Twelfth special session

AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 15TH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 9 July 1982 at 6.55 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria)

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82-61087
The meeting was called to order at 6.55 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The CHAIRMAN: I hope that at this late hour we shall be able to proceed quickly with the adoption of our report. After all, we have already gone through each paragraph in the contact group - in fact in the Ad Hoc Committee under another name. Also, since another opportunity will be provided tomorrow in the plenary Assembly for statements, I hope that we shall not find it necessary to make any here. Comments related to specific paragraphs can, of course, be made, but statements of a general nature should be reserved for the plenary Assembly, which is a grander forum in which to make them. I count on the co-operation of all representatives in this matter.

I call on the Rapporteur to introduce the report.

M. ERGUN (Turkey), Rapporteur: I think that as the Chairman has just said we shall not have any particular difficulties because the remaining matters are of a technical nature. We can therefore proceed with the report in document A/S.12/AC.1/L.5. All the factual changes made in the report are reflected in this newly issued document.

There are some changes to be made in the part entitled 'Conclusions' in the light of discussions held earlier today. Representatives have before them three pages containing paragraphs numbered 48, 48 (a), 48 (b), 49 and 50, which incorporate the major changes agreed on today.

First, we must correct the numbering of some paragraphs. The page bearing the heading 'paragraph 48' - the difficult paragraph on which we have held informal discussions - is the text to replace the present paragraph 60 of the report. If representatives will read it they will notice that all the changes suggested by various delegations have been made. I think it faithfully reflects their proposals, because I kept in touch with all the interested delegations. However, owing to the fact that we worked
hurriedly, some changes in style may prove necessary and if so I shall get in touch with the delegations concerned. I therefore submit this new text to replace paragraph 60 of the report before the Committee.

The second paper contains paragraphs numbered 48 (a) and 48 (b). Paragraph 48 (a) will replace the present paragraph 61 of the report. This new text is the result of our discussions last evening and this morning. The comment that I made about paragraph 60 applies also to this text: all the proposed changes agreed in the contact group have been included.

Paragraph 48 (b) will be the new paragraph 62, as proposed by the representative of Pakistan and agreed to in the contact group. In consultation with the delegation of Pakistan, it was agreed that the most appropriate place to insert it would be after paragraph 61.

The third paper contains what will become the last two paragraphs of the report in document A/S-12/AC.1/L.5. Paragraph 49 will replace the present paragraph 62 and will become paragraph 63. It will be noted that the addition agreed upon yesterday has been included in this paragraph; that is the only change.

Paragraph 50 is the same as the present paragraph 63 of the report, but it will be renumbered 64. We have repeated it here only to show that it is the end of the body of the report.

I turn now to document A/S-12/AC.1/L.5/Add.1, which contains the text of the draft comprehensive programme of disarmament. I must confess that although we worked overnight and this morning with the Secretariat I did not have time to check the text for errors. However, I believe that it reflects faithfully the text agreed upon in the Working Group, and it is submitted for representatives' consideration.
As for A/S-12/AC.1/L.5/Add.2, which contains annex II to the report, I should like first of all to make the following correction. The title of the proposal of Romania in document A/S-12/AC.1/24 should read "Considerations of the Grand National Assembly, of the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu, presented to the second special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament". I propose that the Secretariat be authorized to make that correction when printing the concluding document in final form.

Furthermore, the Austrian delegation has informed me that on page 6 of A/S-12/AC.1/L.5/Add.2 the proposal submitted by the Austrian delegation should be referred to as "Measures to improve the reliability and objectivity of information in the military area". I think that every delegation has the right to decide upon the title of its own proposals, so I believe this will create no problem.

However, at this point, if I may, I would make an observation regarding A/S-12/AC.1/L.5/Add.2. Yesterday, when we were working after midnight, I learned that the Secretariat had been asked to shorten some of the résumés given by delegations, which, according to the decision taken by the Working Group, should not exceed six lines. I took the responsibility of telling the Secretariat that we would probably ask the few delegations that had exceeded six lines to do that work themselves, because each individual delegation is entitled to draw up its own résumé and being so pressed for time and the Secretariat having so much work, we were not in a position to make such changes today. The Secretariat will get in touch with the few delegations concerned in order to obtain the six-line résumés and make the necessary changes.

