Twelfth special session
AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE
TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION
Agenda items 9, 10, 11 and 12

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

CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME
OF DISARMAMENT

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION OF THE 1980s AS THE SECOND
DISARMAMENT DECADE AND CONSIDERATION OF INITIATIVES AND
PROPOSALS OF MEMBER STATES

ENHANCEMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MACHINERY IN THE FIELD OF
DISARMAMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
 IN THIS FIELD, INCLUDING THE POSSIBLE CONVENING OF A WORLD
 DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Letter dated 17 June 1982 from the Permanent Representatives of
Austria, Finland, Sweden and Yugoslavia to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to communicate to you herewith the views of the Swiss
Federal Council on some problems considered at the twelfth special session of the
General Assembly.
We should be grateful if you would be good enough to circulate these views as a document of the twelfth special session of the General Assembly under agenda items 9 to 12.

(Signed) Karl I. R. FISCHER
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Austria to the United Nations

(Signed) Ilkka Olavi PASTINEN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Finland to the United Nations

(Signed) Anders I. THUNBORG
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
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(Signed) Miljan KOMATINA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Yugoslavia to the United Nations
ANNEX I

Views of the Swiss Government on some problems dealt with at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

(7 June-9 July 1982)

The Swiss Government is aware of the growing importance of arms control and disarmament in international politics. These factors cannot fail to influence also Swiss security policy. That is why the Swiss authorities are not content with following attentively the efforts accomplished in this area at the international level. They also support them to the extent possible, in other words, as long as they are compatible with the armed neutrality of Switzerland. Switzerland, like other neutral States, moreover, has already had the opportunity to make its territory available for negotiations in the field of arms control and disarmament. It intends to continue this policy in the future in order to facilitate and encourage multilateral and bilateral contacts and negotiations in these important areas.

The Swiss Government would like first of all to recall the guiding ideas in the field of arms control and disarmament which, at the time, it had brought to the attention of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in the annexed document dated 24 May 1978 (see annex II):

(1) Today, as in the past, it should not be forgotten that military power and the arms race are the result of international insecurity and tension. Thus, the sequential principle "arbitration - security - disarmament" propounded at the time of the League of Nations by Nikolaos Politis is still valid. In order to achieve disarmament, it is essential to create first of all at the international level a climate of peace and trust.

(2) A reduction in the threat or use of force can be expected only if, either beforehand or simultaneously, effective international machinery is set up which permits each State to assert its rights and interests by means other than arms. In our international system, moreover, a reduction in the use of force is necessarily linked with the establishment of arrangements for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

In view of developments in recent years, the Swiss Government regrets that it has been unable to note any important progress in the fields of arms control and disarmament, despite the Declaration and the Programme of Action contained in the Final Document of the 1978 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. On the contrary, the arms spiral tends rather to accelerate, in both the conventional and the nuclear fields, thus increasing instability and lessening security at both regional and global levels.

One of the decisions of the special session of the General Assembly held in 1978 led to the re-organization of the then Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva (CCD), now called the Committee on Disarmament (CD). As a
result of the re-organization, Switzerland was authorized to take part in the Committee's work on a limited basis. The Swiss Government has gladly taken advantage of the opportunity afforded to it.

In the nuclear sphere too, there has been little meaningful progress. While the Non-Proliferation Treaty embodied in article VI a political commitment on the part of the nuclear Powers that are parties to the Treaty to put an end to the nuclear-arms race and promote nuclear disarmament, negotiations towards that end have made little headway since the last special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament. It is thus not surprising that some States which, like Switzerland, have foregone their right to possess nuclear weapons, should be anxious for the balance of obligations on which the entire Non-Proliferation Treaty rests to be more scrupulously respected.

In addition, even the comprehensive nuclear test ban envisaged as early as 1963 in the preamble of the nuclear test ban agreement, and thus well before the Non-Proliferation Treaty, has yet to be carried through. The observance of a test ban would have been an essential factor in promoting arms control in general and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in particular. This defect in the application of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and of the comprehensive test ban can pose a threat to the non-proliferation system as it currently operates.

The lack of success in nuclear disarmament has also been one of the main reasons for the impasse reached at the second review conference, on the Non-Proliferation Treaty held in 1980. The Swiss Government, which has traditionally espoused the principle of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as evidenced by its renunciation of such weapons under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, expects that the next review conference, to be held in 1985, will produce more encouraging results.

Efforts to prohibit or restrict on humanitarian grounds the use of certain conventional weapons are not unrelated to the question of arms limitation and disarmament. Switzerland has taken an active part in action towards that end undertaken at the urging of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations General Assembly. Such action has yielded partial results as evidenced by the adoption on 10 October 1980 by the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Certain Conventional Weapons of a general convention, together with three protocols dealing with non-detectable fragments, with mines, booby-traps and other devices, and with incendiary weapons respectively. It is to be hoped that this body of rules, the adoption of which already represents a step forward, will be complemented at a later stage by the establishment of machinery for consultation and co-operation on the enforcement of the proposed rules. Along those same lines, mention should also be made of the additional protocols to the Geneva Conventions which were adopted on 8 June 1977. Switzerland ratified the two protocols in question on 17 February 1982; it has signed the Convention on conventional weapons and expects shortly to ratify the Convention and its three protocols. It is desirable that the greatest possible number of States should agree to be bound by those instruments at the earliest possible date.
As regards arms control and regional disarmament, Switzerland has taken an active part in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The Madrid meeting, which is part of the follow-up to the CSCE, has on its agenda the question of a conference on confidence-building and security measures and disarmament in Europe. In that connexion, Switzerland, together with a number of neutral and non-aligned countries (Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Liechtenstein, San Marino, Sweden and Yugoslavia), submitted a proposal on the convening of such a conference in two phases, the first to be devoted to the consideration and adoption of a series of mutually reinforcing confidence-building and security measures intended to reduce the risk of military confrontation in Europe. The measures would cover the whole of Europe and the adjacent sea areas and air space in accordance with a formula to be negotiated. The measures would have military consequences, would be politically binding and would be coupled with adequate verification procedures suited to the nature of the measure in question. After considering the results achieved during the first phase and in the light of other relevant negotiations on security and disarmament in Europe, a future meeting in the framework of the follow-up to the CSCE would explore avenues available to participating States to pursue their efforts in that area and, particularly, the appropriateness of advancing to the second phase of the conference on confidence-building and security measures and disarmament in Europe, at which time disarmament proper could be dealt with.

The Madrid Conference has not yet ended. The main obstacle relates to the first of the points referred to above, namely, the definition of the scope of confidence-building and security measures. That aspect of the mandate of the conference on disarmament in Europe will be at the centre of the discussions which are to resume on 9 November in Madrid.

The Swiss Government attaches great importance to the activities in connexion with the CSCE with respect to arms control and disarmament in the European region. Indeed the greatest build-up of weapons has occurred on our continent. We therefore have an obvious interest in the establishment of machinery for negotiations on regional disarmament in Europe in which all countries interested in the maintenance of security in Europe can participate on an equal footing. That is a lacuna that exists at present which the CSCE can and should fill.

Arms control and disarmament, the importance of which we have been at pains to demonstrate, presuppose adequate and effective verification of the implementation of agreements sought on those issues. It is precisely in this specific context that Switzerland wishes to emphasize its traditional willingness. In a general way, Switzerland will continue to work to the extent possible for the objectives of arms control and disarmament.
ANNEX II

Views of the Swiss Government on some of the problems discussed at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (23 May-30 June 1978)

[For the text of this annex, see A/S-10/AC.1/2.]