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AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE
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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 11TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ORTIZ DE ROZAS (Argentina)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 9, 10, 11 and 12 (continued)

REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE PRESSING NEED TO ACHIEVE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF DISARMAMENT, THE CONTINUATION OF THE ARMS RACE AND THE CLOSE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISARMAMENT, INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN DISARMAMENT AND OF THE INTERNATIONAL MACHINERY FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON DISARMAMENT, INCLUDING IN PARTICULAR THE QUESTION OF CONVENING A WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to inform representatives of some aspects of the organization of our work that have been under consideration by the Bureau.

In the Bureau - which, as the Committee knows, is made up of the Chairmen of Working Groups A and B as Vice-Chairmen of this Committee - there was a consensus on the following points.

First, Working Groups A and B should conclude their substantive work on 21 June. On 22 June each Working Group will adopt its report to the Ad Hoc Committee.

Secondly, the draft reports will be submitted to the Working Groups by the Secretariat at the beginning of their meetings on 22 June, that is, at about 10.30 in the morning, and each Working Group will then consider its draft report during the day so as to adopt it in the course of its afternoon meeting of that day, 22 June, at the latest.

(The Chairman)

Thirdly, to be able to meet these target dates, the Working Groups should have concluded their work on the morning of 21 June, so that their Secretaries will have the time needed to prepare the draft reports and to submit them to the Chairmen of the Working Groups. This obviously means that the drafting groups will have to complete their work by the end of this day on 20 June.

Fourthly, the two reports will be submitted as Conference Room Papers, in English only, on the understanding that they will be translated and distributed in all official languages when the Ad Hoc Committee has approved them.

Fifthly, an entire day will be needed for the translation and reproduction of the reports in all official languages and for their distribution as official documents of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Does any delegation wish to speak either on the procedural arrangements for our work or on the announcements I have made with regard to the concluding dates for the work of the Drafting Groups and the Working Groups?

Mr. KOH (Singapore): In the light of the progress that has been made in the two Working Groups, I should like to ask you, Mr. Chairman, whether the dateline of 21 June is a realistic dateline? Has this been discussed by you and the members of the Bureau?

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): Indeed, we did discuss this with the members of the Bureau. The date originally scheduled was 20 June; and precisely because of the considerations which the representative of Singapore has just stated, it was decided to postpone the conclusion of the work of those Groups by one day to 21 June. But, as I have duly reported to this Committee, if we are to conclude the work of the General Assembly on 28 June, two days will have to be set aside for the approval of the final document and to hear all those delegations which wish to make statements in the plenary Assembly. Monday, 26 June, will have to be set aside for the

(The Chairman)

preparation of the final documents, and Thursday and Friday, 22 and 23 June, will be set aside for consideration of the Working Groups' reports here in the Ad Hoc Committee. So we really do not have much latitude to set other dates than the ones I have mentioned.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I have before me Conference Room Paper WG.B/DG.2/CRP.2 of 12 June 1978, entitled "Parts of the Programme of Action as discussed and amended in Drafting Group No. 2 of Working Group B", and would refer to the part of its section E under the subheading "Addition to last paragraph of Section", on page 11.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

Now, with regard to paragraph 1 of our proposed addition: on several occasions the General Assembly has expressed concern over the negative consequences of the arms race both for the individual State and for the world as a whole. Several reports have been submitted by the Secretary-General on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and of military expenditures, the last one being before this special session. The General Assembly has also decided to keep the issue of the consequences of the arms race under constant review. It is against this background that Cyprus proposed, in paragraph 1, that the Secretary-General should periodically submit reports to the General Assembly on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and its extremely harmful effects on international peace and security.

