



Chairman: Mr. Carlos GIAMBRUNO
(Uruguay).

AGENDA ITEM 49

Human rights in armed conflicts (*continued*):

(b) **Protection of journalists engaged in dangerous missions in areas of armed conflict: report of the Secretary-General (*continued*)* (A/8703, chap. XIV, sect. B; A/8777 and Add.1 and 2, A/C.3/L.1952, A/C.3/L.1956, A/C.3/L.1958, A/C.3/L.1960, A/C.3/L.1961, A/C.3/L.1963/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1968, A/C.3/L.1969, E/CN.4/1096)**

**DRAFT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON
THE PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS
ENGAGED IN DANGEROUS PROFESSIONAL
MISSION IN AREAS OF ARMED CONFLICT
(*continued*)**

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the amendments (A/C.3/L.1969) submitted by the Central African Republic, India, Senegal and Togo to draft resolution A/C.3/L.1968.

2. Mr. MAGONGO (Swaziland) said that the draft articles of the international convention on the protection of journalists in areas of armed conflict (A/C.3/L.1963/Rev.1) must be acceptable to all Member States; it was therefore desirable to give Governments time to study the draft and formulate their comments on it. For that reason, he urged all those who wished to see the articles adopted at the current session to agree to the adjournment of the question to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly. Although some of the articles might possibly be adopted at the current session, it would be preferable to defer consideration of them and consider them altogether at the following session.

3. Mr. VAURS (France) recalled that, in accordance with the rules of procedure it had been decided not to discuss the item for 24 hours, to give delegations time to study draft resolution A/C.3/L.1968 properly, and that therefore there was no reason to consider that postponement as a delaying tactic.

4. As to the proposal made by the Tunisian representative at the 1950th meeting to the effect that paragraph 1 of article 13 should become paragraph 2 of article 1, that change would ensure a more exact definition of the scope of the convention, not only with regard

to its purpose and objective, but also of the limits within which the protection should be granted, thus affirming from the outset the principle of the sovereignty of States. The French delegation considered that proposal justified and was ready to vote for it.

5. The Egyptian representative had pointed out that the words "or who is under its jurisdiction" in paragraph 2 of article 6, were difficult to interpret and in any form raised some difficulties for his delegation. In the view of the French delegation, that was a most relevant question; it had already been considered very carefully by the sponsors without any consensus being achieved. For that reason, he was hoping very much that agreement could be reached when the Committee took up article 6.

6. At the 1950th meeting, the representative of Colombia, in introducing draft resolution A/C.3/L.1968, had made an analysis of the draft convention. Referring to that analysis, the French delegation wished to repeat that the text contained in document A/C.3/L.1963/Rev.1 was modest in scope, was conceived in a realistic spirit and was humanitarian in character. In that connexion, he recalled the statement he had made at the 1932nd meeting on the general structure of the draft articles and the four basic principles about which they were built, that was to say, respect for the jurisdiction of the International Red Cross and collaboration with it, support from and participation by journalists, the realistic nature of the proposed protection measures, and respect for national sovereignty.

7. Some of the interpretations given by the representative of Colombia were not in accordance with either the spirit or the letter of the convention. In the first place, the journalists' card proposed would not be a "political passport": it would merely be an identification document of the type envisaged by the General Assembly in resolution 2673 (XXV) and as indicated in draft article 5. The Colombian representative had also mentioned the protection of national sovereignty including respect for frontier legislation; but article 13 and article 5, paragraph 2, laid down the principle of the sovereignty of States in any event. The aim of the convention would be to give journalists on dangerous missions greater protection in the humanitarian field, not to grant them any additional rights or force States to grant them visas. The French delegation's attitude to the Tunisian proposal made at the 1950th meeting clearly showed its concern for national sovereignty.

