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

Disarmament Week

Report of the Secretary-General

1. At its thirty-third session, the General Assembly, under agenda item 125 on the review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted at its tenth special session, adopted resolution 33/71 D on 14 December 1978, entitled "Disarmament Week". In paragraph 2 of that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a model programme which might assist States that so desire in developing their local programmes for Disarmament Week. Elements of such a model programme are presented in the annex to this report.
2. That resolution was adopted in connexion with the General Assembly's decision in paragraph 102 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session (resolution S-10/2) proclaiming "a week starting 24 October, the day of the founding of the United Nations, as a week devoted to fostering the objectives of disarmament".
3. By the same resolution, the General Assembly, after pointing out the desirability of promoting broad measures on the mobilization of world public opinion in the celebration of a Disarmament Week in order to create an international atmosphere conducive to the implementation of further practical disarmament measures, invited all States to carry out, through the dissemination of information and the organization of symposiums, meetings, conferences and other national and international forums, effective measures to expose the danger of the arms race, propagate the need for its cessation and increase public understanding of the urgent tasks in the field of disarmament and in particular of the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session.

* A/34/150.

4. From the above, it seems clear that the General Assembly places great emphasis on increased public information activities in order to sensitize world public opinion on the dangers of the arms race and on the need to foster disarmament objectives. Thus, in preparing a model programme which may assist States that so desire in developing their local programmes for the annual observance of Disarmament Week, the Secretary-General has been guided by the relevant decisions and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, especially at its tenth special session and at its thirty-third regular session in 1978.

5. As requested by the General Assembly in resolution 33/71 D, the Secretary-General has formulated elements of a model programme which may assist States in developing programmes for Disarmament Week (see annex). The model programme describes activities planned by the Secretariat, suggests types of activities which might be undertaken, as well as topics and themes reflecting the main concerns expressed in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly and other resolutions. The programme is not intended to limit in any way the scope of observances of the Disarmament Week which might be arranged by governmental authorities, non-governmental organizations or the general public. It should be noted that the model programme is intended primarily to assist States, as requested in resolution 33/71 D; thus its focus is on possible activities which could be initiated, promoted, or encouraged by Governments and others in planning their programmes.

ANNEX

Elements of a model programme for Disarmament Week

A. Introduction

1. The annual observance of Disarmament Week is intended to help create an international atmosphere conducive to the implementation of practical measures to end the arms race and promote disarmament. The Week begins on 24 October - United Nations Day, the anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations which, in Article 26, sets forth the goal of promoting "the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources".
2. The General Assembly has urged Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to make Disarmament Week the focus of efforts to mobilize public opinion for disarmament. The Week is an occasion for Member States and organizations to disseminate information about the arms race and to make efforts to halt and reverse it; to increase public understanding of the urgent tasks in the field of disarmament, outlined in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly; to make the public aware of current issues in disarmament and the progress of negotiations on specific disarmament measures; to encourage disarmament education and research; to expose the danger of the arms race, and to propagate the need for its cessation as well as the need for general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In these areas, the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session, especially the Programme of Action (paras. 43 to 112), present a wide range of substantive issues which Disarmament Week events could focus, with the aim of fostering these objectives effectively.
3. An important means by which the United Nations can contribute to fostering the objectives of disarmament is through the dissemination of relevant information, thus helping to create an international atmosphere conducive to the implementation of effective measures to end the arms race and promote disarmament.
4. The Centre for Disarmament, as the central secretariat unit entrusted with disarmament-related matters is, in accordance with paragraph 103 of the Final Document, expanding its activities in the presentation of information on the arms race and disarmament. To that end, the Centre, in co-operation with the Department of Public Information, is preparing various printed and audio-visual materials for dissemination to the public worldwide, not only during Disarmament Week but also on a continuing basis throughout the year.

5. The information materials to be made available to the public will include, among others, the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, Assembly resolutions, and other United Nations publications on disarmament. Disarmament Week 1979 posters, being prepared in co-operation with the Government of Poland, will carry the slogan taken from paragraph 18 of the Final Document: Mankind must choose: halt the arms race or face annihilation.

6. In addition to the dissemination of information, the United Nations, both at Headquarters and in field offices, will undertake a number of other activities such as the setting up of exhibits, lectures and the showing of films, with disarmament themes, during Disarmament Week. Other organizations of the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, also have been invited to observe Disarmament Week with special programmes of their own.

B. Suggested governmental activities

7. Governments could play a major role in promoting the observance of Disarmament Week. Governmental participation in this annual event could involve a number of concrete activities, including dissemination of information to the public.

