PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT

Second session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 11 May 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria)

CONTENTS

Consideration of views concerning the agenda of the second special session of the
General Assembly devoted to disarmament (continued)

Consideration of views on other relevant questions relating to the second special
session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, including the organization
of work of the session (continued)

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session.
CONSIDERATION OF VIEWS CONCERNING THE AGENDA OF THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT (continued) (A/AC.206/2 and Add.1 and 2; A/AC.206/CRP.1, 2)

CONSIDERATION OF VIEWS ON OTHER RELEVANT QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT, INCLUDING THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE SESSION (continued) (A/AC.206/2 and Add.1 and 2; A/AC.206/CRP.1, 2)

1. Mr. KAMANDA wa KAMANDA (Zaire) said that his country had placed great hopes in the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and above all in the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of that session, especially those contained in its Programme of Action. Since that session, however, the various reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of those recommendations and decisions had shown that very little progress had been made. Work on the priority questions currently being negotiated in the Committee on Disarmament, namely the drafting of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, a convention prohibiting chemical weapons, a convention prohibiting radiological weapons and a convention assuring non-nuclear-weapon States against the use of nuclear weapons, had not advanced. The return to cold war and confrontation politics in international relations had intensified the arms race, and, despite declarations by States in favour of halting and reversing the arms race, military spending had increased, thereby reducing still further the resources available for development and for improving the living conditions of millions of human beings, particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America. As against $370 million in 1970, $500 billion had been spent on arms in 1980, 10 per cent more even than in 1979.

2. Hotbeds of tension were on the increase, as was the phenomenon of proxy wars conducted by the great Powers in other countries' territories, chiefly in the southern hemisphere. Such a situation aggravated threats to peace, to international security and to the exercise of peoples' right to self-determination. Efforts by States Members of the United Nations to destabilize and overthrow Governments by means of foreign military intervention, in contravention of the Charter, were also increasing.

3. Clearly, not only had little progress been made in implementing the recommendations and decisions contained in the Final Document of the 1978 special session, but the results of General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV) proclaiming the First Disarmament Decade were far from fulfilling the expectations of States. Although since 1945 a third world war had been avoided, more than 125 localized wars had taken a toll of over 60 million lives. Such wars had generally been fought in the third world.

4. It was against that background of uncertainty, distrust and insecurity that the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session had proclaimed the 1980s the Second Disarmament Decade. No doubt the same atmosphere would prevail when the second special session devoted to disarmament was held in 1982.
5. The arms race was clearly at the centre of the rivalry between the great military Powers and of the insecurity and instability of international relations. By undermining understanding and co-operation between States and giving licence to excesses of every kind, the arms race was threatening international peace and security rather than increasing security. If disarmament efforts were to be effective, States must be able to achieve all their economic, social, political and cultural objectives outside the context of the arms race and military or nuclear competition. Peace was all that was needed to achieve such objectives, and any system of international relations which was based on hegemonism, lust for power and a balance of forces was totally unacceptable.

6. The 1982 special session would provide an ideal opportunity for the international community to review progress made in the field of disarmament since 1978 and to study the real causes underlying States' reluctance to implement the decisions and recommendations of the 1978 special session and the factors which were preventing the cessation and reversal of the arms race, thereby hampering the international community's efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament. The session would also have to review progress made in implementing the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade. In addition, it would be most desirable if the session reaffirmed the validity of the Final Document of the 1978 special session.

7. His country attached great importance to the question of denuclearized zones, particularly the denuclearization of Africa. It therefore believed that South Africa's possession of an atomic or nuclear weapon had added a new dimension to that issue and that the whole question of denuclearized zones must be re-evaluated accordingly, within the over-all framework of the review of the international disarmament situation and its close links with peace, security, progress, development and confidence-building measures.

8. After reviewing the implementation of the 1978 Programme of Action, the 1982 special session should adopt a comprehensive programme of disarmament, which was a key element of any international disarmament strategy. His delegation hoped that the Committee on Disarmament would complete the drafting of such a programme before the 1982 special session, so that it could be adopted at that session.

