Twelfth special session
AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE
TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION
Agenda items 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13

REVIEW OF THE 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

MEASURES TO MOBILIZE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION IN FAVOUR OF DISARMAMENT

Letter dated 18 June 1982 from the Permanent Representative of India
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward herewith a message from the Prime Minister of
India, Her Excellency Mrs. Indira Gandhi, on the occasion of the second special
session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. I request Your Excellency
to circulate this message as an official document of the twelfth special session of
the General Assembly under agenda items 9 to 13.

(Signed) N. KRISHNAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
ANNEX

Message from the Prime Minister of India to the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

I wanted to participate in this Second Special Session on Disarmament of the General Assembly, for I have long held strong views on this vital subject. My voice is raised in the cause of peace.

Men and women have put up with inequality and injustice, submitted to exploitation, and tolerated the disintegration of their environment. They have gone to war, displaying courage, fortitude and gallantry of a high order. All this and more they have endured. There has been protest, resistance, even revolution in one part or another. But never has there been so deeply affected people, across divisions of class, political ideology and even of international frontiers. It may not yet encompass the whole of the human race, but its numbers are increasing. Those who pause to think, cannot but be acutely aware that inhumanity is the result of decisions and actions of humans themselves. Never before has humankind as a whole faced the possibility of its destruction by the weapons that some States claim to need for their security. The danger of nuclear war is inherent in the very dynamics of the arms race and in what is known as deterrence. It is said that cities are targeted for nuclear attack, because that is regarded as the ultimate form of deterrence. The total accumulation of destructive radioactive power is more than enough to eliminate all forms of life several times over. This new barbarism - nuclear war - entails the destruction not only of warring countries but also the peoples of the non-aligned and neutral ones.

The situation today is far more critical and the need for action more compelling than in 1978. How can this Session follow up the declaration of the first Session? I venture to propose the following concrete programmes of action:

First, The Session should negotiate a binding convention on the non-use of nuclear weapons;

Second, As a first step towards the eventual cutting on existing stockpiles, there must be a freeze on nuclear weapons, providing for the total stoppage of any further production of nuclear weapons, combined with a cut-off in the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes;

Third, Immediate suspension of all nuclear weapons tests;

Fourth, Towards this objective, disarmament negotiations must once again revert to the task of achieving a Treaty on General and Complete Disarmament, within an agreed time-frame as was discussed between the USA and USSR in the Agreed Principles and Draft Treaties of the early sixties. Although the problems involved have become far more complex, the basic approach and the principles then formulated could still provide a basis for meaningful negotiations;

/...
and Fifth, The United Nations and its Specialized Agencies should take the lead in educating the public on the dangers of nuclear war, on the harmful effects of the arms race on the world economy, as well as the positive aspects of disarmament and its link with development.

This Conference might also consider issuing a call to devise legally binding restrictions on various types of scientific and technological research for purposes that are inconsistent with humanitarian laws and principles. The UN Secretary-General might be requested to undertake an independent expert study to that end.

We urge the Great Powers to start negotiations with determination to reach agreement. The prospects of an early accord may seem discouraging from the particular point of view of one side or the other. But the path to peace and security cannot and does not lie through an arms race or theories of deterrence. Intricate calculations of security and insecurity merely generate irrational fear and suspicion in policy-makers and in the public at large. On behalf of the growing world community which is calling for peace, I appeal to leaders of all nuclear weapon powers and their allies to help pull the world back from the precipice. Let us all cooperate to save humanity. In a war, the dominant thought is to win. Can we do less for peace?

(Signed) Indira GANDHI

New Delhi
May 29, 1982