

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

UNITED NATIONS
CENTRE FOR DISARMAMENT
DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS
Reference Library
GENERAL



A/S-12/AC.1/FV.2
26 June 1982

ENGLISH

Twelfth special session

AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 2ND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 14 June 1982, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria)

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION OF THE SPECIAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT TO
THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF HIS MAJESTY KING KHALID IBN ABDUL AZIZ AL SAUD

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be incorporated in a copy of the record and should
be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief of the
Official Records Editing Section, room A-3550, 866 United Nations Plaza.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a
separate fascicle.

82-61809

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SPECIAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT TO THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The CHAIRMAN: I call first on the representative of Japan, who is the current Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament, to introduce that Committee's report.

Mr. OKAWA (Japan): It is a great honour for me to be able to present the special report of the Committee on Disarmament to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/92 F. It is a pleasure for me to do so under your chairmanship in this Ad Hoc Committee, Sir, and I use this occasion to congratulate you warmly on your election to this key post.

Representatives will recall that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament was reorganized under paragraph 120 of the Final Document adopted at the first special session devoted to disarmament in 1978 and that, consequently, the Committee on Disarmament started functioning in Geneva from the following year, 1979. The report I am presenting, therefore, covers the work of the Committee from January 1979 to April 1982. The report, contained in document A/S-12/2, is divided into three parts: an introduction, a part on the organization of work of the Committee, and a part on the substantive work of the Committee.

Under "Organization of work", I wish to draw the attention of representatives to the sub-chapter entitled, "Modalities of the review of the membership of the Committee and related matters", which is to be found on pages 4 and 5 of the report. It will be recalled that General Assembly resolution 36/97 J stated that

"the first review of the membership of the Committee on Disarmament should be completed, following appropriate consultations among Member States, during the second special session devoted to disarmament".

(resolution 36/97 J, para. 2)

I wish also to mention in the same context that, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Committee on Disarmament, a number of States not members of the Committee have been participating in the Committee's discussions. The Committee is aware of the need to facilitate still further the participation of non-member States.

The third part of the report, entitled "Substantive work of the Committee", constitutes the bulk of the report, and it will be found in pages 5 to 70 of the document.

Under this chapter, nine items of substance are listed. On the item "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons", the Committee established an ad hoc working group in 1979 on the items concerning chemical weapons, radiological weapons and comprehensive programme of disarmament, the Committee established ad hoc working groups in 1980. Those four working groups have been re-established in each succeeding year up to the 1982 session of the Committee. The other items listed under "Substantive work" have been dealt with in the Committee itself, although I am pleased to report that the Committee was able to reach a consensus at the end of the first part of its 1982 session, which ended on 23 April, on the establishment of an ad hoc working group under item 1 of its agenda, entitled "Nuclear test ban". This new working group will begin functioning at the second part of the 1982 session, which commences on 3 August 1982. I should also inform representatives that, during the first part of the 1982 session, an item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" was inscribed on the agenda, and work is expected to begin shortly on that item.

I shall not go into the details of the substantive work of the Committee, but I should like to draw the attention of representatives to the draft comprehensive programme of disarmament which is appended to the report; it can be found on page 71 of this document. It hardly needs mentioning that it is that draft programme which will form the basis for the consideration of item 10 of the agenda of this special session of the General Assembly.

The working group of the Committee on Disarmament on the comprehensive programme of disarmament started its work in 1980, Mr. Chairman, under your own leadership. After you relinquished your chairmanship prior to your departure from Geneva it was the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles,

(Mr. Okawa, Japan)

who took over from you the task of chairing that group. The members of the Committee on Disarmament, and indeed all the members of this Assembly, are deeply indebted to Ambassador Garcia Robles and to those who worked with him for the long hours and the tireless efforts they have devoted in the past two years to the drafting of the text to which I have just referred.

I wish also to express the Committee's deep appreciation to all the representatives who have chaired the Committee itself and its various working groups and other subsidiary bodies over the past four years.

Very special mention must be made of the exceptional and outstanding service rendered to the Committee by Ambassador Ricky Jaipal, Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the Committee, who also acts as Secretary of the Committee.

By way of information for representatives, I wish also to report that the Committee and its subsidiary bodies held 155 meetings in 1979, 185 meetings in 1980, 255 meetings in 1981, and 215 meetings during the first part of its 1982 session alone. I am sure those figures give a clear indication of the steep increase in the work-load of the Committee over the last few years, and of the need to strengthen the Committee's secretariat, as is pointed out in paragraph 18 of its report.

