

**REPORT
OF THE
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE
WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 4 (A/S-12/4)



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2. INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-sixth session, by its resolution 36/91 of 9 December 1981, the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference 1/ to submit a report to the Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament.
2. At its tenth special session, in 1978, the General Assembly had before it the special report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the state of its work and deliberations 2/ submitted pursuant to the request contained in its resolution 32/89. In paragraph 122 of its Final Document of that session, the Assembly expressed the view that, "at the earliest appropriate time, a world disarmament conference should be convened with universal participation and with adequate preparation", (resolution S-10/2).
3. At its thirty-third, thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth sessions, the General Assembly continued its consideration of the agenda item entitled "World Disarmament Conference" and, having taken note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee submitted to it respectively at these sessions, 3/ renewed successively the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee (resolutions 33/69, 34/81, 35/151 and 36/91).
4. In resolution 36/91 adopted at its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly noted with satisfaction, as it had at its preceding sessions, that in its report the Committee had reiterated, inter alia, its statement 4/ that, "having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly might wish to decide that, after its second special session devoted to disarmament, a world disarmament conference would take place as soon as the necessary consensus on its convening had been reached".

1/ By its resolution 3183 (XXVIII) of 18 December 1973, the General Assembly decided that the Ad Hoc Committee should consist of the following 40 non-nuclear-weapon Member States appointed by the President of the Assembly after consultation with all regional groups: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire and Zambia.

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Tenth Special Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/S-10/3 and Corr.1).

3/ Ibid., Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/33/28); ibid., Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/34/28); ibid., Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/35/28); and ibid., Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/36/28).

4/ The same statement was contained in the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions.

5. By resolution 36/91, the General Assembly again requested 5/ the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference "to maintain close contact with the representatives of the States possessing nuclear weapons in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes, as well as with all other States, and to consider any possible relevant proposals and observations which might be made to the Committee, especially having in mind paragraph 122 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly".

6. The elected officers of the Committee at present are as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Ignatius Benedict Fonseka (Sri Lanka)

Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Juan José Calle y Calle (Peru)
Mr. Ryszard Krystosik (Poland)

Rapporteur: Mr. Fermín Zelada (Spain)

7. At the first session in April 1982 of the Ad Hoc Committee, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics participated in the work of the Committee by virtue of paragraph 3 of resolution 3183 (XXVIII). Under the same provision, China, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America maintained contact with the Ad Hoc Committee through its Chairman. The German Democratic Republic and Viet Nam attended meetings of the Committee as observers. 6/

8. The Working Group established in 1974 continued to function. At its 56th meeting, on 6 April 1981, the Ad Hoc Committee decided to add Sri Lanka to the membership of the Working Group. 7/ At the first session in April 1982, the following countries participated in the Working Group as observers: Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Romania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Venezuela.

5/ The General Assembly made the same request at its thirty-third, thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions (resolutions 33/69, 34/81, 35/151).

6/ In 1978 and 1979, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics participated in the work of the Committee by virtue of paragraph 3 of resolution 3183 (XXVIII); and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics continued to do so in 1980 and 1981. Under the same provision, China and the United States of America in 1978 and 1979, and China, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America in 1980 and 1981, maintained contact with the Ad Hoc Committee through its Chairman. The German Democratic Republic attended the meetings of the Committee as observer during all these years; Viet Nam did so in 1980 and 1981.

7/ The composition of the Working Group is as follows: Burundi, Egypt, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Spain and Sri Lanka. Participants in the Working Group as observers in respective year since 1978 are listed in the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly mentioned in paragraph 3 of the present report.

II. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE BETWEEN THE TENTH SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ITS SECOND SPECIAL SESSION
DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT

9. In accordance with its mandate mentioned in paragraph 3 above since September 1978 the Ad Hoc Committee held eight sessions to continue its work.
10. During these sessions, statements were made on the subject by the Chairman and a number of States. 3/
11. In the work of the Committee since 1978, the members of the Committee were fully aware of the positions previously expressed by the Governments of other States on the convening of a world disarmament conference. 8/
12. During its second session in 1978, the Ad Hoc Committee reviewed the discussion that had taken place at the tenth special session on a world disarmament conference (see A/AC.167/SR.44 and 45).
13. The Ad Hoc Committee took into account the fact that, in the Declaration of the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-aligned Countries, held at Belgrade from 25 to 29 July 1978, the Ministers had noted "with approval the idea of convening a world disarmament conference at an appropriate time with universal participation and adequate preparation" (A/33/206, annex I, para. 148).
14. In accordance with its mandate contained in resolution 33/69, the Ad Hoc Committee held two sessions in 1979.
15. The Ad Hoc Committee was conscious of the fact that the idea of holding a world disarmament conference was referred to or considered in other forums, within and outside the United Nations. These included the following:
- (a) At its session held between 14 May and 8 June 1979, the Disarmament Commission adopted various recommendations on "Elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament". Paragraph 17 of the recommendations reads as follows: 9/
- "At the earliest appropriate time, a world disarmament conference should be convened with universal participation and with adequate preparation."

