Twelfth special session
Agenda item 9

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS
ACCEPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

Relationship between disarmament and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

GOLFA CEECOSFSIC FEFUELI

[Original: English]
[14 May 1982]

1. The arms race which is being spurred on by imperialist quarters represents a most serious challenge to mankind. It has become a menace to the existence of mankind and to the economic and the social basis of nations.

2. The study on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/36/356) contains a number of conclusions that should be made use of with a view to releasing, through disarmament measures, resources that today are still channelled towards military purposes, in order to serve the economic and social development of nations and simultaneously contribute to more stable peace.

3. In this connexion, the German Democratic Republic recalls the joint statements of socialist States made also on its behalf at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly (A/C.1/36/PV.42, A/C.2/36/SR.25), including the reservations contained therein.

4. In addition, the German Democratic Republic wishes to submit the following observations concerning the study (A/36/356).

   (a) Particular relevance is contained in the conclusion that the world will either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or will move consciously and with deliberate speed towards a more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustainable international economic and political order, and that it cannot do both. The only alternative acceptable to the peoples of the world is the urgently needed discontinuation of the arms race and its reversal towards genuine disarmament in order to resolve the economic, social and technological problems facing mankind.

   (b) Increasing military expenditures and the squandering of enormous material and human resources for military purposes place a heavy burden on national economies and on international economic relations. The arms race entails extremely negative consequences, both economic and social, for the developing countries and for the establishment of a new international economic order.

   (c) It is obvious that burning issues such as those facing the underdeveloped countries, namely, economic development, scarcity of energy and raw materials, poverty and malnutrition, unemployment and inflation, can be overcome and the global health programme can be implemented only if and when the arms race is stopped.

   (d) Constantly growing unemployment, which has become a major dilemma in a number of States, is a particularly sharp expression of the fact that the social situation of the working people in those States has worsened at an accelerated pace because of the arms race. At present, effective remedial measures are elusive, since the necessary financial and material resources are absorbed by dramatically increasing arms expenditures. If, in turn, such expenditures would be used for
peaceful purposes, substantial material conditions could be created in the States concerned in order to achieve higher economic growth rates and provide new jobs.

(e) Within a short space of time, effective disarmament steps could set free considerable resources not only for solving the most acute economic and social problems in those States but also, notably, in developing countries.

(f) The initiatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the other socialist States taken within the United Nations system in 1973 and 1978 were conceived to achieve this end. They foresee a reduction of military budgets on the part of the Security Council's permanent members and of the other militarily significant States, and the use of a part of the means thus released for assistance to developing countries.

(g) Relevant agreements should be such that they could be implemented as easily and speedily as possible. That would be the case if those means would be set free nationally in terms of real resources or national currencies. The reallocation of a portion of the funds released in order to render additional assistance to developing countries should be carried out primarily through existing bilateral and multilateral forms of co-operation among States, including relevant bodies within the United Nations system.

(h) In the view of the German Democratic Republic, it would not be expedient to make comprehensive exchange and comparability of data on military spendings a precondition for agreement on measures to reduce military budgets. As borne out by practical experience, those demands, in the final analysis, amount to the delaying and blocking of relevant reduction agreements. It would be a success indeed if the study gave fresh impetus to efforts aimed at producing agreements on military spending reductions.

(i) On the basis of the results of the study, special attention should be focused on the following practical measures:

(i) The comprehensive and incontestable facts regarding the dangers and consequences of the arms race for the economic and social development of the peoples of the world, should be used as extensively as possible for public information;

(ii) The specialized agencies should be invited to take more account of the consequences resulting from the relationship between disarmament and development in their programme activities;

(iii) States should, in parallel with negotiations on concrete disarmament measures, proceed to planning the conversion of resources. The earlier specific ideas on the possibilities and methods of the employment of funds released for peaceful purposes are forthcoming, the earlier there will evolve a strong economic and social interest in the progress of disarmament negotiations.

(j) The German Democratic Republic expresses the expectation that the conclusions which States will draw from the study will help to bring about a turn in the field of arms limitation and disarmament.
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

[Original: Russian]
[21 April 1982]

1. In the Soviet Union's view, there is no more important problem in the world today than the elimination of the threat of war, particularly nuclear war. In the current complicated international situation the need for concrete and tangible action to contain the arms race and bring about disarmament is greater than ever. For its part, the Soviet Union is prepared to reach agreement on limiting, reducing or prohibiting any type of weapons on an equitable and reciprocal basis.

2. The problem of preventing nuclear war directly determines the solution of other pressing global problems - the food problem, the energy problem, the ecological problem and others - which affect the vital interests of all countries and peoples and which can be resolved only through the concerted efforts of all States. It is specifically from this standpoint that the Soviet Union views the question of the relationship between disarmament and development.