I come now to A/S-12/AC.1/L.5/Add.3, which contains annex III, and L.5/Add.4, which contains annexes IV, V and VI. I would point out that there is a correction to be made in paragraph 22 of annex V, which contains the text on the World Disarmament Campaign. The words "paragraphs of" should be deleted, so that the paragraph reads:

"Member States should co-operate with the United Nations in the implementation of all the recommendations mentioned in this document."
Annex VI contains the list of non-governmental organizations and research institutions which addressed the Ad Hoc Committee of the Twelfth Special Session.

I think I have gone through all the annexes and the main body of the report. As I have said, the most important corrections are to be found in the three separate sheets of paper containing paragraphs which I have just introduced and which will be numbered differently.

Mr. VENKATESWARAN (India): I find that documents A/S-12/AC.1/L.2, L.4 and L.6, containing draft resolutions proposed by India, are not mentioned in document A/S-12/AC.1/L.5/Add.2. I am sure that this is an omission, and I request that it be rectified.

Mr. ERSUN (Turkey), Rapporteur: I think that the representative of India is right. As I have said, working overnight we were not able to rewrite this document. It is a technical omission and will be corrected.

Mr. VENKATESWARAN (India): I would ask if the deadline for the submission of corrections of errors of this type could be extended until tomorrow so that there may be no problems arising subsequently. We could then get in touch with the Rapporteur and see that these are sorted out.

The CHAIRMAN: The draft resolutions were submitted by the Secretariat. The omission occurred during printing and will be corrected.

Mr. RAJAKOSKI (Finland): In the report we have just heard from the Rapporteur I heard no mention of the fact that yesterday we submitted in written form an amendment to the paragraph that is now paragraph 38 in part II of document A/S-12/AC.1/L.5. I did not have occasion to propose that amendment orally yesterday, so I should now like to repeat what we submitted to the Secretariat in written form last night.

In paragraph 38, the third line, after the words "the report of the Preparatory Committee," we should like the following words to be added: "as well as the proposals that were submitted during the second special session on disarmament".
An amendment to paragraph 38 was proposed by the representative of France with regard to the documents transmitted to the special session by the Secretary-General, but that would not take care of various new proposals, inter alia the proposals made by the representative of Finland for a certain study to be made by the United Nations. I think that this amendment will fill that small lacuna.

Mr. ERSUN (Turkey), Rapporteur: The representative of Finland did, in fact, give me the proposal he has just made after we had adopted paragraph 38. As I said to him yesterday, other paragraphs, especially in the "Conclusions" section, will be rewritten and the report will then be reissued. Technically, this new proposal may be added at that time, but in order to do so we need a decision. That is why no action has yet been taken. Since the representative of Finland has now made his proposal officially, we shall include it in the report if the Ad Hoc Committee agrees upon it.

The CHAIRMAN: If there is no objection to the proposal just made by the representative of Finland, I shall take it that it is adopted for inclusion in paragraph 38 of the report.

It was so decided.

Mr. SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil): My delegation would like to state for the record its position on the report we are about to adopt by consensus. If it were put to a vote, we would not be able to support it. There are, in our view, important discrepancies between its contents and reality. My delegation, however, is aware of the wish of the majority of delegations to adopt a document by consensus, and we shall not stand in the way.

In the view of the Brazilian delegation, the most important feature of this report is the unanimous and categorical reaffirmation of the validity of the Final Document and of the commitment of all States to it. Such a reaffirmation amounts to a renewed dedication to the principles, objectives and priorities of the Final Document and to the implementation of its Programme of Action by all Member States,
particularly the nuclear-weapon Powers. For my delegation this means that, in accordance with those priorities, multilateral negotiations on the cessation of all tests of nuclear weapons and on nuclear disarmament should be initiated without delay.

Mr. VENKATESWARAN (India): A few days ago, when it became clear that the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament would be unable to discharge the mandate assigned to it, my delegation expressed the hope that despite its failure the session would be able to redeem itself by adopting certain urgent measures for the prevention of nuclear war and for nuclear disarmament. We based ourselves on the expectation that as a body that represents the interests of all the peoples of the world the United Nations would, at the very minimum, respond to the universal concern over the possibility of the outbreak of a nuclear war, which could mean the total destruction of civilization as we know it.

We had indeed hoped that the narrow security concerns of individual States, the major Powers in particular, would not be allowed to stand in the way of adopting certain urgent and necessary measures to ensure the survival of mankind. We note with deep regret however, that the report that is about to be adopted fails to come to grips with the basic reasons for the failure of this session. Still worse, it does not hold out any hope or encouragement to the millions of people all over the world who have placed such store on the outcome of this session, in particular with respect to removing the threat of a nuclear holocaust, which has been increasingly weighing upon them in recent years.

