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Agenda item 58

REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS

Report of the First CommitteeRapporteur : Mr. **Doulaye Corentin** KI (Burkina Faso)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The **item** entitled:**"Reduction of military budgets:** "(a) Report of **the Disarmament Commission;** " (b) Report of the **Secretary-General**"

was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-first session, in accordance with **General Assembly resolutions 40/91 A and B** of 12 December 1985.

2. At its 3rd plenary **meeting**, on 20 September 1986, 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 8 October, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on **the disarmament items allocated to it., followed by statements on specific disarmament agenda items and a continuation of the general debate, as necessary.** The deliberations on **those items, namely, items 46 to 65 and item 144, took place between** the 3rd and the 32nd meetings, from 13 October to 4 November (see A/C.1/41/PV. 3-32).

4. In connection with item 58, the First Committee had before it the following documents:

- (a) Report of the Disarmament Commission, 1/
- (b) Report of the Secretary-General on reduction of military budgets (A/41/482) ;
- (c) Report of the Secretary-General on reduction of military budgets (A/41/622 and Add.11) ;
- (d) Letter dated 3 March 1986 from the Acting Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/42/185) ;
- (e) Letter dated 21 March 1986 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/41/230-S/17937 and Corr.1) ;
- (f) Letter dated 10 April 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/41/276) ;
- (g) Letter dated 15 May 1986 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General., transmitting the final documents of the Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 26 to 19 April, 1986 (A/41/341-S/18065 and Corr.1) ;
- (h) Letter dated 1 May 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the German Democratic Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General. (A/41/356) ;
- (i) Letter dated 30 September 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final documents of the Eighth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Harare from 1 to 6 September 1986 (A/41/697-S/18392) ;
- (j) Letter dated 23 October 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General., transmitting the text of the communiqué of the meeting of the Committee of Foreign Affairs Ministers of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, held at Bucharest on 1.4 and 1.5 October 1986 (A/41/744) ;
- (k) Letter dated 23 October 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/41/745).

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

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/41/L.37 AND REV.1

5. On 30 October, Romania submitted a **draft** resolution entitled "Reduction of military budgets" (A/C.1/41/L.37). The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Romania at the 29th meeting, on 3 November, and read as follows:

"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,

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

"Recalling its resolution 34/83 F of 11 December 1979, subsequently reaffirmed by 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,

"Recalling also that since 1981 the Commission on Disarmament has considered at every session the identification and elaboration of a set of principles which should govern further actions of States in the field of freezing and reduction of military budgets intended to harmonize the view of States and create confidence among them,

"Considering that the identification and elaboration of the principles which should govern further actions of States in freezing and reducing military budgets and the other activities performed 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 promoting international agreements on the reduction of military expenditures,

"Noting that the Commission on Disarmament, at its substantive session in 1985, has finalized the above-mentioned set of principles except one on which various alternatives were proposed by Member States,

"1. Recommends the principles which should govern further actions of States in the field of freezing and reduction of military budgets, as annexed, to all Member States for their further examination in the context of new developments and initiatives on the freezing and reduction of military budgets

"2. **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 promoting practical measures on freezing and reduction of military expenditures;**

"3. **Decides** to include in the **provisional** agenda of its **forty-second session** the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets".

'Annex

"PRINCIPLES WHICH SHOULD GOVERN FURTHER ACTIONS OF STATES IN
THE FIELD OF FREEZING AND REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS

"1. Concerted efforts **should** be made by all States, in particular by those States with the largest military arsenals, and by the appropriate **negotiating forums, with the objective of concluding international agreements** to freeze and reduce military **budgets, including adequate verification measures** acceptable to all parties. Such **agreements** should **contribute to genuine reduction of armed forces and armaments** of States **parties, with the aim of strengthening international peace and security at lower levels of armed forces and armaments. Definite agreements on the freezing and reduction of military expenditures are assuming special importance and should be reached within the shortest period of time in order to contribute to the curbing of the arms race, alleviate international tensions, and increase the possibilities of reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries.**

"2. All **efforts in the field of freezing and reduction of military expenditures** should take into account the principles and **purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant paragraph of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2).**

"3. Pending the conclusion of agreements to freeze and reduce military expenditures, all States, in particular the most heavily armed States, should **exercise self-restraint in their military expenditure.**

"4. The reduction of military expenditures on a mutually agreed basis **should** be implemented gradually and in a balanced manner, either on a percentage or on an **absolute basis, so as to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage, and without prejudice to the right of all States to undiminished security and sovereignty and to undertake the necessary measures of self-defence.**

"5. While the freezing and reduction of military budgets is the responsibility of all States to be implemented in stages in accordance with the principle of the greatest **responsibility, the process should begin with those nuclear-weapon States with the largest military arsenals and the biggest military expenditures, to be followed immediately by other nuclear-weapon**

States and militarily significant States. This should not prevent other States from initiating negotiations and reaching agreements on the balanced reduction of their respective military budgets at any time during this process.

"6. Human and material resources released through the reduction of military expenditures should be devoted to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries.

"7. [The text of this paragraph is still under consideration. Alternative formulations for this paragraph are appended to this document.]

