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**INTERNATIONAL NGO CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT  
CONFERENCE INTERNATIONALE DES ONG SUR LE DESARMEMENT**

**Palais des Nations, Genève, Suisse, February 27 – March 2, 1978**

organised by the / organisée par le

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**M E S S A G E**

**TO THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR  
THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT  
(SSD)**

**25th October, 1977**

1. Gathered at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on 24 and 25 October, 1977, on the initiative of the Special NGO Committee On Disarmament, 126 representatives of 38 national and 31 international non-governmental organisations (including trade-unions, women, youth and religious organisations) representing broad political, philosophical and socio-economic tendencies, have examined in the course of the Seminar the contribution they wish to bring to the Special Session of the UN General Assembly devoted to Disarmament.
2. Once again they have expressed their anxiety of the peoples of the world confronted by the acceleration of the arms race ; the quantitative increase in these armaments in the proliferation of nuclear weapons ; the continued development of new weapons of mass destruction which present the world with an ever graver threat ; the senseless waste of human, technological and financial resources caused by the armaments race and which directly effects the peoples of the world in both industrial countries and developing countries.
3. They have reaffirmed the imperative and urgent necessity of taking steps to stop the armaments race with priority for the nuclear weapons and make progress towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control for the very survival of humanity and its peaceful development.
4. They have expressed their conviction that such steps are politically and technically possible as has been demonstrated in certain areas by treaties already concluded and by the work of the experts. Concerned by the slowness of disarmament negotiations they have also reaffirmed their conviction that more rapid and significant progress towards substantial reduction of armaments requires a firm political will on the part of all the membership of the United Nations and they have emphasised the essential role which the NGOs can and must play to stimulate and reinforce this political will.

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5. That is why they welcome the calling of the Special Session, By adopting a declaration on disarmament as well as a programme of action, by devoting its attention to the effectiveness of mechanisms of negotiations and in particular to the question of early convening of a World Conference on Disarmament and by stimulating the combined efforts of member states this Session should constitute an important step in promoting progress towards general, complete and controlled disarmament.
6. Anxious to give the utmost publicity to the SSD and to contribute to its success, they are determined to pursue their efforts to make world public opinion aware of the urgent need to stop the armaments race, to achieve disarmament and to convince people that success is possible. They appeal to Governments and to UNO to intensify their efforts to achieve rapid and decisive progress in this direction especially in the matters of :
  - (a) the ban of nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction as well as the ban on new and highly sophisticated weapons such as the enhanced radiation weapon (Neutron Bomb) , and the prohibition of research and development for such weapons.
  - (b) the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapons tests
  - (c) the adoption of effective measures concerning the non--proliferation and destruction of nuclear weapons including the adoption of an appropriate legal instrument outlawing the use of nuclear weapons.
  - (d) the adoption of measures for reducing armed forces and conventional weapons,
  - (e) the reduction of military expenditures and the transfer of an important part of the financial as well as technological resources thereby released to help developing countries ; and also redeployment of the workers engaged in research and production of arms to peaceful ends,
  - (f) limitation and reduction of international trade and transfer of arms.

These and other measures taken together and accompanied by adequate measures to supervise disarmament agreements must be seen as important steps leading to our final goal : general and complete disarmament. The NGOs strongly urge the SSD to take concrete measures and resolutions in these regards.

7. They consider it essential that efforts be pursued and developed with a view to a more effective implementation, broadening the geographical scope and the field of application of existing treaties and working out new treaties and bringing all countries into disarmament negotiations.

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8. They are anxious to emphasise the importance they attach to the respect for the UN Resolutions and the efforts undertaken by the UNO and its member states with a view to reinforcing and developing international détente, to settling international disputes and conflicts by peaceful means and eliminating resort to force from international relations. The UN machinery for peace-keeping and peaceful settlement of disputes should be examined and effectively utilised.
9. The NGOs represented at the Seminar express their hope that the ideas and suggestions set up above will be considered by the Preparatory Committee and included in the documents of the SSD. They also hope that the agenda of the SSD will be able to include an important additional item on the way in which a concerted effort can be made to mobilise public opinion in favour of disarmament. This should improve the means by which the UN and its specialised agencies can assist and cooperate with the public opinion in maintaining and developing a momentum towards peace and disarmament after the SSD.
10. They wish to be involved in the work of the SSD so as to achieve the maximum effectiveness in the tireless efforts which they are resolved to continue in the course of world disarmament.

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