Tenth special session
AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE
TENTH SPECIAL SESSION
Agenda item 9

REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION IN THE
LIGHT OF THE PRESSING NEED TO ACHIEVE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN THE
FIELD OF DISARMAMENT, THE CONTINUATION OF THE ARMS RACE AND THE
CLOSE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISARMAMENT, INTERNATIONAL PEACE
AND SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 24 May 1978 from the Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward you, enclosed herewith, the text of the message
addressed by the President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia,
Josip Broz Tito, to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to
disarmament.

Will you please make the necessary arrangements for the aforesaid text to
be circulated as an official document of the tenth special session of the General
Assembly under agenda item 9.

(Signed) Jaksa PETRIC
Ambassador Extraordinary
Permanent Representative of
the Socialist Federal Republic
of Yugoslavia to the United Nations
ANNEX

Message addressed by the President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Imbued with a sense of great obligation towards ourselves and towards the coming generations, we who experienced the horrors of two world wars and witnessed human suffering inflicted by the use and abuse of weapons in the post-war decades, are faced, at the present moment, with a particular responsibility towards history. For the first time since its inception, the world Organization has included in the agenda of its special session a problem on the solution of which directly depends the destiny of countries, nations and people, even the very survival of mankind. The United Nations has done so only today when the spectre of a potential nuclear catastrophe has become a real one, posing an ever present, rather than a remote, threat to the whole of mankind.

As responsible statesmen and, above all, as human beings, we should strive to break out, at long last, of the vicious circle in which futile debates on disarmament have been for years reduced to seeking answers to the artificially created dilemma - whether disarmament paves the way to a confidence that does not exist or whether confidence established beforehand should render disarmament possible.

In the meantime, before our very eyes, the arms race is continuing and gaining in intensity, reducing peace to a very fragile balance largely based on force, which engenders distrust and fear. Regrettably, the destructive force of the existing stockpiles of weapons is measured in terms of "how many times" a potential adversary and, by the same token, the whole of mankind can be destroyed. Yet, it is precisely on the curbing of the arms race that largely depend the over-all development of international relations, their substantive democratization, the changing of inherited and untenable inequalities and injustices prevailing in the present pattern of world economic relations and the finding of most appropriate answers to the imperative demands and tasks facing mankind. Our decisions and their implementation will determine whether mankind will be given the possibility to develop in a way that has become a historical necessity and which is the only road leading to the general security and progress of the human race, or whether this development will be denied or jeopardized. We have no right to ignore this alternative and our tremendous responsibilities.

It is for this reason that the convening of this session of the General Assembly of the United Nations - on the initiative of the countries pursuing a policy of non-alignment, with the full understanding and support of the other States Members of the United Nations - provides an invaluable opportunity for mankind to come to its senses at the eleventh hour and solve a problem fraught with the gravest risks for peace and the fate of mankind, and to stop marking time, a tendency that has unfortunately been a characteristic feature of post-war efforts, and thereby, once and for all, to eliminate the very fear of nuclear and similar catastrophes.

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We welcome, of course, the results achieved so far in the field of limitation and control of certain types of armaments, as the first encouraging signs that have contributed to some extent toward creating the necessary more favourable climate in relations between the leading military Powers possessing the main arsenals of destructive power which threaten the whole of mankind. These results, however, are far from satisfying the legitimate strivings of all peoples who feel the need for an urgent consolidation of peace and security in the world and for undertaking more seriously, effectively and comprehensively the solution of accumulated pressing issues. And that implies the narrowing of the gap between the developed and the developing countries, the achievement of more harmonious and rapid development, the elimination of dire poverty, of illness and hunger, the solution of problems brought about by recession, inflation and unemployment as well as other grave and complex problems of the world economy. At this point, I should like to lay particular stress on the need to establish the new international economic order. Unfortunately, all of this has been to a large extent rendered impossible or has been drastically hampered by the arms race, which has reached absurd proportions.

How can we then close our eyes to the fact to which the non-aligned countries have been drawing attention ever since their first meeting in Belgrade 17 years ago, that the initiating of the process of disarmament would not only reduce the danger of a nuclear catastrophe but would also release vast resources for the most beneficial uses. The beginning of such a process of disarmament would ensure conditions for gradually overcoming the existing division into antagonistic military and political blocs, for intensifying the process of relaxation of international tensions and transforming this process into universal active and peaceful coexistence. This would, in turn, narrow the area for the pursuit of policies from a position of strength, for attacks on the freedom and independence of peoples and for interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

It seems to me, therefore, that it is of utmost importance to ensure that competence and responsibility for solving problems of general disarmament, under effective international control, should become, as a result of this session, a substantive and integral part of the constant activity of the United Nations and not the prerogative of only some of its members who are most responsible for the present arms race.

Precisely for this reason I should like to express my firm conviction that this special session, besides strengthening the role of the United Nations in actions aimed at genuine progress in disarmament, will contribute towards translating words into deeds, translating resolutions which are not implemented into concrete programmes and proposals, positions and decisions for the solving of this problem, which is the greatest source of danger confronting the present day world. This calls for harmonious, resolute and energetic action on our part - in line with the true dimensions of the problems and dangers confronting us.

I am convinced that present and future generations will not judge countries or statesmen by the destructive power of weapons in their possession, but rather by the genuine efforts and contribution towards stopping destruction and self-
annihilation and towards placing human energy, wisdom and wealth in the service of
the security and prosperity of all countries, of all peoples, in the service of the
most humane ideals of man.

I avail myself of this opportunity to extend to the participants in the
special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament my very best wishes
for success in the fulfilment of their highly responsible tasks.

Josip BROZ TITO