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Agenda item 49

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Kedar Bhakta SHRESTHA (Nepal)

1. The item entitled

"General and complete disarmament:

"(a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament;

"(b) Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency;

"(c) Report of the Secretary-General."

was included in the provisional agenda of the thirty-first session on the basis of General Assembly resolutions 3484 A and C (XXX) of 11 December 1976.

2. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 24 September 1976, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in the agenda of the thirty-first session and to allocate it to the First Committee,

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 5 October, the First Committee decided to hold a combined general debate on the items allocated to it relating to disarmament, namely, items 34 to 50 and 116. The general debate on these items took place at the 20th to 39th meetings, from 1 to 19 November.

4. The First Committee had before it, in connexion with agenda item 49, the following documents:

(a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament; 1/

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/31/27).

(b) Letter dated 7 July 1976 from the representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/31/125);

(c) Annual report for 1975 of the International Atomic Energy Agency (A/31/171);

(d) Letter dated 1 September 1976 from the permanent representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the decisions of the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Colombo from 16 to 19 August 1976 (A/31/197);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3484 A (XXX) (A/31/224);

(f) Letter dated 28 September 1976 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Secretary-General transmitting a memorandum of the Soviet Union on disarmament (A/31/232);

(g) Letter dated 26 November 1976 from the permanent representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.1/31/10).

5. On 8 November, Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bhutan, Brazil, Cyprus, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Republic, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire and Zambia submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/31/L.7). The draft resolution was subsequently revised (A/C.1/31/L.7/Rev.1 and Rev.2) and also sponsored by Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Botswana, Burundi, Canada, Chad, the Congo, Cuba, Ecuador, Germany, Federal Republic of, Guinea, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Madagascar, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mozambique, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Niger, Norway, Panama, the Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Spain, the Sudan, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, the United Republic of Cameroon and the Upper Volta. It was introduced by Sri Lanka at the 44th meeting on 21 November. A statement on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution was submitted by the Secretary-General on 1 December 1976 (A/C.1/31/L.40).

6. On 22 November, Bolivia, Colombia, Denmark, El Salvador, Ghana, Ireland, Japan, Liberia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines and Singapore submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/31/L.20), which was subsequently also sponsored by Ecuador, Iceland, Paraguay, Venezuela and the United Republic of Cameroon. This draft resolution was introduced by Japan at the 41st meeting, on 23 November. A statement on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution was submitted by the Secretary-General on 30 November (A/C.1/31/L.35). Also on 30 November, Pakistan submitted amendments to the draft resolution (A/C.1/31/L.36). At the 49th meeting, on 2 December, Japan announced that certain modifications to A/C.1/31/L.20 had been agreed following consultations with Pakistan, and the latter agreed that the amendments in A/C.1/31/L.36 would not be pressed to a vote.

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7. At the same meeting, India moved to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion. The motion was adopted by a recorded vote of 51 to 32, with 33 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Central African Republic, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, India, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Republic, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Surinam, Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, Yemen, Yugoslavia

Against: Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Liberia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Swaziland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Austria, Bangladesh, Burma, Chad, Costa Rica, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Sweden, Togo, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Zaire, Zambia.

8. On 24 November, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru and Sweden submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/31/L.25), which was introduced by Mexico at the 46th meeting, on 30 November.

9. On 29 November, Liberia submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/31/L.28), which was introduced at the 46th meeting, on 30 November. At the 49th meeting, on 2 December, the representative of Liberia agreed to a suggestion by Canada that, in view of the fact that some delegations had been unable to obtain instructions on the draft resolution in the limited time remaining after its submission, Liberia would request the Secretary-General to circulate the draft resolution as a General Assembly document rather than seek a formal decision on it at the thirty-first session.

10. On 30 November, Pakistan submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/31/L.33), which was subsequently also sponsored by Iran, Kuwait, Morocco, Nicaragua and Panama. The draft resolution was introduced by Pakistan at the 48th meeting, on 1 December.

