Letter dated 6 July 1977 from the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward the enclosed views of the Government of Pakistan on the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

(Signed) Agha SHAHI
Foreign Secretary
VIEWS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN ON
THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY ON DISARMAMENT

SPECIAL SESSION SHOULD ACHIEVE CONCRETE AGREEMENTS ON DISARMAMENT

1. The Government of Pakistan attaches great importance to the success of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament. However, the special session should not merely be another forum to discuss the broad aspects of disarmament. Mere declarations or resolutions would not mark a meaningful advance towards the disarmament goals established by the General Assembly but merely give an illusion of progress. The convening of the special session would be justified only if there is a real prospect of reaching concrete agreements on specific disarmament questions.

2. The work of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session should be framed with the purpose of facilitating the adoption of concrete measures on the most important and pressing tasks in the field of disarmament. In this context, we would like to refer to document No. A/8191 dated 2 December 1970, sponsored by six countries, including Pakistan, on a comprehensive programme of disarmament. This document enumerates the most important tasks for achieving the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. Pakistan believes that the Preparatory Committee should first of all identify the priority tasks in the fields on which it is essential that progress should be made and then take the necessary steps for the conclusion of agreements in regard to them.

PRIORITY ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED BY SPECIAL SESSION

3. The specific issues which Pakistan believes should be at the centre of the Preparatory Committee's deliberations are: conclusion of SALT agreements providing for deep cuts in nuclear weapons systems, a complete ban on chemical weapons, and a test ban treaty. Agreements must also be concluded on effective and binding security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, and the creation of a more effective machinery for disarmament negotiations.

STRATEGIC ARMAMENTS

4. Since the concept of security forms the core of the disarmament issue, a realistic programme for disarmament must begin with measures to create a climate of security in which States can begin to dismantle their preparations for war. Towards this end, the world must focus its attention on the more basic tasks in the field of disarmament i.e. preventing the further development and sophistication of nuclear weapons and delivery systems; immediate reduction of the existing level of armaments, especially nuclear armaments, and initiating moves towards their eventual destruction and complete elimination.

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5. The drive towards these goals must stem firstly from the two super-Powers, which already enjoy a preponderant position of military power and, therefore, do not need to continue expanding their arsenals and improving their weapons. The non-participation of the other nuclear Powers in the disarmament negotiations need not deter the super-Powers from initiating positive action to create a climate of security, in which global disarmament might be achieved.

6. The arms race of the super-Powers and the already existing stockpiles of their nuclear arsenals pose an ever-present threat to international peace and security. It is their responsibility, as recognized in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to reduce these arsenals and to create a climate of confidence in which the other States could be convinced to join in the efforts to promote global disarmament. Some measures were taken by the super-Powers, such as the SALT-I Agreement for a standstill on anti-ballistic missile systems and the Vladivostok Accords regarding a freeze on certain levels of strategic weapons. But SALT-I is to expire in a few months, the Vladivostok Agreements are yet to be confirmed in a SALT-II, and SALT-III - the phase of actual reductions - is not in sight.

7. Pakistan appreciates the desire expressed by the leaders of both the Soviet Union and the United States to make early progress in SALT talks. The Preparatory Committee should, therefore, encourage progress towards this goal and call on these nuclear super-Powers to reach agreement not only in regard to the present level of their nuclear arsenals but also for substantial reductions in these by next year.

8. Quantitative reductions in nuclear arsenals will not be fully meaningful unless they are accompanied by measures to prevent the further sophistication and improvement of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems as well as the development of new and more terrible weapons of mass destruction. In this context, the adoption of the Convention on Environmental Modification Techniques and the current examination of means to prohibit the development of new weapons of such destructive power are to be welcomed.

COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN

9. For the immediate future, it is imperative to reach agreement on the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests so as to prevent the further development and sophistication of nuclear weapons as well as their horizontal proliferation. It is particularly unfortunate that such tests continue to be carried out. The Threshold Test Ban Treaty between the United States and the USSR has not restrained nuclear-weapon-tests; it may indeed have lent a measure of legitimacy to the conduct of testing below the 150 KT threshold.

10. Pakistan has sought the adoption of a ban on all nuclear-weapon-tests for many years. We believe that the prospects for an agreement on a test-ban treaty look somewhat brighter today. Hence, it is reasonable to hope that a general treaty for a nuclear-weapon-test-ban can be evolved this year and secure general support and endorsement at the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

11. The primary condition necessary for the success of such a treaty is that the two super-Powers should agree to suspend nuclear-weapon tests. Since they are...
technologically far in advance of the other nuclear Powers, an immediate suspension of nuclear-weapon-tests by the two would in no way jeopardize their security. It would, at the same time, constitute a manifestation of their sincerity in seeking to halt the nuclear-arms race and induce the other nuclear-weapon-States to join in the general prohibition.

SECURITY ASSURANCES TO NON-NUCLEAR-WEAPON-STATES

12. An essential step in creating a suitable international climate for disarmament is to reassure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the threat or use of nuclear weapons. Unless their security is assured by credible and binding guarantees, the nuclear threat to them is bound to mount.

13. One of the main objectives of the special session should be, therefore, to promote an agreement on the question of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. The formula for "negative" guarantees approved by the General Assembly at its last session (resolution 31/189) provides a most realistic basis for negotiations on this question. The resolution "invites the nuclear-weapon States, as a first step towards a complete ban on the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to consider undertaking, without prejudice to their obligations arising from treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States not parties to the nuclear security arrangements of some nuclear weapon powers".

This is a sufficiently flexible yet precise framework within which an agreement can be evolved for a binding undertaking by the nuclear Powers against the nuclear threat while at the same time accommodating what they consider to be their legitimate security interests and obligations. It is, therefore, Pakistan's conviction that urgent attention be given at the special session and in other relevant forums to elaborating an agreement for security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States on the basis of the recommendation adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, as well as to the question of "positive" guarantees.

NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONES

14. At the same time, Pakistan believes that the non-nuclear-weapon States must not depend solely on the great Powers to ensure their security in the nuclear era. Acting in a spirit of self-reliance, they should themselves take initiatives towards regional security measures against the nuclear threat emanating from within or outside their respective regions.

15. In view of what must be considered to be the failure of the Non-Proliferation Treaty to elicit a sufficiently wide measure of support, especially from the so-called "threshold nuclear powers", the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones provides the best available approach to prevent nuclear proliferation. There is increasing interest within the international community in the concept of
nuclear-weapon-free zones. The majority of States in various regions such as Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and the South Pacific, besides Latin America, have expressed their desire to denuclearize their respective regions. The General Assembly has responded to this desire by adopting resolutions urging the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in these regions.

16. The special session should, therefore, address itself to the measures required to facilitate the implementation of these proposals for regional nuclear non-armsment. While a comprehensive study has been conducted on this question, sufficient attention has not been paid to the underlying political reasons for the slow progress made towards the creation of denuclearized zones in the various regions where they have been proposed.

17. Some of the nuclear Powers and their allies insist that the prior agreement of all the regional States is necessary to achieve the objectives of denuclearization and that the creation of such zones should not prejudice existing security arrangements. These pre-conditions have operated to retard the creation of denuclearized zones in South Asia, the Middle East and Africa. The Government of Pakistan believes that if denuclearization is a desirable goal, it should be pursued and promoted regardless of the reservations of one or two regional States. Indeed, energetic efforts are expended to persuade countries to join the NPT despite their preoccupations about the lack of effectiveness of this Treaty. Such efforts would be more productive in the context of regional denuclearization. Furthermore, since denuclearization is obviously an accepted objective under the NPT, for all non-nuclear-weapon States, its achievement in any particular region cannot be contrary to "existing security arrangements".

