Twelfth special session

AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 11TH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 7 July 1982, at 8 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. ADEMIJI (Nigeria)

CONTENTS

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be incorporated in a copy of the record and should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room A-3550, 866 United Nations Plaza.

 Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a separate fascicle.

82-61681
The meeting was called to order at 8.45 p.m.

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS

The CHAIRMAN: As we decided yesterday, our first business today is to receive the report of Working Group I. I therefore call on the representative of Mexico, Chairman of Working Group I, to submit his report.

Mr. GARCIA RODLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): I have been informed by the documents officer that the report of Working Group I is not yet available for distribution. Consequently, I see two possible alternatives. One would be for us to wait 10 or 15 minutes until the document is available; the other would be for the Secretary of the Ad Hoc Committee to read out the report very slowly so that everyone may be apprised of its content. Whichever alternative you deem advisable, Mr. Chairman, would be acceptable to me.

The CHAIRMAN: I note that the report is rather short so perhaps the Secretary of the Ad Hoc Committee could read it out, and I therefore call on him.

Mr. OSILLAG (Secretary of the Ad Hoc Committee): The final report of the Chairman of Working Group I to the Ad Hoc Committee of the twelfth special session of the General Assembly reads as follows:

"1. The Preparatory Committee for the second special session devoted to disarmament, in its report to the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, inter alia, recommended the establishment of a working group on the comprehensive programme of disarmament. The General Assembly, by resolution 36/81 A of 9 December 1981, endorsed that recommendation (A/S-12/1)."
2. At its 2nd meeting, on 14 June 1982, the Ad Hoc Committee of the Twelfth Special Session confirmed that recommendation and appointed His Excellency Ambassador Alfonso García Robles of Mexico as Chairman of Working Group I.

3. Working Group I held four meetings between 14 June and 7 July 1982.

4. At its 1st meeting, on 14 June 1982, the Working Group established four open-ended drafting groups to proceed with the elaboration of the comprehensive programme of disarmament on the basis of the draft programme submitted by the Committee on Disarmament (A/S-12/2). Drafting Group A was assigned to consider chapter II, 'Objectives'; Drafting Group B was assigned to consider chapter III, 'Principles'; Drafting Group C was assigned to consider sections A to E of chapter V, 'Measures and stages of implementation' - 'Nuclear weapons', 'Other weapons of mass destruction', 'Conventional weapons and armed forces', 'Military expenditures' and 'Related measures'; and Drafting Group D was assigned to consider the remaining sections of chapter V - 'Other measures', 'Disarmament and development' and 'Disarmament and international security', as well as chapter VI, 'Machinery and procedures'.

5. Also at its 1st meeting, the Working Group appointed His Excellency Ambassador François de La Gorce of France as co-ordinator of Drafting Group A. At its 2nd meeting, on 15 June, the Working Group appointed His Excellency Ambassador Anatoly Nikitich Sheldov of the Byelorussian SSR as co-ordinator of Drafting Group B, His Excellency Ambassador Mansur Ahmad of Pakistan as co-ordinator of Drafting Group C, and His Excellency Ambassador Curt Lidgard of Sweden as co-ordinator of Drafting Group D.

6. The Chairman of the Working Group reported orally to the Ad Hoc Committee at its 9th meeting, on 28 June, on the progress of the work of the Working Group (A/S-12/AC.1/PV.9).

7. At its 3rd meeting, on 3 July, Working Group I reviewed the work of the four Drafting Groups. In this connexion, the Working Group had before it texts submitted by Drafting Groups A, B and C (A/S-12/AC.1/WG.I/L.1, L.2 and L.3 respectively). The co-ordinator of Drafting Group D reported orally to the Working Group on the work of that Group.
8. Also at the Working Group's 3rd meeting, one delegation proposed an amendment to paragraph 2 of chapter IV, 'Priorities', of the draft comprehensive programme of disarmament submitted by the Committee on Disarmament, which was referred to Drafting Group C in view of the close relationship between the substance of the amendment and that of the work of the Drafting Group. The Drafting Group decided to include the proposed amendment in the chapter on 'Priorities' between brackets. 

9. In the four Drafting Groups, intensive efforts were made with a view to achieving agreement on the sections of the comprehensive programme of disarmament assigned to them. Drafting Group A held three meetings, Drafting Group B 10 meetings, Drafting Group C 12 meetings and Drafting Group D 19 meetings. In addition, informal consultations were held under the guidance of the co-ordinators of the Drafting Groups. Progress was achieved on a number of issues, particularly those concerning the chapter on 'Objectives' and, to a lesser extent, the chapter on 'Principles'. However, significant differences of opinion persisted on various aspects of the programme, notably the chapter on 'Measures and stages of implementation'. With respect to the question of time-frame and review mechanism, informal consultations were held under the guidance of the Chairman of the Working Group, but, while some progress was achieved and promising approaches were explored, it did not prove possible to reconcile divergent views.