"8. Armaments and military activities which would be the subject of physical reductions within the limits provided for in any agreement to reduce military expenditures will be identified by every State party to such agreements.

"9. The agreements to freeze and reduce military expenditures should contain adequate and efficient measures of verification, satisfactory to all parties, in order to ensure that their provisions are strictly applied and fulfilled by all States parties. The specific methods of verification or other compliance procedure should be agreed upon in the process of negotiation depending upon the purposes, scope and nature of the agreement.

"10. Unilateral measures undertaken by States concerning the freezing and reduction of military expenditures, especially when they are followed by similar measures adopted by other States on the basis of mutual example, could contribute to favourable conditions for the negotiation and conclusion of international agreements to freeze and reduce military expenditures.

"11. Confidence-building measures could help to create a political climate, conducive to the freezing and reduction of military expenditures. Conversely, the freezing and reduction of military expenditures could contribute to the increase of confidence among States.

"12. The United Nations should play a central role in orienting, stimulating and initiating negotiations on freezing and reducing military expenditures, and all Member States should co-operate with the Organization as among themselves, with a view to solving the problems implied by this process.

"13. The freezing and reduction of military expenditures may be achieved, as appropriate, on a global, regional or subregional level, with the agreement of all States concerned.

"14. The agreements on the freezing and reduction of military budgets should be viewed in a broader perspective, including respect for and implementation of the security system of the United Nations, and be interrelated with other measures of disarmament, within the context of progress towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control. The reduction of military budgets should therefore be complementary to agreements on the limitation of armaments and disarmament and should not be considered as a substitute for such agreements.

“15. The adoption of the above principles should be regarded as a means of facilitating meaningful negotiations on concrete agreements on the freezing and reduction of military budgets.

* * *

“Proposal for paragraph 7 by Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom Of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

‘Before there can be meaningful negotiations on the freezing and reduction of military budgets the principles of transparency and comparability must be accepted by all parties to any negotiation. To this end, the elaboration of agreed methods of measuring and comparing military expenditures between different periods of time and between countries representing different regions and different budgeting systems is a necessary pre-condition. Thus the use of the standardized international reporting instrument by the participating States, although not sufficient in itself, is an essential first step.

“Proposal for paragraph 7 by the German Democratic Republic

‘*Meaningful negotiations on the freezing and reduction of military budgets require the participating States to exchange, during the negotiating process, a reasonable amount of information on their military budgets. In this respect States may use any means and methods acceptable to them.

“Proposal for paragraph 7 by Pakistan

‘Before there can be meaningful negotiations on the freezing and reduction of military budgets among any group of States there should be an understanding among them concerning the need for an exchange of data and comparability of their military budgets. In this regard, the elaboration of agreed methods for measuring and comparing military budgets is essential. To this end, the use of the standardized international reporting instrument could constitute the first step,

“Proposal for paragraph 7 by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

‘Meaningful negotiations on the freezing and reduction of military budgets require the participating States to exchange on an agreed basis during the negotiating process a reasonable amount of information of their military budgets which will be needed for the purpose of the agreement. In this respect States may use any means and methods acceptable to them. Unreasonable requests for information unrelated to the objectives of the negotiations or setting forth such requests as a pre-condition for the beginning of negotiations might cause damage to these objectives and should be avoided,

"Proposal for paragraph 7 by Sweden"

"Meaningful negotiations on the freezing and reduction of military budgets would require the exchange of a reasonable amount of relevant data and agreement on concepts concerning the measurement and comparability of the military expenditures. The specific methods for measuring and comparing the military expenditures should be elaborated in the context of negotiation & of specific agreements taking into account the scope, nature and purposes of the agreements. Relevant parts of the standardized international reporting system adopted in 1980 by the General Assembly could be useful in this connection."

6. On 11 November, Austria, Colombia, Finland, Indonesia, Ireland, Nigeria, Romania, Senegal and Sweden submitted a revised draft resolution (A/C.1/41/L.37/Rev.1), which contained a number of changes in the preambular and operative parts.

7. At its 41st meeting, on 12 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/41/L.37/Rev.1 without a vote (see pars. 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,

Convinced that the freezing and reduction of military budgets would have favourable consequences on the world economic 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 economic and social development, especially for the benefit of developing countries, 4/

Recalling further the provisions of its resolution 34/83 F of 11 December 1979, subsequently affirmed in its resolutions 35/142 A of 12 December 1980, 36/82 A of 9 December 1981, 37/95 A of 13 December 1982, 38/184 A of 20 December 1983, 39/64 A of 12 December 1984 and 40/91 A of 12 December 1985, 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 expenditure, 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 substantive session in 1986, agreed upon the above-mentioned principles except one on which various alternatives were proposed by Member States, 5/

1. Declares again its conviction that it is possible to achieve international agreements on the reduction of military budgets without prejudice to the right of all States to undiminished security, self-defence and sovereignty;

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

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 could **be** reallocated for economic and social development, particularly for **the benefit of the developing countries;**
4. Requests the Disarmament Commission to continue the consideration of the item entitled "Reduction of military **budgets**" and, in **this context, to** conclude, **at its substantive session** in 1987, 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** at its forty-second **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 harmonizing **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-second **session the** item entitled "Reduction of military **budgets**".