The special report of the Committee on Disarmament is before the Ad Hoc Committee for consideration under item 9 of the agenda of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure that this Committee and its working groups will find the report of the Committee on Disarmament of very great value.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Representatives will recall that at our first meeting, held on 8 June, I informed them that it was my intention to convene the Bureau of the Committee with a view to seeking its guidance and recommendations on a number of organizational matters. I should now like to report that the Bureau has held two meetings and that in addition to those meetings I have had the opportunity to

(The Chairman)

carry out consultations with several delegations. In the course of its meetings, the Bureau was able to address itself to a number of organizational matters and, although it was not, of course, in a position to arrive at a consensus on all those matters, it was nevertheless able to agree on a number of recommendations, which I shall now place before the Committee.

(The Chairman)

The recommendations are as follows. First, the Ad Hoc Committee should meet as often as necessary, but the precise schedule of meetings should be arranged on an ad hoc basis as necessary. One meeting should be held at the end of each week anyway, to receive progress reports from the working groups.

Secondly, the Ad Hoc Committee should consider setting 25 June as the deadline for the submission of proposals to the Secretariat for inclusion in the final documents of the special session. In this connexion, it would be helpful if delegations with proposals that they would like to introduce formally in the Ad Hoc Committee got in touch with the Secretariat as soon as possible after they had made up their minds clearly about such proposals, so that in scheduling meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee the Secretariat could take them into account.

Thirdly, the working groups should start their work as soon as possible, preferably today.

Fourthly, in exceptional cases, the Chairman of a working group can be replaced by a member of his delegation.

Fifthly, as a rule, no working groups should meet while the Ad Hoc Committee is in session.

Sixthly, in the working groups, as far as possible, regional groups or groups presenting proposals should have a restricted number of spokesmen. An appeal is therefore made to various groups to nominate spokesmen in the working groups from among those delegations that have submitted proposals or may wish to do so.

(The Chairman)

Seventhly, there should be no rapporteurs for the working groups, but the rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee should follow the work of the groups and provide co-ordination as necessary.

Eighthly, the working groups should work without summary records. The Secretariat will prepare a brief note at the end of each meeting describing the proceedings and any decisions. The note would be given to the Chairman of the working group as well as to the Chairman and the Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Ninthly, the Ad Hoc Committee should consider setting a target date by which the working groups should complete their work. It would be premature to do that immediately, but once all the working groups have been set up and have started their work the officers of the Committee will exchange views again and make some concrete recommendations to the Ad Hoc Committee.

The recommendations of the officers of the Committee that I have just outlined represent matters that are mainly of a procedural nature. I therefore presume that the Committee is in a position to accept them. Unless I hear any comments, I shall take it that it is the Committee's wish to approve the recommendations of the officers of the Committee on the various organizational matters to which I have referred.

It was so decided.

A request has been received from the Secretary-General of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE) that he be given the opportunity to address the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In this connexion, it is appropriate to remind the Committee of the recommendation of the Preparatory Committee, in paragraph 49 of its report, to the effect that an opportunity be given in the course of the meetings of the Committee of the whole to hear statements by the representatives of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, the Olof Palme Commission. It is the intention that the Ad Hoc Committee should, at its meeting on Wednesday morning, 23 June, hear statements by the representatives of the IPU

(The Chairman)

and the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues. It has been suggested that the same meeting might be the appropriate occasion to hear the statement by the Secretary-General of UNISPACE. If that is acceptable to the Committee, we can take a decision to that effect.

It was so decided.

A request has been received from the Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) that he be given the opportunity to address the second special session on disarmament in plenary meeting. In the discussions that I have had the view has been expressed that he should be invited to address the General Assembly in plenary meeting, and that the Ad Hoc Committee should make the appropriate recommendation to the plenary meeting concerning this. May I take it that the Committee wishes to adopt this recommendation, which is in line with the earlier recommendations regarding some of the executive heads of United Nations agencies?

It was so decided.

I come to the question of the working groups. In discussing the matter, the officers of the Committee took into account the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee in paragraph 51 of its report, to the effect that the Ad Hoc Committee should set up two working groups, one on the comprehensive programme of disarmament and one on the review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and that it might also consider setting up additional working groups.