10. At its 4th meeting, on 7 July, the Working Group had before it a draft of the introduction prepared by the Chairman (A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.5).

11. Also at its 4th meeting, the Working Group considered the results of the work in the four Drafting Groups. In that connexion, the Working Group had before it, in addition to the texts submitted earlier

---

*With the proposed amendment, paragraph 2 of chapter IV of the draft comprehensive programme of disarmament submitted by the Committee on Disarmament would read: 'Effective measures of nuclear disarmament which maintain or enhance security and the prevention of nuclear war....'*
by Drafting Groups A, B and C (see para. 7 above), a text submitted by Drafting Group D (A/S 12/AC.1/WG.I/L.4), a text submitted by the co-ordinator of Drafting Group D (A/S.12/AC.1/WG.I/L.6), and additions and amendments to document A/S 12/AC.1/WG.I/L.3 (L.3/Add.1).

"12. Working Group I submits to the Ad Hoc Committee, for its consideration, the texts that appear below:

Texts for the draft comprehensive programme of disarmament submitted by Working Group I."

Those texts will follow in the final version of the report.
Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico), Chairman of Working Group I, (interpretation from Spanish): First, the annexes mentioned in the report (A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.1, L.2 and L.3) are the same as those received by representatives who attended the last meeting of Working Group I which took place on Saturday, 3 July. After that meeting, at which, as the report indicates in referring to Drafting Group D, there was only an oral report by its co-ordinator, an annex was issued to this report - a document analogous to the previous ones; it is document A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.4.

With regard to document A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.3, there will be an addendum which may be possible to distribute this evening, but only in English. That addendum (A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.3/Add.1) will update document A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.3, which is dated 2 July.

As regards document A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.4, there will also be an addendum, and, with respect to the same topic in that document, there will also be another document, which will be A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.6 containing a text prepared by the co-ordinator of Drafting Group D.

In addition to these documents prepared by the co-ordinators of the Drafting Groups there is annexed to the report I have just presented a document A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.5, which contains a draft introduction prepared by Working Group I, and I should like to recall that on several occasions, when some members of the Working Group asked me when and how the introduction would be prepared, I always replied that it seemed and still seems to me that the decision taken in Geneva by the Committee on Disarmament on the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Working Group was a very wise one and, as we all know, that decision was that the introduction or preamble should be prepared at the end - that is, once it was clearly known what the content of the comprehensive programme for disarmament would be. In my reply to those questions I always added that it did not seem to me that the introduction would pose any problem once we had determined what the content of the chapters in the comprehensive programme should be, and, as I had said on several occasions I added that if the need arose it should not prove
impossible for the Chairman himself to prepare in one day a draft introduction for submission to the members of the Working Group. When late last week it seemed that we were close to completing our work, I thought the time had come for me to fulfill my promise, and last Sunday I put down on paper the text of this draft introduction contained in document A/S-12/AC.1/WS.1/L.5. The draft introduction is not very long, containing only six paragraphs.

The first paragraph is meant to give a concise view of some facts placing the convening of this second special session of the General Assembly in its proper perspective, and we all know that this special session was expressly provided for in the Final Document adopted at the first special session.

The second paragraph, containing subparagraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d), is the longest in the draft introduction. It is intended to underline that in the general debate, where a large number of Heads of State or Government and Foreign Ministers participated, as well as in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee and in the Working Groups, it emerged that there had been no slackening of the support lent to all the main conclusions of the Final Document, such as those that I have cited. The four that I have cited are taken verbatim from the Final Document, and three of them are contained in the draft chapter on "Principles" marked with an asterisk and a foot-note stating that the text was fully approved with respect to substance and that the only thing remaining to be determined is the place where those paragraphs should appear. It seemed to me that the introduction might be the best place for the inclusion of those paragraphs about which a decision has not been reached as to where they should finally be placed.

Paragraphs 3 and 4 sum up the origin of the work which has led up to the comprehensive programme of disarmament that has been examined here, and the origin must clearly be sought in several parts of the Final Document, mainly in paragraph 109, which expressly states that

"the Committee on Disarmament will undertake the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament encompassing all measures thought to be advisable in order to ensure that the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control becomes a reality in a world in which international peace and security prevail and in which the new international economic order is strengthened and consolidated". (resolution S-10/2, para. 109).
But the General Assembly at its first special session on disarmament did not confine itself to determining what the final goal of this comprehensive programme of disarmament should be but also set the immediate goal in that respect which is that

"of the elimination of the danger of a nuclear war and the implementation of measures to halt and reverse the arms race and clear the path towards lasting peace". (resolution S-10/2, para. 8)