With regard to paragraph 2 of our proposed addition: in pursuance of resolution 32/87 C of the last session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General submitted to the special session a progress report on the interrelationship between disarmament and international security. I should like to recall here that in the general debate of this special session, a large number of speakers referred to this question, and the President of my own country proposed that the study initiated by the Secretary-General should be continued with the assistance of experts appointed by the Secretary-General. The progress report, which is contained in document A/S-10/7 describes the area to be covered by the study and the problems involved. In view of the existing limitations of the United Nations Secretariat, we feel that the study should be continued by a group of experts, and consequently we propose the inclusion in the final document of the following text:

"The Secretary-General shall, with the assistance of consultant experts, appointed by him, continue the study of the interrelationship between disarmament and international security and submit it to the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, as requested in resolution A/RES/32/87 C".

With regard to paragraph 3 of the addition: there has been wider support for strengthening the United Nations capacity in the field of promoting peace. Now, a number of delegations have stressed the importance of the preventive measures and activities relating to implementation of the means provided for in the Charter

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

to settle international disputes by peaceful means. The Secretary-General of the United Nations himself has stressed repeatedly what he called "preventive diplomacy functions" of his office. My delegation feels that the General Assembly should develop the means already available to it, and more exactly the provisions of Article 33 of the Charter, and it is in this light that my delegation proposed the inclusion in the final document of this special session the following text:

"The General Assembly should proceed to the establishment of a commission to deal with conflict-preventing measures and, in particular, by resort to full use and appropriate development of the means and modalities envisaged in Article 33 of the Charter for the peaceful settlement of international disputes".

This is a matter of great importance because, so far, there has been no committee or other body set up to develop the means provided for in Chapter VI for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Nothing has been done to develop either the arbitration, mediation, inquiry or negotiation modalities for settling disputes. This is why we believe that the paragraph that Cyprus has proposed should be included in the final document.

Mr. CARPIO CASTILLO (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): We should briefly like to state our views on the various proposals that have been submitted to this Committee. We have studied each one of them very carefully and we note that all, in one way or another, could, if they had the support of the member countries of this Assembly, introduce useful and effective instruments to accelerate the disarmament process, which is one of the major objectives of the international community.

We have found that some of the proposals contain similar ideas and make similar points. In our opinion, that is the case with the proposal of France on the establishment of a research institute for disarmament, and that of a group of countries headed by Austria, contained in document A/S-10/AC.1/29, on the establishment of an advisory board to be made up of eminent persons and the proposal of Uruguay in document A/S-10/AC.1/25. It is our hope that this Assembly will be able to consolidate these ideas so that they can be combined into a single text reflecting the spirit of these proposals.

(Mr. Carpio Castillo, Venezuela)

We have been pleased to read the proposals intended to strengthen or to establish specialized bodies for research, study and dissemination of information on disarmament. Along these same lines which link disarmament to education, the delegation of Venezuela, together with the delegations of Nigeria and Sierra Leone, agrees in affirming the need to create an anti-armaments consciousness at the level of world public opinion by the systematic use of all available information media and the need to develop education programmes on disarmament, as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is now doing. Furthermore, we have recognized the urgency of training to a high technical level professionals specializing in the field of disarmament, particularly in the developing countries; and this is why we support the proposal of the delegation of Nigeria.

We believe that other proposals submitted also have undoubted merit, and we therefore wish to confirm our support for them here. For example, the proposals of France on the establishment of a disarmament fund for development and the complementary proposal of Mexico on opening an ad hoc provisional account in the United Nations Development Programme until such time as the Fund proposed by France could be set up. We agree with all those delegations that have spoken of the need to improve negotiating and deliberative machinery as regards disarmament and to strengthen the link between the United Nations General Assembly and the negotiating body. We support the proposals of the Federal Republic of Germany and of Sweden on seismological verification and on the international workshop for monitoring chemical weapons. We also support proposals such as that of Viet Nam, a country which from its own painful experience knows the horrible sufferings of war, proposals relating to the establishment of regional zones of peace with the hope that in time the entire world will be a single and complete zone of peace.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union have made valuable proposals that deserve our attention and which, if implemented, would represent important steps towards disarmament.

(Mr. Carpio Castillo, Venezuela)

It is they who have accumulated the largest quantity of destructive arms and it is therefore they who have the greatest and most serious responsibility in the disarmament process.

