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

Dissemination of information on the arms race and disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, in paragraph 5 of its resolution 33/71 G of 14 December 1978, entitled "Dissemination of information on the arms race and disarmament", requested the United Nations Centre for Disarmament to increase contacts with non-governmental organizations and research institutions, in accordance with paragraph 123 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session (resolution S-10/2) and requested the Secretary-General, after appropriate consultations, to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session on other ways of encouraging the role of such organizations and institutions in the field of disarmament.
2. In paragraph 123, the General Assembly had stated:

"The Centre should ... increase contacts with non-governmental organizations and research institutions in view of the valuable role they play in the field of disarmament. This role could be encouraged also in other ways that may be considered as appropriate".
3. The Secretary-General has expressed support for increased contacts on various occasions. He said, inter alia, that public opinion in the world should be actively aware of the dangers of current developments in the armaments field and should not adopt a defeatist or fatalistic attitude in the face of the appalling reality of the arms race. He stated that peoples as well as nations had to be directly involved if world public opinion was to be brought effectively to bear on disarmament. Thus, the non-governmental organizations have an essential role to play as a source of ideas to Member States and valuable information to the general public.

4. The Centre for Disarmament, in its work, fully recognizes the role played by the non-governmental organizations in the field of disarmament and is conscious of the valuable contribution they can make, in particular, to the realization of the aims set forth in the Final Document of the tenth special session. It also recognizes the need for and the importance of generating active, world-wide, public support for disarmament, through extensive and objective information on the arms race and its devastating consequences. In this respect, the Centre appreciates the important and instrumental role of the non-governmental organizations in the dissemination of information on the arms race and on disarmament, thus mobilizing the public in support of disarmament by making relevant information available through their own distribution facilities to supplement information programmes of the United Nations. With this in view, the Centre for Disarmament continues to provide and intends to intensify its co-operation with the non-governmental organizations, active in the field of disarmament, through encouragement as well as practical support. To this end, since the special session, the Centre has carried out, and plans to continue to carry out, thorough consultations with the representatives of the non-governmental organizations in New York, Geneva and elsewhere on the specific and practical aspects of present and future co-operation. Pursuant to a decision of the General Assembly at its thirty-third session, the Centre has now completed arrangements for the recruitment of an additional officer whose primary task is to maintain liaison with the non-governmental organizations.

5. In pursuance of the above outlined approach, the Centre for Disarmament has increased its contacts with non-governmental organizations by, inter alia maintaining regular liaison with both the NGO Committee on Disarmament in New York and the Special NGO Committee on Disarmament at Geneva as well as with an increasing number of individual non-governmental organizations with a view to: providing information on all aspects of the arms race and disarmament, in particular about on-going activities in bodies dealing with disarmament; making the necessary arrangements for non-governmental organizations to submit, directly or indirectly, contributions to various disarmament bodies which have enabled them to do so (United Nations Disarmament Commission, Committee on Disarmament, Group of Governmental Experts on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, Group of Experts on the Relationship between Disarmament and International Security, and the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects); making available to delegations files of the Centre containing communications of non-governmental organizations and circulating listings of such communications; providing increasingly speakers to various non-governmental organizations' groups, in New York, Geneva and many other meeting places; participating in seminars, conferences, symposia, conventions and other meetings organized by non-governmental organizations; and making the reference collections of the Centre for Disarmament in New York and Geneva easily accessible to members of non-governmental organizations.

6. In pursuance of the request of the General Assembly with respect to other ways of encouraging the role of non-governmental organizations in the field of disarmament, the Centre for Disarmament carried out consultations with the NGO Committees in New York and Geneva and with representatives of individual

non-governmental organizations. In the course of these consultations, the Centre has become more familiar with various aspects of the on-going dialogue among non-governmental organizations and possible future arrangements of the non-governmental organizations.

7. Concerning specifically the contacts between the Centre for Disarmament and research institutions, it can be stated that since the tenth special session of the General Assembly, they have developed to an unprecedented degree, especially in connexion with studies being prepared at the request of the Assembly - in particular the study on the relationship between disarmament and development - and other activities, such as seminars and symposia and the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament.

8. The Centre for Disarmament intends to continue the efforts indicated above and will pursue, inter alia, the following: continuation and intensification of consultations aimed at more efficient co-operation with non-governmental organizations and research institutions; periodical updating of the mailing list of non-governmental organizations, maintained by the Centre for dissemination of information; distribution, on the basis of that list, of United Nations publications and other materials related to disarmament, including summaries of United Nations studies drafted in easily understood language; information about treaties coming into effect and other items relevant to the mobilization of public opinion; co-operation with the non-governmental organizations in the planning and executing of Disarmament Week programmes. In this respect, reference is made to the report of the Secretary-General on Disarmament Week suggesting elements of a model programme for the observance of Disarmament Week, which also contains specific suggestions for activities by non-governmental organizations and research institutions (A/34/436, paras, 22-28).
