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**REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS  
ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION**

**United Nations disarmament studies**

**Report of the Secretary-General**

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\* A/42/50.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-first session, the General Assembly, under the item entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session", adopted resolution 41/86 C of 4 December 1986, the operative part of which reads as follows:

**"The General Assembly,**

**"...**

**"1. Reaffirms the value of United Nations disarmament studies and the need for a thorough appraisal of the subject;**

**"2. Takes note with appreciation of the views of Member States contained in the report of the Secretary-General: 1/**

**"3. Invites those Member States that have not yet done so to communicate to the Secretary-General, by 1 April 1987, their views and proposals on how the work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament studies can be further improved;**

**"4. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit the replies received in 1987 to the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies and to the General Assembly at its forty-second session;**

**"5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-second session the item entitled 'United Nations disarmament studies'.**

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**"1/ A/42/421 and Add.1 and 2."**

2. The views and proposals received from Member States in response to the request in General Assembly resolution 41/86 C are reproduced in section II below.

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## II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

## BELGIUM\*

(Original : English)

(3 April 1987)

1. The twelve members of the European Community reaffirm that their views on the work of the United Nations in disarmament remain as set out in their message addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in 1986 in response to General Assembly resolution 40/152 K (see A/41/421) .

2. The members of the European Community *are* gratified that a number of Governments provided responses to resolution 40/152 K and that during the course of its sessions in 1986 the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies continued to discuss the issue of how the work of the United Nations in this field might be improved.

3. The Twelve are firmly of the view that studies can and do make an important contribution to a balanced and comprehensive examination of issues in the field of arms control and disarmament. Clearly, a thorough appraisal of the subject of United Nations disarmament studies will benefit from the widest possible cross-section of views of Member States about how such studies might be made even more effective.

4. In its previous message, the Twelve stated, inter alia, that studies present a useful opportunity for all Member States to participate in the disarmament debate, and that, while studies alone are unlikely to resolve fundamental differences, they can make a fundamental contribution to the disarmament process. It is important to maintain the consensus rule, but, as they noted in their previous reply, this does not necessarily mean that there must be consensus on every sentence of a study; there may be occasions on which it is preferable for differing views to receive equal weight and attention in the body of the report without the need to resort to the lowest common denominator of agreement at every point. On the basis of the advice given them by the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies, the members of a group of experts should have sufficient room for manoeuvre in drafting to ensure that balance and flexibility are retained. They should be able to decide on the points for which they seek a concerted substantial result and those for which consensus must be limited to an agreed portrayal of the various views. Which approach is to be adopted in a particular case depends on the stage reached in discussions of the topic in question.

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\* On behalf of the States members of the European Community.

5. An example of this approach is the study submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, entitled "Deterrence and its implications for disarmament and the arms race, negotiated arms reductions and international security and other matters". <sup>1/</sup> This study also exemplifies the guiding role played by the Advisory Board, which formulated the title and provided a group of experts of appropriate calibre and representation. This approach enabled the United Nations to produce a study on a crucial and controversial subject. By reflecting dialogue and outlining differing points of view, greater understanding can be promoted, and ultimately consensus can be promoted in the debate on arms control and disarmament issues within the United Nations.

5. The Twelve urge those States which have not yet done so to submit their comments and ideas. This would facilitate the preparation of the Advisory Board's report and would ensure that all views are taken fully into account when the subject is again considered by the General Assembly at its forty-second session.

#### BULGARIA

(Original: Russian)

[6 April 1987]

1. The People's Republic of Bulgaria considers that United Nations studies are of value in elucidating the pressing problems associated with disarmament. They are indispensable as background documents in the discussion of sundry aspects of arms limitation and disarmament. In that sense they must facilitate progress in this area.

2. It behoves the United Nations to continue its efforts to carry out these studies and renew them where necessary. The involvement of governmental experts from different geographical regions, representing different political and legal systems, would further the thorough and complete consideration of the problems concerned. Efforts should chiefly be concentrated on the essence of those problems, not on secondary and technical issues. The studies should not become a substitute for, or a reason for delaying, settlements on the pressing problems of disarmament.

