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

Fourth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 40th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 13 May 1982, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.50 a.m.

PRINCIPAL DOCUMENT(S) TO BE ADOPTED AT THE SPECIAL SESSION (continued)

ANY REMAINING ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS RELATED TO THE SPECIAL SESSION (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN, giving an account of the meeting which the Bureau had held that morning, said that it had considered that there was no need to change the speakers' list of NGOs for the special session, since the NGOs applied their own criteria in the matter. Moreover, the Ad Hoc NGO Liaison Group had confined itself to sending the list of research institutions which had asked to participate in the debates of the Preparatory Committee, without making a selection from those institutions. As six new research institutions had asked to participate in the debates, the Bureau had decided to add them to the list already submitted by the Liaison Group.

2. Since, at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the work of the committee of the whole had been delayed because there had been no precise criterion for determining its composition, several delegations had felt that the Preparatory Committee should make a recommendation on the subject to the special session. The Chairman recalled that the Preparatory Committee had already decided to recommend that the bureau of the committee of the whole should be composed of 15 members, like that of the Preparatory Committee. It had been felt that the Preparatory Committee could help the committee of the whole to organize itself quickly, so that its subsidiary organs could begin their work without delay. The idea had been put forward that the regional groups might propose that their representatives in the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee should represent them also in the bureau of the committee of the whole. The Bureau, which could not make a recommendation on that subject without appearing to wish to perpetuate its existence, therefore submitted the question to the Preparatory Committee.

3. Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) congratulated the Bureau on its wise recommendations and decisions. The Soviet delegation would like the bureau of the committee of the whole to remain the same as that of the Preparatory Committee. That would have several advantages: the members of the Bureau had a good knowledge of the procedure to be followed in preparing for the special session, and they had experience and good relations with the other members of the Preparatory Committee. On the basis of the experience acquired at the first special session and in order to avoid any loss of time, his delegation considered that the Preparatory Committee should make a recommendation to that effect to the General Assembly.

4. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Preparatory Committee approved the USSR proposal.

It was so decided.
5. Mr. IJEWERE (Nigeria), turning to item 5 on the Preparatory Committee's agenda, recalled that his delegation had said, in an earlier statement, that it was necessary to specify the tenor and scope of the document(s) to be adopted at the special session. It was fairly clear from the discussions that delegations were in favour of the preparation of two documents, one devoted to consideration of issues related to the implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session and the other to the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. If it was intended to open the latter text for signature, it should necessarily be presented in the form of a separate document. His delegation felt that the Preparatory Committee would contribute to the smooth progress of the work of the special session by recommending expressly to the General Assembly that separate documents should be drawn up.

6. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) said that his delegation had proposed, in an earlier statement, that the Preparatory Committee should recommend to the special session the adoption of two documents, the first devoted to the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament and the second to all other issues included in the agenda; it was, therefore, particularly gratified that the Nigerian delegation had expressed a similar point of view. Pakistan in no way wished to prejudice the character that would be finally given to the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament or the way in which it would be adopted by the special session; that was one of the substantive issues to be negotiated, and the Preparatory Committee was not in a position, at the present stage, to take a decision on the matter. Moreover, since the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament would be the subject of a separate document in which its objectives, principles and programme of action would be set forth, it seemed logical for it to be adopted separately and for the Preparatory Committee to recommend, therefore, to the special session the adoption of two separate documents.

7. Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation considered, like other delegations, that a document should be adopted on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament and another document devoted to all the substantive issues included in the agenda. With regard to the second document, his delegation felt that there were three reasons why it would be preferable to adopt a single document dealing with all the items, except item 10, of the provisional agenda of the special session recommended by the Preparatory Committee (A/36/49, para. 18). Firstly, such a document would make a stronger impression on the public and would be easier to read and handle than a series of documents. Secondly, a single document would make it possible to avoid repetitions, since certain issues overlapped. Thirdly, if there was to be a vote, it was obviously better to have separate documents, but if a consensus was sought, it was preferable, on the contrary, to have a single document highlighting the unity of views. His delegation was in favour of consensus and the success of the session, which would be easier to achieve in the framework of general agreement. It would, therefore, like the Preparatory Committee to recommend to the special session the adoption of two documents. It was true, as the representative of Mexico had said, that, at the first special session devoted to disarmament, the General Assembly had adopted many decisions and not just one single decision. However, there was no doubt, on the one hand, that the Final Document remained the most important result of the session and that, on the other hand, many of those decisions had dealt with procedural or organizational issues. His delegation was speaking of a decision on the substance of the issue; that was why it insisted on the idea of two separate documents.
8. Mr. MOUSSAOUI (Algeria) said that his delegation had abstained from speaking, while listening with interest to the discussions on item 5 of the agenda of the Preparatory Committee, because it had felt that that issue could not be dealt with independently of the others, and it had proposed, in an earlier statement, that consideration of it should be deferred until the end of the work of the Preparatory Committee, because it considered that consideration of substantive issues would determine its outcome. It believed that, in so far as key issues remained in suspense, it would be more realistic to seek specific means which would enable the Preparatory Committee to propose to the special session practical solutions which would facilitate its adoption of decisions. It felt, in that regard, that the various issues on which concrete results were expected might be regrouped. The assessment of the implementation of the decisions taken at the first special session, questions relating to machinery and the World Disarmament Campaign might be the subject of a document. His delegation believed that, as a compromise, that document might be adopted by a resolution, as had been done at the first special session. The second document would be devoted to the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, a question which, in his delegation's view, had a very special status and deserved to be accorded the highest possible level. In view of the divergences of views aroused by that question, it might be possible, as other delegations had suggested, to adopt a blanket resolution governing issues which had not yet been resolved, in particular, that of the signing of that text, an idea to which Algeria subscribed fully. The general appeal for disarmament and reversal of the arms race, the idea of which had been launched in the course of the Committee's work, might, if that proposal met with the approval of the Preparatory Committee, form the subject of a brief separate document.

9. Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia) said that it would be extremely regrettable if the Preparatory Committee was unable to recommend to the special session the document(s) to be adopted at the conclusion of its work. However, there was every hope that the Committee would be able to arrive at a consensus. His delegation would prefer the special session to adopt two separate documents, one containing the Comprehensive Programme and the other the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly. In view of the importance of the Comprehensive Programme, it would be desirable for it to be contained in separate documents.

10. Mr. KRUTZSCH (German Democratic Republic) said that, in view of the influence which the Preparatory Committee's recommendations would have on the work of the special session itself, the Committee should do its utmost to formulate recommendations. Given the essential future role of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, especially if it lived up to expectations, the Programme should be treated as a special document. Recommendations and decisions relating to other questions, inter alia, the review of the implementation of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, could be included in another document.

11. Mr. de BEAUSSE (France) noted that all delegations had a common goal: to ensure that the decisions adopted at the special session commanded as much respect as possible. A single document would carry more weight than several documents. The single document could of course be subdivided into several parts corresponding
to the various items to be considered. As the Soviet representative had stated, a single document would be easy to read, would create a greater impression and would be more coherent. Moreover, the first special session devoted to disarmament had shown that the respect enjoyed by the Final Document adopted by consensus in 1978 was largely due to the fact that it was a single document.

12. **Mr. Ligard** (Sweden) repeated that he favoured the adoption of two documents: one would deal with the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament and might contain some kind of solemn declaration for possible signature by delegations; the other would contain the recommendations, decisions and conclusions adopted at the special session. The document concerning the review of the implementation of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session could contain not only recommendations for the implementation of the Programme of Action, but also an overview of the responses to the various proposals and opinions presented during the forthcoming session.

13. As to the organization of work, his delegation believed that it would be advisable to establish two working groups; on the understanding that any decision to subdivide them into subgroups would be taken only at the beginning of the special session. When that question had been taken up, there had appeared to be a consensus that the relationship between disarmament and development deserved special attention. There should therefore be no objection if that question was dealt with by one of the subgroups of the working group reviewing the implementation of the Final Document.

14. The **Chairman** noted that the Committee had decided not to rule out the possible establishment of subgroups or other working groups, in case that was considered appropriate at the special session.

15. **Mr. Garcia Robles** (Mexico) reiterated his Government's position of principle concerning the question under consideration: it was essential to avoid dissipating efforts and to seek maximum co-operation. It was therefore essential to prevent a proliferation of items on the agenda of the second special session, which should include, in addition to the usual item on organizational and procedural matters, only item 10 of the provisional agenda recommended by the Preparatory Committee: "Consideration and adoption of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament". In accordance with the decision taken by the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva, the Comprehensive Programme should form a whole. That would in no way prevent a conscientious examination of questions of lower priority. However, as a sign of goodwill, his delegation was prepared to accept the draft provisional agenda prepared by the Preparatory Committee and any decisions or recommendations adopted by the Committee, provided they were adopted by consensus. He did not think that there were major differences of opinion regarding the substance of the question; the wording of agenda item 10 ("Adoption of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament") perhaps made the distinction between that item and other items clear enough.

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16. He failed to see the purpose of item 14 of the provisional agenda and had asked the Secretariat whether there had ever been an agenda item with that wording at previous special sessions of the General Assembly. Mexico would not object to the deletion of item 14 from the agenda. It was inclined to agree that there should be two documents: one relating to the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament; the other relating to items 11, 12 and 13 of the provisional agenda. His delegation might, however, agree to a single document, on condition that the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament occupied a position of priority therein.

