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Agenda item 61

### REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS

#### Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Ngaré KESSELY (Chad)

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled:

"Reduction of military budgets:

"(a) Report of the Disarmament Commission;

"(b) Reports of the Secretary-General"

was included in the provisional agenda of the thirty-ninth session in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 38/184 A and B of 20 December 1983.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 21 September 1984, 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 2nd meeting, on 15 October, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on the disarmament items allocated to it, namely, items 45 to 65 and item 142 which was allocated to the First Committee by the General Assembly at its 27th plenary meeting, on 9 October, followed by statements on specific disarmament agenda items and continuation of the general debate, as necessary. The deliberations on those items took place between the 3rd and the 36th meetings, from 17 October to 12 November (see A/C.1/39/PV.3-36).

4. In connection with item 61, the First Committee had before it the following documents:

- (a) Report of the Disarmament Commission; 1/
- (b) Progress report on the construction of price indices and purchasing-power parities for military expenditures: report of the Secretary-General (A/39/399);
- (c) Military expenditures in standardized form reported by States: report of the Secretary-General (A/39/521 and Add.1 and 2);
- (d) Letter dated 23 May 1984 from the representatives of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Joint Declaration by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, Mr. Miguel de la Madrid, President of Mexico, Mr. Julius Nyerere, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mr. Olof Palme, Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Andreas Papandreu, Prime Minister of Greece, and Mr. Raúl Alfonsín, President of Argentina, issued on 22 May 1984 at Athens, Buenos Aires, Dar es Salaam, Mexico City, New Delhi and Stockholm (A/39/277-S/16587);
- (e) Note verbale dated 7 June 1984 from the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations addressed to the United Nations Secretariat (A/39/296-S/16619);
- (f) Letter dated 27 September 1984 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Togo to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/39/529);
- (g) Letter dated 8 October 1984 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Final Communiqué of the Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, held in New York from 1 to 5 October 1984 (A/39/560-S/16773).

## II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

### A. Draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.19

5. On 6 November, Austria, Bangladesh, Colombia, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Ireland, Malta, Nigeria, Peru, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, the Sudan, Sweden and Uruguay submitted a draft resolution entitled "Reduction of military budgets" (A/C.1/39/L.19). The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Romania at the 35th meeting, on 9 November.
6. At its 42nd meeting, on 19 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.19 without a vote (see para. 9, draft resolution A).

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1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/39/42).

**B. Draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.28**

7. On 8 November, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Romania, the Sudan, Sweden and Uruguay submitted a draft resolution entitled "Reduction of military budgets" (A/C.1/39/L.28), which was later also sponsored by Australia. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Sweden at the 38th meeting, on 14 November.

8. At its 42nd meeting, on 19 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/39/28 by a recorded vote of 100 to 14, with 7 abstentions (see para. 9, draft resolution B). The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zimbabwe.

Against: Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Congo, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Viet Nam.

Abstaining: Bahamas, Brazil, Burma, China, India, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia.

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2/ The delegations of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Qatar subsequently indicated that they had not intended to participate in the vote.

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### III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

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

#### Reduction of military budgets

##### A

#### The General Assembly,

Deeply concerned about the ever-spiralling arms race and growing military expenditures, which constitute a heavy burden for the economies of all nations and have extremely harmful effects on world peace and security,

Reaffirming once again the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament, according to which the gradual reduction of military budgets on a mutually agreed basis, for example, in absolute figures or in terms of percentage, particularly by nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States, would contribute to curbing the arms race and would increase the possibilities for the reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries, 3/

Convinced that the freezing and reduction of military budgets would have favourable consequences on the world economic and financial situation and might facilitate efforts made to increase international assistance for the developing countries,

Recalling that at its twelfth special session, the second special session devoted to disarmament, all Member States unanimously and categorically reaffirmed the validity of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session, as well as their solemn commitment to it, 4/

Recalling also the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second United Nations Disarmament Decade, 5/ in which it is provided that during this period renewed efforts should be made to reach agreement on the reduction of military budgets and the reallocation of resources thus saved to economic and social development, especially for the benefit of developing countries,

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3/ Resolution S-10/2, para. 89.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Special Session, Annexes, agenda items 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13, document A/S-12/32, para. 62.

5/ Resolution 35/46, annex.