3. It should be pointed out that the United Nations study on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/36/356) takes on particular significance in the context of the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Important issues are dealt with in the study, which reaches many justified conclusions, in particular that the arms race is incompatible with the aim of establishing a new international economic order and that the resources released by curtailing the arms race and achieving disarmament could be used inter alia to raise the living standards of all peoples and to improve economic conditions in the developing countries.

4. However, it must be noted with regret that the point of view of the Soviet expert who took part in preparing the study was not adequately reflected in the text, owing to the fact that the final stage of its preparation was conducted with undue haste, so that the experts were not afforded the opportunity to give more detailed consideration to the draft text of the study or to introduce needed additions and clarifications. Taking account of this fact, the Soviet Union wishes to make the following comments:

(a) With regard to some of the proposals contained in chapter VI of the report (A/36/356) and the recommendations in chapter VII concerning the establishment of an international disarmament fund for development, it must be emphasized that the establishment of any machinery within the framework of the United Nations to finance development goals would make sense only if taken in conjunction with genuine reductions in the military budgets of States, primarily those of the permanent members of the Security Council. Although the report rightly questions the advisability of introducing an "armaments levy" as a source for financing a fund for development, the idea of an international fund is generally viewed in the report as being most closely in line with United Nations thinking on disarmament and development and as the most practicable approach. It is impossible to share this view. The simplest and most reliable way of obtaining...
additional resources to provide assistance for development purposes is through the reduction of military budgets. Relevant proposals in that regard have already met with the approval of the United Nations. The flexible position of the Soviet Union - as shown by its initiative in putting forward such proposals regarding the initial scale of the reduction in military budgets and its readiness to agree to reduce those budgets in percentage or absolute terms or to freeze them at existing levels - provides a sound basis for achieving practical agreement. This, of course, presupposes the existence of the necessary political will on the part of other States Members of the United Nations which have major economic and military potential, including those States which are permanent members of the Security Council.

(b) The contention in chapter III of the report that the lack of information on the military efforts of States is a major factor in promoting the arms race cannot be regarded as justified. It is likewise impossible to share the favourable assessment of the work done within the United Nations on standardization of the reporting of military budgets (chap. VII). Such assessments, and also the recommendation for broader compilation and dissemination of data on the cost of the military preparations of States and on the military deployment of human and material resources, obscure the true cause of the continuing arms race, namely, the lack of political will on the part of certain States to proceed to genuine disarmament measures. The compilation of additional information on the military expenditures of States and the elaboration of a system for comparing them and reporting on them in any way are unrealistic and cannot bring a solution of the problem of reducing military budgets, on which the allocation of additional resources for development ultimately depends. The fact that such activities are undertaken in the United Nations is used by certain countries to disguise their unwillingness to take steps for the reduction of military expenditures.

(c) The report underestimates the value of a number of existing agreements on limiting the arms race, particularly with regard to strategic weapons (chap. VI). The importance of the SALT-II treaty is that it provides for comprehensive and far-reaching limitations on the strategic offensive weapons of the Soviet Union and the United States, quantitatively and qualitatively, including a genuine reduction in such weapons. If the treaty has not been implemented, that is entirely the fault of the United States. The Soviet Union is prepared to resume negotiations with the United States on strategic-arms limitation, on the basis of the results already achieved and, of course, of the principle of equality and equal security.

(d) The report does not adequately reflect a number of important instruments adopted by the General Assembly - the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade - particularly with regard to the interrelationship between development and the struggle for peace, security and disarmament, the need to free the development of developing countries from the obstacles created by the policy of colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism, and the task of carrying out progressive socio-economic reforms in developing countries, including the strengthening of the State sector and the co-operative sector. The report should attach greater
importance to the relevant conclusions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, on disarmament, designed to halt the arms race and allocate additional funds for development.

(e) The report contains a number of statements affirming the need to increase development aid, but it ignores the existence in the present-day world of two opposing socio-economic systems and, therefore, of two fundamentally different types of economic relations between States (chap. VII).

(f) The Soviet Union has shown an understanding of the specific needs and problems of developing countries and does not deny their right to raise the question of obtaining funds from abroad to finance development. Furthermore, the well-known Soviet initiatives in the field of disarmament provide a clear and concrete idea of the ways to find such funds. However, as is made clear in the Soviet Government's statement of 3 October 1976, circulated as an official document of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly (A/C.2/31/2, para. 5), there are no grounds, and indeed there can be none, for making the same claims on the Soviet Union and other socialist States, as the developing countries make on the developed capitalist States. Such demands should be considered primarily in the context of compensation for the damage caused by the colonial exploitation of the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America by the former colonial Powers and compensation for the losses suffered by developing countries at the present time as a result of the inequality in international economic relations and the activities of transnational corporations.

