Tenth special session
AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE
TENTH SPECIAL SESSION
Agenda items 9, 10, 11 and 12


ADOPTION OF A DECLARATION ON DISARMAMENT

ADOPTION OF A PROGRAMME OF ACTION ON DISARMAMENT

REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN DISARMAMENT AND OF THE INTERNATIONAL MACHINERY FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON DISARMAMENT, INCLUDING IN PARTICULAR THE QUESTION OF CONVENING A WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Note verbale dated 23 June 1978 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to transmit herewith the statements made by the Chinese representatives on 22 June 1978 at the meetings of Working Groups A and B respectively of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Tenth Special Session.

It is requested that these statements be circulated as official documents of the tenth special session of the General Assembly under agenda items 9, 10, 11 and 12.
ANNEX I

Comments made by the Chinese representative on the sections entitled "Introduction", "Declaration" and "Machinery" in the draft Final Document at the meeting of Working Group A, on 22 June 1978

1. The Chinese delegation has made a preliminary study of the text for the sections entitled "Introduction", "Declaration" and "Machinery" submitted by the drafting groups. Now I wish to make some preliminary comments on these sections respectively.

A. On the section entitled "Introduction"

2. Certain parts of the basic content of the original text for the draft introduction have reflected the objective reality in the field of disarmament and expressed the legitimate aspirations of countries of the third world and other small and medium-sized countries. For example, it was explicitly pointed out that no progress has been made in the field of disarmament and that no measures relating to nuclear disarmament have materialized; that States should possess appropriate means of defence for the maintenance of their security; that the disarmament machinery should be reformed and so forth. That text for the draft introduction would have been basically acceptable if it had been amended and supplemented in the light of the positive views and reasonable proposals advanced by many delegations, including the Chinese delegation, in the general debate and in other forums. However, the present text for the draft introduction has not only failed to incorporate the above-mentioned views and proposals, but has included certain harmful elements. For example:

3. First, in paragraph 3 of the draft introduction, it is stated: "Dynamic development of détente ..., with the participation of all countries, would create conditions conducive to the efforts of States to end the arms race, ... thus reducing the danger of war". Such a formulation does not tally with facts. We are in favour of a genuine détente, but as many representatives have stressed in their statements in the general debate, there is growing tension in the international situation as a result of the intensified rivalry for hegemony between the super-Powers; there is no "détente", much less a "process of détente", or a "dynamic development of détente". So how can it be asserted that the so-called "détente", in the first place, would reduce the danger of war? In view of the fact that one super-Power persistently tries to divert peoples' attention and cover up its acts of arms expansion and war preparations, aggression and expansion with hypocritical and empty talk on détente, such a formulation in the draft introduction could easily be used by that super-Power to serve its sinister designs. We, therefore, cannot agree to it.

4. Secondly, sweeping statements have been added to the draft introduction, stressing the threat posed by the arms race towards international peace and the survival of mankind, asserting that "the question of general and complete
disarmament is of utmost importance", claiming that disarmament would "clear the path towards lasting peace", and that "the corresponding obligations and responsibilities are universal". Such formulations, likewise, are questionable. Many countries have pointed out that what threatens international peace and security is the hegemonism and the policy of aggression and expansion of the super-Powers, and that the arms race is but a manifestation of their endeavour to gain military superiority and to strengthen their war machinery. How could there be lasting peace without removing the root-cause of war? Besides, a vague reference to the arms race without specifying those responsible for the arms race and without pointing out that the super-Powers should take the lead to reduce their arms could easily be used by the super-Powers as a pretext to put the blame for the arms race on all other countries so as to enable themselves to continue their arms expansion with no qualms. Some countries have stated pointedly that the super-Powers are "resorting to subterfuges to shift the responsibility for disarmament to the majority of countries which have only enough arms for self-defence". In view of the above, we propose that:

(a) The penultimate sentence of paragraph 1 be amended to read: "The ending of the rivalry of major nuclear Powers and their arms race and the achievement of real disarmament are tasks of primary importance and urgency".

(b) In paragraph 5, the words "the question of general and complete disarmament is of utmost importance" be changed to read: "to safeguard international peace and to oppose a new world war are the most important tasks facing the world today".

