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

Third session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 24th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 8 October 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria)

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the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and recommendations thereon, including
those in respect of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted
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session.

81-56986 /...
The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF OTHER RELEVANT QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS THEREON, INCLUDING THOSE IN RESPECT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION (A/AC.206/CRP.6)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the fact that four paragraphs of the final communique of the meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government, which he had just attended, were devoted to disarmament. In one of them, the heads of Government reaffirmed their support for the objectives of the Second Disarmament Decade and expressed their determination to contribute to the success of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

2. Mr. STEELE (Australia) reminded the Committee that, at its previous meeting, delegations had been invited to focus that day on the central aspects of agenda item 5 and, in particular, on the organization of the second special session. Items 5 and 4 were, without a doubt, the most important items on the agenda. Delegations seemed to agree on the need to make careful preparations for the second special session. Three main tasks lay ahead of the Committee: it must agree on an agenda, settle relevant questions and consider problems relating to the implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted at the first special session. The first, however, was the most important and delegations seemed very close to reaching agreement in that field. With the help of the Chairman they should be able to overcome the remaining difficulties.

3. With regard to the organization of work, it seemed possible to proceed in the same way as in the case of item 4, that was to say by submitting written observations. His delegation, for its part, proposed that the session should open on 17 or 24 May, that it should last three or four weeks, at most, and that the level of representation should be as high as possible. The role assigned to non-governmental organizations would be the same as at the first session. The role of religious leaders could be considered on the basis of precedents and information supplied by the Secretariat.

4. The suggestion put forward at the previous meeting to the effect that a distinction be made between technical problems and problems of a political nature - the latter being the most important - did not seem necessary in the framework of the evaluation of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted at the first special session. The Committee's sole task was to make very careful preparations for the second session, concentrating above all on the organization of the session. With regard to questions of substance, the Committee should confine itself to identifying problems in a general manner and defining the themes to be examined at the second special session. Those themes had been very well presented in document A/AC.206/CRP.6 and his delegation was prepared to contribute to the implementation of any method which the Chairman might suggest with a view to ensuring the success of the work of the Preparatory Committee.
5. Mr. MELESCANU (Romania) said that he was not in a position to propose an exact date for the opening of the second session. He felt that the organs of the United Nations which were active in the field of disarmament should be given time to prepare themselves for the session.

6. The organizational aspects of the second session did not raise any insurmountable difficulties; it would be a good idea for the Committee to look at the experience acquired in that regard during the first session. His delegation endorsed the proposal put forward by Yugoslavia to the effect that, once the Preparatory Committee had agreed on the agenda for the session, it should tackle issues of substance. A first consideration of these issues should take place at the next session. The duration of the special session would depend, inter alia, on how much time the Preparatory Committee had been able to devote to such issues. In the same way, the date for the opening of the special session would have to be determined in light of the dates of the session or sessions of the Preparatory Committee in 1982.

7. With regard to the agenda, his delegation felt that there was already a certain consensus and, recalling that States had been urged to submit their comments on the subject to the Secretariat, in writing, he expressed the hope that the Chairman would let delegations know how he planned to resolve the question of the agenda.

8. Mr. DE LA GORCE (France) said that the present discussion was really useful for it would, inter alia, reveal what the various delegations expected from the second special session.

9. The work of the Preparatory Committee on items 8 and 9 of the draft of the provisional agenda showed that the discussions of the 1982 session should lead both to a political evaluation of the international situation as it related to disarmament and to a review of the status of disarmament in light of the decisions and recommendations contained in the Final Document of the first session. The conclusions and recommendations which the Committee might formulate in that connexion should be as brief and to the point as possible, for the various aspects of disarmament would be the subject of the Comprehensive Programme, which would be the principal element of the work of the special session.

10. The studies constituted an important political and intellectual aspect of the role of the Organization in the field of disarmament. France was one of the sponsors of the resolutions which had led to several of those studies. Given the importance of the issues dealt with in them, Member States must be able to consider them and evaluate the prospects which they might open.

11. On the institutional level, France hoped that the United Nations Centre for Disarmament would be able to play its rightful role in that area and that the special session would give final approval to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.