11. On 30 November, Finland submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/31/L.34) which was subsequently also sponsored by Denmark, Iceland and Norway. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Finland at the 48th meeting, on 1 December.

12. At its 49th meeting, on 2 December, the First Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.25 by 94 votes to 10, with 12 abstentions (see para. 16 below, draft resolution A).

13. At its 50th meeting, on 2 December, the First Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.7/Rev.2 without a vote (see para. 16 below, draft resolution B).

14. At its 52nd meeting, on 3 December, the First Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.33 by 88 votes to none, with 35 abstentions (see para. 16 below, draft resolution C).

15. At the same meeting, the First Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.34 by a recorded vote of 97 to 1, with 21 abstentions (see para. 16 below, draft resolution D). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Libyan Arab Republic, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Surinam, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zaire.

Against: China.

Abstaining: Algeria, Argentina, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, France, India, Lesotho, Mexico, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Romania, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

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

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General and complete disarmament

A

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2602 A (XXIV) of 16 December 1969 relating to the initiation of bilateral negotiations between the Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the limitation of offensive and defensive strategic nuclear-weapon systems,

Reaffirming its resolutions 2932 B (XXVII) of 29 November 1972, 3184 A and C (XXVIII) of 18 December 1973, 3261 C (XXIX) of 9 December 1974 and 3484 C (XXX) of 12 December 1975,

Bearing in mind that the above-mentioned Governments agreed on 21 June 1973 to make serious efforts to work out and sign in 1974 the agreement on more complete measures on the limitation of strategic offensive arms called for in the interim agreement of 26 May 1972, and that on the same occasion they expressed their intention to carry out the subsequent reduction of such arms,

Conscious of the fact that the interim agreement referred to above will expire next year,

Noting that, as a result of the discussions held at the highest level in November 1974 also between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, both sides reaffirmed their intention to conclude an agreement on the limitation of strategic offensive arms to last until 31 December 1985 inclusive,

Noting also that at the same meeting it was agreed to set ceilings both on the strategic offensive nuclear delivery vehicles as well as on such of those vehicles that may be equipped with multiple independently targetable warheads, and that both sides stated that favourable prospects existed for completing the work on the new agreement in 1975 and stressed that it would include provisions for further negotiations beginning no later than 1980-1981 on the question of further limitations and possible reductions of strategic arms in the period after 1985,

Noting further the information submitted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, 2/

Reiterating its opinion that disarmament negotiations move very slowly in comparison to the obvious perils posed by the enormous arsenals of nuclear weapons,

2/ A/31/125.

1. Regrets the absence of positive results during the last three years of the bilateral negotiations between the Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the limitation of their strategic nuclear-weapons systems;

2. Expresses its concern for the very high ceilings of nuclear arms set for themselves by both States, for the total absence of qualitative limitations of such arms, for the protracted time-table contemplated for the negotiation of further limitations and possible reductions of the nuclear arsenals and for the situation thus created;

3. Urges anew the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America to broaden the scope and accelerate the pace of their strategic nuclear arms limitation talks, and stresses once again the necessity and urgency of reaching agreement on important qualitative limitations and substantial reductions of their strategic nuclear-weapon systems as a positive step towards nuclear disarmament;

4. Reiterates its previous invitation to both Governments to keep the General Assembly informed in good time of the progress and results of their negotiations.

B

The General Assembly,

Mindful that the continuation of the arms race endangers international peace and security and also diverts vast resources urgently needed for economic and social development,

Convinced that peace can be secured through the implementation of disarmament measures, particularly of nuclear disarmament, conducive to the realization of the final objective, namely, general and complete disarmament under effective international control,

Reaffirming that disarmament is one of the essential objectives of the United Nations,

Bearing in mind that the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Colombo from 16 to 19 August 1976, called for a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and made specific suggestions in this regard in its declaration and resolution on disarmament, 3/

1. Decides to convene a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to be held in New York in May/June 1978;

3/ A/31/197, annex, p. 127.

