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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Thirty-ninth session

Items 54, 59, 60, 65 and 68 of the
preliminary list*

PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE

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

REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT
OF THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION
ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-ninth year

Letter dated 14 June 1984 from the Permanent Representative of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United
Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to send you the text of a statement made by my Government in connection with the Joint Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania (A/39/277-S/16587, annex), in which they addressed themselves to all the nuclear Powers.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this statement as an official document of the General Assembly under items 54, 59, 60, 65 and 68 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) J. A. THOMSON.

* A/39/50.

ANNEX

Statement by the Government of the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern Ireland

We join the signatories of the appeal in re-stating our conviction that there must never be another World War. The objective must remain to do everything in our power to prevent all war. Since 1945 so-called conventional war has killed up to 10 million people in different parts of the world. During this period there has been peace in Europe, that is to say throughout the life-time of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Nuclear deterrence has played an important part in this.

We are fully aware that a nuclear holocaust, if it were allowed to occur, would be an unprecedented disaster for mankind. But it serves no useful purpose to induce a misplaced sense of panic or fear about the likelihood of this happening. As the British Prime Minister told the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, the fundamental risk to peace is not the existence of weapons of particular types. The springs of war lie in a readiness to resort to force to impose change on others. The leaders of the North Atlantic Alliance have stated clearly "none of our weapons will ever be used except in response to attack". We do not challenge the right of any sovereign state to self-defence. Equally we do not believe that anyone is in danger of misunderstanding Western firmness and unity in collective self-defence, which is the basis of a stable East/West balance.

The greatest contribution to preserving stability at lower levels of military force would be through the negotiating of

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balanced reductions in the levels of US and Soviet nuclear weapons. This is a more urgent and worthwhile task than freezes or bans which we cannot be sure of being able to verify and which would therefore not increase mutual confidence. But this requires both sides at the negotiating table. It was not the United States which walked away from Geneva last year. The Americans have said they remain ready to resume negotiations at any time without pre-conditions.

We should like to see all nations who are seriously interested in a responsible approach to nuclear and arms control issues, including all of those who have made or endorsed this appeal, follow the example of the very large number of states who are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
