Twenty-seventh session
Agenda item 26

WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Letter dated 15 January 1973 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the statement of the President of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Stanisław Trepczyński, regarding the appointment of the Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference.

The President of the twenty-seventh session requests that this statement be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) A. CZARKOWSKI
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Statement by the President of the twenty-seventh session of the
General Assembly regarding the appointment of the Special
Committee on the World Disarmament Conference

In connexion with the appointment of the Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, the President of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly wishes to state as follows:

1. In appointing the members of the Special Committee the President acted in accordance with his mandate under the terms of General Assembly resolution 2930 (XXVII) and was guided by the desires of the overwhelming majority of the representatives who took the floor in the debate on the World Disarmament Conference. The letter of the President of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, dated 20 December 1972, addressed to the Secretary-General, concerning the composition of the Special Committee has been issued 1/ as a result of almost one-month-long consultations with the regional groups. The letter has been published following the additional intensive consultations conducted on 20 December 1972.

2. A clear majority of the representatives shared the view that the participation of the nuclear-weapon States in the work of the Special Committee was essential in order to ensure the success of its work. It was in this spirit that, among others, the representative of Zambia, H.E. Mr. P. J. F. Lusaka, stated on behalf of the 59 co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/L.629:

"... it is the unanimous view of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution that the participation of the five nuclear-weapon States is essential in order to ensure the success of the work which will be entrusted to the Special Committee. We believe that is also the opinion of the overwhelming majority of delegations here /A/C.1/PV.1897, p. 37/.
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3. While the overwhelming majority of delegations was agreed in suggesting the inclusion of all the nuclear-weapons States in the Special Committee, the President so acted solely with regard to one nuclear-weapon State, which had already expressed its readiness to participate in the work of the Special Committee. With respect to the remaining nuclear-weapon States, the President decided to adopt a compromise formula whereby "... the remaining four seats will be reserved for the nuclear States which may wish to become members of the Special Committee in the future". By adopting this course of action, therefore, the President took into account the unanimous wish of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution concerning the World Disarmament Conference, the position of the overwhelming majority of the Member States as well as the wish of those nuclear-weapon States which had requested that a possibility of participation in the work of the Special Committee in the future be reserved for them. At the same time, taking into consideration the position of the remaining nuclear-weapon States, the President refrained from appointing them to the Special Committee, reserving for them the right to participate in its work - should they so wish - in the future.

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1/ A/8990.
4. As the number of States proposed by regional groups for membership in the Special Committee significantly exceeded the total number of seats (35), as determined by the General Assembly, the President, following extensive consultations with the regional groups, expressed his readiness to make a formal proposal for such enlargement of the Special Committee which would render it possible to accommodate the wishes of regional groups. In view of the generally known, categorical objection to any enlargement of membership of the Special Committee, the President, guided by his mandate in General Assembly resolution 2930 (XXVII), appointed the members of the Special Committee from among the nominees of the regional groups, while, of course, seeking to meet their wishes to the greatest extent possible. Bearing in mind the fact that all the regional groups had accorded top priority on their lists of nominees to the members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (with one exception), their appointment to the membership of the Special Committee is a reflection of the consideration given by the President to the views expressed in the course of the debate in the First Committee as well as to the expressed wishes of all the regional groups.

5. Thus, the decision of the President of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly represents full and strict implementation of the mandate given to him by the Assembly in its resolution 2930 (XXVII). His decision has been arrived at as a result of prolonged and intensive consultations with all the regional groups, with due consideration being given to the interpretation of resolution 2930 (XXVII) by the co-sponsors of its draft. The decision of the President has also taken into account, to the fullest extent possible under the existing circumstances, the wishes of the regional groups as well as the necessity to ensure adequate political and geographical representation.