

**General Assembly**Distr.  
GENERAL

A/42/542

15 September 1987

ENGLISH

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/FRENCH/RUSSIAN

Forty-second session  
Item 66 of the provisional agenda\*

## WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 41/61 of 3 December 1986, inter alia, recommended that the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference undertake consultations with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States, as well as with all other States, in order to remain currently informed of the development of their positions on the question of convening a world disarmament conference and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-second session on the results of those consultations.
2. By a letter dated 28 August 1987, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference conveyed to the Secretary-General information concerning the consultations he had undertaken in accordance with the provisions of resolution 41/61. The Chairman's letter and the replies received from Governments are annexed to the present report, which is submitted herewith in pursuance of the above-mentioned resolution.

---

\* A/42/150.

**ANNEX**

**Letter from the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the  
World Disarmament Conference to the Secretary-General  
and information received from Governments**

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. LETTER DATED 28 <b>AUGUST 1987</b> FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE <b>AD HOC</b> COMMITTEE ON THE <b>WORLD</b> DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL .....	3
II. INFORMATION <b>RECEIVED</b> FROM GOVERNMENTS . . . . . *.....**...	5
Bulgaria .....	5
China .....	5
<b>France</b> .....	6
Philippines .....	6
Poland .....	6
Sri Lanka .....	7
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics .....	8
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland .....	9
United <b>States</b> of <b>America</b> .....	9

I. **LETTER DATED 28 AUGUST 1987 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

At its forty-first session, on 3 December 1986, the General Assembly adopted resolution 41/61 entitled "World Disarmament Conference", the operative part of which reads as follows:

**"The General Assembly,**

...

**"1. Notes with satisfaction that, in paragraph 14 of its report to the General Assembly, the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference stated the following:**

**'Having regard for the important requirements of a world disarmament conference to be convened at the earliest appropriate time, with universal participation and with adequate preparation, the General Assembly should take up the question at its forty-first regular session for further consideration, bearing in mind the relevant provisions of resolution 36/91, adopted by consensus, in particular paragraph 1 of that resolution, and resolution 40/154, also adopted by consensus';**

**"2. Renews the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee;**

**"3. Recommends that the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee undertake consultations with the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States, as well as with all other States, in order to remain currently informed of the development of their positions on the question of convening a world disarmament conference)**

**"4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-second session on the results of those consultations;**

**"5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-second session the item entitled 'World Disarmament Conference'."**

In view of paragraph 3 of that resolution, in my capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, I convened a meeting of the bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference on 23 April 1987 to address, inter alia, the question of the consultations referred to in that paragraph.

In defining the scope of the Chairman's consultations, the bureau was of the opinion that the wording "as well as with all other States", as stipulated in paragraph 3, should be interpreted as referring to the member States of the Ad Hoc Committee.

...

A/42/542  
English  
Page 4

Accordingly, I transmitted notes verbales to the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States as well as the member States of the Committee, requesting information concerning the positions of their Governments on the question of convening a world disarmament conference.

I have the honour to inform you that to date replies, which are attached herewith, have been received from Bulgaria, China, France, the Philippines, Poland, Sri Lanka, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

(Signed) Nissanka WIJewardane  
Chairman of the  
Ad Hoc Committee on the World  
Disarmament Conference

## II. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

### BULGARIA

(Original: English)

(24 July 1987)

1. The Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria has invariably supported all proposals, initiatives and actions that are aimed at effecting a change in international of faire towards building comprehensive international security on the basis of confidence and co-operation among States.
2. In the tense international situation of the present day marked by the ongoing arms race and the growing threat of its extension into new spheres and getting out of hand, the idea of convening the World Disarmament Conference continues to be a topical one.
3. Together with the other disarmament forums, such a conference would provide new opportunities for concerted efforts by all States in undertaking practical measures to end the arms race and to achieve real disarmament.
4. The Conference could consider and adopt concrete decisions on the many pending proposals, particularly those concerning the elimination of the threat of nuclear war, the avoidance of the danger of transferring the arms race into outer space and its cessation on Earth, and the elimination of nuclear arms and the other weapons of mass destruction by the end of this century.
5. The Government of Bulgaria is of the view that the World Disarmament Conference, the idea of which enjoys widespread support at the United Nations, would contribute to intensifying the ongoing negotiations and to starting new ones on the entire set of disarmament issues, the amelioration of the overall political climate in the world and the establishment of a comprehensive system of peace and security.