Paragraph 5 is intended simply to recall the role played by the Committee on Disarmament in the preparation of the draft and the work done in this matter by the General Assembly at this special session and to indicate as well what the five chapters are, in addition to the introduction, which should be included in the programme. The titles of those chapters are self-explanatory - "Objectives", "Principles", "Priorities", "Measures and stages of implementation", "Machinery and procedures".
Finally, paragraph 6 is intended to recall that initially a large number of delegations would have preferred the comprehensive programme of disarmament to be a treaty or convention, so that its provisions would be legally binding. But, as the paragraph indicates, it was possible to achieve general agreement on another approach, namely, that through symbolic acts the comprehensive programme, even if it were not a treaty or convention, should be given a status higher than that of most General Assembly resolutions. That approach is mentioned here, just as I also mentioned it in Geneva last April when, as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group, I presented to the Committee on Disarmament the text of the draft programme prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee. It is that a personal representative of the Secretary-General should take a special copy of the programme to the capitals of all States Members of the United Nations, in order to have it signed by the respective Heads of State Government. The paragraph adds:

"This symbolic act will be a clear sign that this time there is the required 'political will' to proceed along the road of uninterrupted good faith negotiations in the field of disarmament. Should there be some States where constitutional obstacles prevent recourse to the above procedures, alternative methods of similar significance should be employed. Thus the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, although not a treaty in itself, would indeed become a source of numerous successive treaties thanks to which mankind may start the twenty-first century in conditions totally different from those it has to endure at present with deepest concern."

(A/S-12/AC.1/WG.1/L.5, para. 6)

This is how the draft introduction ends. The comprehensive programme of disarmament, without being a treaty properly speaking, would generate numerous successive treaties under which mankind could start the twenty-first century in conditions totally different from those now prevailing which are the source of the greatest anxiety.
I should not like to conclude my statement without expressing my deep appreciation of, and thanks to, the co-ordinators of the four Drafting Groups, to whom I have paid tribute in my report for their intensive efforts. I believe that that is no exaggeration. I refer to Ambassadors de la Gorce, Sheldov, Ahmad and Lidgard.

My appreciation also goes to the spokesmen of the regional groups and the representative of China who took part together with Ambassador Ahmad in the informal consultations about the time-table and procedure for review referred to in the report. I should like to mention the representatives that I have in mind in the Spanish alphabetical order of the names of their respective countries: Ambassador Sola Vila, of Cuba, Ambassador Strucka of Czechoslovakia, Ambassador Xie of China and Ambassador Becker of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mr. Raeymaekers (Belgium) (interpretation from French): I should like to address the Ad Hoc Committee on behalf of the ten States members of the European Community. When he spoke to the General Assembly at the beginning of this special session, the then President of the European Community’s Council of Ministers, the Foreign Minister of Belgium, said:

"The adoption by consensus of a global disarmament programme should at one and the same time indicate our common will to resume disarmament efforts and constitute an important contribution towards guiding our future activities in this field." (A/6-12/PV.2 p. 52)

It is with regret and disappointment that we note that, notwithstanding many efforts that have been made, in which members of the Community have actively participated, the work on the comprehensive programme of disarmament has not yielded the result that we had hoped. However, that should not in any way
affect our resolve to achieve the fundamental objectives of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, on which almost complete consensus has, happily, been established during the last few days of the session.

The countries of the European Community have always considered that the comprehensive programme of disarmament should not be conceived as a substitute for the Final Document, whose full validity and irreplaceable value have been reaffirmed again during this session. In our view, the comprehensive programme should be an instrument designed more specifically to ensure the implementation of the Final Document and to reiterate the international community's commitment to that end.

We hope that the work that has been done can be followed up. Accordingly, and in so far as we can agree on the work as a whole, we should not reopen a discussion on the many points of convergence that have been established during this period of intense negotiations.

In that connexion, we pay a tribute to the Chairman of the Working Group on the Comprehensive Programme on Disarmament as well as the Chairmen of the subgroups who have worked devotedly and ingeniously to try to find acceptable solutions to all the various problems that we have confronted. We are convinced, Mr. Chairman, that under your guidance we shall agree on the best way to bring our work to a successful conclusion.
Mr. WEIZENBURG (Federal Republic of Germany): I am speaking on behalf of my own delegation but also on behalf of a number of delegations of Western countries. Having heard the report of the Chairman of Working Group I, we have, as our first duty, to express our admiration to him and to thank him for his tireless endeavours. We similarly express our appreciation to the co-ordinators of the four Drafting Groups that have worked with him. They have all done a remarkable job under difficult circumstances. Without detracting from the merits of any of them, I should like to single out Ambassador Ahmad, who has perhaps had the most difficult group to lead. He has evoked our admiration for his commitment, his hard work and his ceaseless efforts to try new compromise formulas to help us along the road to a comprehensive programme of disarmament. In expressing our deep gratitude, we share his disappointment and frustration — feelings that the delegations in my group share with many others at this time in our proceedings.

