Twelfth special session

AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 3RD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 17 June 1982, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ADEMIJI (Nigeria)

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82-61815
The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Representatives will recall that at its previous meeting, held on 14 June 1982, the Committee decided to establish a working group to deal with the comprehensive programme of disarmament, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico. At that time too I informed the Committee that further consultations would be necessary in order to resolve matters relating to the setting up of additional working groups. In the interim period, accordingly, I undertook extensive consultations on those issues and subsequently summoned a meeting of the Bureau yesterday afternoon at which time the Bureau agreed to make the following recommendations to the Ad Hoc Committee:

First, it recommended the establishment of a working group II to deal with agenda item 9 in its entirety. As representatives are aware, that item concerns a review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session; there are four sub-items subsumed in item 9.

Secondly, the Bureau agreed to recommend the establishment of a working group III to deal with agenda items 11 and 13. Item 11 concerns the implementation of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade, and item 13 concerns measures to mobilize world public opinion in favour of disarmament, including the World Disarmament Campaign launched at the opening plenary meeting of this special session.

With regard to agenda item 12, the item dealing with what we refer to in our shorthand as "machinery", it is recommended that a preliminary discussion of the item take place in the Ad Hoc Committee itself. After that initial discussion of the item, the Ad Hoc Committee would then endeavour to co-ordinate matters in such a way that the review aspects of the "machinery" item would be taken up by working group II and the "forward-looking" aspects would be considered in an informal contact group in which all regional groups will, of course, be represented. It could thereafter form an appropriate subject for a drafting group, as necessary.
The Bureau further recommend to the Committee that it keep an open mind on the question of setting up any additional working groups.

With regard to the chairmanship of the two new working groups, it has been proposed that Ambassador Sadieor of Australia be elected as Chairman of working group II and that Ambassador Gerhard Herder of the German Democratic Republic be elected as Chairman of working group III.

The recommendations of the Bureau which I have just read out are the result of protracted consultations, and I therefore presume that the Ad Hoc Committee will have no difficulty in endorsing them.

Mr. Lidgard (Sweden): I should like merely to say that my delegation assumes that in the context of its organization of work it will be possible for the Assembly to consider at this special session the recommendations of the study group on the relationship between disarmament and development in a substantive way.

Mr. Issraelyan (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)(interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation is prepared to agree that agenda item 9 be considered in a working group II, and we welcome the recommendation that the representative of Australia be elected as Chairman of that working group. We also agree that working group III should be established to consider agenda items 11 and 13, and we welcome the recommendation that Ambassador Gerhard Herder of the German Democratic Republic be elected as its Chairman.

We should like also to state that, within the framework of paragraph 51 of the report of the Preparatory Committee, we believe that the Ad Hoc Committee should establish one further subsidiary body, one to which we attach particular importance; we hope that we are not alone in this. I refer to a body devoted to consideration of the question of the prevention of nuclear war.

I would note that in their statements at this special session, representatives, from Heads of State on down, have without exception stressed the need to adopt specific effective measures to prevent nuclear war. The demonstration that took place in New York on 12 June, as well as demonstrations which are being held every day, show that this is a central question for the General Assembly - a central question for the whole of mankind.
Thus, while we agree with the recommendation to establish the two working groups spoken of by the Chairman, we should like also to introduce a formal proposal that consultations be held with regard to the creation of a subsidiary body devoted to the question of the prevention of nuclear war, and that the Ad Hoc Committee return to that question at a subsequent meeting in the near future.

Mr. VENKATESWARAN (India): I welcome the proposal made by the representative of Sweden that the study on the relationship between disarmament and development be considered in a substantive manner when agenda item 9 is being considered by working group II. We leave it to the working group and its Chairman to decide on the best way of doing this. It is a matter in which I believe the entire world - and not only the developing countries - would be interested.

In the meeting of the Bureau yesterday, my delegation mentioned the importance of creating a subsidiary body for the consideration of measures for the prevention of nuclear war. As representatives are aware, India indicated in the statement by its Foreign Minister a few days ago that it would be submitting a draft convention on that subject. In that context, we feel that it would be very appropriate for the Ad Hoc Committee of the Twelfth Special Session to consider the setting up of a subsidiary body to discuss this very important and vital issue.
Mr. SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil): My delegation also supports your proposal, Mr. Chairman, concerning the establishment of new working groups and the nominations for Chairmen.

At this stage I should also like to support the proposal just made by the representative of the Soviet Union for us to find a way to deal very specifically with the question of the prevention of nuclear war. May I express the hope for a good outcome to the discussions at this special session.

Mr. ESPECHE GIL (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all may I say that my delegation is in full accord with the recommendations made by the Bureau and will go along with the consensus in that respect.