Recalling further the provisions of its resolution 34/83 F of 11 December 1979, subsequently reaffirmed in its resolutions 35/142 A of 12 December 1980, 36/82 A of 9 December 1981, 37/95 A of 13 December 1982 and 38/184 A of 20 December 1983, in which it considered that a new impetus should be given to the endeavours to achieve agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain, in a balanced manner, military expenditure, including adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned,

Aware of the various proposals submitted by Member States and of the activities carried out so far within the framework of the United Nations in the field of the reduction of military budgets,

Convinced that identification and elaboration of the principles which should govern further actions of States in freezing and reducing military budgets could contribute to harmonizing the views of States and create confidence among them conducive to achieving international agreements in the reduction of military budgets,

Considering that the identification and elaboration of the principles which should govern further actions of States in freezing and reducing military budgets and the other current activities within the framework of the United Nations related to the question of the reduction of military budgets should be regarded as having the fundamental objective of reaching international agreements on the reduction of military expenditures,

Taking note of the report of the Disarmament Commission on the work accomplished during its session in 1984 on the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets", 6/

1. Declares once again its conviction that it is possible to achieve international agreements on the reduction of military budgets without prejudice to the right of all States to undiminished security, self-defence and sovereignty;
2. Reaffirms that the human and material resources released through the reduction of military expenditures could be reallocated for economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries;
3. Calls upon all Member States, in particular the most heavily armed States, to reinforce their readiness to co-operate in a constructive manner with a view to reaching agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain military expenditures;
4. Appeals to all States, in particular to the most heavily armed States, pending the conclusion of agreements on the reduction of military expenditures, to exercise self-restraint in their military expenditures with a

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6/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/39/42), para. 24.

view to reallocating the funds thus saved to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of developing countries;

5. Requests the Disarmament Commission to continue, at its 1985 substantive session, the consideration of the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets" on the basis of the relevant working paper annexed to its report, 7/ as well as other proposals and ideas on the subject-matter, with a view to finalizing the identification and elaboration of the principles which should govern further actions of States in the field of freezing and reduction of military expenditures, keeping in mind the possibility of embodying such principles in a suitable document at an appropriate stage;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fortieth session the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets".

B

The General Assembly,

Deeply concerned about the arms race and present tendencies to increase further the rate of growth of military expenditures, its deplorable waste of human and economic resources and its potentially harmful effects on world peace and security,

Considering that a gradual reduction of military expenditures on a mutually agreed basis would be a measure that would contribute to curbing the arms race and would increase the possibilities of reallocating resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries,

Convinced that such reductions could and should be carried out on a mutually agreed basis without detriment to the national security of any country,

Reaffirming its conviction that provisions for defining, reporting, comparing and verifying military expenditures will have to be basic elements of any international agreement to reduce such expenditures,

Recalling that an international system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures has been introduced in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 35/142 B of 12 December 1980, and that annual reports on military expenditures are now being received from a number of Member States,

Considering that a wider participation in the reporting system of States from different geographic regions and representing different budgeting systems would promote its further refinement and would, by contributing to greater openness in military matters, increase confidence between States,

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7/ Ibid., Supplement No. 42 (A/39/42), annex X.

Noting, in this connection, the proposal to convene an international conference on military expenditures,

Recalling its resolution 37/95 B of 13 December 1982, in which it requested the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of qualified experts and with the voluntary co-operation of States, to undertake the task of constructing price indices and purchasing-power parities for the military expenditures of participating States,

Emphasizing that the above-mentioned activities and initiatives, as well as other ongoing activities within the United Nations related to the reduction of military budgets, have the objective of facilitating future negotiations aimed at the conclusion of international agreements on the reduction of military expenditures,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General 8/ containing the replies received in 1984 from Member States in the framework of the above-mentioned reporting system;
2. Stresses the need to increase the number of reporting States with a view to the broadest possible participation from different geographic regions and representing different budgeting systems;
3. Reiterates its recommendation that all Member States should report annually, by 30 April, to the Secretary-General, using the reporting instrument, their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available;
4. Also takes note with appreciation of the progress report of the Secretary-General 9/ on the ongoing exercise undertaken in pursuance of resolution 37/95 B, and which will result in a final report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session;
5. Requests the Secretary-General to provide the Group of Experts on the Reduction of Military Budgets with the necessary assistance and Secretariat services;
6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fortieth session the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets".

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8/ A/39/521 and Add.1 and 2.

9/ A/39/399.