We are saddened that three years of hard work, and particularly hard work during this session, have not yielded the desired results.

We all know that delegations and groups of delegations have brought different concepts to bear and have pursued different objectives on some of the detailed items. We must all give each other credit for having negotiated in good faith, in keeping with our instructions. It would be futile and in the end self-defeating now to incriminate those who allegedly have not shown a sufficient spirit of compromise and have been unable to move away from earlier positions.
For the countries in my Group, I can confirm, as one who has observed them during these long weeks, that they have all worked diligently, in good faith, and with one overriding objective in mind - to produce the comprehensive programme of disarmament as rapidly and as completely as they could.

I should like to go solemnly on record with our belief that the comprehensive programme of disarmament is a project of the utmost importance and does not come to an end during the final stages of this session. None of the countries in my Group will shy away from the complete elaboration of the programme. We consider that the comprehensive programme of disarmament as a carefully structured guideline for future negotiations is necessary and that we must continue our efforts to bring it about.

Many different projects are pursued in the disarmament field. The programme is the only instrument for allowing a comprehensive view of the disarmament necessities in context to create a rational over-all structure of disarmament endeavours in fulfilment of the Final Document and to provide the major incentive for going ahead on a broad front of disarmament issues. In this sense I can pledge the best efforts of the group of countries for which I speak to salvage the comprehensive programme from this not sufficiently successful session and to continue our work until the point of final success.

In these days of dipndency and frustration we should not overlook the fact that progress has been made on a broad front of issues. Those who compare the Geneva document with which we started with the work result that we now have in our hands will easily see the progress and will find much of our diligent work reflected there. This is a basis on which to build. We should miss no chance to work jointly with others to make the best of the labours we have expended at this session.

The group of countries for which I speak would hope that the partial progress that we have achieved would be acknowledged in the final document of the session and that provision would be made for the continuation of the process in the appropriate bodies. If it is the wish of this session that the Committee on Disarmament should again play a major role in this process, we, to the extent that we are members of that Committee, will welcome the opportunity to redouble
our efforts in those familiar and efficient surroundings. If another procedural solution is suggested, we will examine it carefully and in good faith, and in that context we might wish to consider the potential of the United Nations Disarmament Commission as well.

When we resume our negotiations on the comprehensive programme we should draw lessons from the negotiating process as we have conducted it so far. Nobody should take away from the substance of the programme lest it lose the claim to comprehensiveness which is its very characteristic. But we might examine ways of simplifying our negotiations, how to structure them better, and how to accommodate different perspectives on a number of problems where consensus on all specific aspects appears difficult to achieve because of conceptual divergences which cannot be eliminated with the requisite speed. In the search for an appropriately modified methodology my delegation — and certainly other Western delegations — would be happy to cooperate.

There is one aspect of our work on the comprehensive programme of disarmament which does not figure in the documents that we have before us, because the accord that it was possible to achieve in informal consultations has not become final. Ambassador Garcia Robles has just alluded to that topic. I speak of the questions of time-frames and review mechanism.

Although the texts which we have considered have not been included in the documents, I should like to point to those parts of the Chairman's report which affirm that a promising approach of some sort to these important issues has been found and that we hope that this approach can give the comprehensive programme of disarmament its time function and dynamic dimension in a satisfactory manner. Here again I should like to acknowledge the helping hand of Ambassador Ahmad, as well as of other non-aligned countries, which have shown welcome flexibility on a point with which my group of countries had particular difficulties. With the open response that their suggestions have found in our midst and the proposals which we have made in the process, I hope that we have reciprocated to a substantial extent, although at this juncture final language cannot be agreed upon. I am confident, however, that when the negotiation process resumes we shall be able to solve the remaining differences of view in this field as in others in the same co-operative spirit which has marked so many of the discussions with the countries of the Non-Aligned Group on this and other issues here in New York.
Mr. MICHAELSEN (Denmark): The representative of Belgium has made a statement on behalf of the 10 member States of the European Community to which we, of course, fully adhere. In addition, however, on behalf of the Danish delegation, I should like to make a few comments on the report we just heard from the Chairman of Working Group I, Ambassador Garcia Robles.

The Danish delegation came to this special session with the sincere hope that we could gain a basis in the form of a complete programme of disarmament for further mutual endeavours with regard to disarmament. It is therefore with regret that we must realize today that, even if great efforts have been made during this session, it has not proved possible to attain that aim. On the other hand, it might be said that we should not be surprised that the special session could not accomplish within five weeks what the Committee on Disarmament has tried in vain to accomplish over several years.

