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GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Objective information on military matters

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	2
II. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS	3
Austria	3
Bulgaria	4
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	6
Canada	7
Czechoslovakia	8
Finland	9
German Democratic Republic	10
Sweden	11
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	12
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	14

* A/45/150 and Corr.1.

177.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 15 December 1989, the General Assembly adopted resolution 44/116 E entitled "Objective information on military matters", the operative part of which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

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"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on this subject to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament;

"2. Reaffirms its firm conviction that a better flow of objective information on military capabilities would help to relieve international tension and contribute to the building of confidence among States on a global, regional and subregional level and to the conclusion of concrete disarmament agreements;

"3. Recommends that those States and global, regional and subregional organizations which have already expressed support for the principle of practical and concrete confidence-building measures of a military nature on a global, regional or subregional level should intensify their efforts with a view to adopting such measures;

"4. Recommends also that all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States, should implement the international system for the standardized reporting of military expenditure, with the aim of achieving a realistic comparison of military budgets, facilitating the availability of objective information on, as well as objective assessment of, military capabilities and contributing to the process of disarmament;

"5. Invites all Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General before 30 April 1990 measures they have adopted towards these ends, for submission to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session;

"6. Requests the Disarmament Commission to include in the agenda of its 1990 session an item entitled 'Objective information on military matters';

"7. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fifth session the item entitled 'Objective information on military matters'."

2. Pursuant to paragraph 5 of the resolution, the Secretary-General, in a note verbale dated 16 February 1990, requested all Member States to communicate to him information regarding measures that they have adopted towards the ends referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4. To date, the Secretary-General has received replies from Austria, Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Finland, the German Democratic Republic, Sweden, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The replies are reproduced in section II of the present report. Other replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

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II. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

AUSTRIA

[Original: English]

[30 May 1990]

1. General Assembly resolution 43/75 G of 7 December 1988 mentioned further consolidation of the emerging trend towards greater openness in military matters as an aim to be pursued and proposed this topic for consideration by the Disarmament Commission at its 1990 session. Responding positively to this assessment and accepting United Nations suggestions for an international system of standardization, the Austrian Government has, during the past three years, made available all information on military capabilities which could, in its view, provide objective criteria for an assessment of relative military strength and relevant concepts for the employment of national military forces. In particular, the Ministry of Defense of Austria regularly submits all necessary data requested by the United Nations in the framework of Assembly resolution 40/91 B of 12 December 1985 and will continue regular presentation of such data to support practical and concrete confidence-building.
2. Furthermore, the Austrian Government has supported and continues to support all relevant measures of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the related negotiations of confidence- and security-building measures, in which extensive discussions on the reporting of military expenditure have been carried out during the Seminar on Military Doctrines in January/February 1990. In the course of these discussions, suggestions for a general adherence of CSCE member countries to the United Nations instrument for standardized international reporting of military expenditures were made and have led to a proposal submitted by a group of delegations to include provisions for the exchange of information on military budgets and expenditures into a series of measures aiming at an enhancement of confidence- and security-building measures in Europe.
3. The Austrian delegation has expressed its agreement with such a measure for a number of reasons, last but not least because this would support the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2 of 30 June 1978).
4. Bearing in mind paragraph 105 of the Final Document, in which the Assembly encouraged Member States to ensure a better flow of information with regard to the various aspects of disarmament to avoid dissemination of false and tendentious information concerning armaments and to concentrate on the danger of escalation of the arms race and on the need for general and complete disarmament under effective international control, Austria was one of the co-sponsors of General Assembly resolution 44/116 E of 15 December 1989. Therefore, Austria highly appreciates the inclusion of the item entitled "Objective information on military matters" in the agenda of the Disarmament Commission and welcomes the deliberations that took place at the Commission's 1990 substantive session.

