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EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO IMPLEMENT THE PURPOSES AND
OBJECTIVES OF THE DISARMAMENT DECADE

Report of the Secretary-General

1. By resolution 31/68 of 10 December 1976, the General Assembly made, inter alia, the following recommendations concerning effective measures to implement the purposes and objectives of the disarmament decade:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"4. Calls upon Member States and the Secretary-General to intensify their efforts in support of the link between disarmament and development, envisaged in General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV) on the Disarmament Decade, so as to promote disarmament negotiations and to ensure that the human and material resources freed by disarmament are used to promote economic and social development, particularly in the developing countries;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure a proper co-ordination of disarmament and development activities within the United Nations system of organizations and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session."

2. The Secretary-General has, through the years, sought to contribute to decision-making by the world community on the relation between the two goals of disarmament and development. In 1972, for instance, he submitted to the General Assembly a report prepared by a group of experts appointed by him under the terms of General Assembly resolution 2685 (XXV), which was entitled Disarmament and Development. 1/ The report contained a number of conclusions and recommendations.

1/ ST/ECA/174 and Corr.1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.73.IX.1).

3. On 12 August 1977 the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly a report entitled "Economic and social consequences of the arms race and of military expenditures" (A/32/88 and Corr.1), prepared with the assistance of consultant experts appointed by him pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3462 (XXX). Attention is drawn, in particular, to that part of the report dealing with the question of the relationship between disarmament and development (paras. 170 and 172-174).

4. Expert groups, appointed by the Secretary-General, studying various aspects of the reduction of military budgets in 1974, 1976 and 1977, included in their reports considerations related to the transfer of funds that might be saved as a result of reducing military expenditures. 2/

5. In addition, having in mind the continuing arms race, the Secretary-General stated the following in his report on the work of the Organization dated 1 September 1977:

"... This is happening in a world which has accepted the objective of a new international economic order and which urgently requires all its energy and resources to meet a series of urgent human problems. ... In a world where scientific and technological capability is one of the keys to the future, 25 per cent of the world's scientific manpower and 40 per cent of all research and development spending is engaged for military purposes.

"... Disarmament must therefore be a vital part not only of our efforts to establish a better system of international peace and security, but also of our attempts to restructure the economic and social order of the world.

"The relation between disarmament and development has, for some years, been the subject of international debate and there is, as a result, widespread concern to find practical and concrete ways to effect a reduction of military budgets and to transfer human and material resources to areas of development that sorely need them. It is evident that further comprehensive study is needed of this problem if we are to make more substantive progress."
(A/32/1, pp. 12 and 13). 3/

6. Mention should also be made of the fact that, following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 31/68, and pursuant to resolution 31/90 on the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, the Centre for Disarmament was established, within the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, as part of the United Nations Secretariat. The Centre ensures the co-ordination of disarmament-related activities within the Secretariat

2/ A/9970/Rev.1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.I.10), chaps. II, III and VI and annex III; A/31/222/Rev.1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.I.6), chap. I, paras. 6-11; and A/32/194, paras. 5-15, 98 and 106.

3/ To be issued in printed form as Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/32/1).

and maintains relations with organizations of the United Nations system with a view to achieving co-ordination of such activities within the system.

7. In the light of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 31/68, as quoted above, the question of proper co-ordination of disarmament and development activities within the United Nations system of organizations was examined within the framework of the Administrative Committee of Co-ordination in the spring of 1977. The conclusion was reached that there was no need to change the methods of co-ordinating disarmament activities since these were working satisfactorily. Note was taken, however, of several recent developments in the field of disarmament, including the steps taken by the General Assembly to enhance the role of the United Nations in that field.

8. The situation could be reviewed from time to time in order to continue to ensure proper co-ordination of disarmament and development activities within the United Nations system of organizations.
