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## GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Letter dated 13 December 1988 from the Permanent Representative of  
India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

A major international conference of non-governmental organisations was held at New Delhi from 14 to 16 November 1988, with the theme "Towards a nuclear weapon-free and non-violent world". The Conference was widely attended and included over 107 participants, representing both individuals and groups. The single most important group among the participants was that of peace movements - International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, International Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms, New York and Geneva-based federations of non-governmental organisations dealing with disarmament, Pugwash, World Peace Council, Beyond War Foundation, the London-based World Disarmament Campaign, the Green Party of the Federal Republic of Germany, Parliamentarians for Global Action and others.

The Conference adopted unanimously a joint statement, representing a common viewpoint of participants drawn from East and West and from North and South. In view of the importance of this joint statement, I would be grateful if it could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 64.

(Signed) C. R. GHAREKHAN  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

## ANNEX

Joint statement issued at the conclusion of the Conference of non-governmental organisations on the theme "Towards a nuclear weapon-free and non-violent world", held at New Delhi from 14 to 16 November 1988 to mark the commencement of the birth centenary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

## I. CONCLUSIONS

The INF Treaty is the first nuclear disarmament measure after the advent of nuclear weapons. It has opened up the possibility of deeper cuts in nuclear weapons and the virtual elimination of nuclear weapons. However, the development of new categories of nuclear weapons remains unconstrained. The door has been left open for the exploitation of new technologies for the modernisation and upgrading of the remaining nuclear and conventional forces. The scale of expenditure on military research and development is unprecedented historically and has become a key driving force behind the arms race.

Though the INF Treaty has improved the possibilities of nuclear disarmament, there is a danger of complacency. There is already a visible tendency to relax efforts in the struggle to enhance the process of disarmament. The current phase therefore needs the decisive intervention of the peace movements worldwide to preserve and deepen nuclear disarmament.

The doctrine of nuclear deterrence is not only dangerous in its consequences, i.e. the spread of nuclear weapons, but also morally unacceptable and illegal.

There is unfortunately persistent belief on the part of some that a minimum nuclear arsenal is indeed necessary to preserve international security. It is urgent for the peace movements to launch a united campaign against the concept of nuclear deterrence.

For, without such action, the struggle for disarmament may be derailed.

There is great urgency to counter efforts to circumvent the INF Treaty through new nuclear-weapon deployment. It is also a matter of concern that warheads are not being destroyed under the Treaty.

The time has come for evolving alternative security doctrines and considering the application of non-violence as a means for building a new structure of international relations. The alternative security doctrine should take into account the changes of momentous significance that have taken place in the world recently, and should be comprehensive in that it should deal with both military and non-military threats to security. The establishment of a comprehensive system of global security calls for changes in the approach and principles governing international relations and in institutions. All efforts should be made to mobilise support for the United Nations so that it is further strengthened and made really effective. The United Nations must also be armed with new instruments and

be given additional roles in building and maintaining a comprehensive system of global security. A multilateral verification system under the United Nations appears to be a critical necessity at this juncture. Taught should also be given to strengthening the peace-keeping role of the United Nations and making the

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Military expenditure and the armament race in the world • □ seriously affecting the pace and pattern of development the world over, and particularly in the developing countries. There is a growing tendency to increase the allocation of resources for military research and development aimed at improving the sophistication of the military hardware rather than in dealing with the more compelling issues of social welfare, health and education for human beings and their basic needs. Excessive military • xQOnditUrO in the major developed countries has, among others, contributed to the adoption of such monetary, fiscal and trade policies which are detrimental to this pace of development of the world • economy as a whole.

The arms expenditure of the developing countries, with its associated expenditure on the research and development of military technology, stems from both global and regional conflicts. Some of these have been closely related to, and continued by, great power interests and concern for spheres of influence. It was felt that initiatives can be taken by the developing countries themselves to seek the resolution of regional conflicts. The Non-Aligned Movement could promote negotiations for common security. UN could strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to assist in finding solutions. If regional conflicts can be diminished, the developing countries can direct their own considerable spending on arms to their own development priorities. It was noted that a proposal has been made in the General Assembly that regular meetings of the Security Council should consider how the United Nations can, indeed, assist in the resolution of regional conflicts. The Conference considered that developing countries might wish to make their positive responses to this proposal.