(c) In paragraph 8, the words "and clear the path towards lasting peace" should be deleted.

(d) At the same time, in the first sentence in paragraph 10, the phrase "especially those possessing nuclear weapons" should be changed to read: "especially the major nuclear Powers".

5. Thirdly, it is stated in the draft introduction that "the time has come ... to abandon the use of force in international affairs". Such a formulation is both unrealistic and harmful. The super-Powers are now energetically engaged in arms expansion and war preparations, resorting to the use or threat of force everywhere for aggression, interference and subversion. Under such circumstances, how can it be said that "the time has come ... to abandon the use of force"? One super-Power consistently advocates the "non-use of force in international affairs". Its aim is not only to cover up its own use or threat of force to commit aggression and subversion against other countries and to oppose the armed struggles of colonial and semi-colonial peoples for national independence and liberation and the wars of national self-defence of the numerous small and medium-sized countries against aggression in defence of their independence and sovereignty, but also to divert peoples' attention from the basic approach to eliminate the threat of a world war, thereby undermining the struggle for genuine disarmament. There was no reference to the "non-use of force" in the original text for the draft introduction. It is obviously out of ulterior motives that one super-Power is so eager to have a reference on the "non-use of force" in the final document. In view of this, we favour the original draft text and propose the deletion of the above reference.
6. Although there are other parts of the draft introduction which do not meet with our full satisfaction, we shall refrain from presenting further amendments in a spirit of accommodation and co-operation. In our view, the text would receive wider support if amended in the light of the reasonable proposals stated above. For the success of the present session, we once again express the hope that this Working Group will give further consideration to these proposals.

B. On the section entitled "Declaration"

7. In our view, if the draft introduction could become barely passable with further necessary and serious amendments, the draft declaration has even more problems which require even more serious attention.

8. It should be acknowledged that there are positive elements in the draft declaration which reflect the legitimate aspirations and reasonable demands of countries of the third world and other small and medium-sized countries. The text opposes the maintenance of foreign military bases and the presence of foreign military troops, calls for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace and demands that the nuclear-weapon States undertake obligations towards these zones, affirms the right of all countries to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and their right to participate in the disarmament negotiations on an equal footing etc. We are in favour of all these. However, certain formulations and wordings which touch on fundamental principles are not satisfactory.

9. First, it is recognized by all that nuclear weapons possess an unprecedented degree of immense destructive power and lethal capacity. People of the world, therefore, firmly oppose world war and nuclear war. However, the super-Powers with huge quantities of nuclear weapons are doing their utmost to play up the nuclear horror, claiming that the weapons in their possession are capable of overkilling the human race. Their purpose is none other than to coerce the small and medium-sized countries into submitting to their threat of force and political pressure by means of such tactics of nuclear blackmail. Therefore, any over-emphasis or exaggeration of the nuclear horror in the document would only facilitate the further use of it by the super-Powers for nuclear threat and nuclear blackmail. For this reason, we consider it more appropriate and realistic that such wordings as "mankind is confronted with self-extinction" and "nuclear weapons ... are more than sufficient to destroy all life on earth", in paragraph 1, section A. Review and Appraisal, and "mankind ... faces annihilation", in paragraph 8, be replaced by: "mankind ... is fully aware of the immense destructive power of the nuclear weapons", or formulations along this line.

10. Secondly, in section A. Review and Appraisal, paragraph 2 deals with the root cause of the arms race and paragraph 3 with the way to achieve genuine and lasting peace. The source of a world war is the rivalry between imperialism and social-imperialism for world hegemony; the arms race is but a means for their rivalry. We notice the words "rivalry among major Powers on a global scale" in the first sentence of paragraph 2, which talks about the root cause of the arms race. We support such a formulation. However, it would have been even better if the word

