Letter dated 31 October 1980 from the Permanent Representatives of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit to you herewith a memorandum stating the views of the five Nordic countries on the question of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the light, inter alia, of the Second Review Conference of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held in Geneva from 11 August to 7 September 1980. The memorandum stresses the need for further steps in order to promote international confidence that additional States are not seeking to achieve nuclear explosive capability.

We would be grateful if this letter and the memorandum could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 44 and 48.

(Signed) Wilh. ULRICHESEN
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations

(Signed) Ilkka PASTINEN
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations

(Signed) Tómas A. TÓHÁSSON
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations

(Signed) Ole OLÉRD
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations

(Signed) Anders THUNBORG
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations
Memorandum on the question of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

In a joint memorandum circulated in the First Committee of the General Assembly on 1 November 1979 (A/C.1/34/4) the five Nordic countries expressed their concern over the possible development and achievement of nuclear explosive capability by any additional State or States. They emphasized their conviction that the achievement of such capability would pose a grave threat to the international community as a whole and would also be detrimental to the efforts to promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The memorandum called upon all States to do their utmost to enhance international confidence and trust so that nuclear weapons proliferation to additional States will not take place. Such confidence and trust are essential for the security of States and international peace as well as for enhanced co-operation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Nordic countries wish to reaffirm their commitment to the urgent goals of preventing the spread of nuclear explosive capability to additional States and of curbing and reversing nuclear arms race. The possibility that additional States might be seeking nuclear explosive capability has taken even greater urgency during the past year.

Deliberations in the United Nations, at the Second Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, at the International Atomic Energy Agency, and at the International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation (INFCCE) reconfirm that non-proliferation policies do not and should not jeopardize the right of any State, accepting effective non-proliferation restraints, to develop its programmes for peaceful, non-explosive uses of nuclear energy, and that international co-operation in this field would be served by dispelling fears of nuclear weapon proliferation.

The Nordic countries stress the need for further steps in order to promote international confidence that additional States are not seeking to achieve nuclear explosive capability. Such steps include:

(a) Early adherence to the non-proliferation Treaty by the largest possible number of additional States. The adherence of 114 States to the non-proliferation Treaty shows the importance of the Treaty as the most effective instrument available against the danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons;

(b) Formal acceptance of International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards on all nuclear activities, present and future, (full scope safeguards) by all non-nuclear-weapon States with such activities who have not yet done so;

(c) Other national, bilateral or international measures aimed at preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons and promoting confidence in this respect.

There is a close relationship between non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. Both are essential for averting the danger of nuclear war. Progress in nuclear disarmament would be a significant contribution towards non-proliferation. On the other hand, lack of progress in nuclear disarmament cannot
be accepted as justifying the neglect of non-proliferation measures or the attempt by any State to acquire nuclear explosive capability. The nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility for ending the arms race and initiating nuclear disarmament measures. The Nordic countries note with concern that results in that regard fall short of expectations. A comprehensive test ban would be a most important measure of arms control and a measure to ensure that the number of States with nuclear weapons does not increase. The Nordic countries urge all States to work resolutely toward nuclear disarmament, including a comprehensive test ban, and toward non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. They stress in particular the desirability of an early entry into force of the SALT II agreement and of an early resumption of, and progress in, the SALT process, including certain nuclear-weapon systems in Europe.