### CHINA

(Original: English)

(15 June 1987)

China has always stood for the convening of an international conference to discuss disarmament. As early as 1963, China proposed holding a world summit conference to discuss the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. The two super-Powers that possess the largest arsenals of both nuclear and conventional weapons are now stepping up their arms race, posing a grave threat to world peace and security. It is therefore a matter of utmost urgency to urge them by various means to reduce their armaments. If the majority of the

Member states are in favour of a world conference to discuss how the two super-Powers should take the lead in drastically cutting their armaments, China will be ready to support the idea.

FRANCE

[Original: French]

[27 August 1967]

The French Government has the honour to confirm its position as stated in its letter of 8 July 1966.

PHILIPPINES

[Original: English]

[14 July 1987]

1. The Philippine Government has always supported the disarmament campaign, recognizing that resources expended for the arms race will be put to better use if rechannelled to development efforts. The Philippines has consistently voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions that call for an end to the arms race. This commitment to disarmament is clearly manifested in section 8, article II, of the new Philippine Constitution, which states that "the Philippines, consistent with national interest, adopts and pursues a policy of freedom from nuclear weapons in its territory".

2. As a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference the Philippines fully supports all measures that will eventually lead to complete and general disarmament. The convening of the World Disarmament Conference participated in by Member States, especially the super-Powers, is a step in this direction.

POLAND

[Original: English]

[15 July 1987]

1. The Government of the Polish People's Republic - considering the exceptionally painful experiences of Poland and the Polish nation during the Second World War - has traditionally attached the greatest significance to peace, international security, disarmament and peaceful co-operation between States. The unceasing arms race, the development of ever newer and more devastating types of weapons of mass annihilation, especially in the nuclear field, and the possibility of extending the arms race to outer space are among the factors contributing to the exacerbation

of international tension and making it necessary for concrete and radical disarmament steps to be taken without further delay.

2. Its support for the consensus resolution of the forty-first session of the General Assembly concerning a world disarmament conference is a manifestation of a consistent and unfaltering interest that the Government of Poland takes in the concept of convening such a conference which - in our considered view - would allow for the highly complex issue of disarmament to be approached in a comprehensive and universal manner.

3. The Government of Poland stands convinced that no stone should be left unturned in order to accelerate the attainment of the lofty goal of a world rid of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Its conviction in that regard has been borne out by Poland's yearlong efforts, both at the United Nations and on a regional plane, pursued on its own or together with other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty. Among the former, mention must be made of the commonly known initiatives: the Rapacki Plan for a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe, the Gomulka Plan for a nuclear freeze in that region and, more recently, the Jaruzelski Plan for reduced armaments and enhanced confidence in Central Europe, while the latter include, *inter alia*, the initiative of the socialist States submitted at the forty-first session of the General Assembly to create a comprehensive system of peace and international security. These initiatives constitute an eloquent expression of Poland's determination to bring closer the vision of a peaceful world.

4. In the view of the Government of Poland, the consideration of the historic task of disarmament at the forum of a world disarmament conference would - assuming the political goodwill of all participants - allow the identification of the factors that unite States and constitute a common platform of their interests, as well as the opportunity to deal with problems that divide States, in order to work out compromise solutions that would pave the way towards meaningful agreements in the field of arms limitation and disarmament.

