to UNESCO would have a vital task to perform in making public opinion aware of the need for disarmament education. Research results in this area should be "translated" into language comprehensible to the public at large. Those concerned could avail themselves of the opportunity offered by the annual observation of "United Nations Disarmament Week" from 24 to 30 October each year.

33. The United Nations and all specialized agencies should contribute to this effort. The representative of the United Nations Centre for Disarmament pledged the full support of the Centre for efforts in favour of disarmament education in the spirit of paragraph 107 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (Assembly resolution S-10/2) and informed the experts of studies and publications of the United Nations and of the availability of the latter through United Nations information centres.

34. Effective co-operation from non-governmental organizations and religious bodies was equally indispensable. Non-governmental organizations should pay particular attention to the dissemination of information on the Congress by their national sections.

3. Structure and functioning of the Congress

(a) Commissions to be established

35. Given the limited resources available for the organization of the Congress, the meeting agreed that at least two commissions should be established which, if need be, could be organized into working groups, thus ensuring better participation in the discussions. Accepting the suggestion made by the Director-General of UNESCO in his opening address, it was agreed that the two commissions could work as follows:

- (a) Commission I: Education: formal and non-formal education at different levels; the training of teaching personnel; the development of appropriate teaching material; the revision of existing textbooks, particularly history and geography, etc.
- (b) Commission II: Information: The training of professionals in the field of information, information ethics relating to questions of armament and disarmament, methods of informing the general public, scientific circles, military personnel, etc.

36. It was understood that research questions should be examined in both commissions, in relation both to education and to disarmament information.

(b) Documents to be adopted by the Congress

37. Taking the example of the final document of the Congress of Vienna on the teaching of human rights, the meeting considered that a similar document should be adopted by the Congress, giving high priority to the programme and practical aspects of the subject. Such a document might consist of two parts and one annex:

- (a) The principles and guidelines which should govern disarmament education;
- (b) A limited number of major recommendations aiming at developing such education;
- (c) An annex containing different proposals, recommendations and suggestions made during the Congress. The different measures proposed could be addressed both to UNESCO and its Member States and to governmental organizations and, above all, to the United Nations system, as well as to non-governmental organizations, to religious bodies, scientific associations and to all those who would like to unite their efforts in the struggle for this cause.

4. Follow-up to the Congress

38. The ultimate aim of the Congress being to give a decisive impetus to the development of disarmament education, the Congress should:

- (a) Elaborate several major recommendations that could be included in UNESCO's budget for 1981-1983;
- (b) Elaborate proposals which could be brought before the General Assembly of the United Nations;
- (c) Suggest measures to be taken by Member States and especially by their educational institutions and other appropriate bodies;
- (d) Identify possible concrete activities which could be put into effect by different governmental and non-governmental organizations.

39. Several participants mentioned, by way of example, proposals which might be of interest to the Congress, such as:

- (a) The organization of courses, seminars, etc. on training in the field of disarmament aimed specially at teachers of geography, history, international relations and related subjects;
- (b) The setting up of a permanent working group on disarmament education which would consist of representatives of interested organizations and which would have as its task to monitor the implementation of the final document adopted by the Congress;
- (c) The setting up of regional documentation centres on disarmament as a service for disarmament education;
- (d) The periodical organization of a World Congress and Regional Congresses on disarmament education.

APPENDIX

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Experts

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B. Representatives of the United Nations and organizations of the United Nations system

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(2) Observers from non-governmental organizations

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World Peace Council
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Peace Committee, World Peace Council
Professor A. STEJSKAL - Chairman

World Federation of United Nations Associations
Mr. Frank FIELD, Secretary-General

International Association of Universities
Mr. Georges DAILLANT, Deputy Secretary-General

World Federation of Trade Unions
Mr. Mario RAMOS, Counsellor

World Federation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession
Mr. L. H. PERERA, Special Assistant for the Asian Region

Category B

World Veterans Federation
Mr. Reidan SOOT (Norway)

International Federation of Resistance Movements
Mr. Zygmunt BIESZCZAMIN, Deputy Secretary-General

World Federation of Democratic Youth
Mr. Marek NOWICKI, Member of the Bureau

International Union of Students
Mr. Witold MAWROCKI, Deputy Chairman

Category C

World Council for Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. J. de J. DIAZ (See Section A - experts)

War Resisters International
Mr. Michael J. RANDLE

Christian Peace Conference
Mr. Klaus EHRLER, Member of International Staff

Others

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
Mr. Ulf REINIUS - Researcher, Military Expert

NGO (UNESCO) Standing Committee
Mr. Georges MALEMPRE, Chairman

D. UNESCO secretariat

Mr. Karel VASAK, Director, Division of Human Rights and Peace

Mr. Stephen P. MARKS, Programme Specialist, Division of Human Rights and Peace, Secretary of the meeting

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