In the second place, we listened with great interest to the suggestion made by the representative of the Soviet Union and supported by the representatives of India and Brazil that consultations be held with a view to the possible setting up of a subsidiary body which would consider the question of the prevention of nuclear war.

As will be recalled, my delegation was one of those which sponsored a draft resolution on this very subject in the course of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Far from diminishing, our interest has increased as regards this high-priority item on the agenda of this special session on disarmament.

I wish to conclude by supporting both the suggestion by the Bureau and the proposal of the Soviet Union.

Mr. van DONGEN (Netherlands): Mr. Chairman, as to your proposals concerning the organization of work, we find ourselves in agreement with what has been discussed by the Bureau. My only remark concerns the organization of work on the subject of what you briefly indicated as "machinery". If I understood correctly, you said, Sir, that you would endeavour to co-ordinate matters in such a way as to have the various
elements discussed in Working Groups I and II and that eventually the formation of a drafting group under the Ad Hoc Committee could be considered. Since the co-ordination of the work in those two working groups would not be a particularly easy task, I would suggest that we agree on a deadline by which such a drafting group should be formed so as to leave sufficient time until the end of this special session of the General Assembly for it to do its work. Very tentatively, I would suggest that such a drafting group, under the Ad Hoc Committee, should start its work no later than 28 June - that is, on Monday - which would leave this week and next for discussions in the Ad Hoc Committee, and another two before the end of the special session, for the real drafting work.

Mr. BUSBY (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, with regard to the proposals for the organization of our work which you presented to us today as recommendations of the Bureau, my delegation believes that it is a sensible way to go about our work, and we are prepared to accept it. We are also pleased at the nomination of our friends and colleagues Ambassador Sadleir and Ambassador Herder to preside over those groups.

With regard to the question of item 12 of our agenda, my delegation attaches some importance to it, and we look forward to the co-ordination which you, Sir, have outlined under your able guidance of the Ad Hoc Committee. But I do believe that the point which was just made by Ambassador van Dongen of the Netherlands is very pertinent. We fully support it and would assume that, in dealing with this question, the initial discussions that are to take place in this Committee could be scheduled at a very early time in order to enable you to begin this co-ordination process. We certainly would endorse the idea that the drafting group should begin its work no later than 28 June - preferably earlier, if possible.

Mr. de la GORCE (France) (interpretation from French): Although the French delegation agrees with and of course accepts the recommendations of the Bureau, we should like to clarify our views with regard to the discussion of questions of machinery and procedure.
The French delegation endorses what the representatives of the Netherlands and the United States have just said. We consider that this matter should be considered early enough for the various stages which you, Mr. Chairman, have envisaged for this consideration to proceed in good order. Hence, as our American colleague has said, we should like the question to be taken up as soon as possible in the Ad Hoc Committee so that the drafting group, which will be formulating the possible recommendations that we shall be submitting to the General Assembly, can start its work as soon as possible.

I wish to add that we would be very happy, Mr. Chairman, if you yourself accepted responsibility for the conduct of this important aspect of our work.

Mr. ANK (Turkey) (interpretation from French): I merely wish to say that my delegation agrees with the proposal made by the representative of the Netherlands and supported by other delegations.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Mexico being a member of the Bureau, it will come as no surprise to you, Mr. Chairman, that we fully support the recommendations you mentioned at the start of this meeting.

I simply wish to add a few words with respect to the suggestion on the proposal made by the representative of the Soviet Union and supported by a number of other delegations. I believe that later on it would be appropriate for us to consider what would be the best way to deal with this question, the importance of which can hardly be overestimated - that is, the prevention of nuclear war - on which the General Assembly adopted resolution 36/81 B, of 9 December 1981, based on a draft co-sponsored by Mexico.

For the moment, I would merely request all nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so to be good enough to submit - either this week or by next week, at the latest - their views on this matter. So far we have received only one reply.
Mexico expressed its opinion at the appropriate time; it is one of the seven countries which has done so - the number, certainly, is not very encouraging. Among those seven, as I said a moment ago, there is one which possesses nuclear arms and six which do not. We therefore hope that it will be principally those nuclear-weapon Powers that will heed the appeal made by the Assembly.

The second suggestion I should like to make in connexion with this subject is that the Secretariat should make available here for those delegations that desire it the document containing the replies already received and those that will be received in the future. I say this because a moment ago my delegation requested this document and we had to go to look for it elsewhere, because it was not here. The document in question is document A/S-12/11 dated 4 May. If there were an addendum to the document, it should also be made available to delegations.
Mr. KORNEENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Our delegation agrees with the proposals and recommendations put forward by you, Mr. Chairman, and by the Bureau relating to the creation of additional Working Groups II and III. At the same time, we should like to refer to the proposal made by the representative of the Netherlands that we set up a drafting group immediately. I should like to stress that we consider the proposal that we settle this question at this time to be premature and we therefore cannot agree with it. In our view, that question should be subject to consultations in the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia): My delegation wholeheartedly supports the recommendation by the Chairman that the chairmen of the other two Working Groups be nominated. My delegation particularly welcomes the suggestion that we nominate Ambassador Sadleir of Australia to be the Chairman of the Working Group II and Ambassador Herder to be the Chairman of the Working Group III. My delegation knows those two Ambassadors for the tact with which they carried out their functions in the Committee on Disarmament.