We hold the view that by adopting a report which, under the façade of high-sounding words, seeks to conceal the obduracy with which certain States have clung to their narrow security concerns, in total disregard of the anxieties and apprehensions of the vast majority of the countries and peoples of the world we have in fact abdicated our responsibility to the United Nations and to the international community as a whole.

We have clearly failed to address ourselves to the most important and fateful issues facing mankind today. We have failed to provide any answer to the dilemma that bedevils Governments and peoples, namely, the inherent contradiction between the armaments race and development.
Mr. Venkateswaran, India

My delegation would like to place on record that the minimum basis on which we should have proceeded in this regard was that of the adoption by consensus at this session of at least some urgent measures for the prevention of nuclear war and for nuclear disarmament, in accordance with draft resolution A/S-12/AC.1/L.6, dated 6 July 1982, which was submitted to this special session by my delegation and which we shall now be pursuing at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly, along with other draft resolutions similarly submitted by us to this special session on disarmament.

In the view of my delegation, the report of this second special session on disarmament as now being adopted will serve only to promote still further the growing cynicism concerning and lack of confidence in the United Nations system created to meet the concerns of the international community.

For these reasons my Government dissociates itself from the part entitled on "Conclusions" in the report. We have been impelled to take this course of action with the utmost regret, keeping in view the seriousness with which we view our responsibilities as a Member of the United Nations and our obligations to the international community, including the people of India.

The saddest part of it all is that if we had only dared we could have won. Therefore, while taking this course of action to dissociate ourselves from the part on conclusions, which we feel is dictated in the circumstances, we should like to leave no one any doubt of our willingness to continue to participate energetically in the multilateral disarmament process through which alone the future security of the world can be assured.

Mr. Carasales (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The Committee's report, which is on the point of being adopted, ends with part III, which contains the so-called conclusions emerging from this special session.

Although this in no way implies criticism of the intense effort made by you, Mr. Chairman, to achieve the adoption of at least some paragraphs by consensus so that the Assembly should not end without adopting a minimum of formal agreements, I must put on record the fact that the adopted text does not adequately reflect, in the view of my delegation, the vital issues discussed at this session or the concern and constructive determination of a great many delegations of the
Non-Aligned Group which did their utmost, with the greatest flexibility, to ensure that the decisions of this Assembly would represent an important step forward on the road to disarmament. The timid language and serious omissions which characterized the report and the absence of the steps hoped for by the international community mean that the document, in my delegation's view, does not reflect existing circumstances. In some cases it contains affirmations which contradict reality, as for example when it says that the validity of the Final Document was unanimously and categorically reaffirmed. On the contrary, there have been proposals and attitudes - some of which can be found in the final drafting of part III - which run completely counter to the concepts contained in the Final Document.

The Argentine delegation did not take part in the discussions on that chapter, in view of the considerations I have just expressed, and I should like it to be recorded that we do not share the bulk of the so-called conclusions of this special session. We are not objecting to them formally in order not to thwart the desire of a number of delegations to preserve the semblance of an agreement and thus give this Assembly a more positive image than is really correct.

I cannot conclude without expressing the hope that our future work in connexion with disarmament, to which we must all devote ourselves with renewed effort, will have a more positive outcome than our work at this session of the Assembly, for the benefit of all mankind, and indeed for its very survival.

Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh): I should like to make a correction with regard to document A/S-12/AC.1/L.5/Add.2, page 6. The proposal by Bangladesh in document A/S-12/AC.1/62 has been given the wrong title. It should read "Organs of the disarmament machinery". I should be grateful if the Rapporteur could take note of this correction.

Mr. Ersun (Turkey), Rapporteur. As I said previously concerning the request of the Indian delegation on that very document (A/S-12/AC.1/L.5/Add.2), some corrections will be made and a résumé added. After this session, I will probably get in touch with all interested delegations and we can easily see to this.
It is a purely technical point. I should, however, like to point out an omission from the draft report (A/S-12/AC.1/L.5) which I should correct now.

In paragraph 58, just before the last sentence, which begins "The consequent tensions" you, Mr. Chairman, proposed the insertion of the following sentence: "The period has also witnessed actions by States contrary to the spirit and letter of the Final Document." This insertion, already agreed to by the contact group, will be made in paragraph 58.

Mr. SOLA VILA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, once again we should like to thank you for all the efforts you have made to produce a document that will make it possible for us to reach a consensus on the conclusions.