Being aware that Japan was the first victim of the horrors of atomic weapons and in the hope that those horrors will not be repeated, we support the Japanese proposal to designate 6 August each year as World Disarmament Day. In that way mankind will always be reminded that there must be no more Hiroshimas or Nagasakis.

Lastly, I should like to express the feelings of my delegation which, with the firm conviction that there are many common points in the proposals presented and in the positions taken, also hopes that there would be the necessary meeting of minds and political wills among the States represented here on matters and issues still outstanding so that we may really move forward towards disarmament which is the only way to world peace.

Mr. ELLIOTT (Belgium) (interpretation from French): In his statement in a plenary meeting, the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, speaking on the question of machinery, announced that Belgium would support any useful proposal to strengthen the effectiveness of the machinery involved. I should like to speak in detail on that matter.

We are all agreed in recognizing that so far as disarmament goes the action of the international community should take place at two levels: that of deliberations and guidelines first and that of negotiation afterwards. Two types of bodies are required therefore: the deliberative body must, by its very nature, be universal. It is at that level that guidelines must be given and appraisals of the situation must be made. It is at that level also that the application of the programme of action must be supervised - that programme on which, I still believe, we will achieve agreement.

It seems to us that the First Committee of the General Assembly could be that deliberative body.

Various people have mentioned the need to resuscitate the United Nations Disarmament Commission. My country would certainly have no objections in

(Mr. Elliott, Belgium)

principle to that. But, with the present state of affairs, we do not see clearly what the Disarmament Commission could undertake which is not possible in the First Committee of the General Assembly.

The international community should also have a negotiating body at its disposal. That role is assumed today by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD). The problem here is to reconcile two principles which seem contradictory: that of universality, on the one hand, which confers on each country the right to participate fully in the work; and that of effectiveness on the other, for which it is reasonable to limit effective participation in the negotiating work to a relatively small number of countries.

The criteria for participation should be as follows: effective participation of all nuclear Powers, of the principal military Powers and, in general, of all those who have a contribution to make to disarmament progress.

One must also respect a balanced geographical and political distribution. It does not seem to us that the CCD in its present form answers all these criteria. Participation in it is neither complete nor balanced. The present structure and, more particularly, the system of co-chairmanship, is not in line with the political situation at the present time and, in fact, hampers full participation. We suggest, therefore, that that body should be reformed so that it can effectively play the role which devolves upon it.

What then, according to Belgium, ought to be the elements needed for reform? First, the CCD should be transformed in accordance with a decision taken by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Only a decision at that level can confer on the negotiating body that general recognition and, I am tempted to say, that legitimacy without which it will not be able to fulfil its function. Thus the universal nature of the decision would coincide with acceptance by all of a restricted participation in that body.

(Mr. Elliott, Belgium)

Secondly, while participation should be limited, it should be expanded compared to the present membership of the CCD. Those who are members now would remain members; expansion of the membership would not only allow for the membership of France and China but also for that of a number of non-nuclear States which, in one way or another, have an effective contribution to make to the work.

Thirdly, participation should be organized on the basis of an equitable geographical and political balance.

Fourthly, all countries could participate in the work of the negotiating body as observers. Furthermore, they would be allowed to make proposals on the various items on the agenda. Thus the consideration of any proposal would authorize the author of the proposal to take full part in the work and in the decision-making process on an equal footing with the members of the negotiating body.

Fifthly, the present system of co-chairmanship should probably be replaced by a rotational system. Belgium, not being a member of the CCD, cannot make specific proposals on this point.

Sixthly, the negotiating body should have complete functional autonomy with respect to the United Nations. It should decide on its own rules of procedure on the basis of a consensus which should also provide rules for the decision-making process.

Seventhly, quite apart from the possibilities of rotation among the geographical and political groupings, participation must not appear to be an absolute right for some and exclusion a matter of principle in the case of others. The membership of the negotiating body should thus remain subject to revision within a reasonable time-limit.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.