During the session, however, many fruitful ideas have been advanced, and my delegation feels that they should be examined further. The disarmament process cannot and should not be stopped because, also owing, among other things, to lack of time, we have been unable to fulfil our task. We must seek ways and means to continue that process and, like others, we think that one approach to be recommended would be to refer the comprehensive programme of disarmament, together with the relevant material on which agreement has been reached in the Working Group, to the Committee on Disarmament for further consideration and with an invitation to that body to intensify consideration of the problem with a view to early negotiations.

Denmark attaches the greatest importance to such early negotiations on the framework of arms control and disarmament.
Mr. SUJA (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): Our delegation, as one of the co-ordinators of the group of socialist countries in Working Group I, would also like briefly to voice some thoughts about the work on the comprehensive programme of disarmament at this special session.

As members know, at an early stage in the special session Working Group I established a number of Drafting Groups which immediately got down to active work on the texts of individual chapters of the programme. Like other delegations of socialist countries which regard the elaboration of the comprehensive programme of disarmament as important, Czechoslovakia welcomed the possibility to make the most of the time available, which was rather short, and took an active part in all the Drafting Groups.

When we look at the results that have been achieved we must, however, state that on the whole they do not correspond to the volume of work done or to the significance of the matter dealt with. Of course, the Group did manage to achieve some progress on some matters and was able to put together a generally acceptable text. I am referring on the whole to general questions, the solution of which would not in itself yield tangible results in the field of disarmament.

To our great regret - and I should like to stress that this was not the fault of the socialist countries - we were not able to resolve the key questions, which we consider to be first and foremost the questions of the non-first-use of nuclear weapons, the prevention of a nuclear catastrophe, the banning of all nuclear weapon tests and a whole range of questions relating to nuclear disarmament. Unless these questions are resolved we feel that the programme cannot be deemed to be comprehensive or complete.

Despite the complex situation that has arisen we are prepared to participate actively and constructively in the future work on the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

In conclusion I should like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the Chairman of Working Group I, Ambassador García Robles of Mexico, for his experienced and able guidance of the work of the Group, and to the Chairman of the four Drafting Groups, Ambassador de La Gorce, Ambassador Shevdov, Ambassador Ahmed and Ambassador Lidgard, who bent every effort to ensure that the Drafting Groups would conclude their work successfully.
Mr. MENZIES (Canada): I have listened with attention to the report
given by Ambassador García Robles, the Chairman of Working Group I, and to
the speakers who have preceded me this evening.

On behalf of my delegation I should like to pay a tribute to the Chairmen
of all four Drafting Groups of Working Group I, and perhaps in particular
to Ambassadors Ahmad and Lidgard, who have made tremendous efforts to work
out agreed texts in their Drafting Groups.

I must express the disappointment of my delegation at the fact that
a substantive comprehensive programme of disarmament does not appear to
be within reach at this time, even though we recognized from the outset
the Herculean character of the task. All of our delegations were confronted
with a formidable challenge. The project of reaching agreement on a
comprehensive programme of disarmament can be seen as one of the most
ambitious projects ever attempted in the field of arms limitation and
disarmament. Here was the task of trying to express in consensus language
the legitimate interest of the international community on a range of
disarmament negotiations and to give those negotiations a real sense of
impetus. In spite of the magic which is sometimes generated by deadlines at
major international meetings like this, with their built-in time
constraints, the question can legitimately be asked whether 157 delegations
could have been expected to succeed in completing in five weeks a task which
a more manageable group of 40 delegations in the Committee on Disarmament
has been unable to complete in three years.

Had the international atmosphere been more propitious, all delegations
would undoubtedly have found it easier to move from their proclaimed positions.
Although my delegation could easily cite examples where it considers more
flexibility could have been shown by other groups of countries, we do not
think that this would serve a constructive purpose. We are satisfied that
the Canadian delegation and other Western delegations with which it consults
showed flexibility and a desire to search for consensus language. One of
our problems has been the varying interpretations of the meaning of the
Final Document of the first special session and a reluctance to admit that there
can be more than one interpretation of the balanced phrasing of the Final
Document.
For our part, we are prepared to continue in future months to try to reach agreement on a comprehensive programme of disarmament if that is the general desire of other delegations. Although the task is a very ambitious one and progress may be slow until the international atmosphere changes for the better, the negotiations provide a framework in which a meaningful dialogue can be continued among all States on the whole range of arms limitation and disarmament matters. In other words, we suggest that the process of seeking a comprehensive programme of disarmament has a value of its own provided the negotiations are undertaken with openness and realism.

Although it appears that we may be unable to reach agreement on a comprehensive programme of disarmament at this time, I hope that there will be a way of recording the modest progress made here on the various elements of the programme. As I said yesterday, we believe it to be of cardinal importance that this second special session reaffirm by consensus the continuing validity of the Final Document of the first special session, because that is the foundation of our continuing work together in the United Nations disarmament process.

Mr. OKAWA (Japan): On behalf of the Japanese delegation, I wish, like other speakers before me, to express deep regret and disappointment that a comprehensive programme of disarmament is now unlikely to be agreed upon at this special session.

