General Assembly

Thirty-eighth session
Item 62 (c)

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Study on conventional disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General

1. By its resolution 35/156 A of 12 December 1980, the General Assembly approved, in principle, the carrying out of a study on all aspects of the conventional arms race and on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces, by the Secretary-General with the assistance of a group of qualified experts appointed by him on a balanced geographical basis. The Assembly agreed that the Disarmament Commission should work out the general approach to the study, its structure and scope, which should constitute the guidelines for the study. The Secretary-General was requested to submit a progress report to the Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament, and a final report at its thirty-eighth session.

2. By resolution 36/97 A of 9 December 1981, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish the Group of Experts; requested the Disarmament Commission, at its substantive session in 1982, to complete its consideration of the general approach to the study, its structure and scope; agreed that the Group of Experts should pursue its work after the above-mentioned session of the Disarmament Commission; and requested the Secretary-General to submit a final report to the Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.


4. By a letter dated 16 September 1983, which is annexed to the present report, the Chairman of the Group of Experts on All Aspects of the Conventional Arms Race and on Disarmament relating to Conventional Weapons and Armed Forces informed the Secretary-General of the status of the Group's work. It is noted that the Group of Experts needs further time in order to complete its work and that the Chairman requests that due consideration be given by the appropriate authority to the possibility of extending the time period of the study.

83-25040 0796m (E)
ANNEX

Letter dated 16 September 1983 from the Chairman of the Group of Experts on All Aspects of the Conventional Arms Race and on Disarmament relating to Conventional Weapons and Armed Forces addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the Group of Experts on All Aspects of the Conventional Arms Race and on Disarmament relating to Conventional Weapons and Armed Forces, appointed by you pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 35/156 A of 12 December 1980 and 36/97 A of 9 December 1981, began its work on 12 July 1982 and has held five substantive sessions, but has not yet been able to complete its work.

On the basis of an outline agreed at the first session, and as a result of intensive work and maximum use of the services made available, the Group has almost completed its consideration of the three substantive chapters of the study report and has begun work on the final chapter containing conclusions and recommendations.

The subject of this study embraces a very wide area involving several issues of a sensitive and complex nature in which there are conceptual differences among the experts. Nevertheless, work has proceeded steadily and constructively towards the objective of a consensus text. It should also be noted that originally a period of two years was envisaged by the General Assembly for the study in resolution 35/156 A, but as the Disarmament Commission was not able to agree on guidelines for the work until May 1982 the Group of Experts could not commence its task until July 1982 and thus the effective period under the present mandate was reduced to some fifteen months.

In the circumstances, the Group of Experts needs further time in order to complete its work and I therefore request that due consideration be given by the appropriate authority to the possibility of extending the time period of the study.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) S. G. MELLBIN
Chairman of the Group of Experts on All Aspects of the Conventional Arms Race and on Disarmament relating to Conventional Weapons and Armed Forces