

United Nations GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TWENTIETH SESSION

Official Records



FIRST COMMITTEE, 1391st
MEETING

Wednesday, 1 December 1965,
at 10.45 a.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 105:</i>	
<i>Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa</i>	
<i>(continued)</i>	
<i>General debate (concluded)</i>	213
<i>Consideration of draft resolutions</i>	216

Chairman: Mr. Károly CSATORDAY (Hungary).

AGENDA ITEM 105

Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa (*continued*) (A/5975, A/C.1/L.346/Rev.1)

GENERAL DEBATE (concluded)

1. Mr. EL BESHIR (Sudan) said that his delegation had noted with great satisfaction that the United Nations was taking constructive steps to realize one of its most urgent objectives: the banning of nuclear weapons. The draft resolution before the First Committee (A/C.1/L.346/Rev.1), following the decisions on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the convening of a world disarmament conference, represented a genuine effort made by the African countries for progress in the direction of and in conformity with that noble objective. The Sudan therefore looked forward to its unanimous adoption, for it was from such unanimity that the draft resolution would derive its force.

2. He trusted that members of the Committee were aware of the difficulties that had confronted the sponsors of the draft resolution. Of course, Africa was not the only region which sought to denuclearize its territory: attempts of considerable importance had been made in that respect, and the sponsors of the draft resolution had benefited greatly from the experience of others. However, Africa was in many respects a different case: while there had been no difficulty in the Organization of African Unity in achieving unanimity on the declaration on the denuclearization of Africa, there were African countries which were not yet independent and whose destinies, contrary to the wishes of their peoples, were in the hands of foreign Powers. Still worse, some minority régimes, oppressing the original population and violently hostile to the rest of the continent, were not committed to the declaration. Furthermore, there were foreign military bases on the continent which threatened the peace and security of the region; and it would be recalled that the first atomic explosion in the Sahara had been carried out by a foreign Power in February 1960. The denuclearization of Africa was therefore not entirely dependent on the African countries. Other

countries across the borders of the continent, and especially the nuclear Powers, must co-operate by refraining from the use or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons in Africa; he referred in that connexion to the last phrase in operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution.

3. The Sudan, like the overwhelming majority of African countries which had recently achieved independence, pursued a policy of non-alignment and therefore belonged to no military bloc. It allowed no military bases on its soil and would not permit any nuclear weapons in its territory; it dedicated all its efforts and all its resources to the peaceful economic and social development of the country. The interests of the population of Africa could best be served in a denuclearized continent free from nuclear war or the nuclear threat.

4. Mr. TRIVEDI (India) said that India agreed entirely with the objectives of denuclearization pursued by the African countries and whole-heartedly supported the draft resolution; it also welcomed the efforts of the countries of Latin America to bring about the denuclearization of their continent, and it hoped that the endeavours of the African and Latin American countries would be successful in the very near future. The draft resolution admirably reflected the requirements of Africa; he had in mind specifically operative paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6, which formed the core of the draft resolution, in particular operative paragraph 5. The Indian delegation wished to emphasize that countries belonging to other continents were in accord with the objectives of the non-aligned nations of Africa; the debate on the present item had its relevance to areas other than the African continent and its adjacent waters and islands. He referred in that connexion to the first four of the general principles set out by the representative of the United Arab Republic at the Committee's 1389th meeting, principles which were of universal validity.

5. One of the welcome features of the continent of Africa was that the sovereign African States which were putting forward their peace proposition were non-aligned and had no pacts with military blocs possessing nuclear weapons. The denuclearization of a region became difficult and even impossible when one or more countries in the region were more interested in allies which possessed or were on the way to acquiring nuclear weapons than in denuclearization. Reference had been made in the debate to the Indian Ocean and the desirability of establishing a denuclearized zone for Asia and the Pacific. Unfortunately that region, which had been more or less a denuclearized zone, except for military alliances, had now become a nuclearized zone—an

unhappy development which had taken place only a week after the momentous Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo in October 1964, which had declared its support for various denuclearization proposals as steps helpful in consolidating international peace and security. The Indian delegation accordingly considered that the peace proposition of the sovereign African nations deserved the full support of all members of the First Committee.

