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

Third session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 25 January 1988, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES FOR INCORPORATION IN THE DOCUMENT OR DOCUMENTS TO BE ADOPTED AT THE SPECIAL SESSION

1. **Mr. Barker** (Federal Republic of Germany), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community, said that the agreement on the global elimination of United States and Soviet land-based intermediate-range missiles was a milestone. It was to be hoped that the agreement would enter into force soon. It was essential that that achievement should result in substantive progress with regard to the whole range of current and future bilateral United States/Soviet and multilateral negotiations on arms control and disarmament. That welcome development struck a positive note in the debate on arms control and disarmament and should facilitate the charting of an appropriate course for dialogue in the area in question.

2. The final document of the third special session should reflect the points he had just made. On the basis of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Preparatory Committee should concentrate on defining and describing what particular steps were to be taken next. It should pay particular attention to the course to be taken by international deliberations in the future. The documentation called for in General Assembly resolution 42/40 could be limited to the amount needed in order for the General Assembly to conduct its work in the most effective and efficient manner possible. The third special session could have a considerable impact on the outcome of the various ongoing disarmament negotiations, if its concluding document was concrete, specific and forward-looking. In a changed international situation, characterized by the prospect of an improvement in East-West relations, the third special session could be effective and have a lasting impact, if the General Assembly carried out its work in a positive and constructive spirit and if it could secure agreement by consensus on the special session's final document.

3. **Mr. Yu Menqjia** (China) said that the final document of the third special session should reaffirm the validity of the Final Document of the first special session, taking account of the new situation resulting from developments in the intervening years. After briefly reviewing the relevant developments, the new document should set forth a blueprint for the future. China took a flexible approach towards the issue of the structure of the document. One possibility would be to draft a text laying down major principles and then to list the conclusions reached by various working groups. An alternative approach would be to annex the reports of such working groups to the main document. Whatever the format of the new document, the text should cover three major areas.

4. Firstly, the document should review the current situation, evaluate both positive and negative developments in the field of disarmament since the second special session and examine the relationship between disarmament and security.

5. Secondly, the text in question should reaffirm the principle that the States with the largest arsenals had a special responsibility with regard to disarmament...
and emphasize the urgent need to prevent the nuclear arms race from entering outer space. The document should also call upon the States with the largest conventional arsenals and on the major military alliances to take the lead in drastically reducing their conventional armaments, taking account of the need for reasonable self-defence. The comprehensive and total destruction of chemical weapons was another urgent task, whose importance must be reaffirmed in the document. The document should urge that negotiations in that connection should be intensified so that a treaty on the prohibition of chemical weapons could be concluded as early as possible. The document should also confirm and further elaborate the concept of the relationship between disarmament and development put forward at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and reflect the implementation of the programme of action adopted at the Conference.

6. Thirdly, with regard to the issue of disarmament institutions and the role of the United Nations, the document should further stress the role of multilateral disarmament institutions and draw attention to the fact that multilateral, bilateral and regional disarmament efforts were complementary. Where appropriate, specific measures should be proposed.

7. Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh) said that in the sphere of disarmament the current point in time inspired hope for a number of reasons. Firstly, the super-Powers had just concluded an important treaty, thus demonstrating their concern for the preservation of peace and the abolition of war. It was to be hoped that that momentum would help achieve the targeted deep cuts in strategic weaponry. Secondly, there was the prevalent optimism that a chemical-weapons convention was a real possibility. Bangladesh was hopeful that the Disarmament Commission would be able to determine the means to ban the possession, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the destruction of existing ones. Thirdly, the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development had generated considerable hope. The Conference had been able to adopt a final document by consensus, give a fillip to disarmament activities and give currency to the idea of a close connection between disarmament, security and development. Lastly, at its forty-second session the General Assembly had concluded its disarmament work in an atmosphere of remarkable amity. There been an easing of tension among major protagonists, and the non-aligned and developing countries had played a more assertive and independent role, both individually and in unison. The developing countries' positions reflected the potential and the capability of the countries in question to play an effective and constructive role at the third special session.

8. However, despite those developments, there had been much strife since 1945. Moreover, weapons had proliferated and arms transfers had become more uncontrolled. Recently, new strategic nuclear-weapon systems had been introduced and several were on drawing-boards. The accuracy of both nuclear and conventional weaponry had increased, and the risk of collisions in space was increasing with the addition of man-made debris from national space and satellite programmes. The third special session was therefore well-timed in order to check those trends and ensure the predominance of positive factors.
9. The provisional agenda was appropriate, and Bangladesh endorsed the proposed procedure for dealing with the various agenda items. It was to be hoped that the issue of disarmament and development would also be discussed. At the third special session, the General Assembly should look ahead and seek to broaden the international consensus on concrete measures pertaining to the halting and reversal of the arms race. Together with negotiations on nuclear disarmament, which had the foremost priority, measures for the limitation and gradual reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons should be pursued resolutely within the framework of progress towards general and complete disarmament, with special responsibilities in that regard for States with the largest arsenals. The acquisition and maintenance of conventional capabilities in excess of the perceived legitimate security needs of a State could have destabilizing regional and international effects. Where such excess capabilities existed there should be reductions, in a balanced and equitable manner, so as not to affect adversely a State's genuine security requirements and so that stability was enhanced at lower military levels. The need to weight capabilities for weaker States must be given due recognition.

