

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

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-THIRD SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 28 (A/33/28)



UNITED NATIONS

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CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 4	1
II. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE	5 - 12	2
III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	13	4

ANNEX

Excerpts from summary of statements made by the representatives of Member States in the general debate of the <u>Ad Hoc</u> Committee on the World Disarmament Conference		5
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. By its resolution 32/89 of 12 December 1977, the General Assembly requested the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference: 1/

(a) To submit to the General Assembly at its special session devoted to disarmament a special report on the state of its work and deliberations;

(b) To maintain close contact with the representatives of the States possessing nuclear weapons in order to remain currently informed of their respective attitudes, as well as to consider any relevant comments and observations which might be made to the Committee and to report to the Assembly at its thirty-third session.

2. The elected officers of the Ad Hoc Committee were as follows:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. Fereydoun Hoveyda	(Iran)
<u>Vice-Chairmen:</u>	Mr. Carlos T. Alzamora	(Peru)
	Mr. Henryk Jaroszek	(Poland)
	Mr. Artémon Simbananiye	(Burundi)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. Juan López-Chicheri and his successor, Mr. Fermin Zelada	(Spain)

3. France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland participated in the work of the Committee by virtue of paragraph 3 of resolution 3183 (XXVIII). Under the same provision, China and the United States of America maintained contact with the Ad Hoc Committee through its Chairman. The German Democratic Republic attended meetings of the Committee as an observer.

4. The Working Group established in 1974 2/ continued to function.

1/ By its resolution 3183 (XXVIII) of 21 December 1976, 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/ The composition of the Working Group is as follows: Burundi, Egypt, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Poland and Spain (Chairman). Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Japan, Mongolia, Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Yugoslavia participated in the Working Group as observers.

II. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

5. In accordance with its mandate mentioned in paragraph 1 above, the Ad Hoc Committee held two sessions in 1978.

6. During the first session, which was devoted to the preparation and adoption of the special report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its tenth special session, ^{3/} the Committee held three meetings between 13 March and 8 May, and the Working Group held eight meetings between 28 March and 3 May.

7. At its 43rd meeting, on 8 May 1978, the Ad Hoc Committee considered and adopted the special report, which included five sections entitled "Introduction", "Work of the Committee", "Summaries of the positions of Governments on various aspects of a world disarmament conference", "Conclusions, observations and recommendations made from 1975 to 1977 by the Ad Hoc Committee, including those relating to its mandate", and "Conclusions of the special report made by the Ad Hoc Committee", and an annex entitled "Comprehensive review of the positions of States as presented to the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference and to other forums".

8. The Ad Hoc Committee's conclusions, contained in section V, paragraphs 95 and 96 of the special report, were as follows:

"The Ad Hoc Committee reiterates 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. 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.

"The Ad Hoc Committee considers that the General Assembly, at its special session devoted to disarmament, might wish to draw its conclusions on the subject in the light of this special report and taking into account the relevant sections of the report of its Preparatory Committee. ^{4/}"

9. During its second session, the Ad Hoc Committee held two meetings, on 11 and 15 September 1978, and reviewed the discussions that had taken place at the tenth special session on a world disarmament conference (see A/AC.167/SR.44 and 45). Statements were made by a number of countries, excerpts from which are included in the annex to the present report. Members of the Committee were also fully aware of the positions previously expressed by the Governments of other States on the

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

^{4/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Tenth Special Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/S-10/1).

convening of a world disarmament conference. 5/ The Working Group held four meetings between 12 and 14 September 1978. The Ad Hoc Committee at its 45th meeting considered and adopted its report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session.

10. The Ad Hoc Committee was conscious of the fact that at its tenth special session the General Assembly, on 30 June 1978, adopted resolution S-10/2, embodying the Final Document of the session, in paragraph 122 of which the Assembly stated:

"At the earliest appropriate time, a world disarmament conference should be convened with universal participation and with adequate preparation."

11. The Ad Hoc Committee also 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).

12. In accordance with paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 32/89, the Ad Hoc Committee, through its Chairman, maintained close contact with the representatives of States possessing nuclear weapons in order to remain currently informed of their respective attitudes and obtained the following summary of their positions:

China

The position of China has not changed. According to that position a world disarmament conference can only be convened if certain prerequisites for the creation of conditions conducive to genuine disarmament are met. The convening of a world disarmament conference, or preparation for such a conference, could only be acceptable if all the nuclear-weapon States, in particular the two nuclear-weapon Powers, would undertake an obligation (a) not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, particularly against the non-nuclear-weapon States; and (b) to end all forms of military presence on the territory of other countries by those concerned. If such pre-conditions are met, a world disarmament conference can be convened with a clear aim, namely, to consider the question of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all nuclear weapons.

