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CESSATION OF ALL NUCLEAR-TEST EXPLOSIONS

URGENT NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Pablo Emilio SADER (Uruguay)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The items entitled "Cessation of all nuclear-test explosions" and "Urgent need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty" were included in the provisional agenda of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolutions 45/49 and 45/51 of 4 December 1990, respectively.
2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 20 September 1991, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include items 51 and 53 in its agenda and to allocate them to the First Committee.
3. At its 2nd meeting, on 10 October 1991, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on the disarmament items allocated to it, namely items 47 to 65. The deliberations on those items took place between the 3rd and the 24th meetings, from 14 to 30 October (see A/C.1/46/PV.3-24). Consideration of and action on draft resolutions on those items took place between the 25th and 37th meetings, from 4 to 15 November (see A/C.1/46/PV.25-37).
4. The First Committee had before it the following documents which, unless indicated otherwise inside parentheses, were submitted under both items 51 and 53:

(a) Report of the Conference on Disarmament; 1/

(b) Letter dated 17 January 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/46/69);

(c) Letter dated 23 May 1991 from the Permanent Representatives of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the statement issued at Santiago on 9 May 1991 by the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (A/46/203);

(d) Letter dated 3 June 1991 from the Permanent Representatives of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the statement issued at Santiago on 28 May 1991 by the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (A/46/223);

(e) Letter dated 5 June 1991 from the Permanent Representatives of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the statement issued at Santiago on 31 May 1991 by the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (A/46/225);

(f) Letter dated 24 June 1991 from the representatives of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the statement issued at Santiago on 17 June 1991 by the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (A/46/276);

(g) Letter dated 16 July 1991 from the representatives of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the statement issued at Santiago on 8 July 1991 by the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (A/46/314);

(h) Letter dated 22 July 1991 from the representatives of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the statement issued at Santiago on 16 July 1991 by the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (A/46/320);

(i) Letter dated 5 August 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Vanuatu to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the final communiqué of the twenty-second South Pacific Forum, held at Palikir, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, on 29 and 30 July 1991 (A/46/344) (submitted under agenda item 51);

(j) Letter dated 23 September 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/46/493);

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/46/27).

(k) Letter dated 12 August 1991 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/46/501) (submitted under agenda item 51);

(l) Letter dated 27 September 1991 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/46/501/Rev.1) (submitted under agenda item 51);

(m) Letter dated 11 October 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Republics to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/46/592-S/23151).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/46/L.4

5. On 28 October, Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Thailand, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Yugoslavia and Zaire submitted a draft resolution entitled "Comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty" (A/C.1/46/L.4), which was later also sponsored by Brazil, Ukraine and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of New Zealand at the 25th meeting, on 4 November.

6. At its 33rd meeting, on 11 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.4 by a recorded vote of 127 to 2, with 4 abstentions (see para. 7). The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania,

2/ Subsequently, the delegations of Benin, Burundi, Gabon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Rwanda and Uganda indicated that they had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zimbabwe.

Against: France, United States of America.

Abstaining: China, Israel, Marshall Islands, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

II'. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

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

Comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty

The General Assembly,

Recalling previous resolutions which identify the complete cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and a comprehensive test ban as one of the basic objectives in the field of disarmament,

Convinced that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought,

Welcoming the improved relationship between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America and their consequent announcements of significant measures, including unilateral steps, which could signal the reversal of the nuclear arms race,

Welcoming also the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic offensive Arms, signed on 31 July 1991, and expressing the hope that it will be followed by agreement at an early date on further cuts in strategic nuclear arsenals,

Recognizing the ratification of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of

Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests, 3/ signed on 3 July 1974, and the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes, 4/ signed on 28 May 1976, together with their protocols,

Noting the decline, in comparison with previous years, in the number of nuclear tests conducted in 1990,

Convinced that an end to nuclear testing by all States in all environments for all time is an essential step in order to prevent the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapons and their further proliferation and to contribute, along with other concurrent efforts to reduce nuclear arms, to the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons,

Noting concerns expressed about the environment and health risks associated with underground nuclear testing,

Convinced that the most effective way to achieve an end to nuclear testing is through the conclusion, at an early date, of a verifiable, comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty that will attract the adherence of all States,

Taking into account the undertakings by the original parties to the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water 5/ to seek to achieve the early discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time and also noting the reiteration of this commitment in the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 6/

Noting with satisfaction the work being undertaken within the Conference on Disarmament by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, and in this context welcoming the second technical test concerning the global exchange and analysis of seismic data,

Recalling that the Amendment Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water was held in New York from 7 to 18 January 1991,

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/9627), annex II, document CCD/431.

4/ The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook, vol. I: 1976 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.IX.2), appendix III.

5/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 480, No. 6964.

6/ Ibid., vol. 729, No. 10485.

1. Reaffirms its conviction that a treaty to achieve the prohibition of all nuclear-test explosions by all States in all environments for all time is a matter of priority which would constitute an essential step in order to prevent the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapons and their further proliferation, and which would contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament;

2. Urges, therefore, all States to seek to achieve the early discontinuance of all nuclear-test explosions for all time;

3. Reaffirms the particular responsibilities of the Conference on Disarmament in the negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, and in this context urges the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban in 1992 with an appropriate mandate;

4. Requests the Conference on Disarmament, in this context, to intensify its substantive work on specific and interrelated test-ban issues, including structure and scope and verification and compliance, taking also into account all relevant proposals and future initiatives;

5. Urges the Conference on Disarmament:

(a) To take into account the progress achieved by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, including the experience gained from the technical test concerning the global exchange and analysis of seismic data, and other relevant initiatives;

(b) To continue efforts to establish, with the widest possible participation, an international seismic monitoring network with a view to developing further a system for the effective monitoring and verification of compliance with a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty;

(c) To investigate other measures to monitor and verify compliance with such a treaty, including on-site inspections, satellite monitoring and an international network to monitor atmospheric radioactivity;

6. Urges:

(a) The nuclear-weapon States to agree promptly to appropriate verifiable and militarily significant interim measures, with a view to concluding a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty;

(b) Those nuclear-weapon States which have not yet done so to adhere to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water;

7. Calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session on progress made;

8. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-seventh session the item entitled "Comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty".