After very detailed discussions, the officers of the Committee decided to recommend that the recommendation on working group I, on the comprehensive programme of disarmament, should be confirmed and that the working group should start its work this afternoon. Moreover, to facilitate the working group's work, the officers of the Committee also agreed to recommend to the Ad Hoc Committee that the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles, be appointed the chairman of that working group.

JP/bo

A/S-12/AC.1/PV.2
9-10

(The Chairman)

May I take it that the Ad Hoc Committee endorses those recommendations of the officers of the Committee in relation to the working group on the comprehensive programme on disarmament?

It was so decided.

The officers of the Committee discussed extensively, first, the setting up of the second working group specifically referred to in the Preparatory Committee's report and, secondly, the suggestion that a third working group should be set up at the same time.

(The Chairman)

These discussions were not conclusive. The Bureau could not reach a consensus on the basis of which they could make a recommendation to the Ad Hoc Committee and it was therefore agreed by the Bureau that discussions should continue, that informal consultations should be conducted and that the Bureau would meet again later with a view to reaching specific decisions which will be recommended to the Ad Hoc Committee. I would therefore suggest that the Ad Hoc Committee should allow the Bureau to carry on with its consultations, and I would ask members to be patient enough to await a recommendation from the Bureau before these issues are taken up within the Ad Hoc Committee.

That concludes my report on the work of the Bureau.

I now call on the representative of Sweden.

Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden): On this Monday morning, 14 June, when the Ad Hoc Committee is holding its second meeting, I feel a compelling need to put on record Sweden's warm tribute to the organizers of and the up to 800,000 participants in the powerful manifestation for disarmament and peace which took place in this city on 12 June. This historic event will, I hope, exert a lasting influence on the attitudes of all political leaders towards disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and especially the leaders of the powerful and mighty nuclear-weapon States. It will, I hope, contribute to facilitating our task at this special session of the United Nations General Assembly to take determined first steps towards genuine disarmament.

At this early stage of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, I feel it important to explain in concrete terms what Sweden expects to come out of the special session as far as some important items on the disarmament agenda are concerned. I shall be brief but fairly specific, as Sweden's views on the general background to this session were stated by our Prime Minister in the general debate on 8 June. Before going into the substance of the matter, however, let me first take this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election as Chairman of this Committee. Your abilities as a diplomat and a leading figure

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

in international negotiations are well established and my own delegation is very happy to see you in the Chair. It makes us confident that this Committee will achieve the best possible results that circumstances will allow.

I shall summarize in nine points our expectations for achievements at this special session.

First, there seems to be almost universal recognition of the fact that a multilateral comprehensive test-ban treaty would constitute a particularly important first step towards halting the nuclear arms race. This is a matter that Sweden and many other countries have vigorously pursued over the years and it is therefore a source of satisfaction to us that the Committee on Disarmament has at long last decided to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group to deal with this item, which has for many years had the highest priority on its agenda. The increasing pressure exerted by world opinion in the United Nations and other quarters has finally borne fruit. However, it is important to continue to exert pressure in this issue. The Assembly should therefore, at this session, call for an improved mandate for the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Committee on Disarmament and a rapid and successful conclusion of the negotiations on these matters.

Second, a continued nuclear arms race will adversely affect ongoing and future efforts to reduce the nuclear arsenals. In order to start such a reduction process, it is essential first to put an end to the nuclear build-up. In fact, it seems hardly possible to stop and reverse the current trend unless the parties can, as a beginning, agree on a complete halt in the quantitative and qualitative nuclear arms race. We therefore hold that the super-Powers should consider without delay the possibility of agreeing to freeze their nuclear arsenals and the number of delivery vehicles at the present levels. Such a freeze would constitute the starting point for negotiations on balanced and verifiable reductions of various kinds of nuclear weapons, as well as limitations on the development and production of new types of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

The freeze of the nuclear arsenals at the present levels should be supplemented by a ban on the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes. The cessation of production of such material would strengthen confidence in the freeze arrangement and its long-term importance. Such a cut-off of fissionable material would, furthermore, be an important measure in the efforts to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons and explosive devices. This session should initiate action aimed at achieving soon a nuclear freeze, followed by a ban on the production of all types of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles.

Third, it has for a long time been obvious that the arms race is shifting emphasis from a quantitative to a qualitative competition. Military research and development play a decisive role in this process. Today's projects become tomorrow's expensive and constantly more sophisticated weapons. New scientific and technological developments are rapidly incorporated into new weapons, new doctrines and new defence systems. Innovation is driven at a fast speed for fear of falling behind in the military technological competition. Military research and development programmes thus consume enormous financial and intellectual resources. Last year at least \$40,000 million in Government spending alone was used for this purpose and some 20 per cent of all scientists and technicians in the world were involved in military programmes. This will have to be stopped if there is ever to be an end to the arms race. There is therefore an urgent need to come to grips with the problem.