3. The People's Republic of Bulgaria considers that the United Nations disarmament studies help to identify specific practical steps in this direction, with all due regard for the priority that the international community attaches to matters associated with heading off the arms race and its extension into space and to genuine steps towards nuclear disarmament.

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<sup>1/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87. IX. 2 (previously issued under the symbol A/41/432 and Corr.1).

## PANAMA

[Original: Spanish]

[7 June 1987]

1. The Republic of Panama attaches great importance to the practice established by the United Nations of preparing studies on various aspects of disarmament with a view to the successful performance of the Organization's role.
2. In view of the acknowledged diversity and complexity of the subjects which have to be taken up in these studies, the specialists concerned with reviewing the subject on which a study is being prepared must have excellent academic and scientific knowledge; furthermore, an appropriate political, ideological, geographic and cultural balance must be maintained in the study's components, so as to ensure as far as possible that the experts adopt an independent and objective approach.
3. The Government of Panama, like many countries which do not have a budget for research on military matters, derives significant benefit from United Nations disarmament studies, and therefore strongly advocates expansion of this practice.
4. In this connection, the Government of Panama endorses the view of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies that the purposes of studies, namely, "to assist in ongoing negotiations, to identify possible new areas of negotiation, and to promote public awareness of the problems involved in the arms race and disarmament", remain fully valid.
5. In the view of the Government of Panama, therefore, disarmament studies should continue to serve as a guide to the international community by providing balanced and objective conclusions on the situation prevailing in the various areas of disarmament. In that respect, determined efforts should be made to ensure that the studies produce practical recommendations so that they can be applied to concrete situations. Moreover, every possible effort should be made to ensure that, as far as possible, consensus recommendations, which are acceptable to all parties, are arrived at in the studies.

## SRI LANKA

[Original: English]

[23 April 1987]

1. The Government of Sri Lanka attaches great importance to the studies carried out by the United Nations in accordance with paragraph 96 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2 of 30 June 1978). The United Nations studies on disarmament represent an important manifestation of the central role entrusted to the United Nations in the field of disarmament. The studies carried out so far have contributed to deliberations and

negotiations and facilitated public awareness on disarmament. Such studies represent much more than academic endeavours. They reflect authoritative and representative expert opinions on sensitive security and related issues which are of vital interest to all countries. Sri Lanka therefore believes that the United Nations activities in this area should be strengthened. There is no doubt that studies can be carried out in an efficient and cost-effective manner. However, this cannot be achieved by placing arbitrary financial constraints on studies. Any rationalization of the process of initiating and carrying out United Nations studies should more appropriately be based on the recommendations made by the Advisory Board in this regard.

2. The objectives of United Nations studies in the field of disarmament, as identified in 1979 by the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies, continue to provide a sound framework for work in this regard. Within the parameters identified by the Advisory Board, the studies should endeavour to present their analyses, findings or conclusions in a way which would help the negotiating process. In particular, the studies should provide input to facilitate the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The study being undertaken by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research on the prevention of an arms race in outer space should have such an orientation.

3. To the extent possible, studies should be carried out on the basis of consensus. In view of the complex nature of the security and political issues involved, it would not be realistic to expect consensus reporting on all disarmament subjects studied by governmental experts. The lack of consensus among governmental experts on a given subject should not, however, result in the absence of a report. In such situations, the study should reflect various points of view and leave the task of finding the acceptable common denominator to government negotiators. While the studies could identify prospective areas for achieving progress in disarmament negotiations, they cannot replace the process of intergovernmental negotiations. If consensus is not possible on the totality of a given subject, it should not deter the governmental experts from delineating common elements relating to various constituent parts of the study. The study groups can devise appropriate procedural modalities to facilitate such a presentation.' In the case of the recently concluded study on deterrence, the first of its kind by the United Nations, the group was able to complete its report by devising an interesting procedure to give full expression to divergent viewpoints on the subject. There is no uniform model that can be applied to formulating study reports on various subjects. Depending on the subject and the degree of divergencies, study groups should devise procedures to formulate their report, taking into account the parameters identified by the Advisory Board.

