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Agenda item 45

REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Miodrag MIHJLOVIĆ (Yugoslavia)

1. The item entitled "Reduction of military budgets" was included in the provisional agenda of the thirty-third session in accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/85 of 12 December 1977.
2. At its 4th and 5th plenary meetings, on 22 September 1978, 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 3rd meeting, on 6 October, the First Committee decided to consider separately items 125 and 128 and then to hold a combined general debate on the other items allocated to it relating to disarmament, namely, items 35 to 49. The general debate on these items took place at the 29th to 50th meetings, from 6 to 24 November 1978 (A/C.1/33/PV.29-50).
4. On 13 November, Austria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Liberia, Mexico, Norway, the Philippines, Romania, Senegal and Sweden submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/33/L.18) which was subsequently sponsored also by Bolivia, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zaire. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Sweden at the 49th meeting, on 24 November.
5. On 28 November, the Secretary-General submitted a statement (A/C.1/33/L.50) on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution.
6. At its 55th meeting, on 29 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.18 by 101 votes to none, with 18 abstentions (see para. 7 below).

RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

7. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Reduction of military budgets

The General Assembly,

Noting that, according to the Final Document adopted at the tenth special session, the General Assembly should continue to consider what concrete steps would be taken to facilitate the reduction of military budgets, bearing in mind the relevant proposals and documents of the United Nations on this question,

Reaffirming its conviction that there is an urgent need for the nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States to carry out reductions in their military budgets and that this would 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,

Convinced that a reduction of military budgets could be carried out without affecting the military balance to the detriment of the national security of any country,

Conscious that the attainment of the ultimate objectives will require the co-operation of nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States,

Convinced that the systematic measurement and reporting of military expenditures is an important first objective in the move towards agreed and balanced reductions in military expenditure,

Recognizing the need for the availability of a satisfactory instrument for standardized reporting on the military expenditure of Member States,

Recognizing also the value of such an instrument as a means of increasing confidence between States by improving the information on military expenditures,

Recalling that in its resolution 32/85 of 12 December 1977 it requested the Secretary-General to ascertain those States which would be prepared to participate in a pilot test of the reporting instrument and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its special session devoted to disarmament,

Noting with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General 1/ submitted to the General Assembly at its tenth special session in response to paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution 32/85,

Recognizing that the work set in motion by the General Assembly on the

1/ A/S-10/6 and Corr.1 and Add.1.

reduction of military budgets has reached a decisive stage and that successive reports of groups of experts, in particular the latest report issued on 14 September 1977, 2/ have moved the whole exercise to a position where practical steps for testing and refining the proposed reporting instrument could now be taken,

1. Requests the Secretary-General, with the assistance of an ad hoc panel of experienced practitioners in the field of military budgeting:

(a) To carry out a practical test of the proposed reporting instrument with the voluntary co-operation of States from different geographic regions and representing different budgeting and accounting systems;

(b) To assess the results of the practical test;

(c) To develop recommendations for further refinement and implementation of the reporting instrument;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to provide the ad hoc panel referred to in paragraph 1 above with the assistance that may be deemed necessary;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

4. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-fifth session the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets".

2/ A/32/194 and Add.1.