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BULGARIA

[Original: Russian]

[14 May 1990]

1. Bulgaria welcomes the recent conclusion of agreements in the field of arms limitation and disarmament which, by virtue of their innovative monitoring mechanisms, lay a firm foundation for the attainment of new and even higher standards of openness in relations between States. Grounds for optimism are afforded by the growing number of specific proposals and practical measures proposed in recent months by States with differing political philosophies and from different regions aimed at increasing transparency in the military sphere and thus reducing the risk of an erroneous assessment of military potential and intentions. The provision on a reciprocal basis of objective information on military issues can serve as an important confidence-building measure and make a direct contribution to removing sources of suspicion. The achievement of greater openness and glasnost in the field of defence policy is capable of effectively promoting the establishment of an overall climate of trust, stability and co-operation, and would increase the predictability of States' behaviour both in Europe and throughout the world.
2. The active exchange of balanced and militarily significant objective information on all aspects without exception of the military sphere, including military expenditures, can undoubtedly make a contribution to the reduction and, ultimately, the elimination of the probability of States' actions and intentions being misinterpreted. A process of this kind would strengthen security and stability on the basis of the principle of regional sufficiency at both the regional and world-wide levels, and would be conducive to progress in disarmament negotiations.
3. Bulgaria has accepted and complied strictly with the commitments set forth in the Final Document of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. These include prior notification of major military exercises, the invitation of observers and verification of compliance with agreements by, inter alia, on-site inspections. In keeping with its obligations, Bulgaria routinely provides at the appointed times annual calendars of military activities and ensures that all the agreed conditions exist for the conduct of inspections on its territory.
4. Within the framework of a Balkan-wide process of confidence- and security-building and the expansion of Balkan co-operation in every area, Bulgaria has already put forward a series of specific bilateral and multilateral proposals for joint regional activities to promote greater glasnost and openness in peacetime military activities and, ultimately, to stimulate efforts aimed at disarmament and the strengthening of security on a broader plane.
5. Bulgaria is taking a number of practical steps to increase openness on each and every aspect of its military potential, as called for by resolution 44/116 E, including steps to create conditions for realistic comparison of military budgets. On a regular basis, it discloses detailed information on the strength of its armed

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forces and on its weapons systems, and in implementation of its purely defensive military doctrine, it is making significant unilateral cuts in this area. In 1989, for example, the strength of the army was reduced by 10,000, and 200 tanks, 200 artillery weapons, 20 military aircraft and 5 naval vessels were taken out of service. Recently, the Ministry of Defence invited foreign military attachés in Bulgaria to watch the physical destruction of this military technology.

6. Bulgaria is participating actively and constructively in the Vienna talks on the reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces in Europe. It is sincerely striving to bring about a substantial reduction in the armed forces and conventional weapons of the participants in the talks, with a corresponding reduction in military expenditures, and believes that in the course of the talks the current asymmetries and imbalances both across Europe and, especially, in individual regions should be identified and eliminated on a reciprocal basis. It insists on the scope of the talks being gradually extended to cover the other components of States' military strength, and specifically naval and air forces, since their continued absence from the negotiating table will lead to new imbalances and asymmetries, and constitutes a cause for concern. In the final analysis, priority in Europe should be given to strengthen the consolidation of those existing military structures which are capable of serving exclusively defensive purposes and which constitute the prerequisite for successfully building tomorrow's security structures at the earliest possible date.

7. Bulgaria has completed the preparatory work on the disclosure of its military expenditures, and has submitted to the United Nations the completed forms for standardized reporting of military expenditures for the financial years 1988 and 1989. Its military expenditures for 1990 have also been disclosed, and will very shortly be submitted to the United Nations in a form corresponding to the standardized reporting requirements. Bulgaria expresses its readiness actively to promote and participate in further efforts to draw up criteria for the comparison of military budgets in accordance with the standardized international reporting system adopted within the United Nations. It welcomes the emerging prerequisites for agreement within the Disarmament Commission on principles for the reduction of military budgets. A number of areas of agreement with respect to these issues have been identified, and these should be expanded and made use of.

8. The Government of Bulgaria attaches exceptional importance to the prestige and role of the United Nations in the field of international security and disarmament, and is convinced that the Organization can make a substantial contribution to ensuring greater openness and objectivity of information in the military sphere. Bulgaria will continue to support all efforts within the framework of the United Nations and outside it aimed at finding ways and means of further strengthening the trends that have emerged to greater openness in military matters, and at halting the arms race and reducing military expenditures as a fundamental component of the disarmament process that has been initiated. It will continue in future its efforts to promote, within the limits of its abilities, constructive consideration of these issues on a global, regional and subregional basis in accordance with the balance of interests of the States concerned, and with the ultimate aim of achieving concrete disarmament agreements.