Japan has participated actively in the work of the Committee on Disarmament over the past three years and in that of the Preparatory Committee for the Second Special Session on Disarmament and the special session itself over the past three months in the hope that a realistic, credible comprehensive programme of disarmament would emerge as the main product of this special session.
We have continued to maintain that hope, but perhaps this is the moment to face reality and to think of where we go from here. Even if we are not going to produce a comprehensive programme of disarmament within the next few days, my delegation does not feel that we must give up our common efforts to achieve a comprehensive programme. Nevertheless, in reviewing the whole process of the exercise of drafting a comprehensive programme of disarmament that we have been pursuing, I cannot but feel that we have perhaps been too ambitious, trying to be too specific, in spite of the complex nature of the subject matter and in spite of the prevailing international situation, which is, after all, hardly propitious for the drafting of an all-embracing programme covering, say, the next 20 years.

However desirable that might be, it may be appropriate for us to stop here and to reflect for a while on this whole exercise. My delegation would therefore like to suggest at this juncture that we continue the work on a comprehensive programme of disarmament in some body of the United Nations during the thirty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly. By so doing, we should perhaps have some time to devise a new approach to the comprehensive programme of disarmament. That would seem to be the sensible course to adopt at this particular moment. It would at least assure the international community that we have not completely abandoned the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

I wish to express the sincere appreciation of my delegation to our colleagues who have been working so hard here to arrive at a programme. First of all, I would mention the Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico, the Chairman of Working Group I and also the Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament's Ad Hoc Working Group on the comprehensive programme. I would also like to mention our colleagues who, in their capacity as co-ordinators of the Drafting Groups, have devoted such painstaking efforts to trying to produce a consensus document. I am referring to Ambassador de La Gorce of France, Ambassador Sheldov of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Ambassador Ahmad of Pakistan and Ambassador Lidgard of Sweden.
I take this opportunity to make the following plea to my colleagues in this room. Though the comprehensive programme of disarmament is apparently not within our reach and the progress in other Working Groups is not encouraging, I wish to appeal to my colleagues that we should all endeavour to do our utmost to maintain and preserve the practice of taking decisions by consensus when we adopt any concluding document for the session. We should by all means retain this practice of decision-making by consensus, which has evolved and been established over the years in the field of disarmament questions. We have only two days left. Let us devote our final efforts to producing a concluding document to be adopted by consensus.

**Mr. SOLA VILA** (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): For those of us who have attended the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament with the hope of achieving a comprehensive programme of disarmament it is truly frustrating that we have been unable to do so. Nevertheless, our respect, admiration and thanks go to Ambassador Garcaí Robles and the Chairmen of the four Drafting Groups, for the efforts they have exerted in the attempt to arrive at a document acceptable to all delegations by consensus.

Our Group, since Geneva, has been showing flexibility with a view to achieving a comprehensive programme of disarmament that would be realistic, objective and positive and would lead us towards the final goal of general and complete disarmament. This temporary frustration will in no way alter the position of the non-aligned countries in favour of earnest negotiations to achieve a comprehensive programme of disarmament acceptable to the entire international community. We will redouble our efforts, and we are confident that this brief moment of frustration will not alter the feelings of all of us who are convinced that the future will be one of peace and disarmament. Our developing countries are seeking by every possible means to bring about a world of justice, peace and progress. We will not at this juncture name the guilty and the innocent. Let each listen to his own conscience to learn who, today, have
made it impossible to arrive at a comprehensive programme of disarmament. History will judge in the future, even though we cannot do so today.

We therefore reaffirm our complete willingness to continue to work hard to make the aspirations of all nations a reality.

Mr. VENKATESWARAN (India): Knowing, as most of us do, the extremely high qualities of head and heart of Ambassador García Robles, the Chairman of Working Group I, as well as the qualities of the four co-ordinators of the Drafting Groups, it is very clear to my delegation, as it should be to other delegations, that if the Working Group has not succeeded in its labours it is certainly not the fault of either the Chairman or the co-ordinators, but of delegations that have been participating in that process. To my mind, what has been happening in the Working Group on the comprehensive programme of disarmament and in the Drafting Groups very much resembles Barmecide's feast. That story, as everyone will recall, is a part of the travels of Sinbad the Sailor, in which he is invited to a feast at which there is nothing to eat on the plates but during which there is a tremendous pretence of eating from those plates, after which everyone leaves the feast apparently replete and content with the repast. The only thing worse than failure is the temptation to cover it up and to project it as a success. That way lies certain disaster.

The reaffirmation of the Final Document, which has been continually repeated by delegations, will be a meaningless litany if, in reality, countries have moved away from the consensus commitments and there is only a pretence that the situation has not changed.

