Letter dated 15 April 1977 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and with reference to his Note OR/421/6(3) of 28 January 1977 and in accordance with the resolution 31/189 B, adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 1976, has the honour to communicate enclosed herewith the views of the Turkish Government concerning the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The views of the Turkish Government with regard to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament

I. The arms race has in the last years reached alarming proportions, endangering world peace and security, as well as hindering economic and social development. Therefore, the Turkish Government regards it a timely decision to convene a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which, in its view, as the international forum most suitable to review disarmament efforts in general, may give a fresh and strong impetus to future negotiations on disarmament and arms limitation. To this end, however, every effort should be made so that the special session would not simply duplicate what the General Assembly and its First Committee are doing in their annual debates on disarmament.

II. The Government of Turkey is of the opinion that the special session should be prepared in a thorough and comprehensive manner. Moreover, to be fruitful and to provide guidelines for the future, it has to take the current political and military situation as its starting point. Its deliberations ought to be carried out in a frank and objective manner which should concentrate on realistic approaches that could ensure progress towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In the view of the Turkish Government, all the States of the world, large and small, irrespective of the military power they hold, have a role to play to this end.
III. The present realities of the world political scene, the experiences of
the cold war and the strenuous attempts that have been made during the later
period to establish détente in Europe and in the world, lead Turkey to believe in
the necessity to consider arms limitation and disarmament issues through a
pragmatic approach. Such an approach takes into account the concepts being evolved
in actual negotiations which have been carried out in the last years. Experience
has shown that the successful application of specific arms control and disarmament
measures is contingent upon the existence of an efficient verification mechanism.
Other basic concepts which have emerged in the work that has been pursued in
recent years are those of balance, the need for stabilization measures, and the
necessity to preserve undiminished security for all countries throughout the
gradual process of disarmament. The Turkish Government fears that concrete
measures may not be achieved if such a pragmatic approach is not pursued.

IV. As for the small distance covered so far and the slow pace on the way to
general and complete disarmament, Turkey believes that improved political
conditions throughout the world and enlarged economic co-operation among countries
will result in the strengthening of mutual confidence as a pre-condition greatly
facilitating and accelerating efforts towards general and complete disarmament
under effective international control.

V. Disarmament negotiations are being conducted today in a number of United
Nations bodies and other fora. Generally speaking, because of the very complex
nature of disarmament questions, Turkey believes that the chances of success in
disarmament issues would be greater through negotiations in bodies set up for
specific purposes. Nevertheless, a pre-condition for success in any issue would
be the participation in that body of countries most directly involved, in particular
so far as nuclear issues are concerned. This holds true also for the direct
participation of all the nuclear powers in any organization dealing with any
aspect of nuclear arms control and nuclear disarmament. On the other hand, Turkey
considers that the United Nations has a responsibility to draw general guidelines
and watch the work done in the appropriate fora.

VI. Today, the most characteristic aspect of the disarmament picture seems
to be the difficulty in the transformation of declared intentions into political
will and then into concrete measures. No Government can proceed to disarmament
without a real sense of security and mutual confidence. That feeling will have a
stronger foundation through a better public understanding of the disarmament
question. Hence, Turkey believes in the vital need to present to the world public
opinion a full account of the proceedings of the special session as well as a
political declaration that might be adopted at the end covering its conclusions.

VII. In the light of the foregoing, the Turkish Government considers that the
agenda of the special session might include the following items:

1. General debate (Review of the consequences of the arms race and
assessment of the current situation in the field of arms control and disarmament).

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2. Adoption of a political declaration consisting of basic principles of arms control and disarmament and guidelines for future efforts.

3. General discussion of some specific disarmament issues of general and immediate interest; establishment of priorities and formulation of recommendations.

4. The role of the United Nations and that of public opinion in disarmament.