6. Mr. DIACONESCU (Romania) said that since 1959 his country had unceasingly spoken out in favour of the establishment of denuclearized zones in various parts of the world; it was convinced that such a step would help to avert the danger of nuclear war and strengthen the security of States. The African and Latin American countries had recently made important progress in that direction, and had thus helped to clarify the principles which were at the root of the idea of denuclearization. Conditions, and therefore possible solutions, undoubtedly differed from one region to another, but as the representative of the United Arab Republic had said, the denuclearization of a region was as important to the whole world as to the countries and peoples directly concerned, since regional denuclearization and universal denuclearization were interdependent. Romania therefore unreservedly supported the efforts of the African States to bar their territories to nuclear weapons. It was to the credit of the African States that they had submitted proposals designed to keep their territories out of the zone of nuclear conflict; he recalled that the Romanian delegation had supported General Assembly resolution 1652 (XVI) in 1961. He traced the various stages of the campaign conducted by the African countries, from the Summit Conference of Independent African States at Addis Ababa in May 1963 to the draft declaration at present before the Committee. The history of those efforts showed that the African States saw denuclearization as an integral part of a system of security meeting Africa's needs. The complete elimination of nuclear weapons from the territories in question would mean the achievement of the essential objective, which was to shield the region from nuclear conflict.

7. Romania agreed with the African States that denuclearization, to be effective, should cover the entire territory of Africa and the foreign military bases surrounding it; in addition, all the nuclear Powers should pledge themselves to respect the denuclearized zones. Romania viewed the establishment of denuclearized zones as one link in a chain leading towards the paramount goal: the total destruction of existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons and—as a first step in that direction—a ban on the use of such arms. Accordingly, the Romanian delegation supported the African countries' proposals, for it was convinced that they would help to limit the sphere of operation of nuclear weapons and to strengthen peace and security in Africa and throughout the world.

8. Mr. FOSTER (United States of America) said that the United States had welcomed the initiatives of the States of Latin America and Africa with a view to achieving and maintaining a nuclear-free status for their regions, for those objectives were in harmony

with the United States policy of halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. With regard to arrangements to be made to achieve the denuclearization of Africa, the United States must of course reserve its position until it could examine the provisions of the convention which would give legal effect to the declaration of the African Heads of State or Government. The fact that the initiative was being taken by the States concerned was in line with one of the principles which, his country believed, should govern the establishment of denuclearized zones. The United States would examine the legal instruments also in the light of the other principles, namely, that the denuclearized zone should preferably include all States in the area, especially any whose failure to participate might render the agreement ineffective; that no State or group of States should derive military advantage from the creation of the zone; and that provision should be made for adequate verification, including procedures for investigating alleged violations. It was also to be hoped that the African States would find it possible to accept International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards similar to those under consideration by the States of Latin America.

9. Turning to the draft resolution itself, he reminded the Committee that the United States had abstained in the vote on resolution 1652 (XVI), which was mentioned in the second preambular paragraph. It understood the "various other areas of the world" referred to in the fourth preambular paragraph to mean those areas where the establishment of a nuclear-free zone would not upset the military balance. The goal mentioned in the fifth preambular paragraph, in the United States view, could only be achieved through the implementation of a programme of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In the operative part of the draft resolution, the revised text of paragraph 1 removed the main difficulty the United States had found in the original draft. Operative paragraphs 2 and 3 represented an endorsement by the Assembly of what was in fact a statement of intention—a statement which the United States was happy to support as being fully consistent with its policy of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. With reference to operative paragraph 4, he did not wish to repeat the reasons for which the United States felt itself unable to subscribe to declarations or pledges concerning the non-use of nuclear weapons; it was the concept of pledges of non-use which it found unsound, and not its application to Africa. He was certain, therefore, that his country's fundamental position would not be misunderstood by the States concerned and that it would in no way hinder them in the development of a convention on the denuclearization of Africa. Although there seemed to be some ambiguity in the drafting, operative paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 were entirely acceptable to the United States delegation.

10. He would therefore vote for the draft resolution, in the conviction that a soundly conceived and appropriately implemented nuclear-free zone in Africa would help to stop the threat of nuclear weapons, contribute to world peace and stability and facilitate progress towards general and complete disarmament.

11. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) thanked the sponsors of the draft resolution for accepting one of the

changes in operative paragraph 5 which he had proposed at the 1389th meeting, that concerning the proper place in the sentence for the word "acquiring".^{1/} So far as the word "using" was concerned, he would not press for its deletion from operative paragraph 5, despite the repetition, since that was the sponsors' preference.

12. It was with the greatest satisfaction that his delegation supported the draft resolution on the denuclearization of Africa. It was a noble enterprise, analogous to the denuclearization of Latin America which had the same aim and the same motive: the vital necessity of saving present and future generations from the scourge of nuclear war. It had been stated repeatedly during the debate on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons that non-proliferation was not an end in itself, but a means; that was also true of denuclearization since it was, in the last analysis, the most effective way of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the supreme goal being general and complete disarmament and, more particularly, nuclear disarmament, one of the essential aspects of which must be, as the General Assembly had declared in resolution 808 (IX), the total prohibition of the use and manufacture of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction of every type, together with the conversion of existing stocks of nuclear weapons for peaceful purposes. The denuclearization of vast geographical zones would undoubtedly be a giant step towards that goal.

13. The debate in the First Committee showed that there had been an encouraging change of heart regarding regional denuclearization projects since the study, two years ago, of the question of the denuclearization of Latin America. No one now questioned the correctness of the argument, which Mexico had always supported, that the denuclearization of vast geographical zones was one of the most effective collateral measures of disarmament. At the time, he had opposed the negative attitude of certain delegations which, after acknowledging that the establishment of denuclearized zones was essentially a matter for the countries of the zones concerned, had indicated a list of conditions they considered indispensable, some of which were obviously so impossible to fulfil that they thwarted the will of the States of a particular zone and were consequently inconsistent with the principle that that will was paramount.

14. The tone of the discussions at the current session was entirely different. In its resolution 2028 (XX), which it had adopted by an overwhelming majority, the General Assembly had recognized that its resolutions 1652 (XVI) on the denuclearization of Africa and 1911 (XVIII) on the denuclearization of Latin America aimed at preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and it had expressly included among the general principles on which a treaty to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons should be based the principle that nothing in the treaty should adversely affect the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories. The Soviet representative had made a statement to the

same effect at the previous meeting and, outside the United Nations, equally heartening words had been spoken by Dean Rusk, the United States Secretary of State, who, speaking on 22 November 1965 at the Second Special Inter-American Conference at Rio de Janeiro, had said that the United States considered the plan for the denuclearization of Latin America to be a constructive project and hoped for its success.

15. He recalled that at the 1369th meeting he had referred to the United Nations documents containing the final acts of the three meetings on the denuclearization of Latin America that had so far been held in Mexico City (A/5824, A/5912, A/5985), and had also given the background of the question and summed up the results obtained. He would therefore merely stress at the present meeting that although the proposals for the denuclearization of Latin America and Africa had their own individual features, they both raised three identical problems: that of defining the geographical zone to which the treaty would apply; that of setting up a satisfactory system of verification, inspection and control, using methods which offered sufficient guarantees of effectiveness and at the same time carried with them no risk of abuse incompatible with the principle of non-intervention; and that of obtaining an assurance from the nuclear Powers that they would respect strictly the legal status of the denuclearized zone. It was with justice, therefore, that some of the sponsors of the draft resolution claimed that the work which the Latin American countries had done over the past two years to solve those problems could be very useful to the African countries and help them in the work they intended to undertake once the General Assembly had approved the draft resolution. He would, therefore, ask the secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Denuclearization of Latin America to send the secretariat of the Organization of African Unity, as the representative of the United Arab Republic had requested (1389th meeting), a complete set of the documents published in connexion with the three meetings that had been held so far and of all the documents it published in the future. It would perhaps also be to the advantage of the African States to send observers to attend the meetings of the Latin American Preparatory Commission, as various countries of North America, Asia and Europe had already done, that Commission having already adopted a resolution agreeing in advance to accept observers from States Members of the United Nations.