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

[Original: Russian]

[29 June 1990]

1. The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic considers that openness, the elimination of excessive secrecy, and objective information about military capability are factors for strengthening general security and, in this connection, supported General Assembly resolution 44/116 E. Furthermore, the Byelorussian SSR believes that measures undertaken by States to ensure openness must gradually develop into a broad policy of openness which is global in nature and applies to the earth, sky, bodies of water and outer space. Ultimately, such measures must be part of a global system for strengthening trust and lessening the danger of war.
2. At this stage, it would be useful to reach agreement on an international basis, for example, within the Disarmament Commission on general goals, principles and instruments relating to openness.
3. In our view, the goals of a policy of openness and objective information on military matters include confidence-building among States, reducing the danger of both premeditated and unpremeditated military conflict, increasing the predictability of military activities, crisis prevention, furthering efforts aimed at arms reduction and disarmament, and promoting the establishment of purely defensive military doctrines and structures and the redeployment of the material and intellectual resources thus made available for social and economic development.
4. With regard to principles, openness must be put into practice on a reciprocal, fair and equitable basis without infringing the interests of any party. In the areas where it is applied on the basis of agreement, openness cannot be selective. Restrictions on the régime of openness must be minimal and agreed. The parties must have an equal right to access to available information. The openness of information obtained within the framework of openness must be a major principle; that is, information obtained under the régime of openness must not be restricted.
5. The volume and scope of the information provided must be in keeping with the objectives of the régime of openness. Information must be provided on a regular basis. It must be reliable and subject to verification under agreed procedures.
6. Reaching mutual agreement on the criteria governing the exchange of information must be an essential element.
7. The régime of openness must apply to the entire territory where the parties to such a régime may conduct military activities and to all corresponding installations under the military jurisdiction of States parties, regardless of where such installations are situated.
8. Measures to ensure openness must be carried out on an agreed and individual basis.

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9. The régime of openness, obviously, should be established on a bilateral and regional basis with possible global elements.

10. The corresponding instruments and machinery are essential for implementing measures and a policy to achieve openness. In our view, preparations for the transition to a global policy of openness as well as the step-by-step introduction of individual elements of the policy could be carried out under an agreed multilateral system to ensure verification and openness under the auspices of the United Nations, which would formulate and establish international standards for trust and openness reinforced by an extensive monitoring infrastructure. Under such a system it would be possible to establish a mechanism for transmitting data on military matters to the United Nations.

11. Clearly, agreement on the parameters and criteria of openness must vary in terms of specific content according to each particular area and could be achieved through the United Nations.

12. During the initial stage of the development of a global policy of openness, the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat could be used as a data bank and centre for providing services relating to openness.

13. We feel that the establishment of centres for reducing the danger of war both on a global and regional basis, where such conditions exist, would be an essential factor in strengthening openness.

CANADA

[Original: English]

[27 June 1990]

1. As a co-sponsor of resolution 44/116 E, the Government of Canada is pleased to take the opportunity presented by this resolution and the invitation of the Secretary-General to communicate measures Canada has taken to promote objective information on military matters. Canada is a strong advocate of greater openness and transparency in military matters, because this enhances the confidence which is a prerequisite to effective arms control and disarmament.

2. In order to contribute to the fulfilment of this objective, Canada has taken a number of actions, among which are the following:

(a) The Department of External Affairs publishes a periodic newsletter called The Disarmament Bulletin, which describes Canadian activities in the arms control and disarmament field at the United Nations and in other forums. The Bulletin is distributed free of charge to Canadians, as well as to interested individuals outside the country.

(b) The Canadian Government regularly convenes a Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs, under the chairmanship of the Ambassador for

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Disarmament, to exchange views with government officials on Canadian arms control and disarmament policy. The Consultative Group draws its membership from across the country and includes academic researchers, strategic analysts and representatives of a wide range of non-governmental organizations.

(c) In addition, the Government also funds the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, the objectives of which are to increase knowledge and understanding of the issues related to international peace and security from a Canadian perspective, with particular emphasis on arms control, disarmament, defence and conflict resolution.

(d) The Department of National Defence publishes an annual review of defence activities, which includes details of departmental estimates and expenditures, defence operations by maritime, mobile and air commands, as well as our forces in Europe. Defence 89 is expected to be available by June of this year. The Department of National Defence also makes available fact sheets with detailed information on the characteristics of all equipment in service with land, maritime and air forces.

(e) Both the Departments of External Affairs and National Defence make available to the public background information on policies and issues in unclassified pamphlets and in a series of broadsheets, which are periodically updated.