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"two" could be placed before the words "major Powers" so that it would read "two major Powers". Of course, we can also say "two major nuclear Powers". Someone wants to add "enemies of détente and disarmament" immediately after that. If these words must be included, then the word "genuine" should be placed before the words "détente and disarmament" in order to make it clear which countries are engaged in sham détente and sham disarmament. Regarding the way to achieve genuine and lasting peace dealt with in paragraph 3, as we have explained in the past: a simple and isolated reference to disarmament would obviously be inadequate. Instead, it must be pointed out that, first and foremost, the source of a new world war has to be eliminated. It must also be stressed that the struggle for disarmament should be integrated with the struggle to safeguard national independence, to defend State sovereignty and territorial integrity and to oppose hegemonism and the policy of war and aggression. The former struggle must be subordinate to the latter in order to help safeguard world peace and postpone the outbreak of a new world war. We have already proposed concrete amendments to that effect. As to what is the most urgent task at the present time, referred to in the first sentence of paragraph 7, we have made proposals in our comments dealing with the draft introduction and we will not repeat them here.

11. Thirdly, on the question of the principles and priorities of disarmament. Disarmament should begin with the two super-Powers. It is the common demand of the small and medium-sized countries that the two super-Powers bear special responsibility for disarmament. Yet this point is not explicitly mentioned in paragraph 4 under "Goals and priorities" or in paragraph 3 under "Principles". Instead, "all States" is referred to in several places without any distinction. This is of course most inappropriate. We maintain that the above basic principle of disarmament should be explicitly stated in the section on principles in the declaration. Moreover, since the super-Powers are energetically expanding their conventional weapons of mass destruction while stepping up their expansion of nuclear weapons, nuclear and conventional disarmament should be accorded equal importance on the question of disarmament priorities and should be carried out in conjunction with each other. Specifically, it should be clearly stated that "the super-Powers must stop their nuclear and conventional arms race and set out to destroy by stages their nuclear weapons and drastically reduce their conventional weapons". Similarly, we also support the proposal of some countries to state clearly in the text that the two major nuclear Powers should undertake to be the first to use the funds released from the reduction of military expenditures for the development of the developing countries.

12. Fourthly, the section on principles lauds the various international agreements on so-called disarmament and tries to impose these agreements on all countries. Now it has become clearer to everyone that the disarmament agreements concocted by the super-Powers are merely tools for the purpose of deceiving the public, covering up their own arms expansion and war preparations and limiting others while strengthening themselves. Of course we cannot accept this. In this same section, one super-Power has managed to slip in such wordings as "the non-use of force" which it advertises for propaganda and deception. We have already commented on them on previous occasions. They should all be deleted.
13. Fifthly, the Chinese delegation has previously proposed the addition of the following to paragraph 1 of the section on principles: "All States should reaffirm their commitment to and strict observance of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. They should undertake not to seek or establish hegemony or any form of foreign domination in any region or any part of the world". We believe that such a provision is of major significance for the safeguarding of world peace. It is binding on all countries and fully accords with the consistent demands of the numerous small and medium-sized countries. Those countries which harbour no ambition for hegemony would have no reason to object to such a provision.

C. On the section entitled "Machinery"

14. At the current special session of the General Assembly, the numerous small and medium-sized countries have strongly demanded a thorough reform in the existing machinery for disarmament negotiations so as to realize the true democratization of the negotiating machinery on the basis of equality among all nations, big and small, and to bring about a complete change in the most unreasonable state of affairs in which one or two super-Powers manipulate the negotiating body, impose their will upon other countries and reduce it to an instrument for peddling sham disarmament and obstruct genuine disarmament. In response to this reasonable demand on the part of many small and medium-sized countries, the Chinese delegation has proposed in its working paper, as follows:

"The questions of disarmament and international security, which concern the interests of all countries, should be deliberated by an international organ with the participation of all countries under the auspices of the United Nations, and the reduction of the armaments of the super-Powers should be given priority for consideration. The negotiating body for disarmament should truly be free of super-Power control, and it should be organized through consultations by the above-mentioned deliberative organ and should be responsible to the organ. The negotiating body should be composed on a fair and equitable basis so that it can be fully representative. The specific items and procedures for negotiation should be determined by the aforesaid deliberative organ."

15. Here, the key issues are:

(a) The role of the deliberative organ;

(b) The composition of the negotiating body.