16. His delegation wished the African project every success. There could, of course, be no rivalry between Latin America and Africa since both their denuclearization plans had identical aims, chief among them being to prevent their countries' limited resources from being squandered on nuclear armaments and to protect their peoples from possible nuclear attacks against their territories, thereby also helping to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Over the longer term, the denuclearization projects aimed at the total elimination of nuclear weapons as part of the process of general and complete disarmament.

17. Mr. OBI (Nigeria), on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution, confirmed that the new formulation for operative paragraph 5 which the Mexican representative had proposed was acceptable to them

^{1/} This change was incorporated in the second revision of the draft resolution, subsequently circulated as document A/C.1/L.346/Rev.2.

and would appear in the second revision (A/C.1/L.346/Rev.2). The sponsors were also pleased to see that the slight revisions which they had made in paragraphs 1 and 6 (A/C.1/L.346/Rev.1) had met with such wide response, and they were happy to have received, formally or informally, the assurance that those countries which, in 1961, had been obliged to abstain from voting on the African States' draft resolution would be able to support the draft resolution now before the Committee.

18. Mr. LEKIC (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation had always attached particular importance to the denuclearization of various parts of the world, considering that to be one of the initial measures which should contribute to general and complete disarmament, and that it had therefore always given its support to the proposals which had been made to that end. The denuclearization of certain regions and continents was an integral part of the efforts of peace-loving forces towards the denuclearization of the whole world, the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and their elimination. In that context, the establishment of denuclearized zones would facilitate the prohibition of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The constant endeavours in the field of denuclearization which had been made in Africa, Latin America and central Europe over a number of years should be singled out, and particularly the fact that those endeavours had been directed towards the conclusion of international agreements within the framework of which all the parties concerned, including the nuclear Powers, would undertake to respect certain zones as denuclearized zones. The progress which the Latin American countries had made in that respect would be of valuable assistance to the countries of other continents which sought the same goal. As a result of the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 1652 (XVI), which called upon Member States to consider and respect the continent of Africa as a denuclearized zone, Africa's aspirations had received wide support and the problem had been considered in various African forums, including the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity which, at its first session, held at Cairo in July 1964, had adopted a declaration on the denuclearization of Africa. Africa's consistent efforts to become a denuclearized zone were a logical expression of their policy of non-alignment. Africa, which had overthrown colonial domination only recently, had become one of the mainstays of the struggle for peace and peaceful co-operation. All those peoples which had had to struggle arduously for the maintenance of their independence and the creation of better living conditions were ready to support the concrete demands of the African countries and to do everything in their power to ensure that heavy burden of the colonial past on the African continent would be overcome as soon as possible.

19. It had already been pointed out that the denuclearization of Africa did not depend only on the will of the African countries themselves, although that too was important, but on the will of other States, primarily the nuclear Powers, to respect the decision of the African countries. Denuclearization was component of the struggle for peace, and the attitude adopted by each country towards that question

was one of the criteria for assessing that country's interest in preventing war and developing general co-operation based on equality of rights. By their firm resolve to denuclearize the African continent, the countries of Africa were making an outstanding contribution to the easing of tension in the world. The draft resolution submitted by the African countries was a clear and precise expression of those aspirations. His delegation believed that the draft resolution would meet with the widest possible support at the current session and that the support given by the United Nations would confirm the African countries in the belief that their efforts would be successful and that one of the measures demanded by the Summit Conference of Independent African States, held at Addis Ababa in 1963, would thus be fulfilled. Guided by its policy of non-alignment, peaceful coexistence and disarmament, Yugoslavia fully appreciated the efforts of the African countries in the field of disarmament in general and denuclearization in particular, and fully supported them.

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/C.1/L.346/REV.1)

20. Mr. SETTE CAMARA (Brazil) said that his delegation had always emphasized the need for a clear and constructive discussion of problems affecting the security of nations which had no nuclear weapons and did not participate in any way in decisions concerning the deployment or use of such weapons. After recalling that his delegation had warmly supported General Assembly resolution 1652 (XVI), he reviewed the history of the efforts made by the Latin American countries to negotiate a status assuring them the necessary guarantees against the manufacture, stockpiling and transportation of nuclear devices in their respective territories. Since the Mexican representative had given a detailed account (1369th meeting) of the events which had followed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1911 (XVII), he would merely add a few comments concerning some implications that must be considered in a discussion of the guidelines for such an undertaking.