9. In the light of those considerations, his delegation believed that the agenda for the 1982 special session should comprise the following main items: procedural debate; general debate; review and evaluation of the international situation with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security, development and the promotion of international co-operation; review and evaluation of the progress made in implementing the decisions and recommendations of the 1978 special session, in particular those of the Programme of Action contained in the Final Document; review and evaluation of the progress made in implementing the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade; review of the conclusions of United Nations studies and reports on disarmament and related questions, notably development, security and confidence-building measures; review of multilateral institutional machinery to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament; adoption of a comprehensive programme of disarmament; and adoption of one or more final documents.

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10. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to documents A/AC.206/CRP.1 and 2, which contained a summary of Government's replies to the Secretary-General concerning the agenda and other relevant questions relating to the second special session devoted to disarmament. More information was needed from the Secretariat with regard to the timing of that session. He suggested that the Secretariat should be asked to make arrangements for holding the session from the last week of May to the first week of July 1982. With regard to public information activities, some delegations had suggested that the Secretariat should publish a leaflet on the coming special session as soon as possible and give it the widest possible dissemination. He therefore suggested that the Secretariat should produce a brief paper indicating what it could do in that connexion, so that the Committee could take a formal decision thereon.

11. It was so decided.

12. The CHAIRMAN invited delegations to comment on the contents of document A/AC.206/CRP.1.

13. Mr. FLOWERRDEE (United States of America) said his delegation felt that the Committee's first task must be to prepare the agenda for the 1982 special session, since any other decisions regarding that session would depend on the agenda. In its view, the agenda should not be unduly detailed but should instead be sufficiently broad to cover items of concern to various delegations and groups of countries. In its reply to the Secretary-General (A/AC.206/2), the United States had mentioned a number of specific items to which it attached particular importance, namely, the need for effective verification, for openness on military spending and activities and for confidence-building measures. Those items could, however, be covered by a general debate on all relevant issues.

14. The agenda should comprise a limited number of items and be worded in a neutral, non-controversial manner. There seemed to be general agreement that the agenda should include the following items: general debate; review of developments since the 1978 special session; comprehensive programme of disarmament; review of institutional questions (which could cover a broad range of issues); and adoption of a final report and any other agreed documents. Such an agenda would prevent any protracted dispute over more specific items and enable Governments to raise matters of special concern to them as part of a general debate tailored to the time available and to the priorities of other delegations.

15. Mr. TALIATI (Italy) said that the compilation of views prepared by the Secretariat was very useful and would help the Committee to make progress in preparing the agenda for the 1982 special session. There appeared to be a fairly broad consensus on the content of that agenda, and most delegations had reaffirmed the validity of the Final Document of the 1978 special session. His delegation was prepared to co-operate in efforts to produce a draft outline agenda, based on the compilation of views, by whatever means the Chairman deemed fit.
16. Mr. ZAKK (Egypt) said that the Committee should begin its work by reviewing the implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the 1978 special session and seek ways to remove the obstacles preventing the full implementation of the principles and measures contained in its Final Document. The Committee should also review and evaluate the current international situation. He stressed the close connexion between disarmament and the easing of international tensions. The main task was the consideration and approval of specific measures to be taken by States for a gradual reduction of the arms race, particularly with regard to nuclear weapons. To that end, the Committee on Disarmament should try to conclude the agreements on specific disarmament items before the 1982 special session.

17. Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, judging from the written replies of States and the statements made during the general debate, there seemed to be widespread agreement that the agenda of the 1982 special session should include organization of work, a general debate, a discussion of new proposals, and the elaboration of a final document or documents. The discussion of the organization of work of the special session should include the question of its working bodies. It would be difficult to impose limits on the general debate. Delegations would be free to discuss those international political questions which they considered important. Nevertheless, the duration of the general debate at the 1982 special session would probably be shorter than that of the 1978 special session, which had lasted three weeks. It was important to consider both the new proposals of individual States and those made on the basis of multilateral negotiations. The character and content of the final document or documents would have to be carefully considered. The Preparatory Committee at its current session should consider that question and decide who would draft that document or documents, and determine the nature and number of such documents.

18. His delegation agreed that the agenda should be short and endorsed the statements calling for neutral, non-controversial wording of agenda items on the basis of constructive co-operation. The Preparatory Committee should elaborate a draft agenda which could then be considered and adopted at the 1982 special session. Work on that draft agenda should begin immediately and should be based on the areas of general agreement in the replies of States. Lastly, a list of questions on which there was general agreement should be drawn up and gradually expanded.

