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Twelfth special session  
Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS  
ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

Letter dated 13 May 1982 from the Permanent Representative of Finland  
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government I have the honour to transmit herewith to Your Excellency a memorandum on the subject of nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects, carried out in 1975 by the Ad Hoc Group of Qualified Governmental Experts. 1/

I would be grateful if the memorandum could be circulated as an official document of the twelfth special session of the General Assembly, under item 9 of its provisional agenda.

(Signed) Ilkka PASTINEN  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of  
Finland to the United Nations

\* A/36/49, para. 18.

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 27A (A/10027/Add.1), annex I.

ANNEX

Memorandum submitted by Finland on the subject of nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the Comprehensive study of the Question of Nuclear-weapon-free zones in All Its Aspects

1. Since the 1950's, efforts to eliminate geographic regions, parts of the environment of outer space from the nuclear arms race have been made in various contexts.

The Antarctic Treaty (1959), establishing a demilitarized zone, ensured that nuclear weapons would not be introduced to the area. The Outer Space Treaty (1967) prohibited the emplacement of nuclear weapons in outer space, including in orbit or on celestial bodies. The Treaty of Tlatelolco (1968) was the first instrument for establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in an inhabited area. The Seabed Treaty (1972) was another measure designed to prevent the introduction of mass destruction weapons to an area so far free of them.

Proposals have been made with a view to establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, i.a., Central Europe, the Balkans, the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, the region of Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Northern Europe, the Middle East and South Asia.

Many proposals continue to be under consideration. The preliminary list of items to be included in the agenda of the 37th session of General Assembly indicates the scope of the interest in nuclear-weapon-free zones. The following four items have been inscribed on that list:

- signature and ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty of Tlatelolco (item 41),
- denuclearization of Africa (item 44),
- establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East (item 45),
- establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia (item 46).

2. At the 29th session of the General Assembly, Finland proposed that a comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects be initiated. The proposal envisaged a broad and thorough inventory and analysis of the question, which would clarify the concept and provide such assistance and guidance as might be needed and requested by any country or group or countries in the future. The proposal received wide, positive response. By resolution 3261 (XXIX), the General Assembly decided to launch the study and requested that it be carried out by an Ad Hoc group of governmental experts under the auspices of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. The study was completed in 1975 and was considered by the General Assembly at its 30th session.

3. The study dealt with six substantive aspects of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones. They were (1) the historical background of military denuclearization by areas, (2) concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones, (3) responsibilities of states within the zone and of other states, (4) verification and control, (5) nuclear-weapon-free zones and international law, and (6) peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Group of Experts was able to reach consensus on several principles which might be of use to Governments considering the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. On a number of questions, it did not prove possible to reach consensus, and in these cases the study reflects the various positions held by each expert. While, for example, the experts agreed that a nuclear-weapon-free zone might improve the chances of the zonal states to remain outside a nuclear conflict and decrease the risk of nuclear proliferation, major divergence of views was manifest in the question of security assurances from extra-zonal states, particularly the nuclear-weapon states, to the zonal states. Neither was agreement reached on questions pertaining to the freedom of the seas, transit of nuclear weapons, or peaceful nuclear explosions.

The comprehensive study was transmitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament by the Ad Hoc Group on 18 August 1975. In the plenary meetings of the Committee, fifteen of its members commented on the study. The texts of these comments were reproduced as an annex of the special report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament which contained the study (document A/10027/Add.1).

By resolution 3472 A (XXX) the General Assembly, i.a., expressed its appreciation to the Ad Hoc Group of Qualified Governmental Experts for the study and invited all Governments, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other international organizations concerned to put forth their views, observations and suggestions on the study.

Thirty-three member states, the IAEA, and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America expressed their views on the study (document A/31/189 and Add.1 and 2). By resolution 31/70, the General Assembly took note of those views, reiterated its conviction that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones can, i.a., contribute to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, drew the attention of Governments to the study and expressed the hope that the study would enhance further efforts concerning the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

4. Since the adoption by the General Assembly of the latter resolution on 10 December 1976, questions pertaining to nuclear-weapon-free zones have been discussed in several fora. Progress has been achieved in both the practical implementation of existing arrangements and consideration of modalities and issues closely related to the establishment of such zones. The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones and related questions have become

subjects of growing interest and attention.

(a) In the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, adopted by consensus, on 1 July 1978, the General Assembly dealt extensively with nuclear-weapon-free zones (resolution S-10/2, ch. 60-63). In the Declaration of the 1980's as the Second Disarmament Decade, also adopted by consensus (resolution 35/46), the General Assembly identified "the strengthening of the existing nuclear-weapon-free zone and the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the Final Document" as a priority measure which should be pursued as rapidly as possible.

(b) Implementation of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco) has progressed since the special session. Additional Protocol I of the Treaty was ratified by the United States on 23 November 1981. Additional Protocol II was ratified on 1 August 1979 by the Soviet Union as the fifth nuclear-weapon state. In addition, France signed Additional Protocol I on 2 March 1979. Significant steps have thus been taken towards the full implementation of the Treaty.

(c) The question of the security of non-nuclear-weapon states, an issue closely related to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, has been under substantive consideration in the Committee on Disarmament since 1979. All nuclear-weapon states have made unilateral statements defining situations in which they would not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states. An Ad Hoc working group has been established by the Committee on Disarmament to consider the questions of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon states against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The work of the Ad Hoc group has progressed. The group has concentrated its attention on the examination of the substance of the assurances on the understanding that agreement of substance would facilitate agreement on form.

(d) Existing proposals for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world have been reiterated, developed further and discussed, i.a., in the General Assembly. For example, a resolution calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East was adopted, for the first time, without a vote in 1980 (resolution 35/147).

(e) The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is in general regarded as a most effective regional measure against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, complementing in this regard the Non-proliferation Treaty, widely considered the most effective existing instrument to constrain the possibility of proliferation. The increasing dangers of the spread of nuclear-weapon capability to regions where peace and security are already in jeopardy serves to underline the continued topicality of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

(f) The regional approach, of which the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an aspect, has been extensively discussed and analysed in subsequent United Nations studies. A study on all aspects of regional disarmament was conducted by a group of governmental experts and was submitted to the General Assembly at its 35th session (A/35/416). At its 36th session, the General Assembly took note of a study on confidence-building measures (A/36/474) undertaken by a group of qualified governmental experts. The substance of these studies has inherent links with the zonal approach.

(g) The progress made so far in the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, in particular that related to rights of transit in territorial waters, is of relevance to the subject of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

5. The accelerating arms race, and especially the nuclear arms race in its new technological dimensions, gives added urgency to efforts to limit, on a geographical basis, its effects and to insulate, where possible, regions from the reach of nuclear strategic speculation. At the same time, international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy continues to be hampered by the risk of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Nuclear-weapon-free zones might give a welcome incentive, within a regional framework, to international co-operation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy without this risk.

Since the completion of the Comprehensive Study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in 1975, important new developments have taken place, some of which are outlined in para. 4. These developments include new aspects of nuclear-weapon technology, new nuclear strategic doctrines, and negotiations in various fora on nuclear arms limitation, which all have direct relevance to the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The links of the above developments with the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the practical implementation of proposals, present and future, for the establishment of such zones obviously merit further thorough analysis. Some of these developments suggest that a broader consensus on several aspects could be reached than in the context of the Comprehensive Study of 1975.

In the light of the above, an updated report of the Comprehensive Study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones could make a valuable contribution within the regional context to the solution of problems raised by nuclear weapons and the nuclear arms race.

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