8. The Colombian representative had also said that article 2 (b) was not acceptable to the developing

* Resumed from the 1950th meeting.

countries. That might be so for his and some other delegations, but the many consultations held by the sponsors had shown that the developing countries did not reject it. Furthermore, article 2 (b) did not introduce anything new. The idea had already been expressed in article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and it had never been seriously questioned in connexion with those Conventions or proved an obstacle to their application. Furthermore, currently, some national liberation movements had tried to apply the Geneva Conventions on their own initiative when they were "parties to an armed conflict on the territory of a State party to the Convention". That should reassure the representative of Colombia as to the possibility of legal obligations being placed on the movements that were not parties to the convention. Furthermore, his reservations would apply as much to the Geneva Conventions as to the draft articles, for it was difficult to understand why provisions that were suitable in those Conventions were not suitable in a draft which was in line with the Conventions. The Colombian representative had also said that persons from abroad might aggravate an internal conflict; but it was difficult to see how granting a certain measure of humanitarian protection to journalists could aggravate an international conflict. Lastly, he noted with satisfaction that the Colombian representative had stated that, in principle, he would continue to be deeply interested in the conclusion of an international convention on the protection of journalists.

9. Referring to draft resolution A/C.5/L.1968, he pointed out that General Assembly resolutions 2673 (XXV) and 2854 (XXVI), were recalled in the first preambular paragraph. Both those resolutions affirmed that it was necessary to adopt a new international instrument of humanitarian character for the protection of journalists engaged in dangerous missions in areas of armed conflict, but that statement was not repeated in the draft resolution, which was a serious deficiency. Under operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would merely decide to adjourn consideration of the item to the twenty-eighth session, without indicating any priority for it, which was not very logical. In his own view, that would negate the work which had been going on for more than two years in the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council, and the substantial efforts towards conciliation made by the working group set up at the current session. In operative paragraph 2, the Secretary-General was requested to transmit the revised draft articles to Governments; but the Governments had already been familiar with them since March 1972, through the report of the Commission on Human Rights on its twenty-eighth session. In addition, the report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/8777), had been sent to Governments in September 1972. The text appearing in those documents was basically the same as the revised draft contained in document A/C.3/L.1963/Rev.1. Lastly, the Third Committee had spent a great deal of time working on the draft articles at the current session and so as to enable delegations to seek instructions from their Government, the sponsors had agreed to postpone the consideration of the revised text for one week. There-

fore any Governments that wished to make their views known had had sufficient time to do so.

10. Since operative paragraph 3 did not state that the highest priority should be given to the item, it meant in effect that consideration of it would be dependent on the receipt of replies from Governments, which was a step backwards compared with the resolution adopted at the previous session. What most surprised him was that there was no recommendation that the draft articles should be adopted at the twenty-eighth session. Paragraph 3 was therefore a negation of the previous General Assembly resolutions. The French delegation considered that the constructive and realistic work that the working group had carried out deserved a better fate and that it was the duty of the Third Committee not to negate its own previous efforts but press forward to a positive conclusion at the current session. For those reasons, the French delegation would vote against draft resolution A/C.3/L.1968 and it pressed its request for the draft to be examined article by article.

11. Miss FAROUK (Tunisia) thanked the French representative for accepting the proposal she had made at the 1950th meeting with regard to the transposition of article 13, paragraph 1, to the position of article 1, paragraph 2.

12. Mr. SEKYIAMA (Ghana) said that the Committee was still bottled up in the general debate on the question, to which a great deal of time had already been devoted. The Ghanaian delegation was basically favourable to the idea of a convention for the protection of journalists on dangerous missions in areas of armed conflict; but the Committee also had to take up other agenda items and could not spend the rest of the session on the item. The statement made by the representative of France showed that the sponsors of the draft convention were still unwilling to accept the requests made by most of the delegations for more time to enable their Governments to analyse the revised draft articles in depth. In view of the humanitarian purposes underlying the draft, it was obvious that the ideal thing would be to have a convention that was acceptable to the greatest possible number of countries and was most likely to be ratified. The delegations which had requested the adjournment of the consideration of the item had given every proof of a positive attitude, since they had held meetings of their groups, they had asked for additional time to submit the draft convention to their respective Governments, and they had made sincere efforts to reach a solution. But the reaction of the sponsors of the draft was still as negative as ever, so that a prolongation of the debate would not produce any solution. Therefore, the Ghanaian delegation was sorry to have to request, in accordance with rule 118 of the rules of procedure, the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion, which would be considered at the next session of the General Assembly.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that under rule 118, a representative might at any time move the adjournment of a debate on the item under discussion and that after the proposer of the motion, permission to speak on the adjournment would be accorded to two speakers

opposing the adjournment and two in favour of it, after which the motion would immediately be put to a vote.

