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Agenda item 62

REDUCTION *OF* MILITARY BUDGETS

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Virgilio A. REYES (Philippines)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Reduction of military budgets" was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-third session in accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/36 of 30 November 1987,
2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1988, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.
3. At its 2nd meeting, on 12 October, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on the disarmament items allocated to it, namely items 51 to 69 and 139, 141 and 145. The deliberations on those items took place between the 3rd and the 25th meetings, from 17 October to 2 November (see A/C.1/43/PV.3-25). Consideration of and action on draft resolutions on those items took place between 3 and 18 November (see A/C.1/43/PV.26-43).
4. In connection with item 62, the First Committee had before it the following documents;

(a) Report of the Disarmament Commission; 1/

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/43/42).

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on military expenditures in standardised form reported by States (A/43/567 and Add.1);

(a) Letter dated 31 March 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the texts of the communiqué and the appeal issued by the Committee of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty at its Sofia meeting, on 29 and 30 March 1988 (A/43/276);

(cl) Letter dated 16 June 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/43/410-S/19942);

(8) Letter dated 29 September 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final documents adopted by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Nicosia from 5 to 10 September 1986 (A/43/667-S/20212);

(f) Letter dated 6 October 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the final communiqué of the Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to the forty-third session of the General Assembly, held in New York on 3 October 1988 (A/43/709)1

(g) Letter dated 31 October 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the texts of the communiqué and the statement issued by the Committee of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Warsaw Treaty Member States on Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance at its Budapest meeting, on 28 and 29 October 1988 (A/C.1/43/7).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS A/C.1/43/L.58 AND Rev.1

5. On 31 October 1988, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Ireland, Peru, Romania, Senegal, Sweden and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics submitted a draft resolution entitled "Reduction of military budgets" (A/C.1/43/L.58), which was later also sponsored by Nigeria. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Romania at the 29th meeting, on 7 November.

6. On 11 November, the sponsors submitted a revised draft resolution (A/C.1/43/L.58/Rev.1), containing the following changes:

(a) In the second preambular paragraph, the phrase "paragraph 59" was replaced by "paragraph 89";

(b) The ninth preambular paragraph, the date "1988" was replaced by "1986";

(c) Operative paragraph 4, which had read:

"Requests the Disarmament Commission to continue consideration of the item entitled 'Reduction of military budgets' and, in this context, to conclude, at its 1989 substantive session, taking into account the content of paragraph 7 as a whole, its work on the last sentence of that outstanding paragraph of the principles that should govern further actions of States in the field of freezing and reduction of military budgets, and to submit its report and recommendations to the General Assembly not later than at its forty-fourth session",

was revised to read:

"Requests the Disarmament Commission to continue consideration of the item entitled 'Reduction of military budgets' and, in this context, to conclude, at its 1989 substantive session, its work on the last outstanding paragraph of the principles that should govern further actions of States in the field of freezing and reduction of military budgets, and to submit its report and recommendations to the General Assembly not later than at its forty-fourth session".

7. At its 36th meeting, on 14 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.58/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 8).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

8. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Reduction of military budgets

The General Assembly,

Deeply concerned about the ever-spiralling arms race and growing military expenditures, which constitute a heavy burden for the economies of all nations and have extremely harmful effects on world peace and security,

Reaffirming once again the provisions of paragraph 89 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, 2/ the first special session devoted to disarmament, according to which the gradual reduction of military budgets on a mutually agreed basis, for example, in absolute figures or in terms of percentage, particularly by nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States, would contribute to curbing the arms race and would increase the possibilities for the reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries,

2/ Resolution S-10/2.

Convinced that the **freezing** and **reduction** of military budgets would have favourable consequences *on* the world economy and financial situation and might facilitate efforts made to increase international assistance for the developing countries,

Recalling that at its twelfth special session, the **second** special session devoted to disarmament, all Member States **unanimously and categorically** reaffirmed the validity of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session, as well as their solemn commitment to it, **3/**

Recalling also that in the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second United Nations Disarmament Decade, it is provided that during this period renewed efforts should be made to reach agreement on the reduction of military expenditures and the **reallocation of resources** thus saved to economy and social development, **especially for the benefit of developing countries, 4/**

Recalling further the provisions of its relevant resolutions, in which it considered that a new impetus should be given to the **endeavours** to achieve agreements to **freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain**, in a balanced manner, military expenditures, **including adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned,**

Aware of the various proposals submitted by Member States and of the activities carried out so far within the framework of the United Nations in the field of the reduction of military budgets,

Considering that the identification and elaboration of the principles that should govern further *actions* of States in **freezing** and reducing military budgets **and** the **other current** activities within the framework of the United Nations **related to the question of the reduction of military budgets** should be regarded as **having the fundamental objective of reaching international agreements on the reduction of military expenditures,**

Noting that the Disarmament Commission, at its 1986 substantive session, agreed upon the above-mentioned principles with the exception of **one** outstanding *paragraph* on which it was generally felt that further consideration was needed, **5/**

1. Declares again its conviction that it is possible to achieve international agreements *on* the reduction of military budgets without

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Special Session, Annexes, agenda items 9 to 13, document A/S-12/32, para. 62.

4/ See resolution 35/46, annex, para. 15.

5/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/41/42), para. 28.8.

prejudice to the right of all States to undiminished security, self-defence and sovereignty)

2. Appeals to all States, in particular to the most heavily armed States, pending the conclusion of agreements on the reduction of military expenditures, to exercise self-restraint in their military expenditures with a view to reallocating the funds thus saved to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of developing countries;

3. Reaffirms that the human and material resources released through the reduction of military expenditures should be reallocated for economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries;

4. Requests the Disarmament Commission to continue consideration of the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets" and, in this context, to conclude, at its 1989 substantive session, its work on the last outstanding paragraph of the principles that should govern further actions of States in the field of freezing and reduction of military budgets, and to submit its report and recommendations to the General Assembly not later than at its forty-fourth session;

5. Draws anew the attention of Member States to the fact that the identification and elaboration of the principles that should govern further actions of States in freezing and reducing military budgets could contribute to harmonising the views of States and creating confidence among them conducive to achieving international agreements on the reduction of military budgets;

6. Urges all Member States, in particular the most heavily armed States, to reinforce their readiness to co-operate in a constructive manner with a view to reaching agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain military expenditures;

7. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets".

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