Twenty-eighth session
Agenda item 32

WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Note by the Secretary-General

1. This note is submitted by the Secretary-General for the information of the General Assembly in view of the absence of the report envisaged in paragraph 2 of resolution 2930 (XXVII).

2. On 29 November 1972, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2930 (XXVII), by which it decided to establish a Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference. The operative paragraphs of that resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. Invites the Governments of all States to exert further efforts with a view to creating adequate conditions for the convening of a world disarmament conference at an appropriate time;

"2. Considers it necessary to set up a special committee to examine all the views and suggestions expressed by Governments on the convening of a world disarmament conference and related problems and to submit, on the basis of consensus, a report to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session;

"3. Decides to establish a Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference consisting of thirty-five Member States, to be appointed by the President of the General Assembly after consultation with all the regional groups and taking due consideration of the necessity to ensure adequate political and geographical representation;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to render all necessary assistance to the Special Committee in its work;

"5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its twenty-eighth session the item entitled World Disarmament Conference."

3. By letter dated 20 December 1972, the President of the General Assembly informed the Secretary-General of the States which he had specifically appointed,
pursuant to paragraph 3 of the resolution, to serve on the Special Committee, namely Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Yugoslavia and Zambia. By the same letter the Secretary-General was informed that, "in accordance with the widely expressed wish, the remaining four seats will be reserved for the nuclear States which may wish to become members of the Special Committee in the future". As requested, the letter was issued as a document of the General Assembly (A/8990).

4. The Secretary-General also received:

(a) A letter dated 9 January 1973 from the Permanent Representative of China, transmitting a copy of a statement issued by the delegation of China on the subject of the letter of the President of the General Assembly dated 20 December 1972; as requested, this letter was circulated as a document of the General Assembly (A/9033);

(b) A letter dated 15 January 1973 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations, transmitting a statement by the President of the General Assembly; as requested, this letter was circulated as a document of the General Assembly (A/8990/Add.1);

(c) A letter dated 2 February 1973 from the Permanent Representative of Haiti to the United Nations, containing the observations of the Latin American Group; as requested, this letter was circulated as a document of the General Assembly (A/9041).

5. The Secretary-General, on 6 April 1973, addressed a letter to the 31 Member States specifically appointed by the President to serve on the Special Committee, quoting resolution 2930 (XXVII), noting that a letter had been received from the President of the General Assembly informing the Secretary-General of the States specifically appointed to the Special Committee, and informing these States that the first meeting would be convened on Thursday, 26 April 1973. This letter further informed the recipients that the provisional agenda would include the following items: (1) Opening of the session; (2) Adoption of the agenda; (3) Election of officers. This agenda was circulated on 11 April 1973 as a committee document (A/AC.161/L.1).

6. The meeting of the Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, convened at United Nations Headquarters on 26 April was opened by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disarmament on behalf of the Secretary-General. The Special Representative recalled that, on 29 November 1972, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 2930 (XXVII) by which it had decided to establish a Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference and he read the operative paragraphs of that resolution. He further recalled that, by a letter dated 20 December 1972, the President of the General Assembly had informed the Secretary-General of the States which he had specifically appointed pursuant to paragraph 3 of the resolution to serve on the Special Committee. In the same
letter, the President had also requested the Secretary-General, in accordance with paragraph 4 of resolution 2930 (XXVII), "to render all necessary assistance to the Special Committee so that it may convene and start its substantive work early in 1973". The Special Representative noted that in line with the established practice of the Secretariat with regard to the functioning of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and taking into account that the President of the General Assembly had appointed the Special Committee, the Secretary-General, on 6 April 1973, had addressed a letter to the Member States specifically appointed by the President to serve on the Special Committee, announcing that the first meeting of the Committee would be held on 26 April. He also noted that the Secretary-General had proposed a provisional agenda for the meeting. Pursuant to the Secretary-General's letter of 6 April 1973, the matter now rested with the members of the Special Committee, the Special Representative stated. The Secretary-General would, in accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 2930 (XXVII), render all necessary assistance to the Special Committee in its work. The Special Representative continued as follows:

"I understand that in consultations held prior to this meeting, a consensus has been reached among the members of the Committee that they would now proceed to an informal exchange of views. I have also been informed that the members of the Committee are in agreement that His Excellency Ambassador Hoveyda of Iran should direct such an informal exchange of views. I invite Ambassador Hoveyda to come to the rostrum."

7. An informal exchange of views among the members of the Committee took place in eight meetings held on 26 April, 27 April, 2 May, 7 May, 29 May and 14 September 1973. In accordance with paragraph 4 of resolution 2930 (XXVII), the necessary assistance was rendered in connexion with this exchange of views.