Fifteenth special session

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 13 June 1988, at 6 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 6.15 p.m.

**SUBMISSION OF REPORTS BY CHAIRMEN OF WORKING GROUPS**

**The CHAIRMAN**: Representatives will recall that the Committee of the Whole, at its 1st meeting, on 3 June, decided to request its Working Groups to present progress reports on their work on 13 June.

Accordingly, I invite the Chairman of Working Group I, Ambassador Hepburn, to present his report to the Committee of the Whole.

**Mr. HEPBURN** (Bahamas) (Chairman of Working Group I): In accordance with the decision made by the Committee of the Whole at its 1st meeting on 3 June, Working Group I was entrusted with the task of dealing with agenda item 10 on assessment of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth and twelfth special sessions.

Since last week, the Working Group has held six meetings. According to its programme of work, the Group devoted four meetings to the general exchange of views on the item, and a large number of delegations participated in such an exchange. Thereafter, the Working Group agreed on a set of elements of the subject to be considered by the Group, as contained in document A/S-15/AC.1/WG.I/1.

At its 5th meeting, on 9 June, the Working Group discussed the question of format and contents of its report to be submitted to the Committee of the Whole for consideration. Various views were expressed and different suggestions were made.

In connection with the contents of the report of the Working Group, a number of concrete proposals were put forward with a view to searching for a common approach acceptable to all countries. In this regard, a compilation of various proposals has been issued.

Working Group I is now embarking on the second stage of its work by devoting efforts to the elaboration on the agreed elements of the subject, taking into account all proposals submitted and working papers presented in connection with
agenda item 10. This task will be carried out during the remaining work that we have this week. Finally, in view of the co-operation and positive attitude of delegations in Working Group I, I feel certain that the Working Group will be able to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it.

The CHAIRMAN: If there is no comment on Mr. Hepburn's report, I invite the Chairman of Working Group II, Ambassador von Stülpnagel, to present his report to the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. von STÜLPNAGEL (Federal Republic of Germany) (Chairman of Working Group II): In accordance with the decision of the Committee of the Whole at its 1st meeting, Working Group II was entrusted with the consideration of agenda items 12 and 15.

At its 1st meeting, on 6 June, the Working Group agreed to a programme of work divided into three phases: (1) general debate; (2) first round of discussion of individual subjects on the basis of the elements contained in the paper prepared by you, Sir, as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for this third special session, and which appears in the Annex to the report of the Preparatory Committee; and (3) consideration of a text to be submitted by the Working Group to the Committee of the Whole.

So far the Working Group has held nine meetings. Three of them were devoted to the general debate, in which over 40 delegations participated and a wide range of views was expressed. The second phase of the work, was begun on Thursday, 9 June, and is scheduled to conclude at midday, tomorrow, 14 June. In this connection, I submitted an outline for focusing the discussion. This outline embodied certain general elements for consideration, including compliance with the Charter, validity of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-I), bilateral, regional and multilateral approaches,
disarmament and international security, disarmament and development and implications of technological developments. Beyond that, the outline contained specific subjects as follows: nuclear weapons in all aspects, chemical weapons, outer space, conventional weapons, verification and compliance, confidence-building, naval arms race, zones of peace, disarmament and development.

In the course of the six meetings held so far on this phase of the work, delegations presented a large number of ideas and suggestions, as well as proposals for specific language.
One more meeting will be held tomorrow morning, when, as I noted earlier, the second phase will be concluded. I may note in this connection that in view of the heavy workload and the shortage of time available to the Working Group, I have asked Ambassador Wejwoda, Permanent Representative of Czechoslovakia in Geneva, and Ambassador Taylhardat, Permanent Representative of Venezuela in Geneva, to act as friends of the Chairman and to help me in working out language and consulting with delegations to bring about consensus on specific issues.

No meetings are scheduled for the afternoon of Tuesday, 14 June, or for Wednesday, 15 June, to allow the Chairman to prepare a draft which, taking into account the proposals that have been put forward, will attempt to identify points of convergence and to present formulations that might command consensus. In a necessary change of the programme of work, the meetings of Wednesday and Thursday will be replaced by consultations. Friday morning's meeting will be devoted to consideration of the text to be submitted to the Committee of the Whole.

I can say that the spirit in the Working Group has been positive, and that exchanges have been interesting. I hope we can continue in that spirit.

Of course, the existence of significant differences of view, of a conceptual as well as of a substantive nature, has to be noted with respect to various issues.

Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria): The Chairman of Working Group II said that he has asked two representatives to assist him, as friends of the Chairman, in working out acceptable formulations. I imagine he has also assigned to them the specific areas they are to cover. I was not present in Working Group II today, but I am told that the Group was not informed of the specific areas the friends of the Chairman will cover. Could the Chairman of Working Group II kindly give us an idea, in case we are interested in any specific item, of which of the two friends of the Chairman we should see?
Mr. von STUPNAGE (Federal Republic of Germany), Chairman of Working Group II: I should like to discuss that question first with the two ambassadors. If we agree, there is time to announce the answer at tomorrow morning's meeting of the Working Group.

The CHAIRMAN: As the Chairman of Working Group III was unable for unavoidable reasons to come to this meeting, I call upon the representative of Cameroon.