19. Mr. ESPECHE (Argentina) said that his delegation's position with regard to the agenda of the coming special session was flexible. It favoured a general and non-controversial wording of agenda items on the basis of the consensus which had already been reached. He reaffirmed his Government's position that the 1982 special session should evaluate the implementation of the 1978 Programme of Action and give priority consideration to the state of negotiations on nuclear disarmament and the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. The agenda of the 1982 special session should reflect the consensus views, especially with regard to priority issues, emphasize the importance of evaluating the work carried out by the Committee on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission and consider the question of strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.
20. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) said his delegation believed that the agenda for the 1982 special session should include the following items: organization of work; general debate; consideration and adoption of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament; consideration, adoption and opening for signature of the treaties or conventions on disarmament whose texts had been received by the General Assembly from the Committee on Disarmament; launching of a World Disarmament Campaign through a pledging conference for that purpose; and the adoption of the Final Act of the special session. The Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament would include all the measures mentioned in the 1978 Final Document and all measures for achieving general and complete disarmament. With regard to treaties on disarmament, his delegation felt that the adoption of the treaty on the total prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests was an important objective to be achieved. In accordance with customary conference terminology, the 1982 special session should adopt a Final Act which would contain a brief summary of the background of the session, a description of the organization of work, and the text of the documents adopted, especially with regard to the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. When the General Assembly came to consider that Programme, it would have to formulate provisions for taking specific measures for the final stage of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, just as provisions of that kind had been formulated in the draft treaties submitted by the United States and the Soviet Union to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament in 1962.

21. Mr. RAHMAN (Bangladesh) said that a number of common themes had emerged from the compilation of the views of Member States. A general debate should certainly be the first item on the agenda, and, in his delegation's view, it should then include the following items.

22. First, review and appraisal of the current international situation in the light of the need to achieve substantive progress in the field of disarmament and in halting the arms race.

23. Second, the question of establishing a close link between disarmament, international peace and security, and economic development, especially in the light of developments since the 1978 special session.

24. Third, review of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations contained in the 1978 Final Document. It was important for all concerned to take stock of the situation and of any experience acquired which might guide the practical recommendations to be made in the final report of the 1982 special session.

25. Fourth, the over-all role of the United Nations. There had been welcome developments since the 1978 special session, in particular the revitalization of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the expansion of constructive debate in the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva, but those had not been enough; the role of the United Nations in all aspects of disarmament must be greatly expanded.

26. Fifth, the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. That should be an important part of the debates of the 1982 special session, and the session's final document should indicate what progress had been achieved.
27. Sixth, the adoption of resolutions.

28. Seventh, the adoption of a final document. The suggestion by the representative of Mexico that the term "Final Act" should be used seemed to be a good one.

29. He also welcomed the reference which had been made by the representative of Mexico to the McCloy-Zorin agreements, reached at Geneva as early as 1962. The ideas expressed in those agreements had been mostly forgotten, but his delegation believed that they still held good and might yet be instrumental in attaining the major goal of general and complete disarmament.

30. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus) said that the second special session devoted to disarmament should focus on those parts of the Declaration and the Programme of Action which presented action to be taken, rather than ideas alone, and consider them carefully in terms of their feasibility, their urgency, the extent to which they were independent of other measures, and the degree of consensus which existed, or which was needed in order to produce results. The 1978 Final Document contained a wealth of declarations and statements, but none of them had produced any effective action, and as a result, the arms race was continuing to intensify dramatically.

31. For example, action was mentioned in the Declaration, in paragraph 13 of the Final Document, which stressed the need for "effective implementation of the security system provided for in the Charter of the United Nations". The essence of disarmament was, of course, the phased reduction of arms, but the arms race itself must first be halted, and the pre-condition for that, in turn, was the implementation of the international security system, which came first in terms of both feasibility and urgency. Again, the Programme of Action (para. 110) spoke of "the necessary measures to maintain international peace and security", including the provision of manpower for an international peace force. The 1982 special session must concentrate on finding methods of implementing such measures which would produce results, for a Final Act which merely repeated the ideas of the 1978 Final Document would be worthless.

32. The proposal made by Yugoslavia and other members of the non-aligned group regarding a review and appraisal of the current international situation in the light of the urgent need to achieve substantive progress in the field of disarmament through halting the arms race and in establishing a close link between disarmament and international peace and security and economic developments should be given full consideration, with a view to promoting practical and effective action.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.