Fifteenth special session
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE
FIFTEENTH SPECIAL SESSION
Agenda items 10, 11, 12 and 13

ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT
ITS TENTH AND TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSIONS

CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME
OF DISARMAMENT

ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS, INCLUDING QUALITATIVE AND
QUANTITATIVE ASPECTS, RELEVANT TO THE DISARMAMENT PROCESS, WITH
A VIEW TO THE ELABORATION OF APPROPRIATE CONCRETE AND PRACTICAL
MEASURES AND, IF NECESSARY, ADDITIONAL PRINCIPLES, TAKING DULY
INTO ACCOUNT THE PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES ESTABLISHED IN THE
FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE TENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY, THE FIRST SPECIAL SESSION DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT

CONSIDERATION OF THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE
FIELD OF DISARMAMENT AND OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
DISARMAMENT MACHINERY

Establishment of an international verification mechanism
under the auspices of the United Nations

Working paper submitted by the delegations of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia
and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

1. The sponsors propose that consideration should be given to the establishment,
under the auspices of the United Nations, of a mechanism for wide-ranging
international verification of compliance with agreements aimed at reducing
international tension and limiting armaments, and for monitoring the military
situation in regions of conflict. They fully recognize the complex and
multifaceted nature of this proposal, and they realize that it will take a long
time to implement it. At the same time, they believe that it is important to take
the question up even now, to outline the basic objectives and functions of the
future mechanism, and to devise ways and means of establishing it. In practical
terms, this will help to focus international attention on solutions to the urgent
problems of verification and monitoring, and would make for more purposeful efforts
in this area.

Consideration might be given to the merits of eventually instituting an
international verification agency as one possible option in the establishment of an
international verification mechanism. The process which will ultimately result in
the emergence of such an agency must be based on consensus decisions by all the
States concerned and on the observance of the rules of international law.

Far from ruling out the establishment of bilateral and multilateral systems to
verify compliance with individual military and political agreements, efforts to
institute an international verification agency presuppose the establishment of such
systems.

When it is established, the agency would co-ordinate and, as appropriate,
verify compliance with agreements and treaties on specific aspects of the
limitation, reduction and elimination of armaments, with the consent of member
States of course. It could also be entrusted with the task of verifying compliance
with agreements on the reduction of international tension. Another function of the
agency could be to monitor the military situation in regions of conflict, with a
view to bringing to light, in good time, preparations for military action, making
surprise attacks difficult and taking measures to prevent the development,
expansion or intensification of military conflicts.

The agency might be established as an integral part of the United Nations
Secretariat or as an independent agency associated with the United Nations through
a co-operation agreement. Co-operation agreements could also be concluded with
other international organizations which have already been established, such as
IAEA, or with organizations which might be established by then, such as the world
space organization.

After the establishment of the agency, its functions could be expanded in turn
to include, in particular:

Systematic gathering of information on all questions within its competence;

Co-ordination of the activities of individual verification mechanisms, and
subsequently, as appropriate, independent verification of compliance with treaties
and agreements in force, both on the question of disarmament and on the reduction
of international tension, with the consent of States parties of course;

Monitoring of the military situation in regions of conflict;

On the basis of a comprehensive analysis of available information, preparation
of conclusions to be transmitted to all States members of the agency for their
consideration, and to the Secretary-General, who under Article 99 of the United Nations Charter may, at his own discretion, bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security;

   Provision of operational links among all States members of the agency, and with United Nations Headquarters;

   Consideration of requests by States for technical and expert services aimed at ensuring effective verification of compliance with bilateral and regional agreements;

   Preparation of recommendations regarding verification procedures which may be included in future treaties and agreements.

The international verification agency would monitor compliance with these and other agreements already in force, with the consent of the States parties to such agreements. The role of the agency in monitoring future arrangements would be specified when such arrangements were drawn up.

In performing its functions, the agency would, as necessary, use different forms, methods and means of monitoring and verification. It would carry out inspections and send fact-finding missions in the event of an outbreak or the threat of an outbreak of a conflict situation which undermined international peace and security. The agency would set up permanent or temporary supervision posts in areas of tension. In the end, it would have at its disposal the necessary technical means, including verification satellites, and also a staff of inspectors put together from specialists recommended by interested States. Individual States members of the agency could also provide it with appropriate information.

2. The organizational structure of the agency, including the composition of its administrative and operational organs, the precise definition of its relationship with the United Nations, particularly the Security Council and the Military Staff Committee and also the Secretary-General, the settlement of administrative and budgetary questions and sources of funding will be gradually worked out in the course of international negotiations. Individual components of the future agency could begin to function as and when they were constituted.