18. Non-proliferation can hardly be achieved if the nuclear danger is brought to the very doorstep of the non-nuclear States of Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. It is hoped, therefore, that the nuclear Powers will take an active part in promoting the establishment of denuclearized zones in South Asia, the Middle East and Africa and exercise their influence to eliminate the obstacles created in the way of the implementation of these proposals by those States which entertain ambitions of nuclear Power status.

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY

19. A number of decisions of the United Nations, including the NPT, have called for international co-operation for the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. While co-operation in this field has been expanded, this has been mainly among the industrialized States. At the same time, with the revalorization of oil prices, the potential of nuclear energy has assumed ever-increasing importance for the developing countries. The vast majority of these countries have yet to benefit from nuclear technology for their economic development.

20. In this context, the position taken by certain nuclear Powers in recent months, to restrict the dissemination of nuclear technology to the developing countries is cause for concern. The onerous pre-conditions advanced for peaceful nuclear co-operation and embargoes sought to be placed on the transfer of so-called
"Sensitive" technologies, despite the application of effective international safeguards, are in contravention of the principle of State sovereignty. The dissemination of nuclear technology need not imply the proliferation of nuclear weapons if accompanied by adequate international safeguards. On the other hand, depriving developing countries of nuclear technology can, at best, be a partial and short-term answer to the problem of nuclear proliferation. It will induce these countries to develop technologies indigenously and outside of international controls. Moreover, the discriminatory restraint against developing countries is bound to exacerbate the existing difficulties in the relations between the industrialized and the poor nations of the world.

21. The only durable solution to the problem of nuclear proliferation lies in building a climate of trust and confidence in which nations do not feel the need to acquire nuclear weapons. At the same time, co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology should be expanded in accordance with universally agreed principles and safeguards to be evolved in open international forums in which both recipients and suppliers of nuclear technology are represented and not in exclusive meetings behind closed doors.

22. Further steps should also be envisaged to strengthen the IAEA as an organization which is called upon to play a vital role in the promotion and development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, as also in administering universal and effective safeguards to ensure non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. However, some of the in-built proclivities within the Agency, which tend to discriminate against recipient countries, should be eliminated.

23. All these matters need to be considered and a consensus evolved at the special session if the potential of nuclear technology is to be harnessed for the progress of all nations.

AN EFFECTIVE FORUM FOR DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS

24. For many years, consideration has been given within the United Nations and in the CCD to the creation of an effective forum for disarmament negotiations. The shortcomings of the CCD as a negotiating forum have been often pointed out. The most obvious defects of this body are firstly that it does not include the participation of two of the five nuclear Powers; and secondly, its deliberations are dependent on the initiatives of and agreements reached between the two co-chairmen with only a marginal role for the rest of the CCD's membership.

25. There are advantages and disadvantages in establishing a new forum for disarmament negotiations. Perhaps the most practical approach may be to secure certain reforms in the nature and procedures of the CCD to overcome its shortcomings. The special session should give consideration to this matter and evolve an agreement on the machinery required to make more meaningful progress towards the goal of general and complete disarmament.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

26. In organizing its work, the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session should focus its attention on substantive issues and not be led away into debating procedural questions alone or the adoption of anodyne resolutions. The first and perhaps most important task of the Committee is to establish the agenda for the special session. It is hoped that the suggestions made in the preceding paragraphs will be taken into account by the Committee when drawing up the questions to be considered at the special session. Having identified the issues which are to be addressed, the Preparatory Committee should simultaneously indicate the modalities and machinery through which concrete agreements and proposals on these issues are to be elaborated. For instance, it may wish to suggest that some questions, e.g., the CTB Convention should be elaborated within the CCD while the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones could be considered by a separate ad hoc group set up for the purpose. The Committee should decide on the organizational aspects of the special session after it has accomplished the first two tasks and only when the possibilities for concrete progress on various issues are clearer.