12. With regard to organizational matters, France considered that the number of organs of the General Assembly for the next special session should be kept to...
(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

a minimum for the most important text to be considered would be the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament and the Committee on Disarmament would most certainly have prepared a satisfactory draft.

13. The final document of the second session could contain the following elements: conclusions of the general debate; Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, recommendations on specific questions; institutional questions and questions concerning information.

14. Mr. LIDGÅRD (Sweden) said that, acting on the Chairman's request, his delegation had submitted its proposals concerning the provisional agenda, in writing. They were in line with the consensus that seemed to be appearing in the Committee, with regard to both organizational questions and matters of substance.

15. At its second special session the General Assembly should focus on three main items: evaluation of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted at the first special session; Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament which was the crucial element, and strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

16. With regard to the first item, his delegation fully supported the formula presented in document A/AC.206/CRP.6, namely that the consideration should be in the form of a review of the status of negotiations on disarmament as contained in the Programme of Action and bearing in mind the priorities set out in the Programme. That review should be based on the reports of the Committee on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission. As the representative of France had pointed out, the question of the studies was very important and should be considered under that item.

17. As for the consideration and adoption of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, which was currently being considered by the Committee on Disarmament, it would be preferable, given the scope of that issue, not to go into details.

18. With regard to the third item, concerning the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, his delegation felt that it would be advisable to consider the international mechanisms and institutional needs on the basis of the study carried out by the group of experts on the question. The disarmament campaign would also be considered under that item. With regard to the Committee's mandate and, in particular questions relating to the organization of the special session and the opening date, as other delegations had pointed out, the main thing was to prepare the work of that session carefully. That meant that the Preparatory Committee must, on the one hand, identify the questions to be considered and, on the other, agree on the form and structure of the documents to be prepared. His delegation expressed the hope that the Committee would be able to spend enough time on those matters starting at the present session.

19. The Preparatory Committee could meet two weeks prior to the special session in order to draft a document the final text of which would be settled during the
session. In addition, it would be a good idea to set up working groups at that point to study the main questions and draft the provisional texts of documents. Those groups could continue to meet during the special session in order to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of the session's work. Even if the first two weeks of the session were devoted to a general debate, the two or three weeks remaining should be sufficient to complete the Final Document of the session.

20. Finally, his delegation agreed with the views expressed by previous speakers concerning the level of representation and the role of the non-governmental organizations.

21. Mr. SUMMERHAYES (United Kingdom) noted that the wording of item 5 of the agenda of the Preparatory Committee, which was based on General Assembly resolution 35/47, referred to the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the first special session devoted to disarmament because the Assembly had considered it essential to deal with that issue at its next special session. His delegation had already made it clear at the 20th meeting that it fully endorsed that approach. If it made recommendations along the lines envisaged in item 9 of document A/AC.206/CRP.6, the Committee would have fulfilled the wishes of the General Assembly.

22. A number of delegations, however, seemed to think that the Committee was obliged to embark on an in-depth review of the status of the implementation of the decisions of the tenth special session. It would be highly regrettable if the Committee diverted its efforts from what was for the time being its main task, namely to prepare a provisional agenda for the next special session. That agenda had still to be drafted although there was some agreement on a number of points. His delegation was eager to hear the views of the Chairman himself on how he planned to advance the work on item 4.

23. With regard to the actual organization of the special session, his delegation believed that a four- or five-week session should be held, at the beginning of the period envisaged. Its rules of procedure would be those of the General Assembly. Since the Preparatory Committee would have done the groundwork, he hoped that the special session would work chiefly in plenary meeting or plenary committee.

24. Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria) said that discussions in the Preparatory Committee showed that the Committee must try to prepare a provisional agenda for the special session as soon as possible if it was to have a clear idea of the outcome of that session. In those circumstances, item 5 could only be considered on a very preliminary basis. His delegation was therefore eager to hear the Chairman's views on how to advance the work on the provisional agenda.