21. The first condition for establishing a nuclear-free zone was, of course, the political will to do so, freely expressed by all countries of a given geographical area, in adopting a resolution, therefore, the General Assembly was simply reaffirming the will of a group of independent countries to prepare an international instrument by which they committed themselves not to manufacture, store, receive or test nuclear weapons. That was the main purpose of the draft resolution under consideration. The second, and perhaps the most delicate, aspect of the problem concerned the role of the nuclear Powers. Denuclearization was not simply a process of isolating different geographical areas until general and complete disarmament was achieved, for while such an approach could be explained from a political point of view, it would not be useful unless the nuclear Powers demonstrated their readiness to respect the status of denuclearization in all its aspects and consequences. It was therefore essential to bear in mind the principle that all measures of general and complete disarmament must be balanced, in order that no State or group of States could at any stage gain a military advantage

and security was ensured equally for all. A similar approach must be used for the geographical delimitation of the zone to be denuclearized. As to the establishment of an adequate system of verification and control, it would be premature to examine the different possibilities at the present stage; moreover, the question would no doubt be thoroughly and expeditiously dealt with by the Organization of African Unity.

22. His Government was convinced that the world's balance of power would gain, from the point of view of political stability, if Africa was denuclearized: the crisis of October 1962 in the Caribbean had clearly demonstrated the danger that could result from the introduction of nuclear weapons into countries where they did not exist. Lastly, the denuclearization of Africa fitted into the logic of the process of general and complete disarmament. His delegation supported the draft resolution and wished all the African countries complete success in their efforts to ban nuclear weapons from their continent.

23. Mr. VAJNAR (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation welcomed the draft declaration on the denuclearization of Africa, since Czechoslovakia, like the other socialist countries, had always supported proposals for the creation of denuclearized zones. Such a measure would have favorable effects both for the States of the region in question and for the general world situation. Although, to be sure, the creation of denuclearized zones would not completely eliminate the danger of nuclear war, for that goal could be achieved only through total nuclear disarmament as part of the process of general disarmament, nevertheless that in no way diminished the urgency and importance of the specific measures aimed at reducing the danger. The creation of denuclearized zones unquestionably belonged in that category. However, since circumstances were different in different regions, the importance of the denuclearization of particular zones would also vary, as would the conditions of an agreement on such a measure.

24. His delegation believed that it was most important to create denuclearized zones in the regions in which the political and military situation was especially tense, but it realized that it was in precisely those regions that the greatest obstacles to the project existed. Europe was a case in point, and it was probably for that reason that Europe had been the birth-place of the idea of creating denuclearized zones, an idea which had been given concrete form in the plans presented by Poland. Subsequently, other proposals concerning various regions of Europe had been formulated. The situation in that continent, where there was already a build-up of armaments of all kinds, was aggravated by the desire of the Federal Republic of Germany to gain access to nuclear weapons in order to pursue a revanchist policy.

25. The creation of denuclearized zones in Europe was therefore of the utmost importance, particularly in the case of central Europe, and for that reason Czechoslovakia supported the Polish Government's proposal for the denuclearization of central Europe, as well as the German Democratic Republic's proposal that the two German States should renounce

nuclear weapons. In past years similar proposals had been made with regard to northern Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean area. The plan for the denuclearization of Africa demonstrated even more clearly the importance of such proposals, for if all the plans came to fruition, the denuclearized zone would extend from the southern coast of Africa to northern Europe. That development would help to reduce considerably the danger of a nuclear conflict.

26. However, the implementation of the plans for Europe was opposed by the Federal Republic of Germany and other members of NATO. The same attitude was displayed by certain delegations in the First Committee which had opposed the creation of denuclearized zones in that part of the world on the pretext that it would upset the balance of power between the Warsaw Treaty countries and the NATO countries. In the present context, that argument had no validity whatever, since the establishment of nuclear bases in Western Europe was a political concession made by the United States to the Federal Republic of Germany and did not fill any military need.