It is said that it is good to have an open mind. I would submit that an open mind is not and should not become a vacant mind. Similarly, flexibility does not and should not mean total surrender, especially when the stakes are high - in this case, the survival of mankind itself.
From the outcome – or, rather, the lack of a positive outcome – of the labours of Working Group I, it should be clear to anyone who is not totally blind that some delegations, while professing to further the labours of the Group, have, in fact, been bending their entire efforts and directing their energies towards stonewalling negotiations and preventing progress. When Ambassador Garcia Robles, for example, mentions that an amendment to the priorities of the Programme of Action of the Final Document has been sought, it is a clear indication that, in spite of pious reaffirmations of the Final Document, at least that delegation has resiled from the solemn consensus arrived at during the first special session on disarmament.

It was, I believe, a great President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, who said: "You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time." I earnestly trust that this dictum still holds true today and that, at least, there are some – and I hope the numbers are not so small – who will refuse to be fooled and who will continue to see the truth as it is.

I should like to affirm here that India, with other non-aligned countries, will continue to strive and do its utmost to further the objectives of disarmament and, in particular, achieve a meaningful comprehensive programme of disarmament, whatever may be the obstacles facing us today. This is a duty we owe not only to ourselves but to future generations yet unborn. Unless we succeed in this endeavour, mankind, which is already an endangered species, may well become an extinct species in the not-too-distant future.

As a member of a non-governmental organization has indicated in a circular distributed this evening to us who are participating in this meeting, survival is not a matter of consensus, and it is time for us who are living in our ivory towers in the United Nations to take note of this. We can ignore this truth only at our peril.
Mr. IRELAND (Ireland): My delegation will not try to hide our keen disappointment at the fact that the work of this session has not come to fruition and that this does not now appear likely. We have looked upon the comprehensive programme of disarmament as the centrepiece of this special session, but it is not only the centrepiece of the session: we also regard the comprehensive programme of disarmament concept as the major vehicle for achieving progress in disarmament and as the best prospect for breaking out of the deadlock in which disarmament negotiations have been stalled since the first special session.

The major advantage we see in a comprehensive programme, especially a programme adopted at a special session, is that it would organize the different negotiations in a recognizable scheme, relate one set of negotiations to another and impart an impetus which so far has been lacking. That we have failed to achieve this at the present session is a serious setback. The various negotiations in progress will not now have the support of a coherent system and the added political commitment which this session could have provided.

Nevertheless, this special session is not an isolated event: it is a part of the process of disarmament. Our disappointment should not lead us to forget the essential aim, which is that this session should contribute to the disarmament process. In our view, the comprehensive programme of disarmament should be a central concept. We do not wish to abandon this concept. However, it is clear that we will not complete a comprehensive programme of disarmament at this stage. We have, therefore, to consider what courses remain open to us.

My delegation believes that we have to try to look beyond the failure we have witnessed here. Different countries will have different views on the reasons for this failure. For our part, we do not wish to apportion responsibility. We believe that the most important objective which the special session can now usefully pursue is to ensure that work on the comprehensive programme of disarmament will continue. And we are pleased that so many speakers tonight have expressed their willingness to do so.
My delegation has laid great emphasis on the comprehensive programme of disarmament as a practical means of facilitating this disarmament. Therefore, we consider that it must be accepted by all States. Unless a comprehensive programme of disarmament is arrived at by consensus, it loses most of its practical value. We hope that this will be borne in mind here when we come to decide on our next steps. The great strength of the Final Document adopted at the first session is precisely that it was accepted by consensus.

In summary, my delegation deeply regrets that it has not proved possible to agree on a comprehensive programme of disarmament at this session. However, and quite apart from the fact that there are other issues before the session, in our view, the task on which we should concentrate our efforts now is to ensure that the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament will continue.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I wish to say a few words in regard to the present situation concerning the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Of course, a comprehensive programme of disarmament is a most essential document for this special session. I think a lot of work was done by the Chairman of Working Group I and the four co-ordinators. We are grateful to them for their persistent endeavours. However, it seems to me that the principle of consensus has not materialized in the proper way. I believe that we ought to put aside our particular countries' interests in one way or another before the most important subject confronting us now: the survival of mankind, which is so threatened that the peoples of the world have been aroused to the dangers.

There must be something in the air that we are in such great danger. And in circumstances of danger we should put aside our particular interests in the common interest of mankind.
Now, for any comprehensive programme of disarmament, certain immutable realities must be borne in mind: first, there can be no progress on disarmament measures for the regulation or reduction of armaments without first halting the arms race. That should be borne in mind - and by the Committee on Disarmament as well. The failure of its continual efforts to achieve agreements on disarmament is due to the ongoing arms race, and you cannot halt the arms race by trying to get agreements on disarmament.