14. Mr. BELTRÁN (Uruguay) said that he was opposed to the Ghanaian motion. It was true that cases had been cited of conventions which had been the subject of prolonged debate before being adopted, but such conventions were much more complex and of greater consequence. The draft convention being considered by the Committee was limited in scope: its purpose was exclusively humanitarian and it did not establish any additional rights other than the granting of reasonable protection to journalists engaged in dangerous missions in areas of armed conflict. Many journalists were unfortunately losing their lives, martyrs to the perils of their profession. The draft convention merely provided that a journalist should have access to areas of armed conflict, with the consent of the State concerned, without that State relinquishing any of its sovereign rights. All that the draft convention laid down was that reasonable protection should be assured against the dangers inherent in the profession of journalism; nothing could be more general. The draft convention also provided that a journalist's relatives should be notified in the event of his death. There was no need to dwell on the humanitarian considerations behind that provision.

15. In his opinion, merely to postpone the debate on the question would be tantamount to starting all over again. He was concerned that such a situation should have arisen over a limited issue on which the majority of delegations seemed to be in agreement. If that could happen in the present case, what would happen when the Organization had to deal with major problems posed by more urgent situations? For those reasons, his delegation would vote against the motion for adjournment of the debate.

16. Mrs. GUEYE (Senegal) urged that the amendments (A/C.3/L.1969)—of which her delegation was a sponsor—to draft resolution A/C.3/L.1968 be considered and asked to be allowed to present it to the Committee.

17. Mr. BOOTHE (Jamaica) said that the Committee had not dealt with even four of the 15 items assigned to it. The question under consideration seemed to have reached a point where further discussion would not lead to any positive results. Moreover, he understood that proposals to replace draft articles of the convention should be submitted as separate draft resolutions, not as amendments. He therefore considered that document A/C.3/L.1969 should not be discussed but that a decision should be taken on the motion proposed by the representative of Ghana.

18. The Committee should try to reach a decision on whether to recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft convention concerning which many States felt some disquiet and a number of others had not expressed their views, or whether a more cautious course should be followed of seeking the views of Governments on the revised draft convention. His delegation acknowledged the painstaking work under-

taken by the French delegation and the other sponsors of the draft convention contained in document A/C.3/L.1963/Rev.1, and also of those delegations that had proposed amendments to it. Nevertheless, it was of the opinion that further review of the revised draft convention by Governments was necessary before its adoption. He accordingly supported the proposal of the representative of Ghana for the adjournment of the debate in accordance with rule 118 of the rules of procedure.

19. Mr. JAYAWICKREMA (Sri Lanka) said that he did not see how document A/C.3/L.1969 could help Member States to submit their comments on the draft convention. It was not clear how restricting the debate to a few articles of the draft convention could help to increase the protection of journalists in dangerous missions.

20. Mrs. GUEYE (Senegal), speaking on a point of order, said that the representative of Sri Lanka seemed to be starting a detailed discussion on amendments which had not yet been formally introduced. She repeated her request to be allowed to present the amendments.

21. Mr. JAYAWICKREMA (Sri Lanka) said that he was not intending to discuss the amendments. He merely wished to explain why he was in favour of the Ghanaian representative's proposal and why he urged the members of the Committee to support it.

22. Mrs. DAES (Greece) appealed to the representative of Ghana not to press his motion for adjournment of the debate to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly. Hitherto the Committee had pursued its discussions without difficulties and it would be unfortunate if certain items of the agenda were left in suspense until the following year. She accordingly proposed that the meeting should be suspended for 15 minutes. In accordance with rule 121 of the rules of procedure, her motion would take precedence over all previous motions or proposals.

23. Mr. SEKYIAMAH (Ghana) said that he had no objection to the meeting being suspended for 15 minutes.

24. The CHAIRMAN said that if there were no objections, he would take it that the members of the Committee wished to suspend the meeting for 15 minutes.

It was so agreed.

The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 4.55 p.m.