In regard to the proposal put forward by the representative of India and, earlier, by the representative of the Soviet Union, that special attention be given to the question of the prevention of nuclear war, my delegation certainly finds no difficulty in supporting that proposal. As early as 1961, my delegation was among those advocating the achievement of effective measures for preventing nuclear war.

As to the way in which that question would be tackled by the Ad Hoc Committee, I would leave it to the Chairman to decide on the best way of conducting this work. On the one hand, my delegation realizes that if another working group were to be established, there would be quite a proliferation of meetings. On the other hand, my delegation attaches importance to these subjects.
Might I suggest for consideration that these subjects, at least in the first stage, be tackled by the Chairman through the Ad Hoc Committee. At a later stage we might perhaps discover a suitable manner in which to tackle this problem.

If there is a consensus within this Committee that the question should be tackled within another, separate sub-working group, my delegation would have no strong objection.

Mr. Noirfalisse (Belgium) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, I should first like to say how pleased we are at this agreement on the structure of the special session. I think that the representative of the Ukrainian SSR may not have completely understood the intention of the proposal made by the Ambassador of the Netherlands, which we fully support. I should merely like to point out that I believe it to be urgent that we quickly deal with item 12 of the agenda. For that reason, I believe that the Committee of the whole, under your guidance, must be able rapidly to co-ordinate the preliminary exchange of views in the two Working Groups which are to be seized of this question and that, still under your guidance, as was specified by Ambassador Lagorce among others, the work of drafting should be taken up quickly.

I also think that 28 June may be a bit too late. If our two Working Groups meet every day, which is what they have done since being set up, I think that a few meetings should suffice to clear the ground and hence to allow you, Mr. Chairman, to assess the situation. Thus, I would prefer to see the date brought forward by a few days.

Mr. Rahhal (Morocco) (interpretation from French): I should like to express our pleasure at seeing Ambassadors Sadleir and Herder serving as Chairmen on the two Working Groups that we decided to set up this morning.
I also asked to speak to support the proposal put forward by the representative of the Netherlands, given the importance which, as everyone knows, my delegation attaches to the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the area of disarmament. As the Committee knows, a very relevant study has been carried out by a group of experts on the subject of structural arrangements in the field of disarmament.

Mr. GAJDA (Hungary): First of all, I support the proposals that you, Mr. Chairman, put forward at the beginning of this meeting.

I welcome our two colleagues and friends who are going to share leadership of the two Working Groups. We have confidence in their capabilities and in the success of the Groups under their chairmanship.

I wish briefly to express once more our delegation's full agreement with and full support for the formal proposal presented by the representative of the Soviet Union. The subject of the prevention of nuclear war is perhaps the most important subject on our agenda and it is the most urgent task facing this special session. We must devote very careful and most urgent attention to the subject.

I can express my delegation's agreement to the suggestion put forward by you, Mr. Chairman, as to how to handle item 12 in its preliminary treatment in the two Working Groups, under your guidance, as well as your suggestion that we later decide on the establishment of a subsidiary body within the Committee of the whole. I believe that this question has close links to the real substance of matters being handled in the two Working Groups. Therefore, the decision to establish a subsidiary body should depend on the results achieved in the two Working Groups on questions of substance and should not be made too hastily, without any consideration of the subject matter.
We should avoid trying to fashion the suit according to the buttons. I would suggest, therefore, that a decision on this matter should be taken after several rounds of consultations on the questions among the officers of the Committee and within this Committee of the whole.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to summarize now. By and large, then, the Committee accepts the recommendation of the Bureau on the establishment of these two other working groups. The details connected with the discussion of agenda item 12, of course, and the subsequent format of our consideration of that item would also be worked out through consultations, as well as during the initial consideration of that item. The dates suggested will be kept in mind, but I think we need to see this in the larger context of the organization of our work. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that it is so decided.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to congratulate the two members who have been appointed to head the two Working Groups.

I would briefly mention to the Committee that I have received a request from Mr. Jean Ripert, Director-General for International Economic and Social Affairs, to address the Ad Hoc Committee. It has been suggested that he be allowed to do so on 23 June, when the Committee has already decided to hear statements by representatives of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues. If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.