3. Canada strongly supports objective information on military matters, as outlined in resolution 44/116 E. However, the promotion of objective information on military matters is a long-term process, and this will require the sustained efforts of Governments and of the people they represent. The United Nations has a vital role to play in contributing to public understanding of the issues involved, and in publicizing the work that has been done.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA*

[Original: English]

[25 April 1990]

1. Internal proceedings are currently under way in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic with a view to putting into practice a decision taken last year on publishing data on military expenditures according to the standardized reporting system of the United Nations. Efforts are made to complete the proceedings so that the data may be made available to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

2. The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic is not limiting itself to preparations for the publication of data on its military expenditures. In 1989 the country's

* See also A/45/343.

defense spending was reduced by 1 billion Czechoslovak crowns (korunas). One of the basic objectives of the efforts to cut back budget expenses in 1990 is to reduce spending on non-productive purposes; in this context, the appropriation for defense and security, which represents a key item in this sphere, has been reduced by 12.5 per cent in comparison with the amount envisaged under the original budget. This is a further step taken by the Czechoslovak Federal Government in this direction which should be followed by measures of economy connected with a substantial force reduction in the Czechoslovak Army that is expected to be undertaken, particularly in the context of the envisaged results of the Vienna Negotiations on Conventional Forces in Europe. The measures planned in this regard indicate that the trend of reducing military expenditures will be maintained, especially in connection with conversion of military production into production for civilian purposes. When publishing on a regular basis data on its military spending, along with placing emphasis on questions of transparency and verification, Czechoslovakia will become one of those countries that take steps attesting in practice the importance of objective information on military matters.

3. In global terms, objective information on military matters is of fundamental importance for maintenance of international peace and enhancement of security and co-operation. Providing such information means creating prerequisites for tangible progress in disarmament negotiations towards conclusion of concrete treaties. The orientation of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic on peaceful economy is a part of the overall context of democratization of the country's life and its opening towards the outside world, fitting into the framework of strengthening of mutual confidence among States, especially in the European region.

FINLAND

[Original: English]

[30 April 1990]

1. Finland welcomes efforts aimed at greater openness in military matters and believes that such openness will contribute to increased confidence and security in international relations. Thus, in the view of Finland, the flow of objective information on military matters should be increased.

2. In this respect, Finland has fully supported the efforts of the United Nations by, inter alia, participating on an annual basis in the international system of standardized reporting of military expenditures. In Finland, military expenditures are published, in detailed items, as a part of the State budget. In the past few years, Finland has also published a resumé of a plan concerning future activities and expenditures in the defence sector. It includes a summary of plans of the Ministry of Defence, the Defence Forces, international peace-keeping operations and of research institutes under the Ministry of Defence. Finland considers that annual military expenditures are one of the indicators of the military potential of a State.

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3. A forthcoming revision of the budgetary system in Finland will simplify the classification of military expenditures and thereby expedite their incorporation into the annual standardized reporting system of the United Nations.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

[Original: English]

[3 July 1990]

1. As a co-sponsor of General Assembly resolution 44/116 E, the German Democratic Republic believes that objective information on military matters is an essential element conducive to international confidence-building and disarmament. This kind of information should become a matter of course in State-to-State relations. The German Democratic Republic holds that information and openness in military matters are not ends in themselves, but are rather apt to strengthen confidence, security and transparency. They facilitate disarmament measures, inclusive of the verification of relevant agreements.

2. The United Nations Organization, by virtue of its potentialities, can play a major role in promoting, on a world-wide scale, openness and information on military matters. Deliberations on "Objective information on military matters" as an item on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission should lead to the elaboration of generally valid criteria and standards for openness in military matters.

3. Laying open the military doctrines and structures of States as well as of their alliances is a substantial element of objective information, an approach which can help remove enemy stereotypes and fears and strengthen mutual confidence and security.

4. At the seminar of the CSCE participating States on military doctrines, held Vienna early this year, the German Democratic Republic representatives provided detailed information on its military doctrine, as well as on the training concept, the armaments, personnel structures and on the budget of the National People's Army. According to the data provided, the ground forces had 14 mechanized infantry regiments and 4 tank regiments at their disposal at the beginning of this year. Air defence forces were subdivided into 2 divisions with a total of 5 fighter wings, 27 surface-to-air missile (SAM) units on permanent stand-by and 14 such units with reduced personnel strength, as well as 7 radio-technical battalions. The Air Force was structured into independent wings and helicopter units. The Navy comprised three flotillas, among them one with small-size missile ships, one coastal defense regiment with ground-launched missiles, as well as naval aviation forces.

