

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/434
17 February 1984

ENGLISH
Original RUSSIAN

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS OF THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Memorandum of a group of socialist States

1. A group of socialist States members of the Conference on Disarmament recalls the provision in paragraph 120 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament, according to which the Conference on Disarmament, previously designated as the Committee on Disarmament, is "a single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum", and also rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the Conference, which describes it as "a disarmament negotiating forum". The General Assembly of the United Nations has repeatedly appealed to the Committee on Disarmament to undertake negotiations. In particular, resolution 38/183 I, entitled "Report of the Committee on Disarmament", once again urges the Conference "to continue or undertake, during its session to be held in 1984, substantive negotiations on the priority questions of disarmament on its agenda ... and, in order to reach that goal, to provide the existing ad hoc working groups with appropriate negotiating mandates and to establish, as a matter of urgency, the ad hoc working groups on the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, on the prevention of nuclear war and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space".

2. Emphasizing the character of the Conference on Disarmament as a negotiating forum, the group of socialist States expresses concern at the fact that this negotiating body is, in substance, failing to perform its designated function and tending to turn into yet another deliberative body in the disarmament field. The main cause of this abnormal situation, in the socialist countries' view, are attempts to convert the Conference into a forum for academic discussions and to put up a series of preliminary conditions for the holding of negotiations. Such an approach, in the socialist countries' view, runs counter both to the terms of reference provided for the Conference in the Final Document and to its own rules of procedure.

3. The group of Socialist countries proceeds from the fact that the subsidiary bodies of the Conference on Disarmament, a negotiating forum, must have the possibility to conduct the appropriate negotiations. Only technical groups or groups of governmental experts, mentioned in rule 23 of the rules of procedure, may form an exception.

The question of the establishment of subsidiary bodies must be solved in a manner organically linked with the elaboration of an appropriate negotiating mandate. An artificial division between solving the question of the establishment of subsidiary bodies and reaching agreement on their mandate merely creates loopholes to conceal the unwillingness of certain States to conduct negotiations.

4. Attempts made in the past to set up subsidiary bodies having no mandate to hold negotiations have shown that, despite the hopes placed in them in certain quarters, discussions in subsidiary bodies of this kind fail to lead to any constructive development of the position adopted by the opponents of negotiations.

5. In that connection, the group of socialist States proposes that in the course of the 1984 session subsidiary bodies should be established on all substantive items on the Conference agenda with mandates providing for the holding of negotiations. The group notes with satisfaction that the mandates of subsidiary bodies on the items "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons" and "Comprehensive programme of disarmament" for the period of the 1983 session already provided for the holding of appropriate negotiations, as well as the fact that in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the agenda item "Chemical weapons" a recommendation was adopted to provide the corresponding subsidiary body which might be established at the 1984 session with a mandate "to start the full and complete process of negotiations, developing and working out the convention, except for its final drafting".

With regard to the remaining substantive items of the agenda, the group of socialist States considers that it would be expedient to provide the following mandates:

(1) Subsidiary body on agenda item 1, "Nuclear test ban".

"The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish for the duration of its 1984 session, an ad hoc subsidiary body to negotiate on a Treaty prohibiting all nuclear-weapon tests, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives. The ad hoc subsidiary body will report to the Conference on Disarmament on the progress of its work at the end of the second part of its 1984 session."

(2) Subsidiary body on agenda item 2, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and clear disarmament".

"The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish, for the duration of its 1984 session, an ad hoc subsidiary body for negotiations on the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament in accordance with paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and especially to elaborate a nuclear-disarmament programme. The ad hoc subsidiary body will report to the Conference on Disarmament on the progress of its work at the end of the second part of its 1984 session."

(3) Subsidiary body on agenda item 3, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters".

"The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish, for the duration of its 1984 session, an ad hoc subsidiary body for negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on appropriate and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war, taking into account the documents referred to in General Assembly resolution 37/78 I as well as other existing proposals and future initiatives. The ad hoc subsidiary body will report to the Conference on Disarmament on the progress of its work at the end of the second part of its 1984 session."

(4) Subsidiary body on agenda item 5, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

"The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish, for the duration of its 1984 session, an ad hoc subsidiary body with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space, taking into account all relevant proposals, including the consideration of the proposal for a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. The ad hoc subsidiary body will report to the Conference on Disarmament on the progress of its work at the end of the second part of its 1984 session."

(5) Subsidiary body on agenda item 7, "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, radiological weapons".

"The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish, for the duration of its 1984 session, an ad hoc subsidiary body for

(a) Negotiations, with the assistance of qualified governmental experts, with a view to preparing a draft comprehensive agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, and to draft possible agreements on particular types of such weapons,

(b) Negotiations with a view to reaching agreement on a convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons,

(c) Negotiations with a view to solving the question of prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities, including the scope of such prohibition, taking into account all proposals submitted to the Conference to this end.

The ad hoc subsidiary body will report to the Conference on Disarmament on the progress of its negotiations in all three areas at the end of the second part of its 1984 session."

6. At the same time, the group of socialist States indicates that it takes a positive view of proposals repeatedly advanced concerning the desirability of preparing standard terms of reference for subsidiary bodies of the Conference on Disarmament, which, of course, would provide for the holding of negotiations on the appropriate issues.

7. With regard to the designation of the ad hoc subsidiary bodies of the Conference on Disarmament, the group of socialist States proceeds from the need to make full use of the provisions contained in rule 23 of the rules of procedure of the Conference. In particular, the group of socialist countries considers that it would be logical, in view of the change of name of the single multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament from "Committee" to "Conference", also to consider the question of appropriately changing the designation of its subsidiary bodies in accordance with the rules of procedure

8. Providing the subsidiary bodies of the Conference on Disarmament with the possibility of holding negotiations does not, of course, represent a guarantee of the successful solution of the problems facing it. There have been repeated cases of late where certain States have engaged in negotiations for the sake of negotiations, done everything to sidestep the solution of important issues, and failed to show the flexibility and political will necessary in order to reach agreement. Nevertheless, in the view of the group of socialist States, to provide the subsidiary bodies of the Conference on Disarmament with mandates to hold negotiations would render attempts to avoid serious negotiations more difficult and make them more obvious.