Fifteenth special session
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE
FIFTEENTH SPECIAL SESSION
Agenda items 13 and 14

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

UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES
IN THE FIELD OF DISARMAMENT, INCLUDING MEASURES TO
MOBILIZE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION IN FAVOUR OF DISARMAMENT

Report of Working Group III

1. At its 1st meeting, on 3 June 1988, the Committee of the Whole decided to
   establish Working Group III to deal with the following agenda items:

   Item 13: "Consideration of the role of the United Nations in the field of
disarmament and of the effectiveness of the disarmament machinery"

   Item 14: "United Nations information and educational activities in the field
of disarmament, including measures to mobilize world public opinion
in favour of disarmament:

   (a) World Disarmament Campaign;
   (b) Other public information activities".

2. At the same meeting, Mr. Paul Bamela Engo (Cameroon) was elected Chairman of
   the Working Group.

3. The Working Group held 12 meetings between 7 and 17 June 1988. During that
   period, the Chairman also conducted informal consultations.

4. In addition to the documents submitted to the General Assembly and to the
   Committee of the Whole relevant to agenda items 13 and 14, the Working Group had
   before it the following documents:
(a) Working paper regarding agenda item 13, submitted by Canada (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/1);

(b) Proposals regarding agenda item 13, submitted by Romania (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/2);

(c) Proposals regarding agenda items 13 and 14, submitted by Nigeria (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/3);

(d) Working paper regarding agenda item 14, entitled "Orientation Programme for Representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations", submitted by Canada (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/4);

(e) Working paper regarding agenda item 14, submitted by Canada (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/5);

(f) Working paper regarding agenda item 14, entitled "Conference on Disarmament: Participation of States Not Members of the Conference", submitted by Denmark, Ireland and New Zealand (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/6);

(g) Proposals regarding agenda items 13 and 14, submitted by Canada (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/7);

(h) Working paper regarding agenda item 13, submitted by the Philippines (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/8);

(i) Working paper regarding agenda item 13, submitted by Australia, India, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria and Sweden (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/9);

(j) Working paper on agenda item 13, entitled "Report of the Conference on Disarmament", submitted by New Zealand (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/10);

(k) Proposal on agenda item 13, submitted by Italy (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/CRP.1).

5. At its 1st meeting, on 7 June, the Working Group decided to organize its work for the first week by allocating one meeting for a general debate on the agenda items under its consideration and, subsequently, two meetings each for an exchange of views on each of those items.

6. At the 6th meeting of the Working Group, on 14 June, the Chairman submitted a working paper (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/CRP.2), prepared in the light of the views expressed and the proposals put forward in the course of discussions, to serve as the basis for subsequent deliberations. At that same meeting, delegations were given the opportunity to make general observations about the text.

7. From the 7th to the 12th meetings, on 15 to 17 June, the Working Group conducted a detailed consideration of the topics outlined in the Chairman's Working Paper. In the course of deliberations, various views were expressed and a number of proposals and amendments to the text were submitted.
8. Taking into account the discussion and the proposals made and on the basis of consultations, the Chairman prepared a revised text of his Working Paper (see annex) in which he attempted to identify points of convergence and to present formulations that might command consensus. This revised text was not discussed, but the Working Group agreed that it be transmitted, along with the documents referred to in paragraph 4 above (A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/1 to 10 and A/S-15/AC.1/WG.III/CRP.1), to the Committee of the Whole. It was understood that the Chairman's draft text was prepared on his own responsibility and did not prejudice the position of any delegation.
ANNEX

Chairman's working paper

INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in the field of disarmament. This was reaffirmed in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

2. As the only universal organization dealing with global peace and security, the United Nations provides the broadest and the most effective framework for the consideration of issues of interest to the security of all Member States. Therefore, the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament should be strengthened since it provides the best forum for all Member States to actively contribute to the consideration and the resolution of all disarmament issues which have a bearing on their security.

3. The General Assembly recognizes the need to employ international machinery for the promotion of disarmament as a means of enhancing international peace and security. It also reaffirms the imperative of adopting concrete measures to enhance the effective functioning of the international machinery as well as the need for continued improvement of such machinery.

4. The effective implementation of the collective security system provided for in the Charter of the United Nations is essential for the creation of genuine and lasting peace. The General Assembly reaffirms that all States should seek common solutions for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security within the framework of the United Nations Charter. The United Nations should encourage and facilitate all disarmament efforts - bilateral, regional and multilateral - which do not exclude but complement one another.

