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

Fifth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 35th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 7 April 1978, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS (Argentina)

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78-55725
The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The CHAIRMAN said that he had received a telegram from the Chairman of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute requesting that a representative of the Institute should have an opportunity to make a substantive statement at the forthcoming special session. He intended to take that request into account in his consultations regarding the participation of non-governmental organizations and research institutes in the work of the special session and would subsequently make a statement to the Committee on the subject.

PRINCIPAL DOCUMENT(S) OF THE SPECIAL SESSION

2. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/AC.187/29/Add.1, dated 24 March 1978, which contained the disarmament resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-second session.

3. Mr. SCHELTEMA (Observer for the Netherlands), introducing the working paper entitled "Study on the establishment of an international disarmament organization" (A/AC.187/108), which had been prepared by his delegation, said that the interest of a number of countries had recently shown in a disarmament organization and the fact that a number of important disarmament treaties were approaching conclusion and would require elaborate permanent machinery seemed to justify renewed consideration of a proposal which his Government had initially made in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) in July 1973. An international disarmament organization could be given the necessary functions to implement, for example, a chemical-weapons-ban treaty or a nuclear-test-ban treaty and to provide a framework for consultations between the parties. Such an organization could also be entrusted with organizing review conferences provided for in disarmament treaties and could assume further functions as it gained experience.

4. As more and more disarmament measures were adopted in the future, the need for an impartial body to oversee the implementation of agreements would become greater. In that connexion, his delegation agreed with the premise on which the French proposal to establish an international observation-satellite agency (A/AC.187/105) was based, namely, that the present situation, in which only two countries possessed the means to observe the globe, was undesirable from the standpoint of the verification of multilateral disarmament treaties. At the same time, the internationalization of satellite information could not provide all the answers to the problem of verification, which, at least with regard to chemical weapons, must employ a number of different methods. Thus, the French proposal should be combined with the idea of an international organization which would be able to discharge a variety of functions in connexion with implementation.

5. Realizing that much careful consideration would be required before a decision could be taken on the establishment of an international disarmament organization, his Government, in the final paragraph of document A/AC.187/108, was simply proposing that the Secretary-General should seek the views of member States on the
possible functions and structure of such an organization and that the final
document of the special session should include a request to that effect. If the
response warranted a further step, a special committee could be set up to
continue work on the subject.

6. Mr. VINCI (Italy) said that his delegation, which had been giving much thought
to the question of the implementation of international arms-control and disarmament
treaties, found the working paper introduced by the representative of the
Netherlands most interesting and timely. The United States, besides setting
disarmament goals, should also devote attention to their attainment. In document
A/AC.187/97 Italy had proposed, _inter alia_, the establishment of an international
body to supervise the implementation of the disarmament agreements in force. His
delegation trusted that the Italian, French and Netherlands proposals
(A/AC.187/97, 105 and 108, respectively) and the constructive ideas submitted by
the Austrian delegation in document A/AC.187/101 would be given careful
consideration.

7. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) said that document A/AC.187/107 had originally
been submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) by the
members of the Group of 15 in document CCD/530 and was being resubmitted at the
present time on behalf of the same States because the Preparatory Committee had
been called upon to consider issues relating to international negotiating
machinery.

8. Introducing the working paper, he said that the measures which it proposed
were designed to enhance the effectiveness of CCD and to help establish conditions
conducive to the participation of all nuclear-weapon States in its work.

9. The first proposal was designed to strengthen the link between the General
Assembly and CCD by ensuring that all States Members of the United Nations would
be able to participate in the work of CCD and by enhancing the role played in CCD
by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the United Nations
Centre for Disarmament. With respect to the second proposal, there was no need
to dwell on the advantages of replacing the system of co-chairmanship, since they
had been sufficiently emphasized in CCD and the First Committee of the General
Assembly and were self-evident to any objective observer of the international
situation. He merely wished to stress that, in the opinion of the sponsors of the
working paper, the introduction of a new system would in no way hamper the
legitimate interests of the United States and the Soviet Union, particularly in a
body like CCD, where decisions must necessarily be taken by consensus; on the
contrary, such an action would considerably enhance the moral stature of the two
super-Powers in the eyes of all the Members of the United Nations. The purpose
of the third proposal was to enable CCD to embody in rules of procedure the
customary practices which had developed during its 16 years of existence and to
give it greater flexibility. In the fourth and fifth proposals the sponsors
suggested that CCD should establish a standing sub-committee of the whole and
that the plenary meetings of CCD should be public.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.