The second reality that has to be borne in mind is that you cannot halt the arms race by getting agreements on disarmament: you have to create, gradually, an alternative form of security to replace that of armaments in competition, and such alternative security can come only through an international organization, because we are not in the nineteenth century when agreement could be based on the concept of Europe: we are an interdependent world which requires an effective international organization.
We have an international Organization in the United Nations, but it is not effective because the vital requirement for the decisions of the Security Council to be effective is absent. The decisions of the Security Council cannot be implemented because the means of implementing them are not available to the Security Council, as they should be under the Charter.

The Final Document of the first special session on disarmament declared very emphatically that the United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in disarmament. The United Nations cannot be a lame duck without the ability to have its decisions be effective and, at the same time, have a central role and primary responsibility in disarmament. Therefore, our first duty is to make the United Nations effective so that it can proceed towards disarmament and so that it can play a central role in disarmament. The way to do that is to take the measures necessary to make the decisions of the Security Council effective, thereby making operative the system of international security as provided for in the Charter and as emphatically mentioned in paragraph 13 of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, namely, that genuine and lasting peace can only come about through the effective implementation of the security system provided for in the Charter. Therefore, any comprehensive programme of disarmament must ensure that not only in words, not only in paragraphs of a document, but in actual practice and in actual practice in the Disarmament Committee as well as in actual practice in the decisions taken here.

General Assembly resolution 35/156 J. which was adopted by consensus, was mentioned by the Disarmament Commission in its recommendations to the special session. It clearly declared that the system of international security provided for in the Charter must be applied in order to have disarmament. It also called on the permanent members of the Security Council to facilitate the work of the Council in carrying out that essential responsibility under the Charter.

If we had an international system of security as required by the Charter, we would have the beginning of confidence in the United Nations and the smaller States would not be spending their money on armaments but would seek development. In that way a new climate would be created in which the major Powers would be able to co-operate to strengthen international security and to achieve disarmament. Those two aspects of the problem must go together and they cannot go together in the absence of the role of the United Nations.
My wish is for us to see socio-political differences set aside so that mankind, as represented in the United Nations, can co-operate for international security and peace. That is the problem that we face today.

The CHAIRMAN: Members will recall that on 3 July, after receiving the report of the Chairman of Working Group II, I informed the Committee that I would convene my contact group to determine what further action to take on agenda item 9, which had been referred to Working Group II. The contact group decided to establish an informal drafting group, which was to work further on the review, appraisal and other elements of the item referred to that Working Group. The drafting group, consisting of eight delegations, started to work in the late afternoon of 3 July and continued to work until this afternoon. In order to avoid having to submit the results of the work of that drafting group to the contact group, I thought I might take this opportunity to inform all members.

The report which the convener of that drafting group, the representative of Australia, who was the Chairman of Working Group II, submitted to me this afternoon indicated that the drafting group worked very, very hard and for very long hours throughout the holidays. Some progress was made when the drafting group first started its work but, according to the convener of the drafting group, the group lost momentum during the last two days. The representative of Australia felt that there was no possibility that the informal drafting group would fulfil its mandate in time for it to be considered by this special session. Of course, the product of the drafting group would be reflected in the documents that may be annexed to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. It does represent some advance in the report which was submitted by Working Group II, but it is a long way from the review and appraisal which we had thought we would be able to accomplish during this session of the General Assembly.

Members will recall also that yesterday when we had the report of Working Group III we set up two ad hoc groups to engage in some drafting exercises concerning the question of the prevention of nuclear war and the World Disarmament Campaign. I have not yet received the reports of the conveners of those drafting groups. The informal report which I received from them was to the effect that they are still likely to reconvene tonight.
Members will no doubt wish to know, now that we are about 48 hours from the end of the session, how I see our work developing during the next two days. First, it appears from the report of the Chairman of Working Group I that the possibility of achieving a comprehensive programme of disarmament is now out of the question. It is also clear from the report of the representative of Australia, who has been presiding over that small drafting group on item 9, the review and appraisal, that that is not going to be possible. In the circumstances, the two documents which the Preparatory Committee recommended for adoption by the special session cannot be adopted since we cannot agree on them.
Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico), Chairman of Working Group I, (interpretation from Spanish): As the last few minutes have been devoted to secretariat matters, I should like to fill a gap I left in my previous statement, I think it very appropriate that my final words as the Chairman of Working Group I should serve to fill the gap. I should like to express my sincere thanks to Miss Aida Levin, who has so diligently and effectively discharged her duties as Secretary of Working Group I and of Drafting Group C. My thanks also go to Mr. Guennady Efimov, who similarly served as Secretary of Drafting Group D, and to Mr. Sammy Buq, who acted as Secretary of Drafting Groups A and B.

Naturally, my thanks also go to all of Miss Levin's efficient collaborators and to the interpreters, who, in spite of the rather unusual schedules that our groups have been following, always willingly provided their effective co-operation.

The meeting rose at 10.20 p.m.