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

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


Working paper submitted by Sweden

A new comprehensive United Nations study on nuclear weapons

1. In his foreword to the 1980 report on the United Nations study on nuclear weapons the Secretary-General points out that nuclear disarmament continues to be the priority in the efforts to restrain the armaments race. He also notes that careful study and continuous assessment of nuclear-weapon problems were clearly required to assist the international community in achieving progress in the field of nuclear disarmament.

2. In the Swedish view the above assessment remains valid. Much of the content of the 1980 report is still very relevant.

3. However, there are developments during the last few years which warrant a new comprehensive study. These trends relate to nuclear weapons technology and concern the testing and deployment of these weapons as well as new scientific findings with regard to the physical, environmental, medical and other effects of use of nuclear weapons. The risks of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons merit
special attention, as well as initiatives taken or planned to reduce and eliminate the nuclear threat. Recent agreements and other arrangements with the purpose of reducing nuclear weapons arsenals should be presented. Also the efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation régime deserve continued examination, not least in view of the upcoming NPT review conference.

4. There are important security implications of all these factors and developments which need to be clarified. An effort should be made to present and comment upon various views expressed during the last few years on nuclear weapons, their relationship to conventional arms, their status in international law, the risk of their further proliferation, etc. Possible future measures of disarmament and of confidence- and security-building related to these weapons should also be identified.

5. With the view to analysing the matters presented above, it is proposed that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to carry out, with the assistance of qualified governmental experts, a comprehensive United Nations study on nuclear weapons. The study should take recent relevant studies into account and provide factual and up-to-date information on nuclear arsenals and technological developments, efforts to reduce nuclear arms and to prevent their use and proliferation, with regard to the political, legal and security aspects of these matters.