25. Mr. SEKYIAMAH (Ghana) said that he maintained his motion for adjournment of the debate.

26. Mr. JAYAWICKREMA (Sri Lanka), referring to the Ghanaian motion, said that his delegation was not prepared for the kind of patchwork effort suggested by the sponsors of the amendments in document A/C.3/L.1969. A request had been made for clarifica-

tion and correction of the basic weaknesses of the draft articles of the convention and for time to be given for that purpose; in response the Committee had been invited to perform a tiresome and useless task. His delegation was not opposed to an emblem being given to journalists, but it wanted time to study the commitments that its Government would assume in the matter and to consider how the draft convention could be improved so as to ensure that the emblem would be really respected.

At the request of the representative of Ghana, a vote was taken by roll-call on his motion to adjourn the debate to the following session.

Togo, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Algeria, Argentina, Barbados, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Libyan Arab Republic, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mongolia, Nigeria, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland.

Against: Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland, France, Gabon, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Khmer Republic, Laos, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Senegal, Spain, Sweden.

Abstaining: Turkey, United States of America, Upper Volta, Afghanistan, Bahrain, Chile, Cyprus, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Iceland, India, Iraq, Israel, Ivory Coast, Mexico, Nepal, Niger, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Thailand.

The motion of Ghana was adopted by 49 votes to 38 with 23 abstentions.

27. The CHAIRMAN said that the item on the protection of journalists engaged in dangerous missions in areas of armed conflict would be recommended for inclusion in the agenda for the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, as would be indicated in the Committee's report.

28. Mrs. DAES (Greece), speaking in explanation of her vote, said that her delegation had not taken part in the general debate on item 49 (b), nor had it formally submitted at the current session any amendment to the draft articles of the international convention, because it did not think it would be appropriate when its representative was in the Chair. Nevertheless, it had closely followed the debates in the Committee and

the working group. The work of the latter body showed once more the usefulness of such informal working parties, which saved time and promoted the work of the Main Committees of the General Assembly. She stressed the goodwill and spirit of compromise and co-operation which had prevailed among the sponsors of the draft convention, which had made it possible to incorporate in that text a large number of the amendments and proposals submitted and to improve considerably the draft text prepared by the Commission on Human Rights. The new text was based mainly on the fundamental provisions of article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and contained a number of important guarantees for the respect of the principle of national sovereignty. In the view of her delegation, although some of the revised articles needed further elaboration, the draft convention in general provided for a balanced relationship between the right of protection of journalists and the State's duty to preserve and maintain law and order.

29. All the necessary and relevant preparatory work had been completed and those Governments that desired to reply had done so (see A/8777 and Add.1 and 2) in answering the Secretary-General's note of 31 May 1972. Moreover, the Committee had, by consensus, given reasonable time to all members to consult their Governments on the revised text, which was stricter and clearer than the original one because most of the revised articles contained provisions for the observance of the principles concerning the sovereignty of the State and non-intervention in matters within the domestic jurisdiction and affairs of any State. In the view of her delegation, the Committee could have proceeded to the final elaboration and adoption of some articles of the draft convention at the current session. For those reasons her delegation had voted against the motion of the representative of Ghana.

30. Miss SANO (Japan) said that her delegation had voted against the proposal by Ghana because it felt that the Third Committee could have begun discussing the draft international convention, even only part of it, and could have adopted some of the articles, leaving others for the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The convention, of a purely humanitarian nature, would resolve an urgent and crucial problem which needed immediate action. On the other hand, her delegation had been inclined to support the amendments (A/C.3/L.1969) to draft resolution A/C.3/L.1968, and regretted that they had not been discussed owing to the adoption of the Ghanaian proposal.

31. Mrs. GEORGE (Trinidad and Tobago) said that her delegation had been associated with an earlier initiative to postpone the adoption of the draft convention until the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, because that convention included elements that were either unclear or which suggested the possibility that her Government could contract certain obligations or confer certain rights, all of which required further deep reflection. However, her country was deeply committed to seeing the expansion and development of international humanitarian law, and

other fields of international law, and hoped that when the time came it would be able to give full support to the articles of the convention.

32. A great deal of work had been done to improve the draft and considerable progress had been made. But more time was needed, and time in that sense meant more than days or weeks. Her delegation felt that it was preferable to wait until there was a widely accepted text rather than to adopt one which rested on a very narrow base of support. Her delegation hoped that in the time between now and the next session of the General Assembly all Governments would assess the draft articles and make pertinent comments in a sincere effort to finalize it.