5. The General Assembly considers that no matter how perfectly constructed or organized, the desired results would only be achieved if the United Nations machinery is supported by the necessary political will of States, by a clear recognition that the United Nations has a central role to play in the disarmament process as well as by giving substance to that recognition through constructive contributions and actions.

6. The General Assembly recognizes the importance attributed to the increasing awareness and understanding of world public opinion regarding disarmament. It welcomes the progress that has been made since the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament within the United Nations information and educational activities in the field of disarmament including further measures to mobilize world public opinion in favour of disarmament.

I. General Assembly and its organs

The General Assembly remains the main deliberative organ of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and should continue to promote the conclusion and implementation of disarmament agreements and measures.
A. Special sessions

1. Special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament can play an important role in strengthening international co-operation in the field.

2. Special sessions should be convened as appropriate to review and assess the results of the efforts of Member States and of the United Nations in promoting deliberations and negotiations on all relevant issues of disarmament, as well as to provide future direction and guidance for making concrete progress in the field of disarmament.

B. First Committee

1. The First Committee of the General Assembly should continue to serve as its Main Committee dealing with disarmament and related international security questions.

2. The First Committee should make the necessary improvements in its methods and procedures of work with a view to increasing its efficiency. In this regard, each succeeding Chairman should continue to hold consultations with a view to refining further the practices and procedures of the Committee. To this end, the First Committee should take into account, inter alia, the recommendations contained in General Assembly resolution 42/42 N, and the need to expand areas of consensus.

3. Consideration should be given to the feasibility of an earlier commencement of the work of the First Committee.

4. Bearing in mind the increasing importance that the international community attaches to the items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, appropriate attention should be given to the consideration of the Reports of the Conference. The First Committee should devote a portion of its work programme to a review, under a separate agenda item, of the annual Report of the Conference.

C. Disarmament Commission

1. In setting the agenda of the Commission, the General Assembly should bear in mind the need for in-depth discussions of relevant items and for making specific recommendations. To this end, the General Assembly should provide specific guidelines for the consideration of each item on the agenda of the Commission to ensure that appropriate treatment is given to them.

2. The deliberative activities of the Commission should, inter alia, aim at assisting the negotiating endeavours of the Conference on Disarmament.

/...
D. **Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean**

The General Assembly accepts the conclusions and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and reaffirms its full support for the implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and requests the Secretary-General to continue to extend to the Committee all necessary assistance in order to facilitate the intensification of the Committee's work towards the completion of the Committee's remaining preparatory work for the early convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean at Colombo not later than 1990, in accordance with consensus resolution 42/43 of the General Assembly.

E. **Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference**

The General Assembly accepts the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee that its work be suspended until such time as the General Assembly decides it is appropriate to reactivate it.

II. **Role of the Secretary-General**

A. The Secretary-General, in accordance with the Charter, has an important role to play in ensuring the maintenance of international peace and security. In the discharge of his responsibilities in the field of disarmament and in addition to such activities as he may be called upon by the Security Council or the General Assembly to carry out:

1. The Secretary-General should investigate reports of alleged use of chemical and biological weapons;

2. The Secretary-General should continue his depositary functions;

3. The Secretary-General should submit reports to the General Assembly on relevant developments in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. In this connection, States taking part in disarmament negotiations should inform the Secretary-General of their negotiations and periodically of progress made; to this end, States taking part in disarmament negotiations of global interest undertaken outside the United Nations framework should invite the Secretary-General to such negotiations;

4. The Secretary-General should prepare, with the help of qualified experts, an outline of an integrated multilateral verification system within the United Nations which would form an integral part of a strengthened multilateral framework required to ensure peace and security during the process of disarmament, as well as in a nuclear-weapon-free world, and report thereon to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.
B. The Secretary-General is assisted by the Department for Disarmament Affairs in his co-ordination of activities of the United Nations system in the field of disarmament. The Secretary-General and his staff are commended for the very capable and effective manner in which the Secretariat performs its duties in the field of disarmament, in spite of the very limited resources available to it in that field. To further enhance the effective functioning of the Department for Disarmament Affairs:

1. The role of the Department should be strengthened. No reforms should be undertaken which would result in diminishing the capacity of the already under-staffed Department for Disarmament Affairs to perform so vital a function. The existing level of staff and budgetary resources of the Department for Disarmament Affairs should be maintained.

2. The present status of the Department for Disarmament Affairs within the Secretariat should be maintained.

3. The universality of interest in disarmament should be reflected in the structure of the Department through effective geographical balance at the highest professional level.