27. Moreover, it was only in the matter of disarmament that the Western Powers were concerned with maintaining a balance; a strengthening of the military potential of NATO, on the other hand, they regarded as perfectly compatible with the maintenance of such a balance. Thus, on 27 November 1965, the United States Secretary of Defense had announced that during the coming six months the number of nuclear weapons at the disposal of West European NATO members would be increased from 5,000 to 6,000.

28. The initiative of the African countries, to which Czechoslovakia gave full support, proved that the countries concerned wished to take an active part in solving other international questions and to help strengthen world peace and security. Despite the fact that there were at present no atomic weapons in Africa, that continent too might, in one way or another, become part of the nuclear weapons zone, with grave consequences for the international situation and for the political, military and economic development of the African countries. The desire of those countries for the prompt adoption of effective measures to prevent such an eventuality was therefore readily understandable.

29. Under the Charter of the United Nations, Member States had an obligation to aid the African countries in that sphere, and the adoption of the draft declaration before the Committee would be a step in that direction. It was evident that that measure alone would not suffice and that the African States would subsequently have to see to it that the resulting obligations were also respected by the States which still administered certain territories in Africa, by the racist régimes which still existed in the continent and, in general, by all States, especially the nuclear Powers.

30. The draft declaration and the statements made by the representatives of a number of African countries demonstrated the latter's desire to reach a solution which would exclude any loop-holes; he hoped that they would quickly succeed in formulating a text and implementing the appropriate measures. The

General Assembly, for its part, should adopt recommendations which would help to create conditions favourable to those purposes. The draft declaration on the denuclearization of Africa fulfilled that requirement, and his delegation would therefore vote for it.

31. Sir Harold BEELEY (United Kingdom) viewed with sympathy the efforts of both the Latin American and the African States to reach agreement on the establishment of nuclear-free zones in their continents. He was therefore happy that, as a result of the co-operative spirit of the sponsors of the draft resolution, the United Kingdom could vote for it. The United Kingdom had abstained in the vote on resolution 1652 (XVI) because the text had created certain difficulties. He was recalling those difficulties because resolution 1652 (XVI) was mentioned in the preamble to the draft resolution on which the Committee was about to vote.

32. The present draft resolution did not raise any comparable problems. There were perhaps phrases in it which were open to more than one interpretation, but it did not seem necessary to put any particular interpretation on them at the present stage. That was not, however, the case with the change in operative paragraph 5 which had been introduced by the sponsors on the suggestion of the Mexican representative. The United Kingdom would like to record its understanding that paragraph 5, in both its original and its revised form, related exclusively to the question of the denuclearization of Africa.

33. Apart from that, it would await the results of the studies mentioned in operative paragraph 7 and the text of the treaty or convention which would presumably result from those studies. While reserving the right to determine its attitude towards those documents at the appropriate time, the United Kingdom delegation hoped that the African States would reach an agreement beneficial not only to Africa, but to all mankind.

34. Mr. PRANDLER (Hungary) recalled that two denuclearization agreements had already been reached. They concerned Antarctica and outer space, uninhabited regions over which no sovereign State had authority. If it were possible, within the framework of the United Nations, to contribute to the denuclearization of Africa, then for the first time inhabited areas would have been successfully withdrawn from the dark shadow of nuclear weapons.

35. Many proposals for the creation of denuclearized zones had been made in the past. The first concerned central Europe. That was not by chance. For there were vestiges there of the Second World War: no peace treaty had been concluded with Germany, and the Federal Republic of Germany had been rearmed. It was regrettable that the Polish proposals, known as the Rapacki plan and the Gomulka plan, had aroused no positive reaction. In view of the sound measures proposed in the Gomulka Plan, it was difficult not to feel concerned at the ever-increasing stockpiles of nuclear weapons in Western Europe. Indeed the number of nuclear warheads, already more than 5,000, was going to be increased by 20 per cent in the next six months.

36. Since the cold-war tension had lessened, proposals had been made for the denuclearization of such

areas as the Balkan Peninsula, the Mediterranean countries and the Scandinavian Peninsula. If all the plans proposed were carried out, they would cover a part of the globe inhabited by nearly half of the world's population. That figure alone showed how important such initiatives were.