33. Mr. PAPADEMAS (Cyprus), explaining his abstention in the vote, reiterated the interest which his delegation had shown, during the discussion of the item, for the adoption of the draft articles. It was regrettable that rule 118 of the rules of procedure had been invoked; that procedure had, perhaps, not been correct, even though it had been accepted by the majority. His delegation had felt that during the current session a vote would have been taken on draft resolution A/C.3/L.1968 and on the amendments to it (A/C.3/L.1969). Those documents had not been put forward, and for that reason his delegation had been obliged to abstain in the vote on the motion of the representative of Ghana.

34. Mrs. NIGAM (India) said that compromise was an art which all representatives and countries had to learn in order to work in justice. Although it was not always possible to achieve the best solution, it should be attempted; all delegations should be willing to accept a formula which, although not the best, was acceptable to the majority. In that spirit of accommodation, her delegation had decided to co-sponsor the compromise solution contained in document A/C.3/L.1969. Those amendments had, in a way, accommodated that spirit of compromise which the representative of France had shown during the discussion of the draft articles, and which had been shown by other delegations also when they had proposed that the debate on the draft articles be postponed until the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The amendments had been a compromise between the two points of view and her delegation had believed, as had the other sponsors, that they would have received majority support. For that reason her delegation had abstained in the vote and she wished to emphasize that her action had always been dictated by a noble spirit of conciliation.

35. Mrs. GUEYE (Senegal) said that the delegations that had wished to introduce the amendments (A/C.3/L.1969) had felt that the draft convention had been timely and quite legitimate and useful; however, they had understood that, given the limited time at its disposal, the Third Committee had not been in a position to discuss the details of all the articles with due calm. Since they had not wished the efforts made by the Committee and by the competent bodies of the United Nations to be in vain, and since they had felt that the two views expressed during the debate were

equally justifiable, they had concluded that it was necessary to find a way of reconciling those divergent points of view through a compromise solution that would satisfy both. Consequently, they had wished to submit the amendments in the hope that the spirit of compromise which had always inspired the Third Committee would once again allow it to reach an agreement dispassionately and to reaffirm the Committee's humanitarian vocation; the main objective of that vocation, regardless of any political or personal consideration, was the continuing defence of human rights. Her delegation regretted that feeling had become so hot during the debate and hoped that in the future, reason would prevail over sterile passion.

36. Mr. AKYAMAC (Turkey) said that as one of the sponsors of the draft articles contained in document A/C.3/L.1963/Rev.1, he wished to explain his abstention in the voting. His delegation would have liked the draft articles to be adopted immediately, but during the debate it had become apparent that many delegations, whose wishes could not be disregarded, had not been in a position to decide and had wished to examine the draft more carefully. In those circumstances, his delegation had willingly accepted the amendments contained in document A/C.3/L.1969, which had represented a compromise solution between the position of those who had wanted the discussion of the item postponed until the twenty-eighth session and that of the sponsors of the draft articles. The amendments had asked only for the adoption of certain articles, leaving the definitive adoption of the convention until the next session. However, it had been evident that it was impossible to reconcile the two opinions, and for that reason his delegation had decided not to vote against the Ghanaian proposal. Moreover, his delegation had reservations regarding the interpretation given to rule 118 of the rules of procedure, since it did not believe that the rule could be invoked to postpone a debate until another session, but only until another date during the same session. The first was a very important decision and could not depend on the opinions, in favour or against, of four representatives. Nevertheless, the majority had thus decided and his delegation was inclined to abide by that decision.

37. Mr. MASRI (Jordan) said that had he been present during the vote he would have voted against the Ghanaian proposal.

38. Mr. AN (China) said that he had voted in favour of the proposal by Ghana because his delegation was still studying the contents of the draft articles. Although he was not yet in a position to comment formally on the draft, he wished to draw particular attention to article 15, in which it was stipulated that the convention should be open for signature by all States Members of the United Nations or members of a specialized agency. At its twenty-sixth session, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 2758 (XXVI), whereby it had decided to restore all rights to the People's Republic of China and to recognize the representatives of its Government as the only legitimate representative of China to the United Nations, and to expel forthwith the representatives of Chiang Kai-

shek from the place which they unlawfully occupied at the United Nations and in all the organizations related to it. However, certain specialized agencies had not implemented that resolution and article 15 could be used by the Chiang Kai-shek clique to establish itself as a party to the convention, and that was unacceptable. Consequently, his delegation was asking that that article be revised in conformity with resolution 2758 (XXVI) in order to prevent the Chiang Kai-shek clique from being able to accede to the convention.