8. Intensified measures to provide factual information about the arms race and disarmament efforts would help to encourage constructive participation of the public in fostering disarmament objectives. Such information could include, for example, reports on the extent of expenditures on armaments and on the increasing production and acquisition of weapons, both nuclear and conventional. Information based on various United Nations documents in regard to specific disarmament issues could be presented. Governments might consider supplying information to the public about their own policies and initiatives relating to efforts to end the arms race, including their views on their own military establishments and expenditures.

9. Governments could also use the occasion of Disarmament Week to give prominence to official policies and programmes relating to disarmament goals, for example, through statements reaffirming support for the disarmament objective or through other activities likely to attract wide media coverage, such as ratification of agreements on arms control, announcement of plans to reduce military budgets or discontinue development of weapons, testing or deployment programmes, or the introduction of peace studies into national educational curricula.

10. Further, since nuclear disarmament is recognized by the General Assembly as a priority disarmament goal, appeals could be made by Governments, as well as by the public, to the States concerned, in support of General Assembly decisions calling for the non-use of nuclear weapons, the cessation of nuclear weapon tests, ending the nuclear arms race and the progressive and balanced reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery within a comprehensive phased programme with agreed time-frames, leading to their ultimate and complete elimination. At the same time, attention should so be directed to the need to end the conventional arms race. Governments could endorse the General Assembly's call for negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and of conventional armaments, as well as negotiations on the limitation of the international transfer of conventional weapons.

11. In the light of complexity of disarmament problems, information made available to the public should be presented in a factual and balanced manner in order to offer a complete picture. In this connexion, the General Assembly has stated in paragraph 105 of the Final Document that Member States should be encouraged to ensure a better flow of information with regard to the various aspects of disarmament to avoid dissemination of false and tendentious information concerning armaments, and to concentrate on the danger of escalation of the armaments race and on the need for general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

12. Taking into account that the General Assembly in its resolution 33/71 D has suggested that States organize symposiums, meetings, conferences and other national and international forums concerning the danger of the arms race, the need for its cessation and the urgent tasks in the field of disarmament, Governments could, for instance, organize or encourage such meetings during Disarmament Week to focus on the balanced and factual consideration of such topics and issues as the economic and social consequences of the arms race; the threat posed by nuclear weapons; the relationship between disarmament security; ongoing arms control negotiations and discussions; agreements already achieved; the redirection of military research and development as well as other military resources and facilities to peaceful uses; and the strategy and prospects for general and complete disarmament.

13. Other possible themes might include: disarmament and development; disarmament and the New International Economic Order; the world arms trade; the arms race and developing countries; disarmament and education; disarmament and women; children in armed conflict; teaching about disarmament; what the citizen should know about the arms race. The concerns of occupational or other groups could be a focus: i.e., the scientific community and disarmament, trade unions and disarmament.

14. In line with the ideas expressed in paragraph 105 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session, special efforts could be made to develop more positive attitudes towards disarmament. Seminars, public debates or television discussions, and newspaper or magazine articles could examine public attitudes and improve public understanding of facts and issues related to disarmament. Disarmament Week would be a suitable time to focus on the fact that disarmament could result in substantial economic benefits for all countries. The role of institutions or economic sectors within countries which may influence disarmament endeavours also might be discussed. In this connexion, attention might be drawn to the report of the Expert Group on Economic and Social Consequences of the Arms Race and Military Expenditures, a/ a report which the General Assembly, in its resolution 32/75 of 12 December 1977, requested the Secretary-General to give the widest possible distribution and publicity.
15. National parliaments could express their attachment to the aims of general and complete disarmament and to concrete measures of disarmament, during their regular meetings or at special meetings convened for that purpose during Disarmament Week. Appeals or declarations, as appropriate, could be adopted.
16. Governments might consider establishing disarmament advisory committees, thus providing for the participation of citizens from outside the Government in the dialogue on defence and disarmament policy.
17. National postal administrations could issue stamps and utilize postmark cancellations to publicize various disarmament themes. Existing agreements on arms control could be commemorated through a special series of stamps.
18. In community halls or other suitable public places, including public libraries, schools, theatre and cinema halls, railway and air terminals, as well as post offices, Government could set up, during Disarmament Week, exhibitions of photographs, drawings or cartoons on disarmament, preferably by local artists. Such displays could be prepared with the co-operation of non-governmental organizations and the United Nations.
19. Public libraries could present Disarmament Week displays of books and periodicals, and could also organize lectures, film showings and photo exhibitions.
20. Athletic, artistic and/or musical events and competitions could be organized nationally during Disarmament Week to highlight the healthy nature of individual and national competition in the arts, music and sports as opposed to harmful competition in war or in the arms race. Disarmament Week prizes could be awarded.

a/ A/32/88/Rev.1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.IX.1).