37. The Hungarian delegation endorsed in principle the creation of nuclear-free zones and, thus, the denuclearization of Africa. But the good intentions of States concerned were not of course enough to ensure that the aims of such initiatives would be achieved in full. In that connexion, it was satisfactory to note that, as in previous years, the Soviet delegation had declared that the Soviet Union would be willing to respect the declared will of the African States and guarantee the denuclearization of Africa if the NATO countries were ready to accept similar obligations. He would have liked to hear from the United States representative, who had spoken in the morning, that his Government was ready to undertake an obligation to that effect.

38. It was to be hoped that the NATO nuclear Powers would refrain from directly or indirectly helping the Republic of South Africa, the unlawful Government of Rhodesia or the Portuguese colonizers, to obtain atomic weapons or make preparations to manufacture the weapons themselves. It was common knowledge that the idea of arming itself with nuclear weapons was not foreign to the racist Government of the Republic of South Africa, as was shown by the Special Political Committee's debates on apartheid.

39. He hoped that all the members of the Committee would accept the constructive draft resolution proposed by the African States. The Hungarian delegation would contribute an affirmative vote to the success of that great undertaking.

40. Mr. M. I. BOTHA (South Africa) was fully in favour of the draft resolution under consideration. South Africa had acceded to the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, signed at Moscow on 5 August 1963, because, although not directly concerned with nuclear weapon tests, it shared the universal desire to prevent pollution of the atmosphere, the soil and the waters, and exposure of the world's peoples to radio-active fall-out resulting from nuclear weapon tests. South Africa had voted for General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX) adopted the week before.

41. During the recent inauguration of South Africa's research reactor, the South African Prime Minister had said that all the knowledge that the reactor developed, and all the work it did, would be at the disposal of the smaller nations of Africa, which, like South Africa, had difficulty in keeping up with the progress of the great nations of the world.

42. For all those reasons, South Africa was in full agreement with the objectives of the draft resolution under consideration. However, operative paragraph 7 implicitly placed the responsibility for whatever studies and measures were needed to realize those objectives in the hands of the Organization of African Unity. The hostile attitude of that Organization towards South Africa was well known and South Africa could

therefore not be expected to endorse the intention reflected in that paragraph.

43. The South African delegation would accordingly, to its regret, not be able to vote for the draft resolution. It would, however, not vote against the draft resolution, but would abstain. Its abstention would indicate its support of the resolution's basic objective.

44. Mr. CORNER (New Zealand) said that he would vote in favour of the draft resolution because he was ready to support its basic intent. However, that did not necessarily mean that he endorsed all its provisions or that he accepted without qualification several of the assumptions which were contained in it, such as those in the fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs. New Zealand had never contested the possible value of nuclear-free zones in certain areas of the world. It had always maintained, however, that the military and political circumstances prevailing in each area must be taken fully into account.

45. The wording of operative paragraph 5 was not entirely satisfactory because it might lead to the conclusion that action by one State—such as the acquisition of nuclear weapons—left other States with no recourse but to take similar action. That would be a most unfortunate implication because there were, in fact, many other ways of meeting such eventualities. It simply could not be accepted that an unfortunate decision in that field by one State must inexorably produce others from neighbouring States.

46. Lastly, he hoped that, in the course of their negotiations, the States of the region would not imperil their venture by neglecting to associate with it all States whose participation in an agreement was essential to its success.

47. Mr. PATRICIO (Portugal) said that he supported the principle of the denuclearization of Africa and, therefore, the idea of converting the whole continent into a nuclear-free zone. The Portuguese delegation had always been in favour of preventing the dissemination of nuclear weapons so as to avoid creating greater risks of a world conflict. That was why it had voted in favour of resolution 1652 (XVI). It now welcomed the initiative of a number of African States which had asked for the inclusion of the question of the denuclearization of Africa in the Assembly's agenda, and had submitted a draft resolution. However, it had serious doubts about the desirability of including a reference to the Organization of African Unity in a text of that kind. It would be recalled that in resolution 1911 (XVIII) on the denuclearization of Latin America, which the General Assembly had adopted on 27 November 1963, no mention was made of the regional organization which covered that part of America. Portugal would therefore find it difficult to support operative paragraphs 2, 7 and 9 of the draft resolution in question, since they would have the effect of according an unjustified position of privilege to the regional organization that was mentioned in them. He therefore requested that a separate vote should be taken by roll-call on paragraphs 2, 7 and 9.