5. Restructuring of the National People's Army is being initiated in an effort to drastically reduce its personnel strength and to give it a strictly defensive character. As was announced, the German Democratic Republic participates as from 1990 in the standardized system of the United Nations for reporting military expenditures.

6. The German Democratic Republic advocates the establishment of an "open skies" régime. It actively participates in the drafting of an international agreement on mutual observation flights over the territories of the participating States. The early conclusion of such agreement would be a major step forward towards more transparency in military matters.

SWEDEN

[Original: English]

[11 May 1990]

1. The Swedish Government wishes to express its satisfaction that the subject of objective information on military matters has been introduced on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission. This certainly is an important step towards a meaningful dialogue in this field, which can give an impetus to further measures to enhance openness and security.

2. In earlier answers to the Secretary-General (incorporated in reports A/38/368, A/39/436, A/41/466, A/42/435 and A/44/396 and Add.1 and 2) Sweden has already communicated various views on objective information on military matters and how to facilitate its availability, measures taken by Sweden to this end included. In addition, the Swedish Government now wishes to submit the following views.

3. By adopting resolution 44/116 E, which, like resolution 43/75 G the year before, commanded an overwhelming majority, the General Assembly expressed the belief that the adoption of confidence-building measures to promote openness and transparency would contribute to the prevention of misperceptions of military capabilities and intentions.

4. The General Assembly, furthermore, therein expressed the belief that balanced and objective information on all military matters, in particular of nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States, would contribute to the building of confidence among States. It deserves to be highlighted that this resolution obtained favourable votes from all five nuclear-weapon States.

5. By voting for resolution 44/116 E the five nuclear-weapon States would seem to have recognized the importance of displaying openness and transparency in all areas of military activity - on land, in the air or at sea.

6. In the opinion of the Swedish Government there is a need for more openness and transparency at sea. Sweden finds the secrecy surrounding the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons at sea particularly disturbing.

7. At this year's session of the Disarmament Commission Sweden intends to contribute further views on possible disarmament measures and measures to enhance transparency in the naval domain.

8. Since last year, several important developments have taken place within the field of military information. The fundamental idea behind the "open skies" proposal is confidence-building and relieving of tensions through transparency. Sweden, together with the neutral and non-aligned countries in Europe, has welcomed this proposal and declared its wish to fully participate in the negotiations on "open skies".

9. On a regional basis the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) continues to serve as a source of openness and confidence. A unique manifestation of the growing awareness of the need for openness is the seminar on military doctrines that was held in Vienna early this year within the framework of the CSCE-negotiations.

10. Negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures and on conventional forces in Europe are now well under way in Vienna. In the negotiations, proposals have been tabled to include annual exchange of military information about all types of forces.

UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

[Original: Russian]

[28 May 1990]

1. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic attaches major importance to the role and activities of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. There is growing recognition in the world of the fact that the amassed arsenals of modern weapons no longer help strengthen security and that disarmament, which can be effectively implemented only in a climate of confidence among States, is becoming an increasingly important security factor. Confidence, together with effective monitoring and verification, clears the way for achieving large-scale weapons and troop reductions and removes the obstacles brought about by military confrontation.

2. Confidence, in turn, to a large extent is based on a corresponding level of openness, transparency and predictability in the military field and in relations among States in general. Progress towards greater glasnost and openness promotes the real strengthening of international security and facilitates negotiations on arms limitation and reduction, overall confidence-building, and the creation of conditions for productive co-operation based on peace, prosperity and the achievement of common objectives.

3. In the view of the Ukrainian SSR, it is now necessary to speed up the process of implementing confidence-building measures, particularly various aspects of openness. The Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe was an important stage in this area. This work is continuing at the present time as well. In this connection, we should point out the useful contribution resulting from such meetings as the seminar on military doctrines attended by the 35 States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the conference on "Open Skies", and the exchange of

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views on these questions conducted during the numerous meetings of military and political leaders of various countries. The Ukrainian SSR hopes that these activities will promote real confidence-building and greater openness in military matters both in Europe and throughout the world.

