Twelfth special session

AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 1ST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 8 June 1982, at 9.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria)

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82-61803
The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: In calling to order this first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the whole of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, I should like to take this opportunity to thank all representatives for electing me Chairman of the Committee. I am deeply appreciative of the honour done to me personally in entrusting me with such tremendous responsibility. I also take my election, of course, as a recognition of the modest contribution which my country has made in the past to the cause of disarmament and the enhancement of international peace and security. I shall exert my best endeavours to direct the work of this Committee with fairness but also with firmness.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the representative of Cuba, Chairman of the Group of Non-Aligned Countries, for presenting my candidature in the name of the Non-Aligned Movement, whose initiative set in train the processes that resulted in this special session as a follow up to the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, also held at the initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement.

My thanks also go to the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Chairman of the Eastern European Group, to the representative of Malta, Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States, and to the representative of Turkey, Chairman of the Asian Group, all three of whom so kindly supported my nomination in such flattering terms.

Let us not underrate the heavy burden which this Committee is called upon to shoulder. By the allocation of items on the agenda of the special session, this Committee is to deal with all the substantive issues before the second special session. This, in effect, means that the success or failure of this session will be determined by our work and by the results that we achieve. The eyes of the entire world are on us. We cannot afford to disappoint the yearning desire of humanity for peace and security, de-linked from the hanging sword of Damocles which
the present accumulation of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, has come to represent. Thousands of women, men and children have not travelled thousands of miles to New York merely to watch us perhaps indulge in negotiating words instead of negotiating the reduction of armaments.

At the opening plenary meeting of the special session yesterday the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General of the United Nations expressed in vivid terms the peril which confronts the world and the sheer wastage of resources, human as well as material, resulting from the present level of armaments. These facts bear repetition, in the hope that they will penetrate the heavily protected corridors of power, where decisions that perpetuate the drift to universal suicide are made. These facts bear repetition, because Governments in many countries took advantage of a lack of general awareness of the total significance of the armaments race to use it as an easy tool to rally support in the name of national security. Thus it is that belief that the more heavily armed a country is the greater is its security is too easily inculcated.

It would be simplistic to imply, and I do not wish to convey that impression, that a certain level of preparedness for the defence of sovereignty and territorial integrity is not necessary in a world where States have not learned to abide strictly by the provisions of the Charter, which, *inter alia*, enjoin non-interference and non-intervention, as well as the peaceful settlement of disputes. However, such preparedness is a far cry from the present situation, in which the level of armaments, particularly nuclear armaments, possessed by only two States is sufficient to destroy the entire world, not just the perceived enemy, several times over. Yet, despite these awe-inspiring statistics of nuclear arsenals, the development and deployment of more sophisticated nuclear weapons proceed unabated.

The words of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament are even truer today than they were four years ago when they were first written:
... the accumulation of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, today constitutes much more a threat than a protection for the future of mankind. (resolution S-10/2, para. 1)

Let us then, in this Committee of the Whole, grapple with the awesome task before us with a determination to set in motion the processes that will lead to the speedy and substantial reduction of armaments and armed forces by international agreements and mutual example, leading to general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

I do not wish to prescribe or to forecast what ought to be the components of the result of our work. I am sure that each of us has a good idea of what will represent a desirable result. I am confident also that the positive note on which the General Assembly began the second special session yesterday, when it unanimously took its first major decision – the launching of the World Disarmament Campaign – will be a guide to us in this Committee. With the co-operation of all members of the Committee, I am confident that we will be able to sustain this positive note.
ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The CHAIRMAN: Paragraph 47 of the report of the Preparatory Committee for this special session contains the recommendation that the committee of the whole should have a 15-member bureau, consisting of a chairman, 13 vice-chairmen and a rapporteur. As the Assembly yesterday afternoon endorsed unanimously the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee, it is the purpose of the meeting this morning to elect the 13 vice-chairmen and the rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The report of the Preparatory Committee also contains, in paragraph 50, another recommendation concerning the composition of the bureau, namely, that the regional groups should consider renominating the members of the bureau of the Preparatory Committee to serve in the bureau of the committee of the whole. After consulting the regional groups, I am now in a position to inform the Committee of the following nominations for Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee: for Africa: the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, Mr. Mehdi Mrani Zentar and the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Benin, Mr. Guy Hazoume; for Asia: the Chief of the Delegation of Japan to the Committee on Disarmament, Mr. Yoshio Okawa; the representative of India to the Committee on Disarmament, Mr. A. P. Venkateswaran, and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, Mr. Valiur Rahman; for the Western European and Other States: the representative of Italy to the Committee on Disarmament, Mr. Mario Alessi, and Mr. David Salier of Australia; for the Eastern European States: the Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia to the United Nations, Mr. Miljan Komatina, the representative of the German Democratic Republic to the Committee on Disarmament, Mr. Gerhard Herder, and the Deputy Head of the United Nations Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, Mr. Baruh Grinberg; for Latin America: the representative of Mexico to the Committee on Disarmament, Mr. Alfonso Garcia Robles, the Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations, Mr. Juan Jose Calle y Calle, and the Permanent Representative of Bahamas to the United Nations, Mr. Davidson Hepburn. The candidate for Rapporteur is the Deputy Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, Mr. Omer Ersoy.
I take it that the Ad Hoc Committee wishes to elect the above-mentioned candidates as Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur of the Committee.

Mr. Alessi (Italy), Mr. Calle y Calle (Peru), Mr. Garcia Robles (Mexico), Mr. Grinberg (Bulgaria), Mr. Hazoume (Benin), Mr. Hepburn (Bahamas), Mr. Herder (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Komatina (Yugoslavia), Mr. Mrani Zentar (Morocco), Mr. Okawa (Japan), Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh), Mr. Salier (Australia) and Mr. Venkateswaran (India) were elected Vice-Chairmen of the Committee by acclamation; Mr. Erson (Turkey) was elected Rapporteur of the Committee by acclamation.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Now that we have elected the officers of the Ad Hoc Committee, it will be possible for me to consult them on the programme of work for the Committee and to begin elaborating that programme, which I intend to submit for the Committee's consideration at its next meeting. It is my hope that the substantive work of the Committee will be started as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.