France

The holding of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the main objectives of which would be to define the general principles applicable in the matter of disarmament, to determine the main foci of efforts in

5/ 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.

that regard and to enhance the effectiveness of the existing negotiating machinery, does not in any way lessen the interest of France in the convening of a world disarmament conference. It is hoped that the necessary prerequisites for such a gathering - in particular, endorsement by all the nuclear Powers - can be met in the near future.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

In the opinion of the Soviet Union, the time has come to take new steps to expedite a decision on the question of convening a world disarmament conference. The Ad Hoc Committee could proceed at once to include in its report a recommendation to the General Assembly to consider at its thirty-third session the question of setting a date for convening a world disarmament conference and establishing a preparatory committee for the conference. Such a recommendation would be particularly appropriate and necessary in the light of the fact that the Assembly, at its special session devoted to disarmament, proposed the inclusion in the agenda of its thirty-third session of an item entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session". It is obvious that this also implies consideration by the Assembly of the question of convening a world disarmament conference.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

There is no change in the position of the United Kingdom, which has been expressed on many occasions in the past. In the view of the United Kingdom, the participation of all militarily significant States, including all nuclear-weapon States, remains an essential element in convening a world disarmament conference.

United States of America

The position of the United States has not changed. According to that position, the General Assembly could note by consensus that a world disarmament conference could play a role in the disarmament process at an appropriate time. However, under the circumstances, it is not the lack of a suitable forum but the lack of political agreement that constitutes the principal obstacle to progress in disarmament. A world disarmament conference would be unlikely to overcome this lack of agreement and thus would more probably hinder, rather than assist, efforts to reach concrete arms control agreements. It, therefore, would be premature at this time to convene, to set a date or to start preparations for a world disarmament conference.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

13. In the light of the present 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 special session devoted to disarmament, 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.

ANNEX

Excerpts from summary of statements made by the representatives of
Member States in the general debate of the Ad Hoc Committee on the
World Disarmament Conference (A/AC.167/SR.44)

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Bulgaria	6
Czechoslovakia	7
Hungary	7
Mongolia	8
Poland	8
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	9

BULGARIA

The representative of Bulgaria congratulated the delegation of the Soviet Union on its proposal that the agenda of the General Assembly at its thirty-third session should include a new item relating to the conclusion of an international convention on the strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States.

He welcomed the fact that the Committee had prepared a special report for the tenth special session of the General Assembly. ^{a/} The report, together with the discussions and documents of the special session, reflected the great importance and urgency of convening the world disarmament conference. The idea had the support of the great majority of the delegations during the session and of the vast number of States represented at the Conference of non-aligned countries, held recently at Belgrade.

He recalled that the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs had stated at the special session that mankind needed a universal forum authorized to adopt effective and binding decisions on specific disarmament problems, and that the world disarmament conference could be such a forum (A/S-10/PV.7, p. 52).

When drafting its report to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session, the Committee must take into account the discussions held during the special session, as well as the documents submitted for consideration and those adopted at that session. The Final Document of the tenth special session (Assembly resolution S-10/2) clearly laid down, among the measures which must be taken, the early convening of the world disarmament conference. His delegation therefore considered that the Committee's next report to the General Assembly should state that the Committee overwhelmingly supported the idea of the world disarmament conference and should emphasize the necessity of embarking on practical steps for convening the conference at an early date.

The new organizational measures to be adopted by the General Assembly with regard to the preparation of the conference should be based on the decisions adopted at the tenth special session and on the Committee's report. His delegation stood ready to co-operate actively, in accordance with its unreserved support for the idea of the prompt convening of the world disarmament conference.

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

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The representative of Czechoslovakia said that Czechoslovakia had always supported the idea of convening a world disarmament conference. The conference should be a universal forum that could adopt concrete disarmament measures and further elaborate and extend the political principles of disarmament. Accordingly, the conference should follow up and, in some areas, finalize the work begun in the multilateral disarmament negotiations.

Although the final goal of permanent peace and general and complete disarmament was still a distant one, and although the threat of war had not yet been warded off, Czechoslovakia, together with other socialist countries, was determined not to relax in the struggle for effective and equitable safeguards that would ensure a lasting peace. The convening of the world conference would provide an opportunity of making progress towards that goal.

An encouraging development was the growing number of countries that supported the early convening of a world disarmament conference, as was reflected in paragraph 122 of the Final Document of the tenth special session (resolution S-10/2) and the similar conclusion reached by the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries at Belgrade.

Despite the undeniable progress made, the special session had in no way obscured the complexity and political sensitivity of the disarmament negotiations. The convening of the world disarmament conference would provide an opportunity for responding to many of the questions raised at the special session. His delegation was in favour of a decision by the Committee to recommend to the General Assembly the early convening of the conference.