48. Mr. SHAW (Australia) considered that proposals for the establishment of nuclear-free zones could

only contribute to arms control and stability in particular areas if they satisfied certain criteria. The necessary arrangements should be made on the initiative of the countries of the region and should enjoy their unanimous support. They should not upset the strategic balance, including the balance of military forces, both nuclear and conventional, existing in the area. Lastly, they must include adequate provision for verification and control.

49. The Australian delegation would try to apply those criteria to the proposed declaration on the denuclearization of Africa. Each African State had the sovereign right to prohibit the testing, storing and disposition of nuclear weapons in its own territory. Each country also had the sovereign right to join with other countries or other areas to give effect to those provisions. It was a matter for the countries concerned to consult one another as to whether or not they wished to establish a nuclear-free zone and under what conditions. They then had to work out rules for respecting the zone and for ensuring that it was respected by other countries.

50. Applying those considerations, the Australian delegation was sympathetic to the proposition that the African States should initiate studies as they deemed appropriate, with a view to implementing the denuclearization of Africa. It regretted, however, that the recommendation was preceded, in the draft resolution under discussion, by certain preambular paragraphs which were not germane to the main proposition. The fourth preambular paragraph, for example, stated that "proposals for the establishment of denuclearized zones in various other areas of the world have also met with general approval". While certain proposals, such as those concerning the denuclearization of Latin America, had received a broad measure of approval, one could not ignore the fact that other proposals for nuclear-free zones elsewhere had not met with general approval.

51. Nor was the Australian delegation convinced that "the denuclearization of various areas of the world would help to achieve the desired goal of prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons", as was stated in the fifth preambular paragraph.

52. With respect to the area in which Australia was situated, his Government considered that the conditions which should exist before nuclear-free zones could be considered did not yet exist. The region of Asia and the South-West Pacific included one Power which already disposed of an enormous quantity of conventional weapons and was now engaged in building up a nuclear armoury. Since that region also included vast international waterways, for which it would be impossible to provide adequate inspection and safeguards, it would be not only illusory but positively dangerous to establish a nuclear-free zone there. It would disturb the existing strategic balance and would increase the risks of aggression.

53. Having made those reservations, the Australian delegation would be happy to vote for the draft resolution.

54. Mr. OTEMA ALLIMADE (Uganda) said that, though the Assembly's rules of procedure provided for a separate vote on certain parts of a draft

resolution, it was the wish of the sponsors of the draft resolution that it should be voted on as a whole.

55. Mr. SEATON (United Republic of Tanzania) opposed the Portuguese motion for division and supported the request made by the representative of Uganda.

56. Mr. SHALLOUF (Libya) also supported the request made by the representative of Uganda. He pointed out that the draft resolution was a sequel to previous resolutions adopted by the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations, and the sixth and seventh preambular paragraphs made it clear that no representatives of African States that were members of the Organization of African Unity had the authority to change decisions already taken by the Heads of their respective States and that the representatives of the non-aligned countries were in the same position. Consequently, the draft resolution would have to be adopted as a whole, since there was no possibility of any compromise.

57. The CHAIRMAN, noting that the representative of Portugal wished to speak again, pointed out that

under rule 129 of the rules of procedure he could not permit the proposer of a proposal or of an amendment to explain his vote on his own proposal or amendment. He could therefore only give him the floor on a point of order.

58. Mr. PATRICIO (Portugal) speaking on a point of order, said that he would not insist on separate votes on operative paragraphs 2, 7 and 9 of the draft resolution since the sponsors were opposed to the motion. That would naturally affect the position of the Portuguese delegation on the draft as a whole, and he might be obliged to abstain in the vote. He therefore requested that a roll-call vote should be taken.

59. The CHAIRMAN said that, in view of the late hour, the vote on the draft resolution would be taken at the following meeting.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.