Over the years a number of ideas and proposals on possible solutions have been discussed. Before discussing solutions, however, it is absolutely essential to have a good over-view of the problems. This special session offers a propitious opportunity for discussing the matter. Sweden holds that this Assembly should decide to request the Secretary-General to carry out a comprehensive study of the many complex questions related to the process of military research and development and the implications for disarmament negotiations. I know that many countries share our concern and would like

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

to see this problem being properly addressed by the United Nations. A United Nations study seems to be the natural starting point and this session should initiate such a study.

Fourth, it was agreed already in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament that further measures should be taken and appropriate negotiations held in order to prevent an arms race in outer space. Sweden welcomes the fact that, following the adoption of two resolutions by the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Committee on Disarmament has decided to include this item in its agenda. We hope that real multilateral negotiations will soon be under way in the Committee on Disarmament and that an ad hoc working group will be established for this purpose. It is necessary to prevent developments now which would have destabilizing effects. Sweden feels that the prohibition of anti-satellite weapons is therefore of particular urgency.

Parallel with the efforts of the Committee on Disarmament, the bilateral talks between the two super-Powers on this issue should be resumed as soon as possible. In this context it is natural that the second special session confirm that outer space is a common domain of mankind, which must not be abused for military purposes, and that it is a matter that concerns all nations of the world. Efforts should be made to increase the transparency of national and international space activities through an improved and more comprehensive United Nations notification procedure. Further, the possibility of an international satellite monitoring agency should be borne in mind in this context. This session should endorse increased international activities with the aim of demilitarizing outer space.

Fifth, Sweden has already, in its note to the Secretary-General regarding the second special session, pointed out that the naval arms race must be given increased attention. We find it particularly disturbing that the major military Powers are engaged in a technological competition in developing means for naval warfare. One particularly destabilizing element in this context is their intensive efforts to achieve an anti-submarine warfare capability aimed at neutralizing the adversary's submarine forces,

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

but new technologies are gradually influencing the navies of smaller countries as well. Present naval amphibious and transportation capabilities provide the major blocs with increased possibilities to project military forces into most parts of the world. In our note to the Secretary-General we have indicated in some detail the issues that should be discussed in this context and we intend to revert to them in the course of our deliberations.

This session should initiate some first steps to come to grips with the serious problems connected with the naval arms race.

Sixth, the bacteriological weapon Convention constitutes an important example of an international disarmament agreement concluded without the inclusion of a satisfactory complaints and verification mechanism. At the 1980 Review Conference some efforts were made to include a complaints procedure, and to some extent that was achieved. The Conference stated that the question of the adequacy of article V of the Convention should be further considered.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

On this occasion, I wish to confirm Sweden's view that it is desirable to consider further the whole question of the adequacy of the complaints procedure of the Convention. We propose that the General Assembly at this special session consider inviting the depositary States of the Convention to convene a special session among the parties as soon as possible to establish a permanently available, objective and non-discriminatory verification and complaints procedure applicable to the Convention.

Seventh, some present trends in armaments and military doctrines pose increasing threats to all nations and peoples. The very physical threat to the security of nations is compounded by the world economic disorder. Unemployment, inflation, problems of accessibility of strategic raw materials, monetary disorder, lack of economic and social development in the developing world and a crisis of the main production systems in the world aggravate the problem of national and global security. The United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which I had the privilege of chairing, unanimously expressed a grave warning, already often quoted, that the world now stands at a crossroad.

At this session, Sweden, together with other interested Member States, will seek effective implementation and follow-up of the disarmament and development report, which substantiates the fact that military budgets are dead-end expenditure in all kinds of economies, be they market, centrally planned or mixed. Military expenditures do not foster growth. Through its inflationary effects and the general economic and political malaise to which it contributes, military spending inhibits the capital investments required for development.