39. Mr. ZAIDI (Pakistan) thanked the French delegation for its efforts on the draft articles and said that he was obliged to explain his opposition to the Ghanaian motion. His delegation had always believed that the question of the protection of journalists was very important because conflicts were constantly breaking out in the world. Taking into account its own experience, the Government of Pakistan had wished that the draft convention be discussed and adopted as soon as possible. In the meetings devoted to that item during the current session, the general debate had been concluded and the opinions of all had been heard, and his delegation, which was anxious to see the discussion successfully concluded, had very willingly participated in the work. Consequently, by respect for its principles, it had been obliged to vote against the Ghanaian proposal.

40. Mr. ARÍZAGA (Ecuador) said that his delegation had opposed the motion to adjourn the debate, since it was a sponsor of the draft articles. In its capacity as such, his delegation also wished to express clearly and sincerely its profound gratitude to those delegations which had called for the adoption of the draft articles at the current session, and he expressed the hope that the Committee would arrive at a satisfactory solution at the twenty-eighth session.

41. Mr. TORRES (Philippines), speaking on a point of clarification regarding the statement of the representative of India, said that the Philippine delegation had never expressed support for any proposal to defer to the twenty-eighth session consideration of that important item. In fact it had underlined the timeliness and need for the adoption of the draft convention, as soon as possible. Its efforts to reconcile the opposing views regarding the time of voting on the draft must have been misunderstood.

42. Mr. BOOTHE (Jamaica) explained that his delegation had associated itself with the motion to postpone the debate on the item until the next session because of its desire that a well-balanced draft convention acceptable to the majority of Member States should be drawn up. It should be recalled that, so far, only 15 Member States had forwarded their comments on the draft articles of the convention to the Secretary-General, in accordance with the request made by the Commission on Human Rights at its twenty-eighth session. That was an obvious indication of the complexity of the instrument under consideration. Resolution 6 (XXVIII) of the Commission on Human Rights approved "as the basis for further work" the draft articles of the convention; it could be considered that

the "further work" had now been completed and that the next step was to send the text to Governments for study and comments. The submission of the draft articles to the General Assembly during the current session might have been counter-productive, since, had the convention been adopted, even those States which supported the draft articles might nevertheless have found it difficult to ratify it.

43. For those reasons, he had supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.1968 and the motion by the representative of Ghana to adjourn the debate on that item until the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

44. Mr. ORDZHONIKIDZE (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in explanation of his vote, said that some progress had been made in the consideration of the draft articles of the international convention and that improvements had been made with respect to specific aspects of the text on the basis of a number of amendments submitted by various delegations, including the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, no agreement had been reached on the most important of the amendments submitted by his delegation (A/C.3/L.1952), namely, those designed to protect the sovereignty and security of States and to eliminate the discrimination which would prevent all interested States from becoming parties to the convention, a text which, as its sponsors had emphasized, was inspired by lofty humanitarian goals. Moreover, his delegation considered the procedure for the issue and withdrawal of journalists' cards to be inadequate. It was stipulated in article 4, paragraph 2, that the International Professional Committee would make regulations prescribing the conditions for the issuance, renewal and withdrawal of the card, as well as its form and contents, which obviously detracted from the sovereignty of States that might become parties to the convention. His delegation regretted that its amendments on that point had not been accepted by the sponsors. The USSR would be in favour of a convention which defined clearly who would be covered by the protection it afforded and in that connexion it had to be acknowledged that the revised draft convention was clearer than the initial text, but it was unreasonable for the term "journalist" to cover technical radio and television assistants as well.

