WORKING GROUP III
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

CHAIRMAN'S WORKING PAPER

INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations, in accordance with its Charter, 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. The Concluding Document of the second special session of the General
Assembly devoted to disarmament stressed the need for strengthening this role.

2. The General Assembly recognizes the need to employ international machinery for
the promotion of peace and security through disarmament. 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. 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 collective security system provided under the United Nations
Charter.

3. The General Assembly considers that no matter how perfectly constructed or
organized the United Nations machinery may be, it will not function well without
the necessary political commitment of States to support it, by clearly recognizing
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.
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.

A. Special Sessions

1. Special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament should be convened periodically 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 a new direction and guidance for these efforts.

2. Special sessions devoted to disarmament can play an important role in strengthening international co-operation in the field and should accordingly be convened as appropriate.

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 implementation of resolution 42/42 N would help to rationalize and enhance the effectiveness of the work of the First Committee.

3. Efforts should be made to expand areas of consensus.

4. Each succeeding Chairman should continue to hold consultations with a view to refining further the practices and procedures of the Committee.

5. More time should be allocated to the consideration of the Reports of the Conference on Disarmament, especially with regard to the status of negotiations.

6. The work of the First Committee should begin simultaneously with that of the other Committees so as to permit more rational distribution of the time allocated for discussion of individual agenda items.

7. Efforts should be made to avoid unnecessary annual repetition of parts of resolutions that have not evolved from the date of the adoption of the previous resolution.

C. Disarmament Commission

1. The agenda should be limited to a few items, leading to in-depth discussion and to making specific recommendations. The Commission should annually set its own priority concerning items placed on its agenda, taking into account any guidelines that may be set by the General Assembly.
2. The deliberative activities of the Commission should effectively complement the negotiating endeavours of the Conference on Disarmament.

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

1. The General Assembly should be kept duly informed on substantive progress made in the Ad Hoc Committee's work towards the implementation of its mandate to enable the completion of its remaining preparatory work. To this end, the Committee should further organize its work in order to evaluate the current situation.

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

1. The General Assembly accepts the recommendations of the 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. **Secretary-General**

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

2. He should continue his depositary functions.

3. Disarmament negotiators at every level should inform the Secretary-General of their negotiations and periodically of progress made therefrom.

4. He should be invited to disarmament negotiations of particular global interest undertaken outside the United Nations framework.

5. He should, in turn, make available to those negotiators the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

6. He should submit regular reports to the General Assembly on relevant developments in the field of arms limitation and disarmament.

7. 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. **Department for Disarmament Affairs**

1. The role of the Department for Disarmament Affairs in assisting the Secretary-General in his co-ordination of activities of the United Nations system in the field of disarmament should be strengthened.

2. The Department for Disarmament Affairs should not be merged with the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs.

3. The existing level of staff and budgetary resources of the Department for Disarmament Affairs should be maintained.

4. The role of the Department for Disarmament Affairs should be strengthened.

5. 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. 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 universality of interest in disarmament should be reflected with greater transparency in the structure of the Department, notwithstanding its size.

6. 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.

7. The Department should be so structured as to reflect geographical balance at the highest professional level. Efforts should be made to employ more women at the professional level.

III. **Other Organs**

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

1. The Advisory Board has played 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. It should have closer relations with scholars, *inter alia*, by holding hearings on specific issues.
3. The Board should review its time-table, 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 research-oriented and of a high academic standard. The Institute should continue to co-operate with national and regional research institutes in the field of disarmament.

2. More contributors should come forward to ensure the viability and the independence 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 need for an effective single 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 show genuine will 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 expresses the hope that a decision will soon be taken.

5. In the mean time, the General Assembly invites the Conference to give further consideration to the participation of non-member States in its work. It also invites the Conference to consider the possibility of:

(i) extending its annual period of work;

(ii) establishing appropriate permanent working bodies on all items on its agenda;

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(iii) holding periodic meetings at the level of Foreign Ministers of Member States.

6. Recognizing the complementarity of multilateral and bilateral negotiations, the General Assembly calls upon 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 appeals to all Member States to support the Campaign by making voluntary contributions to increase its effectiveness.

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 fortieth sessions.

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.