2. Further decides to establish a Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, composed of 54 Member States appointed by the President of the Assembly on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, with the mandate of examining all relevant questions relating to the special session, including its agenda, and to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-second session appropriate recommendations thereon;

3. Invites all Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General their views on the agenda and all other relevant questions relating to the special session of the General Assembly not later than 15 April 1977;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit the replies of Member States pursuant to paragraph 3 above to the Preparatory Committee and to render it all necessary assistance, including the provision of essential background information, relevant documents and summary records;

5. Requests the Preparatory Committee to meet for a short organizational session not longer than one week before 31 March 1977, inter alia, to set the dates for its substantive sessions;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-second session an item entitled: "Special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament: report of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament".

C

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the need to allay the legitimate concern of the States of the world with regard to ensuring lasting security for their peoples,

Deeply concerned at the continuation of the arms race, in particular the nuclear arms race and the threat to mankind due to the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons,

Convinced that only nuclear disarmament resulting in the complete elimination of nuclear weapons will assure perfect security in the nuclear era,

Recognizing that the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of non-nuclear-weapon States need to be safeguarded against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons,

Considering that, until nuclear disarmament is achieved on a universal basis, it is imperative for the international community to devise effective measures to ensure the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use, or threat of use, of nuclear weapons from any quarter,

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Recalling its resolution 3261 G (XXIX) of 9 December 1974 in which it recommended to Member States to consider in all appropriate forums, without loss of time, the question of strengthening the security of non-nuclear-weapon States,

Noting that the non-nuclear-weapon States have called for assurances from nuclear-weapon Powers that they will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against them,

Deeply concerned over any possibility of use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in any contingency,

1. Requests the nuclear-weapon States, as a first step towards a complete ban on the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, to consider undertaking, without prejudice to their obligations arising from treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States not parties to the nuclear security arrangements of some nuclear-weapon Powers;

2. Decides to review at its thirty-second session the progress made on the question of strengthening the security of non-nuclear-weapon States.

D

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2373 (XXII) of 12 June 1968, in which it commended the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons 4/ and expressed the hope for the widest possible adherence to that Treaty,

Noting that 100 States now are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Noting further that the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have accepted the principle of safeguards on all their peaceful nuclear activities,

Recognizing that the accelerated spread and development of peaceful applications of nuclear energy may, in the absence of an effective and comprehensive safeguards system, increase the danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons or equivalent nuclear explosive capabilities.

Noting that the objectives of the International Atomic Energy Agency, as defined in its statute, are to promote peaceful application of nuclear energy while ensuring that they are not used in such a way as to further any military purpose,

4/ General Assembly resolution 2373 (XXII), annex.

Underlining the important role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in implementing international non-proliferation policies in connexion with the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and noting in this context the communication from Finland concerning the strengthening of the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards on a comprehensive basis, 5/

Recognizing the necessity of continued international co-operation in the application and improvement of International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards on peaceful nuclear activities,

1. Recognizes that States accepting effective non-proliferation restraints have a right to enjoy fully the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and underlines the importance of increased efforts in this field, particularly for the needs of the developing areas of the world;

2. Requests the International Atomic Energy Agency to give special attention to its programme of work in the non-proliferation area, including its efforts in facilitating peaceful nuclear co-operation and increasing assistance to the developing areas of the world within an effective and comprehensive safeguards system;

3. Further requests the International Atomic Energy Agency to continue its studies on the questions of multinational fuel cycle centres and an international régime for plutonium storage as effective means to promote the interests of the non-proliferation régime;

4. Calls upon the International Atomic Energy Agency to give careful consideration to all relevant suggestions aiming at strengthening the safeguards régime that have been presented to the Agency;

5. Requests the International Atomic Energy Agency to report on the progress of its work on this question to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session.
