

## II REPORT

### (A) THE BEGINNING

The experience of UNSSOD I in 1978 and UNSSOD II in 1982 had a significant impact on the preparations for UNSSOD III. The First Special Session was a major international conference attended by 20 Heads of State and Government, including the Canadian Prime Minister, and 49 Foreign Ministers. The outcome was a concentrated, 25-page consensus Final Document, which has today become a central point of reference for multilateral ACD. The document included a Declaration, Programme of Action and section on "Machinery".

By contrast, UNSSOD II, also a high profile event, failed to reach agreement on the two substantive documents it set out to adopt: a review of the implementation of the recommendations of UNSSOD I, and a legally-binding comprehensive programme of disarmament, despite the very high level of public interest in the event. The failure can be explained in part by the poor international negotiating climate in 1982.

The decision to hold a "Third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament" in New York, May 31 - June 25, 1988 was taken at UNGA 42 in 1987. Like its predecessors, this was to be a high-profile event attended by Heads of State and Government and Foreign Ministers.

As is commonly the case for major international meetings, an UNSSOD III Preparatory Committee was established by the General Assembly. A major task of the Committee was to elect a Bureau for the Special Session, decide on the allocation of working groups and their chairmen and, most importantly, adopt an agenda for and provide substantive guidance and direction to UNSSOD III.

The Preparatory Committee held two substantive meetings in New York, May 26 - June 6, 1987 and January 25 - February 5, 1988. Vice-Chairmen of the Bureau for UNSSOD III were elected as follows:

WEOG: Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, Norway  
Asian Group: Japan, Mongolia, Sri Lanka  
African Group: Morocco, Sudan, Togo, Zaire  
East European Group: Czechoslovakia, Romania,  
Hungary, Yugoslavia  
Latin American Group: Argentina, Bahamas, Uruguay