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SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT

Letter dated 23 March 1977 from the Permanent Representative of the
German Democratic Republic to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you a letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, H.E. Mr. Oskar Fischer, regarding resolution 31/189 B of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly on the convocation of a special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament.

I request you to have the letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 51 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Peter FLORIN
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
Permanent Representative of the
German Democratic Republic
to the United Nations

* A/32/50.

ANNEX

Letter dated 18 March 1977 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of
the German Democratic Republic to the Secretary-General

With reference to resolution 31/189 B of the United Nations General Assembly on the convening of a United Nations special session devoted to disarmament, I should like to inform you as follows:

The German Democratic Republic regards it as the most important and urgent tasks of our time to remove the threat of a new world war and to achieve disarmament. While certain partial results have been achieved in arms limitation and disarmament, the fact remains that the arms race goes on. In the Bucharest Declaration of November 1976 of the Warsaw Treaty participating States (A/31/431-S/12255, annex I), the German Democratic Republic joined the other Treaty members in expressing their readiness actively and constructively to co-operate with all States in solving these problems, which concern the most elementary interests of mankind. In striving to bring about the cessation of the arms race as well as effective steps towards disarmament, the German Democratic Republic is in harmony with the majority of States Members of the United Nations and with peace-loving mankind.

In the wake of political détente, tangible opportunities have emerged for achieving far-reaching international agreements in the field of disarmament. These opportunities must now be used with still greater resolve in order to check the material preparations for war, to strengthen peace and security and to free the peoples from the huge burden placed on them by armaments.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has proposed that the problems of disarmament should be discussed in their entire scope at a world disarmament conference. This idea has met with world-wide approval. The United Nations has supported it in several resolutions. The German Democratic Republic is convinced that such a world forum, if vested with the necessary powers, would have the authority and the potential to achieve a real break-through in the negotiations on disarmament and to move closer to the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament.

The holding of a United Nations special session devoted to disarmament, as decided by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, would be an important stage on the road to such a world conference. The special session should, in our opinion, give priority to the task of working out measures for the substantive and organizational preparation and the holding of the World Disarmament Conference. In so doing, it would also take due account of the specific references in this regard contained in the Political Declaration of Colombo (A/31/197, annex I). The special session could provide an opportunity for conducting a comprehensive exchange of views on the long-term and topical

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questions of disarmament and arms limitation and for discussing specific partial measures. In this respect, maximum attention should be devoted to the "Memorandum of the Soviet Union on questions of ending the arms race and disarmament" of September 1976 (A/31/232) which constitutes an important reference document for the planned special session of the General Assembly, because it covers all essential problems of disarmament in their interrelationship and, moreover, points out ways of solving them.

The special session should contribute by appropriate means to further progress in the work of existing multilateral fora dealing with disarmament. This is desirable in particular for the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva, which has stood its test as an effective working organ, with a record of concrete results achieved in disarmament negotiations.

In determining the procedures and working method of the special session, the basic consideration should be that the problems of arms limitation and disarmament affect the interests of all peoples and that, consequently, the constructive co-operation of all States and, in particular, of the major Powers is needed to solve them.

To achieve good results naturally presupposes strict respect for the principle of undiminished security for all parties involved. The results of the special session might be laid down in a joint declaration of intent, which would be helpful in co-ordinating activities in the field of disarmament.

The German Democratic Republic feels strongly about the need to ensure that the special session will make an effective contribution to solving the problems of disarmament. The preparation of the session will therefore be an exacting task - a fact that should be taken into account in the composition of the Preparatory Committee and in the organization of its work.

(Signed) Oskar FISCHER