With regard to the conclusions contained in part III of the document we are about to adopt, however, my delegation must express its reservations to the effect that many of the questions raised here, as has been categorically stated, are neither objective nor realistic. We are not opposed to the consensus which has been reached. It is indicative of an effort to continue negotiations in the disarmament forums, in particular the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. But we would have preferred conclusions that were much more objective and realistic and really reflected what took place at the second special session.
Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Following your suggestion, Mr. Chairman, I shall not refer now to matters of substance, given the time constraints, since I shall be doing so in the plenary Assembly. I wish to refer to a very minor administrative matter, but it is one of those questions which, particularly to delegations wishing to report speedily to their Governments, can be of vital importance.

We all know that once a report has been adopted at a plenary meeting, or at a committee meeting when the committee is the ultimate body, it is forgotten; sometimes weeks can pass before the correct and final text is available. This is an important report and fortunately it is not a very long one having only 24 pages. I think that the Rapporteur could make the necessary corrections in an hour or an hour and a half, whereupon a team of four typists, let us say, could easily produce a clean copy of the report in another one or two hours.

My delegation therefore proposes -- as has been proposed several times -- that a clean copy of the amended text of the report (A/S-12/AC.1/L.5) should be made available for the plenary meeting of the Assembly tomorrow.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Mexico.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): May I take that to mean that my administrative proposal is approved? Please correct me if I am wrong.

May I also ask whether in its present form the report reflects what I indicated at yesterday's meeting -- that at the request of the sponsors of draft resolution A/S-12/AC.1/L.3 the Secretary-General will transmit that draft resolution to the General Assembly? I must confess that I have not had time to study the report carefully, which is why I ask this question.

The CHAIRMAN: To answer the representative of Mexico's second question first, the proposal he made yesterday is reflected on page 19, paragraph 45 (bis), which we will come to later.
As for his earlier suggestion that a clean copy of the report should be made available at tomorrow's plenary meeting, I am sure the Committee approves that suggestion. However, we cannot be sure that the Secretariat will be in a position to provide a clean text. I call on the Secretary of the Committee to clarify the matter.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): What had originally been envisaged on this particular issue was that pages would be issued containing corrigenda reflecting any changes that might be adopted at this particular meeting. However, in view of the statement of the representative of Mexico, supplemented by what you have said, Mr. Chairman, every effort will of course be made within the time available to bring out as clean a copy as possible of the entire text.

However, I should point out that it may not be necessary to bring out a clean text of the whole of certain sections inasmuch as some of the changes may not be of an extensive nature. As far as the conclusions in part III are concerned - since that is where most of the more extensive changes have occurred - the Committee can rest assured that a clean text of that part in its entirety will be reproduced. However, the question of the entire text being a clean copy will be considered.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to the adoption of the report. Since all of its paragraphs were adopted yesterday and the day before, I suggest that we now take up the report part by part.

Part I consists of paragraphs 1 to 20. May I take it that the Committee wishes to adopt part I?

Part I was adopted.
The CHAIRMAN: We turn now to part II of the report. May I take it that the Committee wishes to adopt section A, which runs from paragraph 21 to paragraph 31?

Part II, section A was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We will next consider part II, section B, which runs from paragraph 32 to paragraph 54.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): With regard to paragraph 45(bis), to which reference was made earlier, I request that the word "would" on the second line be replaced by the word "will". The phrase in question would then read "the Secretary-General will be requested...".

Mr. ERGUN (Turkey), Rapporteur: Also with regard to paragraph 45 (bis), a second sentence, proposed by the representative if India, should be inserted after the present paragraph as amended by the representative of Mexico. That new sentence reads as follows:

"At the request of the sponsors of draft resolutions A/S-12/AC.1/L.1, L.2, L.4 and L.6, the Secretary-General will be requested to transmit the draft resolutions to the General Assembly for consideration at its thirty-seventh session."

The CHAIRMAN: May I take it that the Ad Hoc Committee agrees to adopt part II, section B, as orally amended?

Part II, section B, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We turn next to part III, which runs from paragraph 55 to paragraph 63. As there have been numerous changes in this part, the Committee will take decisions on each paragraph individually.

Does the Committee agree to adopt paragraph 55?

Paragraph 55 was adopted.
The CHAIRMAN: May I take it that the Committee adopts paragraph 56?

Paragraph 56 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We turn next to paragraph 57.