Mr. SOR (Cameroon) (interpretation from French): Ambassador Engo is obliged to attend to some last-minute official duties, and has asked me to convey his apologies to the Committee of the Whole.

Working Group III was charged with consideration of agenda items 13 and 14. During the past week, an exchange of views has taken place on those items. By and large, there has been a frank and direct debate, and open controversy has been absent.

We hope that in the coming week the Working Group will be able to discuss substantive matters that could present problems and that we shall be able to present our recommendations to the Committee of the Whole by the end of the week.

Mr. NAZARKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In the Working Groups, the foundations are being laid for the three basic parts of the Committee's concluding document. I presume the document is also to contain an introduction. Can you tell me, Sir, what your intentions are with respect to that introduction?

The CHAIRMAN: We have scheduled a meeting for Friday, 17 June. At that meeting I propose to discuss with the Committee of the Whole the method by which we should tackle further work in the Committee of the Whole. On that day, as the representative of the Soviet Union has rightly noted, we shall have reports from the three Working Groups. I hope we shall begin on the following Monday to work on
what the Working Groups submit to the Committee of the Whole. On Friday I shall also discuss with the Committee of the Whole how the drafting of the introduction to the concluding document is to be handled. I hope we shall be able to agree, and I hope that the intervening weekend will provide the time necessary to produce some kind of document for our work on Monday morning.

May I express my hope to the Chairmen of the Working Groups and to all delegations concerned that, as envisaged by the Committee of the Whole, their work will be successfully concluded by Friday, by which time the Committee of the Whole will be in a position to consider the reports of the Working Groups.

INTRODUCTION OF WORKING PAPERS

Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria): I asked to speak in order to introduce, on behalf of the delegations of the German Democratic Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and my own delegation, a working paper entitled "Limitation and reduction of naval armaments". Since that paper will be circulated very soon as a document of the Committee of the Whole, I shall be very brief in presenting its main contents to the members of the Committee.

Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic and the USSR hold the opinion that the continuing accumulation of naval armaments and the intensification of naval activities are detrimental to international peace and security and therefore represent a matter for global concern. Placing this urgent issue high on the disarmament agenda of the international community is long overdue.
In the light of that understanding, we consider it necessary for talks to begin with the participation of the major naval States, especially the nuclear Powers, as well as other interested States, on the limitation and prohibition of military activities in agreed marine areas, the limitation and reduction of naval armaments and the extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans for the purpose of guaranteeing the safety and freedom of navigation. The forum for consideration of those problems could be a special international conference or a meeting of the Security Council.

While taking into account that the naval arms race is but one aspect of the overall complex of the arms race, we are nevertheless of the view that certain measures could be discussed and undertaken at this stage. An important initial step to reduce tension in the maritime sphere would be the speedy identification of an agreement on confidence-building measures that are to be extended especially to areas with the busiest sea-lanes or where the probability of conflict is high. That includes such measures as prior notification of naval transfers and manoeuvres, limitation on the number, scale and areas of naval exercises and an invitation to observers to them. A general exchange of information on naval matters, the comparing of data on naval forces and a discussion of the principles that should govern naval activities would also be instrumental in strengthening confidence.

Another important issue before us is that of ensuring the security of maritime communications. The authors propose to that end the establishment of zones of reduced density of armaments and increased confidence in areas through which the main sea-lanes pass. In order to rule out the possibility of a surprise attack, we propose that in future, under conditions of enhanced security, the question of withdrawal of offensive forces and weapons from such zones be considered. The
creation of international United Nations naval forces could also serve the purpose of strengthening security at sea.

Acknowledging the danger posed by the growing presence and spread of nuclear weapons in the seas and oceans, Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic and the USSR have come up with a proposal to limit the number of ships carrying tactical nuclear weapons, as well as with other relevant ideas. In particular, we call upon nuclear-weapon States to undertake, on a reciprocal basis, the practice of giving notification of the presence or absence of nuclear weapons on board their ships entering the ports of other countries. We stand ready to participate in the elaboration of technical means for verifying the absence of nuclear weapons on military ships. All relevant questions in that regard could be discussed in the United Nations at a multilateral meeting of military experts.

Those are only some of the proposals contained in our working paper. The co-authors hope that the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will give impetus to multilateral endeavours in the field of naval arms limitation, disarmament and confidence-building.

Mr. NAZARKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to introduce a working paper submitted by the delegation of the USSR (A/S-15/AC.1/12) of 9 June 1988 on the elimination of foreign military presence and military bases abroad. In that working paper the Soviet Union proposes that the year 2000 should be set as a target for the elimination of foreign military presence and military bases abroad. The USSR would be prepared for a radical solution of this issue even earlier, but, taking into account world realities and the international agreements in force concerning military bases and sites, as well as the concern of our prospective negotiating partners, we are proposing a process of gradual, step-by-step advance. The end result should be the
withdrawal of all armed forces - land-based troops, air and naval forces and others - from all military bases in foreign territory in all regions of the world.

Our paper suggests that it would be useful for States Members of the United Nations to submit to the Secretary-General on a regular basis data on their military presence abroad and on foreign military presence in their territory. In cases where there might be a need for foreign troops to maintain peace, those functions would devolve upon the United Nations, whose peace-keeping forces, including their naval component, could occupy the vacated military military bases and facilities, subject, of course, to the consent of the States in whose territory they are located.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.