The report to which I have referred must not represent a finished project; it must represent the beginning of a process. Sweden therefore proposes that action should be taken by this session of the General Assembly as an effective follow up to the study's recommendations.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

Eight, in the history of disarmament negotiations a number of proposals have been made for the creation of an international institution for disarmament. During the preparations for the first special session on disarmament, several delegations commented on this matter. The Swedish Foreign Minister, in a statement before the First Committee on 29 October 1979, proposed that the possibilities of establishing a United Nations disarmament organization be studied in a comprehensive manner. The General Assembly decided in the same year to carry out a study of the institutional arrangements relating to the process of disarmament.

The Swedish position on this matter was presented to the Group of Experts carrying out the study and was to a certain degree reflected in their report to the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Sweden called for the establishment of a United Nations disarmament agency organized to meet the priorities and the more ambitious goals that the United Nations should set for the 1980s and beyond. Its functions should include services for deliberation, negotiation, implementation, verification, information, research and study and training. It would also ensure that the work programme which will be agreed by the second special session be matched by adequate secretarial resources.

My delegation has noted with great satisfaction that many countries have, either formally or in private consultations, expressed their support for the idea of strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and giving the United Nations body responsible for these questions the corresponding status and adequate resources to perform its important tasks. Thus, although the United Nations expert study does not recommend any specific action, Sweden proposes that the General Assembly, at this session, decide in principle to establish a United Nations disarmament agency in accordance with the general principles and with the tasks I have just mentioned.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

Ninth, and finally, in his statement in the general debate on Tuesday, 8 June, Prime Minister Falldin pledged Sweden's full and strong support for the United Nations World Disarmament Campaign, an issue that is before this special session. Today, I am authorized to pledge a Swedish contribution of half a million Swedish crowns towards financing that Campaign.

We have seen in recent months the creation and the growth of a powerful popular movement marching and mobilizing against a continued arms race and for disarmament. Through the World Disarmament Campaign, the United Nations should, we sincerely hope, assist in promoting a continued growth of a world-wide disarmament constituency. The political leaders of the powerful and mighty should then not be able to escape listening and learning.

Mr. DIACONU (Romania) (interpretation from French): First of all, Sir, my delegation would like to express its satisfaction of seeing you presiding over the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and to say that we are sure that, with your diplomatic experience, dedication and skill we shall be successful in our work on disarmament in this Committee.

Similarly, we welcome the fact that the Working Group on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament has been established and that Mr. Garcia Robles has been named Chairman of that Group. We associate ourselves with what was said by the representative of Japan, in his capacity as the current Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament, with regard to Mr. Garcia Robles and his exceptional contribution to the preparation of the comprehensive programme and in the disarmament field as a whole.

As for the organization of work, we feel it is absolutely necessary to resolve this problem as quickly as possible. We have very little time. The Chairman has suggested 25 June, that is, two weeks from now, as the target date for the working groups. We must therefore set up the other working groups - or another working group - in order that the work can begin as soon as possible.

(Mr. Diaconu, Romania)

It is essential to be flexible and constructive in order that the groups can begin their work as quickly as possible.

Similarly, in terms of the drafting of and negotiations on documents, we must organize our work so as to be sure that we have the opportunity of taking specific decisions, in order that the session may truly be a turning-point in negotiations on disarmament.

I do not wish to make reference to substantive matters, because the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania is to address the plenary meeting of the Assembly next week, and it is for him to deal with Romania's substantive position with regard to the issues on our agenda.

With reference to the working groups, it is our understanding that the recommendation with regard to the spokesmen of the groups will be interpreted in a very flexible manner. The groups themselves are set up in a very flexible way and there is little identity between them and what we call in the United Nations, the geographical groups, which are the only ones that are formally recognized. Briefly, therefore, I should like to say that each delegation must have the right to choose the way it puts forward its position and defends its interests in the working groups. Those working groups, of course, are open to everyone, and all delegations must have an opportunity to take part in their work and make their views known.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to assure the representative of Romania, first of all, that the deadline of 25 June to which I referred was the date recommended by the Bureau as the deadline for the submission of proposals, not for the completion of the work of the working groups. Nevertheless, I think that he is right that the Committee should take decisions that would enable the working groups to commence their work as soon as possible.

Secondly, I should like also to assure him that the recommendation regarding the appointment of spokesmen for the various working groups will be construed in a very flexible manner. That recommendation was made merely to facilitate the work of the working groups, but it does not prejudice the right of any representative to speak on behalf of his own delegation he wishes to do so.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico)(interpretation from Spanish): First of all, Mr. Chairman, I should like to express my delegation's great satisfaction at seeing you presiding over our work. The experience you have gained from previous similar occasions is a guarantee for us that you will once again conduct the work of this Committee successfully.