Mr. RAJAKOSKI (Finland) (interpretation from French): I should like to raise a small point with regard to paragraph 57. I have tried to read this text from the point of view of a member of the public at large, and it seems to me that the language is somewhat complicated. I should like to propose that at the very beginning of the paragraph a more succinct form of words be used to refer to this special session. The paragraph would thus begin: "In the course of the second special session devoted to disarmament...".

I should also like to ask a question before we complete our consideration of the draft report: Once this draft report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Twelfth Special Session has been adopted, what will its title be?

Mr. ERSUN (Turkey), Rapporteur (interpretation from French): I would appeal to the representative of Finland not to insist on his proposal. In the preparations for the special session, and during the session, we have had considerable discussion about how it should be referred to. I think that we should abide by United Nations practice and refer to it as the twelfth special session. With the formulation "the twelfth special session, the second special session devoted to disarmament" I believe that we meet everyone's needs, and reflect decisions taken in earlier discussions.

Mr. de La GORCE (France) (interpretation from French): United Nations practice is an admirable thing, but it is purely bureaucratic. The representative of Finland has proceeded on the basis of the justified - I hope - hypothesis that the report will be read by people other than experts. There is shocking inelegance in the expression "In the course of the tenth special session, the second special session devoted to disarmament".
If it really is wished to use the numeration of all the other special sessions, I would propose that in the body of the text this session be referred to as the "second special session devoted to disarmament" and that a footnote be inserted noting that this refers to the "twelfth special session". That would be appropriate language; indeed I recall an eloquent statement by the Ambassador of Mexico, Mr. Garcia Robles, in which he appealed to us to use such a formulation.

The repetitiveness of the present formulation is unfortunate; furthermore, we ought to employ a title which stresses that this has been a session specifically devoted to disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: I sympathize with the views expressed by the representatives of Finland and France. As the representative of France rightly pointed out, part of the problem here is that the Secretariat has tried to conform to the bureaucratic appellation; all the documents of this session use the term "twelfth special session". I think that, considering the time left to us, it is probably too late in the day for us to try to take on the bureaucracy in this matter.
I appeal to the representatives of France and of Finland to let this pass. As the Committee knows, we discussed this at length in the Preparatory Committee and even with all the time we had at that stage we did not win.

The Committee will find that paragraph 55 starts "The tenth special session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament."

If we change paragraph 57, I think that paragraph 55 will have to be changed too, but the fact is that the first special session on disarmament was the tenth special session.

So I appeal to the Committee to overlook the inelegance of this formulation and carry on with the adoption of our report. Of course, the attention of those responsible for this in the Secretariat will be called to the points of view expressed, not only here now but also in the Preparatory Committee, in the hope that this will be taken into account at some date.

Paragraphs 57, 58 and 59 were adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: Paragraph 60 will be replaced by the text numbered paragraph 48, which was distributed on a separate sheet. Paragraph 61 will be that numbered paragraph 48 (a) and paragraph 62 will be the text distributed as paragraph 48 (b). Paragraph 63 will be the text distributed as paragraph 49. Paragraph 64 will be the text distributed as paragraph 50.

Paragraphs 60, 61, 62, 63 and 64 were adopted.

Mr. GARCIA ROPLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Paragraph 60 - the paragraph that was distributed as paragraph 48 - indicates that the General Assembly was unable to adopt a document on the comprehensive programme of disarmament but also refers to two other points on which it did adopt texts. One of those texts relates to the World Disarmament Campaign and in this connexion I should like to announce that the Mexican Government will contribute $50,000 to the Campaign.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Government of Mexico for the contribution to the Campaign fund.

Since we have now adopted all the paragraphs of the report, may I take it that the Committee wishes to adopt the report as a whole?

The report, as a whole, was adopted.
The CHAIRMAN: Since the addenda have already been mentioned in the report they are presumed to have been adopted as part of that report. All the corrections that have been indicated will, of course, be made by the Secretariat.

It now remains for me to thank the members of the Committee for their co-operation and, on their behalf, to thank the Secretariat for the very valuable assistance they have given us.

Mr. RAJAKOSKI (Finland) (interpretation from French): In the second part of my statement earlier I asked a question about the title of this document which we have just adopted. So far we have been calling it the draft report of the Ad Hoc Committee. I should like to know what we shall be calling it now that this child to which we have just given birth has been adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry that I forgot to refer to that. It seems to me that tomorrow it will be called the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Twelfth Special Session, but once it is adopted by the plenary Assembly it will become the report of the twelfth special session.

The meeting rose at 3 p.m.