Twelfth special session
AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE
TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION
Agenda item 9

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

Letter dated 28 May 1982 from the Executive Director of
the United Nations Children's Fund to the Presidency of
the General Assembly

During its annual session, on Tuesday, 18 May 1982, the Executive Board of
the United Nations Children's Fund unanimously requested that the attached message
should be transmitted to the second special session of the General Assembly devoted
to disarmament.

In transmitting this message on behalf of the Executive Board, I request you, Sir, to have the text of the message distributed as an official document of the
twelfth special session of the General Assembly under agenda item 9.

May I take this opportunity of conveying the best wishes of UNICEF for the
successful deliberations of the special session

(Signed) James P. GRANT
Executive Director
ANNEX

Message of the Executive Board to the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

(a) The Executive Board of UNICEF, mindful of the opening, in June 1982, of the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament, recalls the message which the Executive Board sent to the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament in 1978, and wishes the General Assembly success in its difficult task of devising concrete ways to reduce armaments in the world and to promote peaceful relations between nations. The Board feels that, at different levels, both the special session of the Assembly and the UNICEF Executive Board are working in the best interests of future generations.

(b) The Board notes that the waste of technical, financial, human and natural resources for armaments to the detriment of solving urgent social and economic problems, particularly of the developing countries, appears intolerable against the background of hardships and suffering of children in most developing countries.

(c) In this regard, we believe it is worth reiterating the basic facts and timeless principles of our 1978 message:

The unmet needs of the world's children are immense. In the developing countries with which UNICEF co-operates, on the average:

(i) The infant mortality rate is eight times that of the industrialized countries;

(ii) Malnutrition affects one quarter of all children;

(iii) Less than one half of the children of primary school age attend school;

(iv) Less than 20 per cent of rural children have access to adequate health facilities.

(d) Bearing in mind that the massive accumulation of armaments reflects and aggravates international tensions, sharpens conflicts in various regions of the world, hinders the process of détente, exacerbates the differences between opposing military alliances, jeopardizes the security of all States, heightens the sense of insecurity among all States, including the non-nuclear-weapon States, and increases the threat of war, including nuclear war;
Accordingly,

1. Taking note of the Final Document adopted by the General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament, the UNICEF Executive Board urges countries participating in the second special session on disarmament to take practical steps towards effective arms limitation and disarmament in accordance with priorities and responsibilities established in the Final Document and with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

2. The UNICEF Executive Board also expresses the hope that, during the deliberations at the special session, the participants will have ever in mind the objective of all Governments to provide safer, more constructive lives for the children who will be the world citizens of tomorrow. One means to this end is a reduction of the dangerous and crushing burden of armaments; another is the provision of adequate services to meet the essential needs of the younger generations.

3. The Board therefore appeals to the General Assembly to take, at the special session, whatever steps it appropriately can in order to assure that there may be a reduction of expenditures on armaments so that a portion of the savings can be channelled through national or multinational programmes towards meeting the minimum requirements of children everywhere—adequate nutrition, safe water, primary health care and suitable education. These are entitlements under the Declaration of the Rights of the Child a/ and are based equally on the principles of humanitarianism and the pragmatic necessities for sustained development.

\[\text{a/ General Assembly resolution 1386 (XIV) of 20 November 1959.}\]