



PM/82/57

PRIME MINISTERPrime Minister

To note.

A.F.C.  $\frac{13}{7}$ 

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Second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament

1. The Second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament ended on Saturday, 10 July without agreement being reached on the main items on the agenda. The Session confined itself to a consensus report of proceedings, and reached agreement on guidelines for a World Disarmament Campaign to be run by the United Nations within its existing budget. The guidelines call for unimpeded access to information in East and West alike.
2. The Special Session opened with national statements by leaders of delegations. Of the 19 heads of state and government who addressed the Assembly, 10 were from the West. Your own statement on 23 June, stressing that the fundamental issues were how to defend peace with freedom, and how arms control could contribute to the fulfilment of that task, was very well received. Mr Gromyko's statement, containing a message from President Brezhnev pledging that the Soviet Union would not be the first to use nuclear weapons, was the basis of the Russian approach to the Session. Western speakers exposed the pledge as incomplete when compared with the NATO undertaking that no Alliance weapons would be used except in response to an attack. Amongst the Non-Aligned, moderate opinion was in the ascendant at first under the leadership of Pakistan. But as the Session progressed, the hard line advocated by India, Brazil and Mexico prevailed and ensured that differences could not be bridged.
3. The two main items on the agenda, a review of progress since the First Special Session in 1978 and a draft Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, and the guidelines for a World Disarmament Campaign, were discussed in Working Groups. On the first two items, it was the insistence of the Non-Aligned on nuclear disarmament in accordance with a strict timetable, and their refusal to consider parallel discussion of conventional disarmament, which prevented agreement being reached. Our Delegation made it clear that we could only subscribe to measures of nuclear disarmament which maintain or enhance security, and thus



protected our position against demands for nuclear disarmament which might call into question our policy for defence through deterrence.

4. We made particular efforts to co-ordinate the defence of Western interests at the Session as a way of ensuring that we were not dangerously isolated. These efforts were successful. The Russians will nevertheless now seek to lay on NATO responsibility for the failure of the Special Session to reach agreement. It will be some time before the Non-Aligned, the promoters of the Session, take stock of their position and their inability to extract additional commitments for nuclear disarmament. Non-Governmental Organisations in this country will be disappointed at the outcome of the Session and may be critical of our role there. But we steadily advised them not to expect much of the Session and we can point to our efforts to widen public understanding of disarmament issues through support for a World Disarmament Campaign.

5. I am sending copies of this minute to other members of OD and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
13 July 1982



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

19 July, 1982

SECOND UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL SESSION ON

DISARMAMENT

The Prime Minister has noted the contents of the minute of 13 July by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

SECRET

F Richards, Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office