45. It was important to remember that journalists engaged in professional missions in areas of armed conflict were obliged to carry out their duties in combat areas, which meant that their safety should be guaranteed by requiring them to conform to the instructions of the military authorities. It was regrettable that the Soviet Union's proposal to that end had not been accepted by the sponsors. The Soviet Union also disagreed with the terms of article 18, which would actually be prejudicial to the sovereignty of States, since it stipulated that a denunciation notification of which had been given by a party engaged in armed conflict should not take effect until after the conclusion of the operations to which the journalist's mission related. Again, it was to be regretted that the proposed amendments to that article, including that of the Soviet Union, had not been accepted.

46. His delegation, which had furnished abundant proof of its interest in the draft convention and had taken an active part in the efforts of the working group, considered that the revised draft as a whole represented an improvement over the previous version. However, it thought that States should be given more time to study the revised draft articles in depth. Hence, it had supported the motion by Ghana to adjourn the debate on that question to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

47. Mrs. BARISH (Costa Rica) said that she had voted against the motion by the representative of Ghana. Her delegation would have liked to see the draft convention adopted during the current session and, failing that, would have liked to have the opportunity to express its views on draft resolution A/C.3/L.1968 and on the amendments to it (A/C.3/L.1969), which it had not been possible to consider despite the fact that they offered a workable solution. Her delegation wished to express its appreciation to all those delegations which had worked so hard at the different stages of preparation of the draft convention, and was convinced that their work had not been in vain but would bear fruit at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

48. Mrs. DE BROMLEY (Honduras) said that her delegation had voted against the motion by the representative of Ghana since, although it was aware of the difficulties raised by the fact that there had not been time to analyse the draft convention in depth, it thought that it would have been preferable for the Committee to try to adopt some articles as a demonstration of its concern and sympathy for journalists.

49. Mr. MKONA (Malawi) said that he had been absent at the time the vote was taken on the Ghanaian motion, but that he would have abstained had he been present, not out of any lack of interest, but in order to associate himself with the views of the majority of the members of the Committee.

50. Mr. SOLOMON (Ethiopia) said that he had voted in favour of Ghana's motion because he thought that the time had not yet come to vote on the draft convention. However, his vote should be interpreted not as a sign of opposition to the draft but as a move to allow Governments sufficient time to study it.

51. Mr. HAMMOUD (Lebanon) noted that rule 118 of the rules of procedure, on which the representative of Ghana had based his motion, made no reference to the adjournment of a debate until the following session. Such a measure required the Committee to adopt a resolution.

52. The CHAIRMAN said that it had been made clear at the time that the proposal was for an adjournment until the following session; as no objections had been raised, he had concluded that all members had understood it in that way.

53. Mr. HAMMOUD (Lebanon) maintained that the Committee was not competent to interpret the rules of procedure and that, in any case, rule 118 was very clear. In the present case, a substantive question had been raised which required the adoption of a resolution.

54. Mr. VAURS (France) said that his earlier lengthy statement had fully explained why France had voted against the motion. Both the sponsors of the draft articles and the sponsors of the amendments had expressed great interest in a problem worthy of the attention of the United Nations and the Third Committee. It was an important, humanitarian, urgent and legitimate problem, not an academic one, and the sponsors had done everything possible to make progress, avoid controversy and arrive at a realistic solution. The postponement of the debate had imposed a grave humanitarian responsibility on the Committee. Nevertheless, he thought that the debate and all the proposals submitted had been useful, and the explanations of vote had given him optimism, as they showed that all delegations attached to the question the importance it deserved and that they would continue their effort to arrive at a humanitarian convention.

55. Miss CAO-PINNA (Italy) said that she had voted against the motion because she had supported the draft international convention from the beginning of the debate and also because she had been able to appreciate the work done by the working group and the sponsors. Although many representatives had mentioned that the revised draft represented a substantial improvement over the initial text, she understood the difficulties of those delegations which had not been able to take a position on the draft articles as a whole. However, she thought that the amendments contained in document A/C.3/L.1969 could have made a very positive contribution, and regretted that no vote had been taken on them during the current session.

56. Mr. CARBERY (Ireland) said that he had voted against the motion because he believed that the draft convention deserved to be supported. He hoped that it would be given high priority at the next session and regretted that the amendments contained in document A/C.3/L.1969 had not been considered, because he would have liked to co-sponsor them.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.