4. Without prejudice to the overall geographical balance, the Department for Disarmament Affairs should continue its intensive efforts to employ appropriately qualified women, including at the senior professional levels.

5. The Department should ensure that the international character of regional centres established under United Nations auspices should be strictly maintained and should serve the interests of the regions concerned as a whole in the domain of peace, disarmament and development.

III. Other organs

A. Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies

1. The Advisory Board plays an important role, particularly in its dual capacity as the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies, as well as the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. It could provide greater service if the Secretary-General had greater flexibility in utilizing the expertise of the Board. Consequently, the role and functions of the Board should be strengthened and its name changed to Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters to better reflect the scope of its activities.

2. The Board should have closer relations with scholars, non-governmental organizations and research institutes. It should also consider holding hearings on specific issues such as conversion.
3. The Board should review its timetable, bearing in mind that the Secretary-General has to report to the General Assembly on its activities.

B. United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research - UNIDIR

1. In accordance with its statute and its autonomous status, the work of UNIDIR should continue to be independent-research oriented, of a high academic standard and of practical value. The Institute should strengthen its co-operation with national and regional research institutes in the field of disarmament.

2. More financial contributions should be made to ensure the viability and the development of UNIDIR.

IV. Security Council

The General Assembly, considering the interrelationship between disarmament and international security, calls upon the Security Council to exercise fully the responsibilities conferred on it under Article 24 of the Charter. In this connection, the General Assembly also calls upon the Security Council to consider appropriate action for resolving inter-State as well as regional tensions and averting armed conflicts.

V. Conference on Disarmament

1. The General Assembly reaffirms the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as a unique multilateral disarmament negotiating body. The Conference on Disarmament was established to that end, following agreement reached during the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

2. While recognizing the autonomous nature of the Conference, the General Assembly affirms that the mandate and work of the Conference are of primordial interest to all Members of the United Nations.

3. The General Assembly therefore calls on the members of the Conference to advance its negotiating processes in order that discernible progress can be made.

4. The General Assembly takes note of the efforts being made by the Conference to resolve the question of the expansion of its membership and requests the Conference to take an early decision on the matter and inform the General Assembly thereon at its forty-third session. In the mean time, the General Assembly, having regard to the principle of the sovereign equality of States, invites the Conference to give further consideration to ways in which the full participation of non-member States in its work might be facilitated.
5. Recognizing the complementarity of multilateral and bilateral negotiations, the General Assembly invites Member States engaged in any disarmament negotiations on items that feature on the agenda of the Conference to keep it fully informed of progress at frequent intervals.

VI. World Disarmament Campaign and other information activities

1. The World Disarmament Campaign should continue its contributions by informing, educating, and generating public understanding and support for the objectives of the United Nations in the field of disarmament in a balanced, factual and objective manner.

2. The Secretary-General should continue to carry out the activities of the Campaign, particularly by ensuring the co-operation and participation of all States and all other constituencies, and by the widest possible dissemination of information and opinions on questions of disarmament.

3. The contribution of the Campaign should be enhanced by the organization of regional conferences and seminars, smaller high-level meetings, programmes of regional centres, greater contacts with non-governmental organizations active in the field of disarmament and the expansion of the target audience for the Campaign to include increased emphasis on women and women's organizations, as well as youth and youth organizations. Similarly, the annual observance by all Member States of Disarmament Week will continue to play an important role in promoting the objectives of the Campaign.

4. The General Assembly urges Member States and other entities to increase the effectiveness of the Campaign by broadening its financial base of support with further voluntary contributions.

5. The General Assembly welcomes the creation of regional centres established under the auspices of the United Nations. It reaffirms its conviction that the objectives of the Campaign would be further enhanced by the activities of these centres. The General Assembly accordingly renews its appeal to Member States as well as other entities to make voluntary contributions to these centres in order to ensure their effective functioning and viability.

VII. United Nations Disarmament Fellowship, Training and Advisory Services Programme

1. The General Assembly affirms that the training of disarmament fellows has made a useful contribution to the development of greater expertise in disarmament issues in Member States.

2. The General Assembly consequently decides to continue the Programme in accordance with guidelines approved by the Assembly at its thirty-third and forty-fifth sessions, duly taking into account in the yearly selection of fellows the principle of adequate representation of developing countries and the need for rotation among States.

/...
3. The General Assembly calls upon the Secretary-General to reinstate the number of fellows participating in the Programme as well as its duration at the levels approved by the Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament, unless the Assembly decides otherwise.