25. The Committee must consider two issues under item 5: the nature of the special session and the content of its final document. Those two issues were also closely linked to the question of the agenda. At the previous session of the Preparatory Committee, many delegations had seemed to think that the second
special session should review the status of the implementation of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, study the causes of the present international situation and find ways of removing all the obstacles to achieving disarmament objectives. However, there also appeared to be broad agreement that the next disarmament session should not simply be a repetition of the first. The final document of the next special session should be a single, general document which gave an account of the deliberations of the session and reproduced any agreements reached at, or multilateral instruments submitted to, the session. His delegation had already suggested at the Preparatory Committee's second session that that document could be accompanied by annexes and comprise: (a) a record of the work of the session; (b) the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament; (c) any agreements arising from the work of the Committee on Disarmament. His delegation suggested that the document should be called a "Final report" as that title would best reflect its true nature. As to who would be responsible for preparing the record of the session, that would depend on the outcome of the work on the provisional agenda.

26. On a practical level, the special session should not last more than four weeks. The precise dates would be determined by the calendar of other conferences.

27. **Mr. Fields** (United States of America) said that the Chairman's summary (A/AC.206/CRP.6) was excellent. It was his view that the special session should last approximately four weeks and take place at the end of May at the latest. He also agreed that the Committee's first task was to reach agreement on a provisional agenda. Although some progress had been made on that score, the question had still to be settled. To embark now on a substantive debate would not make it any easier for the Committee to prepare an agenda. Besides, such a debate would to a large extent take place at the special session proper.

28. **Mr. Issraelyan** (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Chairman's summary (A/AC.206/CRP.6) gave a good account of delegations' different viewpoints and could well serve as a basis for consensus. The discussions in the Committee had revealed some differences of view which would no doubt be difficult to reconcile. That was why consultations had been suggested. He wished to reiterate that the Committee's main task now was to prepare an agenda and it must do that before considering any other issue. How, for instance, could it talk about a final document when it did not know what form that document would take or what it would be like? How could it prepare draft resolutions on the basis of proposals which had yet to be made?

29. His delegation, for its part, believed that the special session should produce one or more documents comprising three main elements: (a) a status report on the implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the first special session devoted to disarmament, which would serve as an introduction; (b) the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament; (c) a section reproducing views and decisions on other items: negotiating machinery (a world disarmament conference, for instance), information questions (including the World Disarmament Campaign), etc. The section on the Comprehensive Programme would be prepared by the Committee
on Disarmament and the introduction and conclusion could be entrusted to the
Preparatory Committee at its current session or, more likely, at its next
session. Agreement must first be reached on the nature of the final document,
however, as part of the process of preparing the provisional agenda. That
would also permit consideration of the future work of the Preparatory Committee.

30. With regard to the organization of the special session, his delegation was
prepared to abide by any decisions that might be taken regarding the dates
and duration of that session. While it believed that a four- or five-week session
would be preferable to a three-week session, which would be rather too short
to achieve real results, its position was nonetheless very flexible in that
regard.

31. Mr. LIANG YUFAN (China) agreed that the Preparatory Committee should devote
itself essentially to arriving at a consensus on the provisional agenda of the
special session. Most delegations regarded the Chairman's summary (A/AC.206/CRP.6)
as a very useful basis for the Committee's work. The Committee must first settle
the question of the agenda, for the week remaining to it at the current session
would not be enough to discuss all substantive issues. With regard to the
practical organization of the special session, a four-week session would be quite
adequate. Of course, preparatory work would be needed.

32. The CHAIRMAN noted that members of the Preparatory Committee seemed
anxious to first complete their work on item 4. Without actually making that a
prerequisite for considering item 5, they nonetheless saw it as a good starting
point which would make it easier to resolve some other issues. Once that first
issue had been settled, it should be possible to reach agreement quickly given the
convergence of views that had just emerged.

33. There were two kinds of issues pending: firstly, strictly organizational
matters (dates of the session, duration, nature of the final document or
documents) which must be settled once the provisional agenda had been prepared;
secondly, substantive issues which might require further discussion once the
provisional agenda had been prepared. To avoid prolonging its work unduly,
the Committee might set aside item 5 for the time being and try to reach a decision
quickly on the best way to approach its work on the agenda, so that the Chairman
could draw up a document for submission to the Committee. The comments which
dellegations had submitted in writing on that point would also have to be studied.
It had been suggested that the discussions on the agenda should take place in a
more restricted body than the plenary and he hoped to hold consultations soon
with the co-ordinators of the different groups so that a decision could be taken
at the following meeting.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.