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VERIFICATION IN ALL ITS ASPECTS

Report of the First Committee

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Verification in all its aspects" was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-third session in accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/42 F of 30 November 1987.
2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1988, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.
3. At its 2nd meeting, on 12 October, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on the disarmament items allocated to it, namely items 51 to 69, 139, 141 and 145. The deliberations on those items took place at the 3rd to 25th meetings, from 17 October to 2 November (see A/C.1/43/PV.3-25). Consideration of and action on draft resolutions on those items took place between 3 and 18 November (see A/C.1/43/PV.26-43).
4. In connection with item 139, the First Committee had before it the following documents:
 - (a) Report of the Disarmament Commission; 1/

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/43/42).

(h) Letter dated 29 September 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final documents adopted by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Nicosia from 5 to 10 September 1988 (A/43/667-S/20212).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.1

5. On 24 October, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Romania and Spain submitted a draft resolution entitled "Verification in all its aspects" (A/C.1/43/L.1), which was also later sponsored by Costa Rica, the German Democratic Republic, Portugal, Samoa, Thailand, Uruguay and Zaire. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Canada at the 26th meeting, on 3 November, and read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 40/152 O of 16 December 1985, 41/86 Q of 4 December 1986 and 42/42 F of 30 November 1987,

"Recalling also the convergence of views on the subject of verification at the fifteenth special session of the General Assembly,

"Conscious of the urgent need to reach agreements on arms limitation and disarmament measures capable of contributing to the maintenance of peace and security,

"Convinced that, if such measures are to be effective, they must be fair and balanced and acceptable to all parties, their substance must be clear and compliance with them must be evident,

"Noting that the critical importance of verification of and compliance with agreements is universally recognized,

"Reaffirming its conviction, as expressed in paragraph 91 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, 2/ adopted by consensus at that session, its first special session devoted to disarmament, that in order to facilitate the conclusion and effective implementation of disarmament agreements and to create confidence, States should accept appropriate provisions for verification in such agreements,

2/ Resolution S-10/2.

"Reiterating its view that:

"(a) Disarmament and arms limitation agreements should provide for adequate and effective measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned in order to create the necessary confidence and to ensure that they are being observed by all parties;

"(b) The form and modalities of the verification to be provided for in any specific agreement depend upon and should be determined by the purposes, scope and nature of the agreement;

"(c) Agreements should provide for the participation of parties directly or through United Nations organs in the verification process;

"(d) Where appropriate, a combination of several methods of verification as well as other compliance procedures should be employed,

"Recalling that:

"(a) In the context of international disarmament negotiations, the problem of verification should be further examined and adequate methods and procedures in this field should be considered;

"(b) Every effort should be made to develop appropriate methods and procedures that are non-discriminatory and that do not unduly interfere with the internal affairs of other States or jeopardise their economic and social development,

"Believing that verification techniques should be developed as an objective means of determining compliance with agreements and appropriately taken into account in the course of disarmament negotiations,

"Having examined the report of the Disarmament Commission, 3/

"1. Calls upon Member States to increase their efforts towards achieving agreements on balanced, mutually acceptable, comprehensively verifiable and effective arms limitation and disarmament measures;

"2. Urges individual Member States and groups of Member States possessing verification expertise to consider means by which they can contribute to, and promote the inclusion of, adequate and effective verification measures in arms limitation and disarmament agreements;

"3. Notes with satisfaction the completion by the Disarmament Commission of its work on the subject of verification in all its aspects;

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Special Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/S-15/3).

"4. Endorses the general principles of verification, drawn up by the Disarmament Commission and contained in its report, 4/ which elaborate upon or add to those principles stated in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly; 2/

"5. Recognises that multilateral aspects of the verification of arms limitation and disarmament agreements deserve further in-depth consideration;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General to undertake, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, an in-depth study of the role of the United Nations in this field which would:

"(a) Identify and review existing activities of the United Nations in the field of verification of arms limitation and disarmament;

"(b) Assess the need for improvements of existing activities as well as explore and identify possible additional activities, taking into account organisational, technical, operational, legal and cost aspects; and

"(c) Provide specific recommendations for future action by the United Nations in this context;

"7. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the subject to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session in 1990;

"8. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fifth session the item entitled 'Verification in all its aspects'."

6. At the request of the sponsors, no action was taken on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.1.

B. Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.2

7. On 25 October, Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania submitted a draft resolution entitled "Verification within the United Nations" (A/C.1/43/L.2). The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Sweden at the 28th meeting, on 7 November, and read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling that, since the process of disarmament affects the vital security interests of all States, they must all be actively concerned with and contribute to the measures of disarmament and arms limitation,

4/ Ibid., para. 60.

"Reaffirming its conviction that the role and responsibility of the United Nations in the sphere of disarmament, in accordance with its Charter, must be strengthened,

"Noting that the critical importance of verification of and compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements is universally recognised,

"Stressing that the United Nations, in accordance with its central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament, has an important role to play in the context of verification of compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements,

"Recalling the agreement of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in 1987 ^{5/} that the United Nations should examine the possibility of compiling and managing a verification data base,

"1. Endorses the principle of a multilateral verification system within the United Nations as an integral part of a strengthened multilateral framework required to ensure peace and security during the process of disarmament and in a nuclear-free world;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to undertake, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, an in-depth study of the role of the United Nations in the field of verification of arms limitation and disarmament agreements, including preparations for an outline of a multilateral verification system within the United Nations, and in the course of this work:

"(a) To identify and review existing activities of the United Nations in the field of verification of arms limitation and disarmament;

"(b) To assess the need for improvements of existing activities as well as to explore and identify possible additional activities, taking into account organisational, technical, operational, legal and financial aspects; and

"(c) To provide specific recommendations for future action by the United Nations in this context, including those related to the implementation of the principle of a multilateral verification system;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the subject to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session in 1990;

"4. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fifth session the item entitled 'Verification in all its aspects'."