3. In order to assist the gradual process of establishing the agency, it is important to put into operation the individual elements of international verification already existing both in the sphere of the lessening of international tension and the monitoring of the military situation in conflict areas and in the sphere of disarmament, and also to discuss in a constructive spirit proposals put forward on this score by different States.

The sponsors see considerable usefulness in drawing on the wealth of experience accumulated by IAEA in monitoring compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The scope of IAEA safeguards for States' activities in the sphere of nuclear energy must be even further expanded.

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The prototype of an international investigation mechanism already exists in the context of the measures taken by the United Nations to strengthen the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare and the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. Appropriate procedures could also be worked out for other multilateral treaties and agreements, including those already in force (for instance, the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects).

It is important that efforts be directed at ensuring wider use of United Nations capabilities for monitoring the military situation in areas of conflict.

4. The sponsors are proposing the establishment, under the United Nations Secretary-General, of a multilateral centre to assist in verification, which could subsequently become part of the international verification agency or operate in close liaison with the agency.

The centre would be instructed to:

- formulate guiding principles of international verification;

- synthesize, analyse and systematize the experience of the United Nations and other international organizations in the area of verification;

- study the verification and confidence-building procedures operating within the framework of various treaties and agreements in order to determine the possibility of using them in future international legal instruments;

- at the request of States participating in negotiations on disarmament and the reduction of international tension, provide assistance in devising appropriate verification machinery;

- on instructions from the Secretary-General, promptly send fact-finding and observer missions to regions of international conflicts and tension;

- provide assistance, advisory and technical services in the area of verification to parties to bilateral and regional agreements, in some cases using the services of States possessing the appropriate expertise and technical facilities;

- help develop the co-operation of the United Nations with other international and regional organizations which perform verification functions.

The work of the centre would be carried out by qualified experts sent by interested member States on the basis of the principle of equitable geographical representation. It would be advisable to establish a corps of United Nations observers (reserve of the Security Council and the Secretary-General).
On the basis of the results of their missions, the experts would submit reports to the Secretary-General, who, on the basis of their content, could in turn hold consultations with interested Member States of the United Nations, circulate the text of the report to all of them, and also avail himself of his right to have recourse to the Security Council.

A decision on the establishment of a multilateral centre to assist in verification could be adopted at one of the forthcoming sessions of the General Assembly. As a preliminary step, the Secretary-General should be instructed to hold consultations with interested States for that purpose.

5. The establishment and subsequent effective functioning of the multilateral centre would be helped by the establishment, as proposed by Finland, of a United Nations data base to which information on disarmament and verification problems would be sent.

States would provide information to the data base on a voluntary basis concerning the general characteristics of their military activity; information on the whole range of issues accumulated by international and national research centres would also be provided. Information from States would be transmitted in accordance with agreed standardized formats.

In addition, the USSR is prepared to give favourable consideration to the question of providing the United Nations data base with certain information concerning verification derived from Soviet satellites used for commercial purposes.

The sponsors are proposing that the Secretary-General should be instructed to determine the material resources needed to establish the data base, and ways of making use of the existing technical capabilities of the United Nations for this purpose, and also the position of the data base within the structure of the United Nations.

6. In order to provide the international community with reliable and comprehensive information on compliance with multilateral treaties and agreements in the area of disarmament and the reduction of international tension, and also to monitor the military situation in areas of conflict, it would be possible in pursuance of the idea put forward by France to establish an international space monitoring agency which in future would become an integral part of the international verification agency. The Conference on Disarmament should be instructed to begin detailed negotiations on the establishment of the international space monitoring agency, including programming and material technical facilities for its work. The Soviet Union would be prepared to consider the question of launching satellites belonging to the agency from Soviet carrier rockets on mutually acceptable terms.

7. The sponsors are in agreement with the idea of the "group of six" regarding the establishment machinery for the international verification of nuclear tests and are prepared to take part in its practical implementation, believing that this could be one of the first steps towards the establishment of the international verification agency.
8. These are the views of the sponsors about possible ways of establishing international verification machinery which would be promoted through broad democratic international dialogue. Only in the course of multilateral discussion will it be possible to work out general acceptable decisions on the basis of a balance of the interests of all States. The consensus positions in any area identified by joint efforts could immediately be put into practice, without awaiting the completion of the process of devising all the international verification machinery.