10. The forthcoming special session could provide some impetus in certain specific spheres. Since progress on the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace had not been satisfactory, advantage should be taken of the third special session to obtain direction and encouragement in a more substantive fashion than at the second special session, so that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean could accomplish its tasks. The preparatory work for the Colombo Conference must be completed without further ado, and the Conference should be convened in 1990 at the latest.

11. The first special session had been a significant watershed, where disarmament activities were concerned. The Final Document of that session set out the goals, principles and priorities in the field, and Bangladesh hoped that at the forthcoming special session the General Assembly would be able to keep the letter, and enlarge the spirit, of that text.

12. Mr. ZAPOTOCKY (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation would actively support the endeavour to conclude the Preparatory Committee's work at its current session with a list of agreed elements and a clear understanding of what the final product of the third special session should look like. The list in question should provide a logical structure relating to the disarmament process as a whole. Czechoslovakia endorsed the agreed approach towards consideration of outstanding organizational and procedural issues designed to avoid delaying the Committee's substantive work.

13. As the co-ordinator of a group of socialist countries, Czechoslovakia wished to state its position on the third special session and thus reflect the views expressed by delegations of the group of countries in question at their meeting at Prague the previous week.

14. The special session was an international event of major political importance and a milestone in the disarmament process. At the session, the General Assembly should explore basic problems in the field of disarmament and outline specific
objectives and ways of achieving a secure, nuclear-weapon-free, democratic and non-violent world. The attainment of the objective of security had always been one of the most profound aspirations of humanity, and the time had come to abandon the use of force in international relations and to seek security in disarmament, through a gradual and effective process beginning with a reduction in the current level of armaments. At the forthcoming special session the General Assembly should be guided by that concept of security and priority should be accorded to consideration of the issue of nuclear disarmament in its entirety. A strong impulse in that direction had emerged as a result of the conclusion of the Soviet/United States treaty on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, as the beginning of a genuine disarmament process. It was to be expected that an agreement on a substantial reduction in strategic offensive weapons would soon be concluded. Moreover, it was to be hoped that there would be a breakthrough in the near future in the area of the elimination of chemical weapons. Conventional disarmament should also be pursued with increased vigour, taking into account the characteristics of the different regions. In that connection, the opening of talks on a reduction in armaments and armed forces in Europe represented a significant component of the disarmament process as a whole. Progress towards a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world was inseparably linked to the fostering of an appropriate political climate. The third special session could give additional impetus to constructive discussion of the problem of military adequacy, reasonable military sufficiency and non-offensive strategy. At the same time, new ideas should be worked out with regard to the establishment of guarantees of non-renascence of nuclear weapons, the halting of the naval arms race and the elimination of foreign military presence.

15. In keeping with the efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space, the third special session should resolutely support the preservation and observance of all relevant international instruments. All the steps to which he had referred, particularly concrete disarmament measures, required adequate verification procedures. Czechoslovakia therefore also attached considerable importance to the establishment, under the auspices of the United Nations, of verification machinery in the sphere of disarmament and the settlement of disputes. In that connection, due attention must also be paid to questions relating to openness in military matters.

16. His delegation welcomed the decision adopted at the previous meeting to deal with the question of disarmament and development and to include that issue as a separate item in the special session's agenda. Where organizational arrangements were concerned, the special session should set up the necessary framework for the discussion of such basic issues.

17. The special session should specifically deal with questions relating to the role of the United Nations where disarmament machinery was concerned. Czechoslovakia recognized the central role of the United Nations in disarmament, as reflected in the Charter and re-emphasized in the Final Document of the first special session. It was necessary to concentrate on practical steps, such as measures designed to increase the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament, while aiming at the gradual transformation of the Conference into a permanent
universal organ for disarmament negotiations. Co-ordination of disarmament efforts was another essential element in the area in question. The special session must elaborate on a more meaningful linkage between the work of the Conference on Disarmament and that of the Disarmament Commission. It might also consider the question of how bilateral and multilateral disarmament efforts could complement each other. Furthermore, it was urgent to enhance the Security Council's role in the consideration of disarmament issues, particularly nuclear disarmament. Disarmament questions played an increasingly significant role in the activities of the Secretary-General, whose role should be retained and could be further strengthened through the submission of an annual report on the disarmament process. The special session might also consider such issues in connection with its deliberations on disarmament machinery.

18. Where the special session's outcome was concerned, although the concluding document should not be long it should be both substantive and forward-looking and should outline both immediate and more distant tasks. The 1990s could be declared a decade for the building of a secure, nuclear-weapon-free, democratic and non-violent world.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.