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Agenda item 53

URGENT NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Virgilio A. REYES (Philippines)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Urgent need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty" was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-third session in accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/27 of 30 November 1987.
2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1988, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.
3. At its 2nd meeting, on 12 October, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on the disarmament items allocated to it, namely items 51 to 69 and 139, 141 and 145. The deliberations on those items took place between the 3rd and the 25th meetings, from 17 October to 2 November (see A/C.1/43/PV.3-25). Consideration of and action on draft resolutions on those items took place between 3 and 18 November (see A/C.1/43/PV.26-43).
4. In connection with item 53, the First Committee had before it the following documents:

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

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 27 (A/43/27).

(b) Letter dated 2 February 1988 from the representatives of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the Stockholm Declaration, adopted on 21 January 1988 (A/43/125-S/19478);

(c) Letter dated 27 May 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the seventy-ninth session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held at Guatemala City from 8 to 16 April 1988 (A/43/370);

(d) Letter dated 29 July 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/43/495);

(e) Letter dated 29 September 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final documents adopted by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries held at Nicosia from 5 to 10 September 1988 (A/43/667-S/20212);

(f) Letter dated 21 October 1988 from the Permanent Representative of the German Democratic Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/43/741).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/43/L.51

5. On 31 October 1988, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Sweden, Vanuatu and Zaire submitted a draft resolution entitled "Urgent need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty" (A/C.1/43/L.51), which was later also sponsored by Barbados, Ecuador, Liberia, Singapore and Thailand. The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Australia at the 30th meeting, on 8 November.

6. At its 37th meeting, on 15 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.51 by a recorded vote of 127 to 2, with 6 abstentions (see para. 7). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala,

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Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: France, United States of America.

Abstaining: Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

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

Urgent need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty

The General Assembly,

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

Convinced of the consequent urgent need for an end to the nuclear-arms race and the immediate and verifiable reduction and ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons,

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,

Welcoming the ongoing negotiations between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in accordance with their joint statement of 17 September 1987 and noting the significant developments on improved verification arrangements to facilitate the ratification of the 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the 1976 Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty,

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Welcoming also the conclusion on 8 December 1987 of the historic treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles 2/ and the agreement in principle on and progress made towards an agreement for 50 per cent reductions in the strategic nuclear forces of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,

Recalling the proposals by the leaders of the six-nation initiative 3/ to promote an end to nuclear testing,

Convinced that the most effective way to achieve the discontinuance of all nuclear tests by all States in all environments for all time is through the conclusion, at an early date, of a verifiable, comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty that will attract the adherence of all States,

Reaffirming the particular responsibilities of the Conference on Disarmament in the negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty,

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 fundamental importance;

2. Urges, therefore, that the following actions be taken in order that a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty may be concluded at an early date:

(a) The Conference on Disarmament should intensify its consideration of item 1 of its agenda entitled "Nuclear-test ban" and initiate substantive work on all aspects of a nuclear-test-ban treaty at the beginning of its 1989 session;

(b) States members of the Conference on Disarmament, in particular, the nuclear-weapon States, and all other States should co-operate in order to facilitate and promote such work;

(c) The nuclear-weapon States, especially those that possess the most important nuclear arsenals, should agree promptly to appropriate verifiable

2/ CD/798.

3/ See the Joint Declaration issued on 22 May 1984 by the heads of State or Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania (A/39/277-S/16587, annex); for the printed text, see Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-ninth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1984, document S/16587, annex, reaffirmed in the Delhi Declaration issued on 28 January 1985 (A/40/114-S/16921, annex); for the printed text, see Official Records of the Security Council, Fortieth Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1985, document S/16921, annex, and the Mexico Declaration, issued on 7 August 1986 (A/41/518-S/18277, annex I).

and militarily significant interim measures, with a view to realising a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty;

(d) Those nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so should adhere to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water; 4/

3. Also urges the Conference on Disarmament:

(a) To take immediate steps for the establishment, with the widest possible participation, of an international seismic monitoring network with a view to the further development of its potential to monitor and verify compliance with a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty;

(b) In this context, to take into account the progress achieved by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, including work on the routine exchange and use of wave-form data, and other relevant initiatives or experiments by individual States and groups of States;

(c) To initiate detailed investigation of other measures to monitor and verify compliance with such a treaty, including an international network to monitor atmospheric radioactivity;

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

5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session the item entitled "Urgent need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty".

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