4. Pending the achievement of a long-term framework for United Nations activities in the field of disarmament, such as the comprehensive programme of disarmament, the deliberations of the United Nations General Assembly and the state of play in the Conference on Disarmament should be the basis for identifying subjects for disarmament studies. The Government of Sri Lanka shares the view expressed by the Advisory Board that the Board should be in a position to examine proposals for study before submission to the General Assembly and to advise on orientation, scope, priorities and approaches. However, this should not diminish, in any way, the right of sovereign States to initiate proposals for studies.

5. The General Assembly, in the Final Document of its tenth special session, reaffirmed the universal nature of the concerns and interests in the field of disarmament. While the governmental expert groups appointed to carry out studies should reflect equitable geographical representation, the military significance of countries should not be the only other criterion applicable in the constitution of expert groups. There should be more opportunities for smaller countries of less military significance to be represented in the expert groups.

TOGO

[Original: French]

[7 May 1987]

1. The Government of To90 would like, first of all, to reaffirm yet again the usefulness of the studies conducted by the United Nations in the field of disarmament and to emphasize that such studies should be continued. They help to make political leaders and the general public more aware of disarmament issues and are thus in keeping with the objectives of the World Disarmament Campaign. In this way, such studies help strengthen the important role that the United Nations plays in the maintenance of peace and security in the world; improving them also strengthens the role of the Organization. Consequently, the Government of Togo, which has always supported the principle of strengthening the role of the United Nations, would like to put forward some proposals as regards the form as well as the content of the studies.

#### I. REGARDING FORM

2. The layout of existing United Nations publications, namely Disarmament and the Disarmament Fact Sheets, should be reconsidered. The cover of Disarmament, for example, could be modified to attract greater public attention and elicit greater interest, which might help to diversify the review's readership. Perhaps this cover could display the symbol of the World Disarmament Campaign. The colour of the cover of the Disarmament Fact Sheets should remain the same, rather than change with each issue. Perhaps yellow could be used.

3. These slight changes in format are not likely to generate any new expenditures for the Organization.

#### II. REGARDING CONTENT

4. The Government of Togo would like to commend the quality of the bulk of the studies carried out by either experienced politicians or specialists or groups of experts on disarmament.

5. It believes that many of the studies conducted thus far should be updated. The General Assembly might entrust this task to the Disarmament Commission or another appropriate body.

6. **The Government of Togo also believes that an effort should be made to sensitize States, by approaching political leaders and disarmament researchers as well as weapons manufacturers, in order to make them more aware of the absurdity of the arms race.**
7. **In any event, disarmament studies should address not only the effects of the arms race but also, and essentially, the cause of this race, the monitoring or elimination of which might be of help in solving disarmament problems.**
8. **Such studies should take into account the concerns for security that cause national efforts and the limited resources that countries need to promote the well-being sought after by all men to be diverted towards problems of defence; however, they should also emphasize fundamental values, which ought to guide the lives of all.**
9. **If one accepts that the principal reasons for disarmament research are the prevention of war and its disastrous consequences, the strengthening of peace, and the maintenance of international security through the promotion of a climate of understanding and co-operation, then one must acknowledge that the relationship between disarmament and development - and, consequently, well-being - is equally obvious.**
10. **This issue, too, merits further study, not because disarmament would in itself produce well-being, but because, as its objectives were attained, disarmament would create the most favourable conditions for development, since it would render any military build-up pointless.**
11. **In view of the huge amount of resources that States have allocated to ensure their own security, and in order to reduce expenditures through more effective mutual security arrangements, it is perhaps conceivable that the common contractual commitment to non-aggression and solidarity implied by respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, of which we are all Members, should be the subject of ongoing critical assessment.**
12. **To improve disarmament studies, the Government of the Togolese Republic also believes that the United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament, particularly the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, must be provided with adequate and effective resources to carry out the task given them, which is to promote the objectives of peace, disarmament and development in the various regions of the world.**
13. **Finally, it will be difficult to implement disarmament measures if confidence in the ability of the United Nations to maintain peace is not boosted. It is therefore important that all States take appropriate measures to promote and strengthen further the role of the United Nations in the attainment of the goals set for it.**