I should like also to express my very sincere gratitude to all the members of the Committee for their kindness in choosing me to preside over the working group on the comprehensive programme of disarmament. I am aware of the responsibility involved in that function, but I agreed to accept that honourable burden because I believe that the working group is a team effort, in which the responsibility will be shared by all members. I venture to hope, furthermore, that just as in Geneva I shall be able to rely on the co-operation of all the members of the group.

When I was asked in Geneva whether I believed that we could complete the draft comprehensive programme of disarmament that was the responsibility of the Committee on Disarmament and which was drafted in the ad hoc working group, my reply was always the same: I was certain that we could complete the draft, although in the last 48 hours I had to write in any of the parts which were still lacking. But that was all I could promise: with regard to the number of square brackets, the responsibility lay with the members of the group and not with me.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

I think that the time has now come for every delegation to demonstrate its co-operation by making every possible concession on matters that are not matters of principle but which could make it possible for us to arrive -- as did the Preparatory Committee -- at a text free of square brackets in most cases when we come to prepare our report in this Committee and then in the General Assembly itself, and make it possible for us, despite the existence of fundamental issues remaining to be settled, to put forward solutions which will have won general approval.

I shall not go into details here about the views of the Mexican delegation with regard to the draft comprehensive programme or to other matters to be discussed in the Committee. I have already had several occasions to do this in Geneva, and any representative can consult the records as they are listed in an appendix to the Committee's report. A few days ago, on 9 June, the Foreign Minister of Mexico, Mr. Castañeda, in his speech to the General Assembly, was very clear and specific about our position on the fundamental issues relating to disarmament; I shall not repeat here what he expressed so well.

But I should like to say that I share the feelings expressed here by the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Thorsson: we feel gratitude and high regard for those who organized what was, as I understand it, the most massive demonstration ever held in New York, a demonstration in favour of disarmament, in particular in favour of nuclear disarmament.

In this connexion, I should like to repeat what I said in the statement I made in the Committee on Disarmament on 19 April 1982 introducing the draft comprehensive programme of disarmament drawn up by the ad hoc working group:

"Recently, particularly during the last year or so, there has been throughout the world an increasing number of acts of all kinds which reveal the concern that the nuclear arms race and the emergence of doctrines such as the credible possibility of a limited nuclear war or the illusory hypothesis of a nuclear victory, have aroused throughout mankind. If, as the Assembly stated in 1978, all peoples have a vital interest in the success of the negotiations on disarmament, it may be asserted without any

exaggeration that the thousands of millions of human beings who make up these peoples will follow very closely the work of the special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament which is to be held at United Nations Headquarters from 7 June to 9 July 1982. This may very well be the decisive element in making the representatives of those peoples deliberating in New York realize the need to approve by consensus a comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, which, starting from the text drawn up by the Ad Hoc Working Group..., may give new life to the pressing objectives which... have been set out in paragraph 109 of the Assembly's Final Document. It must never be forgotten that, as stated in the Final Document itself, the most acute and urgent task of the present day is to remove the threat of a nuclear war, since this threat has confronted mankind with a choice between proceeding to disarmament or facing annihilation." (CD/286, p. 4)

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Finally, I was most pleased to hear the representative of Sweden pledge on behalf of her country a most valuable contribution to the United Nations World Disarmament Campaign. If my memory serves me correctly, hers is the second Member State - the first was India, in the plenary meeting recently - to mention a specific figure for its contribution, in addition to repeating support for the campaign.

The CHAIRMAN: I assure the representative of Mexico that it is also my expectation that all delegations will co-operate with him in the discharge of the heavy responsibility that we have unanimously imposed on him this morning by appointing him Chairman of the Working Group on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament.

I hope that consultations about the other working groups will proceed in such a way as to enable us to have a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee by Wednesday, so that we may settle the matters of the other two working groups and enable them to begin their work quickly.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF HIS MAJESTY KING KHALID IBN ABDUL AZIZ AL SAUD

The CHAIRMAN: Earlier this morning in plenary session the General Assembly paid tribute to the memory of His Majesty King Khalid Ibn Abdul Aziz Al Saud, the late King of Saudi Arabia, who passed away yesterday. On behalf of the Committee and on my own behalf, I wish to express sincere condolences to the family of His Majesty, the people of Saudi Arabia and the delegation of Saudi Arabia to this special session.

The representatives, standing, observed a minute's silence.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.