8/ For the views of Member States, see A/8817 and Add.1; Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/9628); ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/10028 and Corr.1); ibid., Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/31/28); ibid., Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/32/28); ibid., Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings, 6th to 33rd meetings; A/C.1/32/PV.7-38; Official Records of the General Assembly, Tenth Special Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/S-10/3 and Corr.1); A/S-10/PV.1-27; A/S-10/AC.1/PV.4-16; General Assembly resolution S-10/2; and A/AC.167/SR.15-43.

9/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/34/42), para. 17.

(b) The Joint United States-Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Communiqué of the meetings of the President of the United States Jimmy Carter and the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet Leonid I. Brezhnev, issued on 18 June 1979 at Vienna. The relevant paragraph reads as follows:

"The sides noted their support for a second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament and for that session to be followed by the convocation of a World Disarmament Conference with universal participation, adequately prepared and at an appropriate time." 10/

(c) At its meetings held from 3 to 9 September 1979 at Havana, the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries adopted a political Declaration. Paragraph 223 of the Declaration reads as follows:

"The Conference welcomed the decision to hold a second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1982 and called upon the non-aligned countries to take an active part in the preparation of that session in order to ensure the best results. It supported the proposals to call for a world disarmament conference at the appropriate time with universal participation and adequate preparation." 11/

16. In accordance with its mandate contained in resolution 34/81, the Ad Hoc Committee held two sessions in 1980.

17. The members of the Ad Hoc Committee were aware of the fact that the subject of convening a world disarmament conference had been considered by the Disarmament Commission during its session held between 12 May and 6 June 1980. The report of the Disarmament Commission submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, in the elements of a draft resolution entitled "Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade", 12/ under the heading "Implementation, review and appraisal", recalled, inter alia, that the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly stated: "At the earliest appropriate time, a world disarmament conference should be convened with universal participation and with adequate preparation."

18. In accordance with its mandate contained in resolution 35/151, the Ad Hoc Committee held two sessions in 1981.

19. The members of the Ad Hoc Committee were aware of the fact that, in resolution 35/46 entitled "Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade", the General Assembly recalled, inter alia, that the Final Document of the Special Session of the General Assembly stated: "... at the earliest appropriate time, a world disarmament conference should be convened with universal participation and with adequate preparation" (annex, para. 23 (b)).

10/ A/34/414, annex, p.4

11/ A/34/542, sect. I.

12/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/35/42), para. 19.

20. In paragraph 11 of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, the following statement was included:

"Some delegations expressed the view that the question of holding a world disarmament conference should find a reflection in the work and decisions of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to be held in 1982, and that the United Nations Disarmament Commission might take up this subject in connexion with its recommendations and conclusions to be presented in the Disarmament Commission's report to the special session."

21. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/91, the Ad Hoc Committee held its first session of 1982. The Committee held three meetings from 5 to 8 April.

22. During the session, the Working Group held two meetings on 7 April and prepared the draft report of the Committee.

23. At its 63rd meeting, on 8 April, the Ad Hoc Committee considered and adopted the report which will be submitted to the General Assembly at its second special session on disarmament.

24. In accordance with paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 36/91, the Ad Hoc Committee, through its Chairman, maintained close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes. The updated positions of the nuclear-weapon States were as follows:

China

The position of the Government of China on the question of the World Disarmament Conference remains unchanged. Quite a number of large-scale conferences on disarmament have been held in recent years. In view of the fact that the super-Powers have not shown the slightest sincerity towards disarmament and have obdurately refused to withdraw their aggressor and occupationist troops from abroad, it is doubtful whether the convening of the proposed conference under such circumstances would be of any practical significance. Furthermore, the question of the World Disarmament Conference will be considered by the forthcoming second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, at which delegates from various countries may continue to exchange views on this question.

France

Having, in the past, adopted an attitude favouring, in principle, the idea of a world disarmament conference which, following a suitable period of preparation, would be attended by, among others, the five nuclear-weapon Powers, France none the less recognizes that the international situation, which has recently suffered a further serious deterioration, is not conducive to the useful pursuit of such an undertaking.

France points out, moreover, that such an initiative should take into account the achievements of the 1978 first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the conclusions that will emerge from the second special session, to be held from 7 June to 9 July 1982.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

The world situation and the state of affairs in the arms limitation negotiations have given rise to an urgent need for new, more decisive efforts by States on all fronts in the campaign to rid mankind of the threat of a nuclear disaster and to secure disarmament. The Soviet Union, therefore, considers that the convening of a world disarmament conference would constitute an important step towards uniting all States' efforts in this direction.

In the opinion of the Soviet Union, a world disarmament conference, proceeding on the basis of a thorough discussion of disarmament issues, could agree upon effective approaches to the question of halting the arms race and the accomplishment of real disarmament. The Soviet Union sees the particular importance and utility of this forum in the fact that the conference would adopt not mere recommendations but specific decisions which States would undertake to implement.