21. Efforts of Member States to undertake large-scale distribution of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament by reprinting it or where necessary translating into local languages, would be desirable as a means of ensuring the widest possible publicity for this basic document during Disarmament Week.

C. Suggested activities for academic institutions, research institutes and non-governmental organizations

22. Non-governmental organizations, especially those specializing in disarmament-related issues, play a significant role in focusing public attention and helping to mobilize public opinion in support of disarmament.

23. Through a variety of programmes and activities including publications, seminars, conferences, meetings, film shows and public rallies, non-governmental organizations could generate massive involvement and participation by the public in the commemoration of Disarmament Week.

24. Non-governmental organizations, with their sometimes vast network of affiliates, could also assist or co-operate with interested Governments or United Nations agencies in planning or staging certain activities during Disarmament Week.

25. In this regard, national United Nations associations, in particular, could play a leading role in preparing Disarmament Week programmes. Since Disarmament Week begins on United Nations Day, the various activities organized by United Nations associations and other groups to mark the Organization's founding would provide valuable opportunities for emphasis on the aims of Disarmament Week - both in general reviews of the United Nations role in disarmament and in separate meetings, lectures, exhibitions or information dissemination on various disarmament topics.

26. In paragraph 106 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session, the General Assembly recommended that programmes of education for disarmament and peace studies should be developed. During Disarmament Week, schools and universities, perhaps in co-operation with governmental, non-governmental organizations or United Nations bodies, could arrange lectures, class discussions, film showings and provision of reading materials suited to particular age groups. Children could be asked to design and construct exhibits showing the relative cost of armaments and civilian goods in graphic terms, using models or drawings. Mock General Assembly sessions or arms-control "negotiations" could be organized, in which students could gain insight into the complexity of the problems.

27. Oratorical, essay or poster contests could encourage students and others to develop an interest in disarmament problems and possibilities.

28. Research institutes carrying out studies relating to the arms race and disarmament could publicize such activities during Disarmament Week by, for example, timing the issuance of relevant reports to coincide with the Week. They could issue press releases on research projects that are being undertaken. Researchers could write articles for newspapers or magazines concerning the problems being studied.

D. Role of the media

29. The mass media could also make a significant contribution to fostering the objectives of Disarmament Week by increasing public understanding and awareness of problems created by the arms race and of the benefits of disarmament. Towards this end, special issues of publications and special radio and television programmes on arms race and disarmament topics could be undertaken.

30. Wherever possible, direct public participation or involvement in media activities honouring Disarmament Week could be encouraged. For instance, the public could be invited to participate, either directly or indirectly through the telephone, in radio and television discussions or debates on disarmament-related issues.

31. The press could also provide extensive coverage at the municipal, national and international levels of important Disarmament Week events and activities.

E. Relationship between Disarmament Week and other international observances

32. Disarmament Week could be linked to other focuses of international, regional, national or local concern. An appropriate link for Disarmament Week 1979, for example, could be made in connexion with activities of the International Year of the Child - stressing the importance of disarmament for the security and happiness of today's children and for future generations. The fortieth anniversary of the start of the Second World War in 1939 is another example of a parallel occasion likely to receive notice in a number of countries: in statements or meetings recalling the agency of that war, emphasis on the need to end the arms race and to prevent further such wars would be natural.

33. In 1980, the preparation of a new United Nations International Development Strategy for the 1980s might appropriately be linked with the theme of disarmament and development; the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women to be held in Copenhagen in July 1980 will offer opportunities to underline the role of women in promoting disarmament efforts; and the UNESCO International Congress on Disarmament Education will be held in 1980. UNESCO has proposed that 1980 be designated as International Year for Science and Technology for Development; observance of such a Year could highlight the waste of research personnel and facilities currently devoted to military purposes. The next United Nations international year - 1981, designated as Year of the Disabled - could remind the public of the millions crippled by war injuries. A connexion with Disarmament Week could also be developed in regard to local events or programmes concerning such matters as economic development, health, environmental protection, conservation of resources. The links between Disarmament Week and other themes, such as those mentioned above, could be highlighted by slogans publicized through posters, brochures, spot announcements on radio and television, etc. In connexion with the International Year of the Child, for example, a slogan such as "Support for Disarmament - For the Sake of All Children" might be appropriate.

34. Disarmament Week could be an occasion to initiate continuing activities. It should be seen not merely as a one-week observance, but as the impetus for year-round efforts to increase public awareness of the danger of arms and of the possibilities of ensuring security with the least diversion of resources for armaments. Each successive Disarmament Week could present an annual occasion for the public to measure the progress of Governments in undertaking substantive measures to achieve disarmament.