4. Particular hope in this regard has been placed in the Vienna negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures. Now, especially on the threshold of a further general European summit meeting, of increasing urgency is the question of speeding up the pace of negotiations and the need for constructive efforts by all the participants in them to use the existing potential of mutual understanding in order to carry out the basic task - drawing up and implementing on a broad basis an integral and comprehensive set of confidence-building measures, including a new generation of measures for notification and surveillance of military activities, the limitation of such activities, the exchange of information, monitoring and verification, and other provisions. All this, of course, must apply to all types of military activities and all types of armed forces, including land forces, air forces, naval and military bases in the territory of third countries, as well as outer space activities.

5. Unilateral measures taken by States are also of great importance. Accordingly, the Soviet Union published data on the size and composition of its weapon arsenals and armed forces, their deployment according to region, and its defence budget and provides clear and prompt information on reductions in Soviet armed forces and their return to the Soviet Union.

6. The USSR informs the Secretary-General about the nuclear tests that it carries out. The Soviet position at the talks on the prohibition of chemical weapons, where it has called for maximum openness, is well known. Last year, the Warsaw Treaty member States submitted detailed information on their military potential and its correlation with the armed forces and weapons of the North Atlantic alliance in Europe. Such measures, particularly on the basis of reciprocity, hasten progress towards strengthening stability and security.

7. The submission of agreed information on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, to which the Ukrainian SSR is a party, has made a useful contribution to the dissemination of objective military information.

8. The practice of informing the United Nations about various negotiations conducted outside the Organization's framework should also be encouraged. The establishment under the auspices of the United Nations of an international disarmament monitoring body as well as a multilateral centre for reducing the threat of nuclear war and preventing military conflict would also make a valuable contribution to the promotion of greater openness.

9. The Ukrainian SSR considers that the question of objective information on military matters should be carefully studied in the United Nations, particularly in the Disarmament Commission. At its substantive session in 1991, the Commission should give in-depth consideration to the basic aspects of this problem: goals,

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criteria and mechanisms. It is important to begin concrete work on the preparation of the relevant working documents. The exchange of views that took place during the Commission's 1990 substantive session confirms the possibility and need for practical steps in this direction. The Ukrainian SSR is prepared to participate constructively in this work.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

[Original: English]

[28 March 1990]

1. At the First Committee of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, on 7 November 1989, the United Kingdom introduced a draft resolution on objective information on military matters (see A/44/785). In this resolution, like its predecessor 43/75 G of 7 December 1988, States were invited to communicate to the Secretary-General each year measures they have adopted to facilitate the availability of objective information on military matters. The resolution built upon its predecessor and asked that the Disarmament Commission include on the agenda for its 1990 session an item entitled "Objective information on military matters", expressing the hope that deliberation would take place resulting in a useful document commanding consensus on the item and thus serving as a guide for the future. The United Kingdom stated that a paper would be submitted to the Secretary-General detailing views on the ways and means of further consolidating the emerging trend towards greater openness in military matters for consideration in the Disarmament Commission.

2. There is growing acknowledgement that openness and transparency in military matters make an important contribution to the enhancement of security. To this end, the United Kingdom supports the adoption of measures which ensure that, in all regions of the world, a broad range of objective information is made readily available.

3. Since 1986, and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/91 B of 12 December 1985, the United Kingdom has annually responded to the exercise on the reduction of military budgets reporting of military expenditures. This gives information on military spending, broken down between the individual armed services and apportioned between support and command functions, equipment, procurement, operations and maintenance and research and development expenditure. As an example of openness in the provision of information on military expenditures, the exercise has the United Kingdom's support, as would its adoption by a larger number of member States. Accordingly, the United Kingdom's intention is to continue to provide the information requested in the resolution.

4. The British Government's provision of information extends well beyond the exercise on the reduction of military expenditures. Among the various publications produced each year by the Ministry of Defence, two are noteworthy in the context of openness in the provision of information: the Ministry of Defence chapter of the

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Public Expenditure White Paper and the Statement on the Defence Estimates. The first of these, the Ministry of Defence chapter of the Public Expenditure White Paper, published every January, provides an analysis of spending by major programmes and by defence commitment, and of the allocation of manpower by function. It is a further example of the United Kingdom's continuing commitment to promoting the availability of information on military matters.

