



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/44/165
7 March 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-fourth session
Items 61 and 63 (d)
of the preliminary list*

REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT: CONVENTIONAL DISARMAMENT

Letter dated 3 March 1989 from the Permanent Representative of
Poland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request you to have the present letter and the enclosed text of the interview of General Florian Siwicki, National Defense Minister of Poland (see annex), circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 61 and 63 (d).

(Signed) Dr. Eugeniusz NCWORZYTA
Ambassador

* A/44/50.

ANNEX

Excerptu from the interview of the National Defense Minister of
Poland by Polish television on 26 February 1989

In his interview for Polish television on 26 February 1989, the National Defense Minister of Poland, General Florian Siwicki, presented the programme of Polish armed forces reductions, which is contained in the following excerpts:

In view of favourable international developments, with special reference to the diminishing threats to this country's security and intensification of peaceful trends in Europe, we have taken up again the process of restructuring our armed forces. Poland, just as the other remaining Warsaw Treaty States, is vitally interested in the consolidation of peaceful tendencies. The published data on our armed forces, lowering of military potentials and cuts on military spending, which were widely publicized, are our concrete contribution in the ongoing disarmament dialogue and to increasing confidence between countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the North Atlantic Alliance; they are also a practical confirmation of proposals envisaged in the Jaruzelski Plan.

The favourable international conditionalities and Poland's economic situation allow and inspire us at the same time to accentuate our doctrinal defense principles. The National Defense Committee made a known decision concerning the issues of defense and armed forces.

Intensive work by institutions subordinated to the Defense Ministry yielded a concrete blueprint of changes.

It is not as of today that we start our military cuts. In the past two years, we carried out a reduction in the armed forces totalling 15,000 soldiers and hundreds of arms and technical equipment pieces. Thanks to this, as well as the sharpening of savings rigours, we have been systematically lowering expenditure for national defense since 1987.

At present, we are starting a two-year, complex, very responsible, successive stage of the Army's reorganization. Two more divisions will be dissolved, the 2nd and 15th armoured divisions. The manpower of the 10th and 16th tank divisions will be considerably reduced. A new universal structure will be gradually introduced in all divisions whose organizational shape and armaments will correspond to the needs of conducting present-day defense operations. We will also dissolve a dozen or so regiments of various kinds of forces, including tank, artillery and airforce.

At the same time, over 30 units - of territorial defense, engineering-construction and road-railroad - will be transformed into civil defense formations. They will execute production-and-services tasks, first and foremost for the national economy, including services in hospitals.

Changes will also take place in the organizational system of military training. For example, we intend to combine the Academy of the General Headquarters of the Polish Army and the Military Political Academy so as to form the Academy of National Defense.

Also envisaged is the integration of some higher officer's schools or related profiles of training, petty officer schools and centres for military experts training. The overall number of schools and centres will drop by one third.

In the process of clearcut changes in the system of commanding the armed forces and adjusting its bodies to the new structure and number of people in the army, central institutions of the Ministry of National Defense and operational-level command will also be reduced. For example, there is a plan to combine the air defense forces with the airforce.

As concerns the timetable of action, the nearest future, 3 or 4 March, will see the dissolution of two tank regiments, the battlefield-tactical-missile brigade, the training-truck regiment and several other units. We invite representatives of the mass media, as well as representatives of the corps of military attachés accredited to Poland, to check the credibility of our undertakings on the spot.

In that period our armed forces will be reduced by 40,000 soldiers. About 850 tanks, 900 artillery guns and mortars, 700 armoured vehicles and 80 combat planes will be withdrawn as well as many other items of military technical equipment.

The greater part of the most exploited equipment will be cut up and passed on to steelworks after its working subunits are dismantled. A significant part will reach the national economy.

As a point of curiosity, I can announce that several dozen old-generation aircraft - after their arms were dismantled - were sold last year to hard currency countries for non-military purposes.

Moreover, we are lowering orders for military equipment, which in reality will permit part of the production capacity of defense plants to change to the manufacture of commodities designed for the consumer market and national economy.

At the start I mentioned that defense potential is the derivative of the real and anticipated international situation. We remember that in making any decisions about structural changes in our armed forces, and we will therefore maintain troops in such numbers and secure such equipment for them as will really be indispensable at a given stage to guarantee Poland's security within the allied defense system of the Warsaw Treaty. Besides, less does not have to mean worse or weaker.