17. From the purely material standpoint, unless the General Assembly decided otherwise, the publishing services would issue, as was customary, a volume containing, in the first part, the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament and, in the second part, the resolutions and decisions adopted. After the first special session devoted to disarmament, a document entitled "Resolutions and decisions" had been issued. That document included resolution S-10/2, which contained the Final Document. At any rate, the Secretariat would no doubt issue a document entitled "Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament". He hoped that that text would be ratified by as many heads of State and Government as possible.

18. Mr. MAREI (Egypt) said that the two proposals had their merits. To his mind, however, the arguments in favour of a single document were more convincing. If the General Assembly adopted several documents, that might give the impression that the Comprehensive Programme was out of context. The Programme had to be regarded as the natural culmination of the review of the decisions and recommendations adopted at the first special session. There were other arguments in favour of a single document: first, it would be easy to refer to it; secondly, the adoption of two separate documents could mean that Governments would not feel obliged to comply with them in the same way, even if all the decisions were adopted by consensus. The adoption of a single document would in no way prevent the Comprehensive Programme from occupying a special position; Governments would still be committed to implement it in good faith. However that might be, his delegation was prepared to go along with any decision by the Committee on the question.

19. Mr. LOPEZ PAZ (Cuba) agreed with delegations which supported the adoption, at the second special session devoted to disarmament, of two separate documents: one relating to the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, the other containing the recommendations and decisions relating to all the other substantive questions. Those delegations had adequately demonstrated why two separate documents should be adopted at the second special session.

20. Mr. SHELDY (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, having listened with interest to the various views expressed and the supporting arguments regarding the status and number of documents to be adopted, his delegation believed that it was important both to the organization of work of the second special session and to the consideration of the substantive agenda items, for the Preparatory Committee to come to a decision.
21. His delegation took the view that two separate documents should be adopted at the second special session: one containing the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament; the other bringing together recommendations and decisions adopted at the session with regard to all the other substantive questions, including those dealt with under items 9, 11, 12 and 13 of the provisional agenda. As far as those questions were concerned, experience at recent conferences had shown that it was more productive and more realistic to prepare and adopt a single document, instead of a series of separate documents, especially if adoption was to be by consensus. It would thus be possible to take a unified approach to all the burning issues in the sphere of disarmament. His delegation therefore believed that the adoption of two separate documents would be more in keeping with the nature of the task before the Assembly at the special session and with the status that should be accorded to the decisions adopted. Such a solution would facilitate the dissemination of the results of the second session among the general public, which was increasingly interested in disarmament-related activities.

22. Mr. Goonetilleke (Sri Lanka) said that, while the arguments in favour of the adoption of a single document did carry some weight, the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament should be adopted as a separate document, in view of the impact and respect which the Programme should enjoy. Although no consensus on the question was yet emerging, he shared the hope expressed by the Chairman at a previous meeting that the Preparatory Committee would reach a definitive decision. That would save precious time at the second special session.

23. Mr. Fields (United States of America) emphasized the importance of the question. He had heard with interest and carefully considered the proposal that, in order to give the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament greater authority, delegations to the second special session should sign the Programme, either as a separate document or as part of a single document. His delegation considered that the Preparatory Committee would be ill-advised to make such a recommendation to the second special session, first of all because signing the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament might impair the standing of other texts contained in resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in the past, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, none of which had been signed. Secondly, it would be tantamount to prejudging the outcome of the negotiations and would make the attainment of a consensus on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament more difficult. There were certainly other methods besides signature for achieving the aim of the proposal, and finding them was the responsibility of the second special session.

24. As to the number of documents, his delegation continued to believe that logic required the adoption of a single document, which would give greater weight to the decisions of the General Assembly while at the same time reflecting them more accurately. That had been the procedure followed in the past, and there was no apparent reason for changing it now. Although his delegation was ready to continue discussion of the matter and to consider any suggestions that might be made, it was not at present convinced that the Preparatory Committee should recommend to the second special session the adoption of more than one document.
25. Mr. Akram (Pakistan) noted that, although there seemed to be wide support for the adoption by the second special session of two separate documents, some delegations favoured the adoption of a single document; he would like once again to express the hope that the Chairman would be able to achieve a consensus. However, if such a consensus proved impossible, the Preparatory Committee’s report to the General Assembly should give a full account of all the views expressed on the subject, so that it would not be necessary to go through the same arguments again at the second special session.