HUNGARY

The representative of Hungary said that it had been amply demonstrated at the tenth special session of the General Assembly that there was general interest in the convening of a world disarmament conference, as was reflected in paragraph 122 of the Final Document (resolution S-10/2).

The current difficulties should not deter the Committee from continuing its work. It should be remembered that, despite the earlier scepticism of some, the tenth special session devoted to disarmament had yielded positive results: more attention was being devoted to disarmament issues, there was a growing sense of urgency, and new ideas had emerged, including the Soviet proposal on the strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States.

The Committee must do all in its power to remove the remaining obstacles and continue to work on the convening of a world disarmament conference. That conclusion should be appropriately reflected in the report which the Committee submitted to the General Assembly.

MONGOLIA

The representative of Mongolia commented on the efficient work done by the Committee in submitting a special report to the Assembly at its special session devoted to disarmament. a/ The results of that session constituted an important step forward in the efforts to terminate the arms race and to secure disarmament.

All the Committee's efforts should be directed henceforth to the implementation of the provisions of the Final Document of the tenth special session (resolution S-10/2), including the convening of the world disarmament conference, with universal participation. The Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it examine issues related to the conference, including the relevant dates and the establishment of the body which would carry out the preparatory work.

POLAND

The representative of Poland said that the past year had witnessed an active search on all planes for progress in disarmament. Multilaterally it had been crowned by the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, regionally it had continued at the Vienna talks, bilaterally it had concentrated on the decisive SALT negotiations. Yet the results of the past year's endeavours had been inversely proportional to the latter's intensity. The current standstill in disarmament was the effect of the struggle between those who genuinely supported disarmament and those who were opposed to it. In that way, the approach of Governments to the idea of a world disarmament conference had also become an acid test of their real attitudes towards disarmament.

After referring to the latest Soviet proposal to include in the agenda of the thirty-third session of the General Assembly an item entitled "Conclusion of an international convention on the strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States", he said that paragraph 122 of the Final Document of the tenth special session (resolution S-10/2) should constitute the point of departure for the report which the Ad Hoc Committee must submit to the General Assembly. The tenth special session had opened up a qualitatively new phase of the struggle for a world disarmament conference. In fact, paragraph 122 of its Final Document created all the conditions for proceeding from a stage of discussion of the idea of a world disarmament conference to concrete preparations for it.

- The report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its tenth special session a/ and the statements made during the current session of the Committee should also be taken into account. The Committee could thus recommend to the General Assembly that, in the light of the decisions adopted during the tenth special session, it should be transformed into a preparatory committee for the world disarmament conference, with a mandate which adequately combined the elements of the recommendations of paragraph 122 of the Final Document, namely those of convening a world disarmament conference at the earliest possible time and its universal participation and adequate preparation.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics said that, at the special session devoted to disarmament, the USSR had taken a number of constructive initiatives and formulated a number of specific new proposals for disarmament. Furthermore, the Soviet Union, understanding the desire of non-nuclear countries to receive from the nuclear Powers guarantees under international law that they would not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries, had proposed including in the agenda of the thirty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly an item entitled "Conclusion of an international convention on the strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States" and had submitted a draft convention on the subject.

In an effort to ensure that disarmament questions were considered with the participation of all States without exception, the Soviet Union had advanced and consistently championed the idea of convening a world disarmament conference. The General Assembly had supported the holding of such a conference at every session since 1971. The idea of convening such a conference had received broad support throughout the world. Together with the socialist countries, the non-aligned countries were actively advocating the convening of such a conference. At the recent Belgrade meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of non-aligned countries the idea of holding a world disarmament conference had again been mentioned with approval. His delegation noted with satisfaction that an appeal for the convening of such a conference was contained in the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which stated that a world disarmament conference should be convened at the earliest appropriate time with universal participation and with adequate preparation.

Accordingly, his delegation believed that the time had come for taking new steps to accelerate the solution of the question of convening the conference. During its more than four years of activity the Ad Hoc Committee had done a great deal of useful work and had laid the foundations for proceeding directly to the preparations for convening the conference. His delegation therefore felt that the Ad Hoc Committee could at present include in its report a recommendation to the General Assembly to consider at its thirty-third session the question of determining the date for convening a world disarmament conference and of establishing a preparatory body for it.

The Soviet Union was convinced that the task of implementing the programme of action in the field of disarmament which had been adopted by the special session devoted to disarmament could best be handled by a world disarmament conference. It held that precisely such a conference could provide the forum that, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR had said "could immediately take effective decisions that would be truly binding on all States".

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