Disarmament could release substantial amounts of resources which could be channelized for the purpose of development and promotion of social welfare. In the developed countries disarmament would not automatically imply that released resources could be used for development purposes. In the case of developing countries, the imperative for transferring the resources released by cuts in armament expenditure for development purposes is indeed great.

An institutional mechanism should be created for developing resources released through disarmament for combating hunger, malnutrition, illiteracy, rqualor and disease, • XQIOitatiOn Of childron, destitution and deprivation of basic needs.

## II. SPECIAL MEASURES RECOMMENDED BY THE CONFERENCE

A. Thr Conference welcomed all prop08818 for a time-bound • ation programme to create a nuclear-weapon-free world. In particular, it • doraed the broad objectives and thr approach of the action plan for ushering in a nuclear-wrapon-free and non-violant world order (A/5-15/12, annex I), submitted by

India at the fifteenth special session of the General Assembly, the third special session devoted to disarmament.

The participants, either on their own or through the institutions they represent, would endeavour to promote those objectives in specific terms, particularly by mobilising support for the following steps:

(a) The earliest possible adoption of a convention on the prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

(b) The speedy conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

(c) Moving the International Court Of Justice for seeking its opinion on the illegality of nuclear weapons.

(d) The establishment of a panel, at a non-governmental level, for the monitoring, assessment and forecasting of developments in new technologies which have potential military application.

(e) Strengthening of the role of the United Nations in peace-keeping, dispute settlement and multilateral disarmament negotiation.

B. One of the most important measures could be a treaty in Asia to ban the use and the threat of use of nuclear capabilities amongst the parties to such a treaty. Initially, such a treaty could be between, for example, China, India and the USSR and other nuclear-capable nations and then it could be opened to other countries in Asia and elsewhere for signatures. Nuclear capability will cover not only possession of nuclear weapons but also nuclear capabilities and use of radiological weapons.

C. Various professional groups and research institutions who have undertaken studies relating to a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world should strengthen their mutual co-operation and co-ordinate their activities.

D. The Conference recognized the importance of imparting education at all levels on the imperatives of peace, the nature and dimension of the threat posed by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction to peace and human survival and the prerequisites and essential features of a new world order based on non-violence.

The participants, either on their own or through the institutions they represent, would make a survey and assessment of the existing work and activities in this field, establish contact with the organisations concerned in order to further develop these activities and take action to integrate them with the existing curricula.

E. The Conference underlined the right of peoples to have access to information relating to developments, in particular, countries which have adverse implications for their survival, security and welfare. International organisations within the United Nations system which have already established or have the potentiality for establishing networking should monitor and collect such information and make it

available to people all over the world in a digestible and useful manner. The participants would work toward setting up as many such networks as possible and taking an effective follow-up action,

7. In the field of the relationship between disarmament and development, the participants would work in particular to promote the following:

(a) The declaration of 1990 as a decade for converting military industries to civilian industries catering to the development needs of the peoples concerned.

(b) Conducting quantitative studies on the relationship between disarmament and development and alternative scenarios for a phased programme of disarmament and its impact on the development process.

(c) Convening an expert group meeting of social scientists and technologists for determining the optimum size of military expenditure beyond which such expenditure could be counter-developmental and the possibility of establishing a mechanism within the United Nations system by which national Governments which depend beyond this universal norm will have to justify their action.

(d) The possibility of programmes in the field of materials development, alternative sources of energy, new paradigm of development with emphasis on recycling of resources should be explored. Promoting the formulation and implementation of a large-scale programme of civilian expenditure with maximum spread on social welfare and growth, with special emphasis on health services and education.

### III

Any success in the process of disarmament obviously depends on human attitudes and the global environment. To put it in the words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, it is the "temper of peace" rather than the "temper of war" which should govern the spirit of man so that he may achieve the very essence of civilisation".

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