26. With regard to the views expressed by some delegations, including those of the France and the United States, concerning the status and number of the documents to be adopted, he believed that, as argued by the French delegation, a single document might help to give greater authority and standing to the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament; nevertheless, the Programme was of a very specific nature and, looking at it and at the other issues on the agenda of the second special session, one could see differences in kind which in themselves justified a different approach to the adoption of decisions on those issues than had been taken in adopting the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament.

27. In response to those delegations which had considered it necessary to state their views at the present stage on the way in which the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament should be adopted, he said his delegation believed not only that the Programme should be signed by the representatives to the second special session but that the Security Council should also take note of it. In support of that position, he recalled that originally the Programme had been intended to become not an ordinary resolution, but a binding international instrument which would establish the global framework for the negotiations leading to general and complete disarmament. In fact, that was why the Programme had always been discussed at Geneva, rather than in the legislative organs of the United Nations. He therefore believed that the real aim of delegations in suggesting that the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament should have the same status as the other decisions to be adopted by the second special session was to diminish its status by likening it to an ordinary resolution. His delegation had submitted a proposal offering a compromise between those two positions and providing for the drafting of both a treaty and an ordinary resolution, but it could under no circumstances agree that the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament should be in the form of an ordinary resolution. He therefore wished to remind the Committee, before it took a decision on the matter, of his delegation’s view that the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament should take the form of an international legal instrument adopted by the General Assembly and recommended to States for ratification.

28. The Chairman noted that, after exhaustive debate on the question, the Committee was still not in a position to take a decision. It would not be desirable to leave the responsibility for settling the issue to the second special session, because it would then be impossible to avoid a time-wasting repetition of the arguments already made in the Preparatory Committee. Although valid arguments had been advanced in support of both positions, the idea of a single final act did not appear to have much support for reasons to do with the implications of that approach, as explained on the previous day by the representative of Greece and others.
29. The question of the number of documents and whether the Comprehensive Programme should be signed must be settled. If there was one issue which should be the subject of formal negotiations at the second special session with a view to the drafting of an instrument, it was the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, and to that extent the idea of giving the Programme special treatment would seem to be justified. Furthermore, as the representative of Mexico had very aptly pointed out, item 10 of the provisional agenda was entitled "Consideration and adoption of the comprehensive programme of disarmament", which would seem to add weight to the view that the Preparatory Committee should recommend the adoption of the Comprehensive Programme as a separate document. Delegations thus had an immediate opportunity to demonstrate the flexibility with which they had said they intended to approach the second special session in June, because the Committee could not spend any more time on the issue if it was to complete its work by 14 May.

30. It would therefore appear that a majority of delegations were in favour of the adoption of two documents, and adoption of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament as a separate document would facilitate a subsequent decision by the negotiating group on the Comprehensive Programme concerning the mode of adoption of the Programme, because that decision, whatever it might be, would be easier if it applied only to the Comprehensive Programme, the sole text whose manner of adoption seemed likely to give rise to a debate. Even if the Secretariat, for editorial reasons, had occasion eventually to compile the two documents in a single publication, that should not in any way prejudice the manner of adoption of each of them.

31. Since some delegations had proposed that the Committee should recommend the adoption of three documents and others the adoption of a single document, recommending the adoption of two documents would seem to be an acceptable compromise. The second special session would not, of course, be bound by such a recommendation and could decide to proceed differently, but the Preparatory Committee had an obligation to make a recommendation conducive to a consensus in which those still opposed to that solution could join, in a spirit of compromise, on an issue that, despite its importance, was simply an organizational matter. He therefore asked whether, to close the meeting, he could take it that the Committee would recommend to the second special session that it should consider adopting the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament as one document and assembling in a second document the decisions and recommendations adopted on all other items of its agenda.

32. Mr. de BEAUSSE (France) said that his delegation could not go along with the Chairman's suggestion; if the choice was one document or two, no compromise solution existed. At the present stage, therefore, unless agreement was reached at the following meeting, the Preparatory Committee should acknowledge that, in view of the differences of opinion, it was unable to adopt any recommendation on the question.

33. The CHAIRMAN said he had hoped that the following meeting could be devoted to a first reading of the draft report of the Preparatory Committee to the General Assembly, in which all the views expressed on the question under discussion would,
of course, be recorded. While he would not oppose continuation of the debate on the issue, it seemed to him that nothing remained to be said.

34. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) suggested that the Chairman should be asked to arrange informal consultations among the main delegations with differing views on the matter, with the aim of arriving at a solution that could be submitted to the Committee on the following day.

35. The CHAIRMAN, noting that the Committee agreed with that suggestion, said that he would accordingly hold informal consultations; whatever their outcome, that would simplify the work of the Committee at the following meeting.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.