In a nutshell, the negotiating body must be responsible to the deliberative organ; the agenda items and procedures for negotiation must be determined by the deliberative organ through consultation; the negotiating body must be composed on the basis of reasonable geographical distribution. We have noted the positive efforts made by the many small and medium-sized countries in seeking a solution to reform the disarmament machinery on the above principles and in putting forward certain proposals for democratizing the disarmament machinery, e.g. the dissolution
of the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and the abolition of the system of Co-Chairmanship. However, we deem it necessary to point out that as a result of the obstructions of one or two super-Powers, there is still no possibility in the various proposals for reform now under discussion to implement the above-mentioned basic principles and thus really to get rid of super-Power manipulation. In our view, the new negotiating body must truly be free of super-Power control and should be composed on a fair and reasonable basis. For instance, the Eastern European group or the Warsaw Pact members, which constitute only about one twentieth of the United Nations membership, comprise some one fourth of the member States of the Geneva CCD, whereas the third world countries numbering more than 100 occupy very few seats in the said Conference. Can this be described as fair and equitable? Obviously, the most unreasonable composition of the existing Geneva CCD must be changed and a new negotiating body must be fully representative. At the same time, it should be made clear that the new negotiating body must be responsible to the deliberative organ with the participation of all countries. Only thus can it truly reflect the views of various countries and really get rid of super-Power control.

In view of the fact that the proposals for reforming the negotiating body now before us have failed to meet the above requirements, we have reservations on them. But we still hope that the above requirements can be met following continued joint efforts to be made by the numerous small and medium-sized countries.

16. As regards the idea of holding a World Disarmament Conference as advertised by the Soviet Union, we have repeatedly pointed out that with the establishment of a deliberative organ and a negotiating body for disarmament under the auspices of the United Nations, which can truly reflect the views of all countries, all questions relating to disarmament can be seriously discussed and negotiated there, and there will be no need at all to hold a so-called World Disarmament Conference. If the Soviet Union is really sincere about disarmament, why could it not agree to so doing? Not only is it doing its utmost to obstruct a thorough reform of the negotiating machinery, which is under the manipulation of the Soviet Union and the other super-Power, but it is also opposed to the new negotiating body being responsible to the deliberative organ with the participation of all countries. On the other hand, it is engaged in hollow talk about a so-called World Disarmament Conference. Obviously, its purpose is to evade condemnation by world opinion, carry on its fraud of sham disarmament and cover up its arms expansion and war preparations. It goes without saying that we are firmly against such a conspiracy.

17. The Chinese delegation is participating in the work of the special session with a sincere desire and positive attitude. The proposals we have put forward are both fair and reasonable. We are convinced that it will be possible for the numerous small and medium-sized countries, through continued joint efforts, to improve the final document and bring greater success to this session by overcoming the obstruction of the forces against genuine disarmament.
ANNEX II

Comments made by the Chinese representative on the draft Programme of Action at the meeting of Working Group B on 22 June 1978

1. Mr. Chairman, in response to your proposal, I am not going to speak on matters of substance. However, it is mentioned in paragraph 12 of your report: "The relevant sections reflect the consensus reached on a significant number of questions". In order to avoid any misunderstanding that the Chinese delegation has agreed to the relevant sections, the Chinese delegation has to state briefly our reservations.

2. As is known to all, the draft document now before the Working Group embodies certain contents about the "comprehensive nuclear test ban" and "nuclear non-proliferation" etc., which are at variance with the amendments proposed by the Chinese delegation. We reserve our views, which we are not going to repeat today.

3. Now I would like to deal with the question of a basic principle of disarmament, because this question of principle concerns the wording of many sections. During the general debate at the current special session, many representatives stressed in their statements that the two super-Powers bear special responsibility for disarmament and that the super-Powers should be the first to take concrete actions for disarmament. Nevertheless, as a result of the obstructions by the super-Powers, this indisputable principle has not been reflected in the draft final document. Even the original just proposal of the non-aligned countries has not been adopted, a proposal which points out that "in particular the two leading nuclear-weapon States" should bear "special responsibility" for nuclear disarmament. Generalized references have been made more than once to "all States", "nuclear-weapon States" or "permanent members of the Security Council" sharing equal responsibility for disarmament. We have reservations on all such references and formulations. Therefore, these formulations and sections cannot be regarded as reflecting a consensus.