5/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/42/42), para. 46, report of Working Group IV, para. 11.

8. At the request of the sponsors, no action was taken on draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.2.

C. Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.53

9. On 31 October, Australia, Austria, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, the German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United States of America and Zaire submitted a draft resolution entitled "Compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements" (A/C.1/43/L.53), which was later also sponsored by Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, El Salvador, Morocco, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Thailand and Uruguay. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the United States of America at the 27th meeting, on 4 November.

10. At its 43rd meeting, on 18 November, the Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote (see para. 14, draft resolution A).

D. Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.75

11. On 16 November, Argentina, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Belgium, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Samoa, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Zaire submitted a draft resolution entitled "Study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification" (A/C.1/43/L.75), which was later also sponsored by Bulgaria and Hungary. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Sweden at the 41st meeting, on 17 November.

12. In this connection, the Secretary-General submitted a statement on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution (A/C.1/43/L.81 and Corr.1).

13. At its 43rd meeting, on 18 November, the Committee adopted the draft resolution by a recorded vote of 130 to 1 (see para. 14, draft resolution B). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana,

Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamhiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: None.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

14. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Verification in all its aspects

A

Compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 42/38 M of 30 November 1987,

Conscious of the abiding concern of all Member States for preserving respect for rights and obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law,

Convinced that observance of the Charter of the United Nations, relevant treaties and other sources of international law is essential for the strengthening of international security,

Mindful, in particular, of the fundamental importance of full implementation and strict observance of agreements on arms limitation and disarmament if individual nations and the international community are to derive enhanced security from them,

Stressing that any violation of such agreements not only adversely affects the security of States parties but can also create security risks for other States relying on the constraints and commitments stipulated in those agreements,

Stressing further that any weakening of confidence in such agreements diminishes their contribution to global or regional stability and to further disarmament and arms limitation efforts and undermines the credibility and effectiveness of the international legal system,

Recognizing in this context that, inter alia, full confidence in compliance with existing agreements can enhance the negotiation of arms limitation and disarmament agreements,

Believing that compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements by States parties is, therefore, a matter of interest and concern to all members of the international community, and noting the role that the United Nations could play in that regard,

Convinced that resolution of non-compliance questions that have arisen with regard to agreements on arms limitations and disarmament would contribute to better relations among States and the strengthening of world peace and security,

1. Urges all States parties to arms limitation and disarmament agreements to implement and comply with the entirety of the provisions of such agreements;

2. Calls upon all Member States to give serious consideration to the implications of non-compliance with those obligations for international security and stability, as well as for the prospects for further progress in the field of disarmament;

3. Further calls upon all Member States to support efforts aimed at the resolution of non-compliance questions, with a view to encouraging strict observance by all parties of the provisions of arms limitation and disarmament agreements and maintaining or restoring the integrity of such agreements;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to provide Member States with assistants that may be necessary in this regard;

5. Welcomes efforts by States parties to develop additional co-operative measures, as appropriate, that can increase confidence in compliance with existing arms limitation and disarmament agreements, and reduce the possibility of misinterpretation and misunderstanding;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session the item entitled "Compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements".

B

Study on the role of the United Nations in the
field of verification

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 40/152 O of 16 December 1985, 41/86 Q of 4 December 1986 and 42/42 F of 30 November 1987,

Underlining the important role that the United Nations, in accordance with its Charter, has to play in the sphere of disarmament,

Recalling that all the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations and that, consequently, all States have the duty to contribute to efforts in the field of disarmament,

Noting that the critical importance of verification of and compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements is universally recognised,

Stressing that the issue of verification of and compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements is a matter of concern to all nations,

Reiterating its view that:

(a) Disarmament and arms limitation agreements should provide for adequate and effective measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned in order to create the necessary confidence and to ensure that they are being observed by all parties;

(b) The form and modalities of the verification to be provided for in any specific agreement depend upon and should be determined by the purposes, scope and nature of the agreement;

(c) Agreements should provide for the participation of parties directly or through United Nations organs in the verification process;

(d) Where appropriate, a combination of several methods of verification as well as other compliance procedures should be employed;

Recalling that:

(a) In the context of international disarmament negotiations, the problem of verification should be further examined and adequate methods and procedures in this field should be considered;

(b) Every effort should be made to develop appropriate methods and procedures that are non-discriminatory and that do not interfere unduly with the internal affairs of other States or jeopardize their economic and social development,

Conscious of the fact that the United Nations is already playing a useful role in the field of verification,

Taking note of all proposals that have been put forward in the field of verification by Member States, including those by Canada and the Netherlands, France and the countries of the Six Nation Initiative, 6/

1. Recognizes that the United Nations, in accordance with its role and responsibilities established under the Charter, can make a significant contribution in the field of verification, in particular of multilateral agreements;

2. Notes with satisfaction the completion by the Disarmament Commission of its work on the subject of verification in all its aspects;

3. Endorses the general principles of verification drawn up by the Disarmament Commission and contained in its report; 7/

4. Requests the Secretary-General to undertake, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, an in-depth study of the role of the United Nations in the field of verification that would:

(a) Identify and review existing activities of the United Nations in the field of verification of arms limitation and disarmament;

(b) Assess the need for improvements in existing activities as well as explore and identify possible additional activities, taking into account organisational, technical, operational, legal and financial aspects;

(c) Provide specific recommendations for future action by the United Nations in this context;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the subject to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fifth session the item entitled "Verification in all its aspects".

6/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Special Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/S-15/3), sect. III.2, para. 60.

7/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Special Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/S-15/3), sect. I, para. 60.