

**REPORT
OF THE
DISARMAMENT COMMISSION**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-THIRD SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 42 (A/33/42)



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New York, 1978

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly at its tenth special session, held from 23 May to 30 June 1978, established the Disarmament Commission, defined its mandate and determined its functions. Paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session reads as follows:

"118. The General Assembly establishes, as successor to the Commission originally established by resolution 502 (VI) of 11 January 1952, a Disarmament Commission, composed of all States Members of the United Nations, and decides that:

(a) The Disarmament Commission shall be a deliberative body, a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, the function of which shall be to consider and make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament and to follow up the relevant decisions and recommendations of the special session devoted to disarmament. The Disarmament Commission should, inter alia, consider the elements of a comprehensive programme for disarmament to be submitted as recommendations to the General Assembly and, through it, to the negotiating body, the Committee on Disarmament;

(b) The Disarmament Commission shall function under the rules of procedure relating to the committees of the General Assembly with such modifications as the Commission may deem necessary and shall make every effort to ensure that, in so far as possible, decisions on substantive issues be adopted by consensus;

(c) The Disarmament Commission shall report annually to the General Assembly and will submit for consideration by the Assembly at its thirty-third session a report on organizational matters; in 1979, the Disarmament Commission will meet for a period not exceeding four weeks, the dates to be decided at the thirty-third session of the Assembly;

(d) The Secretary-General shall furnish such experts, staff and services as are necessary for the effective accomplishment of the Commission's functions."

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

2. Pursuant to paragraph 118 (c) of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission met at United Nations Headquarters from 9 to 13 October 1978, in order to consider the organization of its work and report thereon to the Assembly at its thirty-third session. During that period the Commission held five meetings.

3. The 1st meeting of the Commission, held on 9 October 1978, was opened by the Secretary-General who made a statement (A/CN.10/PV.1). At the same meeting the Commission elected by acclamation Mr. M. A. Vellodi (India) as Chairman. The

Commission decided that its Bureau would be composed of one Chairman, eight Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur elected on the basis of equitable geographic distribution.

4. At its 2nd meeting on 10 October, the Commission, on the basis of nominations received from regional groups, elected the following Member States as Vice-Chairmen of the Commission: Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Ghana, Madagascar, Mexico and Yugoslavia. At the same meeting, the Commission elected by acclamation Mr. José María Otegui (Argentina) as its Rapporteur.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

5. At its 3rd to 5th meetings, held from 11 to 13 October, the Commission discussed matters related to the organization of its work and agreed that the following recommendations should be made to the thirty-third session of the General Assembly:

A. Date and duration of the first substantive session

6. Paragraph 118 (b) of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session states that "in 1979, the Disarmament Commission will meet for a period not exceeding four weeks, the dates to be decided at the thirty-third session of the Assembly". Accordingly, the Disarmament Commission recommends that, in 1979, a period of four weeks beginning 14 May should be provided for its session to be convened at Headquarters in New York.

7. The Disarmament Commission considers that at that session it might become necessary to set up a committee of the whole and proposes that preliminary arrangements be made to allow both the Disarmament Commission and the committee of the whole, should one be set up, to meet simultaneously.

B. Rules of procedure

8. Paragraph 118 (b) of the Final Document reads as follows:

"The Disarmament Commission shall function under the rules of procedure relating to the committees of the General Assembly with such modifications as the Commission may deem necessary and shall make every effort to ensure that, in so far as possible, decisions on substantive issues be adopted by consensus."

C. Records of meetings and working languages

9. On the basis of the decisions taken at the tenth special session, verbatim records were provided for the current organizational session of the Commission. The Commission recommends that verbatim records should continue to be provided for the meetings of the Commission in 1979. The Commission also recommends that Arabic be included among its working languages.

D. Election of the Bureau

10. The Commission recommends that the present Bureau should serve in office until the end of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The Commission also recommends that an organizational meeting be held in December 1979, before the conclusion of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, for the purpose, inter alia, of electing the Bureau for 1980.

E. Agenda for the 1979 session

11. Paragraph 118 (a) of the Final Document states that the Disarmament Commission shall be a deliberative body and a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly. It also states that the functions of the Disarmament Commission shall be:

(a) to consider and make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament;

(b) to follow up the relevant decisions and recommendations of the special session devoted to disarmament; and

(c) inter alia, to consider the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament to be submitted as recommendations to the General Assembly and, through it, to the negotiating body, the Committee on Disarmament.

12. Keeping in mind its mandate, as stated above, and in order to facilitate the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament by the Committee on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission recommends that, without prejudice to any decisions that the General Assembly may take at its thirty-third session and which may have a bearing on the Commission's work in 1979, the consideration of the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament should be accorded priority at its session in May/June 1979. The Commission also recommends that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to invite Member States to communicate to him their views and suggestions on the comprehensive programme of disarmament by 31 March 1979, for transmission to the Disarmament Commission.

13. The Disarmament Commission further considers that, in the light of the decisions taken at the thirty-third session of the General Assembly which may have a bearing on the agenda of the 1979 session of the Commission, it might be useful for the Commission to hold another organizational session towards the end of the thirty-third session of the Assembly.

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