The idea of holding a world disarmament conference has gained wide international support, inter alia, at the United Nations. The attempts by some nuclear-weapon States to justify their unconstructive attitude towards this matter by allusions to the deterioration in the international situation are baseless, for it is precisely in such circumstances that the maintenance of peace requires a redoubling of efforts to contain the arms race and make use of every opportunity to accomplish the goals of disarmament, including the opportunities that would be afforded by the convening of a World Conference.

In its decisions the General Assembly has repeatedly referred to the possibility of holding a world conference after its second special session devoted to disarmament. It follows logically that, at the second special session, the Assembly can, while debating whether to convene a World Conference, express an opinion as to when this gathering should be held.

The Soviet Union is firmly convinced that success of the special session of the General Assembly in setting a date and deciding on means of preparing specifically for a world disarmament conference would be greeted with satisfaction by the entire world community, as an indication of the determination of Member States to devote particular attention to discussing and resolving disarmament issues, which are so vital to all mankind.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The Government of the United Kingdom maintains the view it has expressed in previous years that in the present international climate it is not useful to consider holding a world disarmament conference. Accordingly, the United Kingdom continues to doubt the usefulness of further meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference and in any event thinks it would be inappropriate for the Committee to undertake any substantive work at this stage.

United States of America

The United States continues to believe that it is premature to set a date and begin preparations for the convening of a world disarmament conference. As noted in the views of the United States contained in the 1981 report of the Ad Hoc

Committee on the World Disarmament Conference to the General Assembly, the United States believes there is insufficient political agreement on the issues which would presumably be addressed at such a conference. This lack of agreement would probably hinder rather than assist efforts to reach concrete and verifiable arms control measures.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE FROM 1978
TO 1982 BY THE AD HOC COMMITTEE, INCLUDING
THOSE RELATING TO ITS MANDATE

A. Conclusions and recommendations made in 1978 13/

25. In the light of the report, especially of the conclusions contained in paragraph 8 thereof, and the relevant paragraphs of the Final Document adopted by the General Assembly at its Tenth Special Session, including in particular paragraphs 115, 122 and 126, the Assembly may wish to consider taking any possible steps thereon, pursuant to the above paragraphs, as well as the renewal of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee.

B. Conclusions and recommendations made in 1979 14/

26. In view of the latest developments in the field of disarmament deliberations and negotiations in different forums, as indicated in paragraph 12 of the report, the Ad Hoc Committee reiterated that the idea of a world disarmament conference had received wide support by the membership of the United Nations, however, with varying degrees of emphasis and differences on conditions and certain aspects related to the question of its convening. No consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference under present conditions has yet been reached among the nuclear-weapon States, whose participation in a world disarmament conference has been deemed essential by most Members of the Organization.

27. Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly may wish to decide that, after its second special session devoted to disarmament, a world disarmament conference would take place as soon as the necessary consensus on its convening has been reached.

28. The General Assembly may wish to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and to request it to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the States possessing nuclear weapons in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes, as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee.

13/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/33/28), para. 13.

14/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/34/28), paras. 14-16.

C. Conclusions and recommendations made in 1980 15/

29. The Ad Hoc Committee reiterated that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support by the membership of the United Nations however, with varying degrees of emphasis and differences on conditions and certain aspects related to the question of its convening, including aspects related to the deteriorating international situation. It was also evident from the updated indications of positions of the nuclear-weapon States, as reflected in paragraph 13 of the report, some of which contain new elements requiring careful consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee, that no consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference under the present conditions has yet been reached among the nuclear-weapon States whose participation in a world disarmament conference has been deemed essential by most Members of the Organization.

30. Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, and in view of the fact that the Disarmament Commission, as indicated in paragraph 10 of the report, considered it pertinent to recall paragraph 122 of the Final Document (resolution S-10/2), the General Assembly may wish to decide that after its second special session devoted to disarmament a world disarmament conference would take place as soon as the necessary consensus on its convening has been reached.

31. The General Assembly may wish to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and to request it to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes, as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee.

D. Conclusions and recommendations in 1981 16/

32. The Ad Hoc Committee reiterated that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support by the membership of the United Nations, however, with varying degrees of emphasis and differences on conditions and certain aspects related to the question of its convening, including aspects related to the deteriorating international situation. It was also evident from the updated indications of positions of the nuclear-weapon States, as reflected in paragraph 14 of the report, some of which confirmed certain elements requiring careful consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee, that no consensus with respect to the convening of a world disarmament conference under the present conditions has yet been reached among the nuclear-weapon States whose participation in such a conference has been deemed essential by most States Members of the Organization.

15/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/35/28), paras. 14-16.

16/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 28 (A/36/28), paras. 15-17.

33. Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly may wish to decide that after its second special session devoted to disarmament a world disarmament conference would take place as soon as the necessary consensus on its convening has been reached.

34. The General Assembly may wish to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee and to request it to continue to maintain close contact with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States in order to remain currently informed of their attitudes, as well as with all other States, and to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee.

E. Conclusions and recommendations at the first session of 1982

35. The Ad Hoc Committee reiterated the conclusions and recommendations contained in its report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session.

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