5. The Statement on the Defence Estimates is presented to Parliament annually by the Secretary of State for Defence. The basic aims of the Defence Estimates are twofold; it is in part a discussion document, explaining important aspects of British security policy, and in part a report on defence activities and achievements during the year. The important contribution that the United Kingdom continues to make to stability and security is described in full. The Statement also describes the level of resources the United Kingdom devotes to defence.

6. In parallel with the Statement, a detailed compendium of defence statistics is published; this provides an analysis of the Defence budget and its relation to defence expenditure. The United Kingdom believes that the availability of such statistics for all States would represent a concrete form of the principles of openness and transparency.

Confidence- and security-building measures

7. By adopting resolution 43/75 G, the General Assembly expressed the belief that the adoption of confidence-building measures would serve to promote openness and transparency of military capabilities and intentions. The successful conclusion in January 1989 of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) follow-up meeting in Vienna paved the way for further negotiations in the field of confidence- and security-building measures, which are now well under way, as well as negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe. The United Kingdom has long held the view that arms reductions are more likely to be achieved if discussed in a climate of confidence already established by agreement on reciprocal measures for greater openness.

8. At the new talks in Vienna the United Kingdom will fully support efforts to build on the package of confidence- and security-building measures concluded by the CSCE participants in Stockholm in 1986 and contained in the agreement known as the Stockholm Document. The United Kingdom notes that participating States have taken seriously their obligations under the Document since it came into effect in January 1987, and welcomes the greater degree of openness and predictability the agreement has introduced into military activities in the whole of Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals, thereby helping to reduce tension, mistrust and the risk of military confrontation. The objective must be to improve the arrangements for notifying military exercises, in appropriate ways. The compliance and verification provisions of the Stockholm Document will also need to be strengthened. An important element of the new generation of confidence- and security-building measures should be the inclusion of a system for more data exchange about the size, type and location of each participating State's armed forces. In particular, Western participants have proposed a system of forward notification of future force

plans along the lines of the United Nations instrument of reporting of current data as provided in reports on the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets". This combination of measures should enhance security, develop co-operation in Europe and thereby contribute to international peace and security in the world as a whole.

9. The United Kingdom believes that there could be great benefit, in terms of increasing transparency, through the introduction of aerial observation measures. It therefore strongly supports the NATO initiative on "open skies", not least because of the opportunities for participation this should provide for those nations without their own national technical means. An "open skies" régime, in which participants would reciprocally open their airspace to allow aerial surveillance of their territory, will strengthen confidence with respect to military activities. The United Kingdom welcomes the progress made towards an "open skies" agreement at the conference at Ottawa earlier this year, and hope that such an agreement might be reached during the Budapest follow-up conference in the spring.

10. In the field of chemical weapons, the United Kingdom is also encouraging greater openness. It attaches great importance to the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva for a global chemical weapons convention banning chemical weapons, and plays a leading role in those talks. An important element of a chemical weapons convention must be a declaration by all signatories of their current chemical weapons stockpiles and production facilities. The United Kingdom abandoned its own chemical weapons in the late 1950s, but has made available much information about its past production, and invited observers of the Conference on Disarmament to the dismantling of the pilot chemical weapons nerve agent plant at Nancekuke, Cornwall.

11. The United Kingdom has welcomed the bilateral agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union on chemical weapons reached earlier this year; this should help build the confidence necessary for the achievement of a global convention at the negotiations in Geneva. The United Kingdom continues to play a leading role in these talks. It is conducting a programme of pioneering work on practice challenge inspections of military facilities. This programme is designed to carry forward work on the challenge inspection régime, which is crucial to verification of a chemical weapons convention and vital for confidence in the convention.

12. The United Kingdom believes that the measures outlined in this paper represent a positive contribution towards building confidence and encouraging openness and transparency in military matters. It further believes that the examples mentioned could have wider application, and it therefore encourages all countries to look closely at them with a view to their wider adoption. In particular the United Kingdom recommends careful study of its Statement of Defence Estimates as an example of how reporting of defence capabilities and expenditure could go beyond the United Nations instrument for standardized international reporting of military expenditure. Two areas which would reward careful study, the United Kingdom believes, are: (a) Defence research and development expenditure; and (b) Manpower (with civilian/service personnel breakdown). The exchange of objective information

in military matters between countries would represent a basic building-block, an essential requirement if real progress in the field of arms control and disarmament is to be effectively pursued. In time this will contribute to increased security world-wide as each Government is able to make informed assessments of the military situation in its own region.