(g) The projects carried out with the participation of the socialist countries in various fields promote the strengthening of an independent national economy and aid in solving the most important socio-economic problems in developing countries -- the elimination of the colonial structure, the development of previously backward areas, the raising of the living standard and the provision of employment for the population. A fundamental feature of the technical assistance provided by the member States of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is that it is designed mainly to set up and develop enterprises in the key branches of the State sector, which forms the basis for independent development.

(h) A number of sections in the report contain assessments of the economic development of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Some of these assessments are based not on a comprehensive analysis but on isolated phenomena of a temporary nature (chap. VII). Consequently these assessments and conclusions, since they are not based on the total picture, give a distorted view of the true condition and development prospects of the economies of the socialist countries.
1. From the very outset of United Nations activities in the field of the economic and social aspects of disarmament, the Government of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has given its full support to these efforts considering them to be very important. Together with other non-aligned countries, Yugoslavia has always pledged itself to the idea of undertaking a study on the relationship between disarmament and development. The study by the Group of Experts on this subject (A/36/356) is of special importance since it covers, in a comprehensive manner, a number of interrelated essential problems facing the contemporary world: peace and security, on the one hand, and socio-economic development, especially that of the developing countries, on the other.

2. Naturally, the attention of this study is focused not only on the positive aspects of this problem, that is, disarmament and its benefits for development, but also on the negative implications of the protracted arms race for the process of economic and social development. As a result, the study not only offers prospects for complementing efforts in these two objectively interrelated fields of international endeavour but also points to the detrimental effect of the continuation of the arms race and its impact on the widening gap between the developed and developing countries.

3. All this in itself testifies to the usefulness and importance of the efforts exerted to examine in detail and to shed some light on the relationship between disarmament and development. Therefore, it was quite understandable that the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament adopted an appropriate decision in this respect. We can note with satisfaction that this was among the few decisions which have been carried out.

4. The Government of Yugoslavia believes that the entire research project has been successfully carried out and that it constitutes a valuable contribution to the efforts made in the field of disarmament and development. This is, in fact, the biggest and most important research project ever undertaken in this field.

5. A specific feature of this study is that it, first of all, places emphasis on material and human resources. Secondly, it examines, within the limit of possibilities, the question of converting the resources released through disarmament. Thirdly, the whole project is based on extensive research work. Finally, through recommendations to the Governments, it attempts to make operative the whole effort and to ensure its continuity.

6. The quality of this study lies in the fact that, in its conceptual approach, it gives a prominent place to the concept of a new international economic order. On the whole, the study applies a valid conceptual approach which is one of the essential prerequisites for a successful achievement of the set goal. The basis of this approach is the triangular relationship between disarmament (that is, the arms race), development and security, taking as a starting point the fact that, in
addition to interaction between disarmament (the arms race) and development, both factors have an impact on the state of international security in the same way that international security, in turn, has an impact on these two processes. It is important that such an outlook on contemporary international relations affirm itself as fully as possible in the practice of political action.

7. The study offers ample proof that the arms race and the meeting of the needs of economic and social development are incompatible, and that the curbing of the arms race — that is, disarmament — would greatly contribute to solving the problems of economic and social development in the world more quickly.

8. However, this does not mean that development is conditioned by disarmament, although disarmament is viewed as an important factor for successful economic and social development.

9. Such a valuable result of a broadly-based international research project undertaken under the auspices of the United Nations, in fact, makes it possible for this study to serve as an especially useful instrument in the efforts to achieve the basic goals of disarmament and development.

10. As already mentioned above, the Government of Yugoslavia considers the recommendations in the concluding chapters of the study very useful. In this respect, it would particularly like to point out the following:

     (a) First of all, it is essential that this effort be continued and, in this connexion, it is necessary, as recommended, that the Governments themselves undertake to study the benefits resulting from the reallocation of military resources for solving economic and social problems and narrowing the gap between the industrialized and developing countries, as well as for establishing a new international economic order. This, no doubt, includes the publication of these results.

     (b) An integral part of this work should also be, in line with the recommendations, a fuller and more systematic compilation and publication of information on the current use of human and material resources for military purposes. It is particularly important that the major competitors in the arms race, whose military complex absorbs the biggest part of resources, engage themselves in this effort.

     (c) In addition, it is indispensable that the question of relationship between disarmament and development be adequately included in the current activities of the United Nations system, that the Secretary-General take appropriate measures in this respect, and that the activities of the United Nations in the field of public information accentuate more the social and economic aspects of disarmament, that is, the arms race.

     (d) There is no doubt that other recommendations also deserve our attention, such as preparation and planning for the conversion of military resources for civil purposes, establishment of an international disarmament fund for development,
including an examination of the possibilities offered in this respect by the existing agencies and institutions dealing with the transfer of resources.

11. On the whole, the Government of Yugoslavia assesses the study as a positive achievement and advocates its widest possible implementation as well as the continuation of the efforts already undertaken.