#### SRI LANKA

(Original: English)

(10 June 1997)

1. The Government of Sri Lanka believes that the convening of a world disarmament conference could make a positive contribution to progress in negotiations leading to general and complete disarmament under effective international control an objective to which the States Members of the United Nations have declared their commitment. The universal nature of concerns relating to disarmament and the urgency of action to meet those concerns, as acknowledged at the special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, bring into focus the relevance of a world disarmament conference. The Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference has recorded the wide support extended Member States for the convening of such a conference and this has been acknowledged by the General Assembly.

2. Concern has been expressed regarding aspects relating to the deteriorating international situation and their impact on a world disarmament conference. Sri Lanka believes that such a conference, backed by necessary political will in consonance with a declared commitment to disarmament, would make an important contribution to confidence-building. Progress in disarmament, particularly in a multilateral framework, and the easing of international tension have a mutually supportive relationship. A world disarmament conference, appropriately convened, could facilitate such progress by providing political impetus to the process of disarmament negotiations carried out in different forums.

3. The nuclear-weapon States have a primary responsibility in facilitating disarmament negotiations in terms of priorities formulated at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1979. Participation of these States together with other militarily significant States will be essential to ensure meaningful results from a world disarmament conference.

4. The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee should undertake consultations with the Member States with a view to facilitating the re-activation of the Ad Hoc Committee under the renewed mandate (General Assembly resolution 41/61) and with a view to preparing for the convening of a world disarmament conference at the earliest.

#### UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

[Original: Russian]

(16 June 1987)

1. The Soviet Union takes this opportunity once again to state that as a matter of principle it supports the idea of convening a world disarmament conference.

2. The course of world events, the changes in international relations, the growing interdependency of States and the creation of weaponry of unprecedented destructive power objectively dictate the need for new thinking, a realistic approach to questions of war and peace and the abandonment of fixed dogmas and stereotypes. A further manifestation of a responsible attitude to mankind's common concern to ensure the survival of civilization would be the convening of a world disarmament conference, which, through the collective efforts of States belonging to different social systems, could work out effective measures to curb the arms race and proceed to real disarmament.

3. The Soviet Union's actions clearly demonstrate the sincerity of its desire to build a non-nuclear, non-violent and demilitarized world. Demonstrating an understanding of the realities of the nuclear missile age, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has in the recent past alone introduced a whole range of concrete, far-reaching proposals aimed at eliminating all types of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, by the year 2000, preventing the extension of the arms race to outer space and reducing military activity everywhere. It is symbolic that this year, the seventieth anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution, it has made efforts to consolidate the positive



achievements of Reykjavik which have given rise to the possibility of taking practical steps in the area of nuclear disarmament.

4. The Soviet initiatives, and also the proposals of other States that are concerned for the fate of the world, could form the basis for a multilateral exchange of views at a world disarmament conference. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics invites the nuclear Powers that have not yet responded favourably to the idea of convening such a forum to take a more constructive position and bring into the service of the cause of peace the various possibilities that may be offered by a world disarmament conference.

**UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

**(Original: English)**

**(6 July 1967)**

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland believes that, in view of the present international climate, no useful purpose would be served by preparing for the holding of a world disarmament conference. The United Kingdom therefore continues to doubt the usefulness of further meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee.

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**(Original: English)**

**(25 June 1967)**

1. The Government of the United States of America continues to view a favourable international environment as an indispensable prerequisite for a successful world disarmament conference. Therefore, convening such a conference at this time would be premature and counterproductive because of the lack of agreement within the international community on both the conditions necessary for a conference and the substantive issues that it would consider.

2. In addition, such a conference would duplicate existing forums, especially the third special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, scheduled for 1968, and might well impede rather than facilitate ongoing international negotiations to achieve deep, meaningful, and verifiable reductions in the existing level of armaments. Under these circumstances, and in view of the budgetary restrictions on the United Nations, the United States does not believe a world disarmament Conference could fulfil its objectives.