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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 29th MEETING

Chairman:

Mr. RANA

(Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

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CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Sweden, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47.

Mr. HYLTEINIUS (Sweden): I am speaking to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47, concerning the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, together with three Protocols on non-detectable fragments, on landmines, booby traps and other devices, and on incendiary weapons.

It is now 10 years since this Convention and its annexed Protocols were adopted by a United Nations conference at Geneva. That Conference concluded its work on 10 October 1980. The Convention was opened for signature here in New York on 10 April 1981, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations was designated as the depositary.

The adoption of the Convention 10 years ago was the result of several years of preparation. The fact that it entered into force on 2 December 1983 - that is, less than three years after its adoption - was a very encouraging indication of the desire of the international community progressively to develop international humanitarian law in the field of weaponry and to give it effect. In the draft resolution the General Assembly would note with satisfaction this positive development, but it would also note the need for wider ratification of the Convention and its annexed Protocols. The Assembly would further stress the possibility, laid down in article 8 of the Convention, of reviewing the scope and operation of the regulations and of setting further international standards relating to other categories of conventional weapons not covered so far.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Thirty-two States have acceded to the Convention and the three annexed Protocols. In the draft resolution States that have not yet become parties to the Convention and its annexed Protocols are urged to exert their best endeavours to do so as early as possible so that the instruments might ultimately obtain universality of adherence.

The sponsors of the draft resolution are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia and my own country, Sweden. On behalf of the sponsors I would like to express the hope that the draft resolution in document A/C.1/45/L.47 will be adopted without a vote.

Speaking on behalf of my own delegation I would like to make some further remarks. According to paragraph 3 of article 8 of the Convention, a review or amendment conference may be convened 10 years following the entry into force of the Convention, that is, in 1993. It is the view of Sweden that the appropriateness of such a Conference should now be seriously considered. In our opinion, some weapons categories, such as incendiary weapons, should be made the object of further, specific restrictions. A category such as naval mines could, as has been suggested in the United Nations study The Naval Arms Race, be made the object of restrictions in a new protocol, preferably within the framework of the present Convention. As a matter of fact, the Swedish Government has prepared a draft protocol on the use of naval mines, in line with the 1907 Hague Convention relative to the Laying of Automatic Submarine Contact Mines and the 1981 Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices. The latest version of this draft protocol was introduced at the meeting of the Disarmament

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Commission last May. It is contained in document A/CN.10/141. The draft protocol is currently under discussion at a series of expert meetings organized by the San Remo Institute on International Humanitarian Law. It is the intention of my Government successively to update and amend the draft protocol in the light of those discussions.

In addition, as already pointed out by Sweden and Switzerland at the twenty-fifth Conference of the Committee of the International Red Cross in 1986, developments in laser technology should be followed closely. There is a definite risk of the development of lasers for anti-personnel purposes on the conventional battlefield. It is thus technically possible to develop and manufacture specific laser weapons the main effect of which would be to blind the adversary's soldiers permanently. Such anti-eye laser weapons would yield certain military advantages, but on balance, taking into account humanitarian considerations, it seems that such lasers should be subject to prohibitions or restrictions on their use, either in a new protocol annexed to the 1980 Convention or by some other means.

Sweden has twice distributed an informal paper on the laser issue in the First Committee. Our conclusion from the comments we have received is that the matter merits international attention and that an international instrument prohibiting at least the systematic and deliberate use of laser against individuals should be considered.

It is therefore gratifying to note that the International Committee of the Red Cross has so far held three expert meetings on the laser issue, one in the summer of 1989, one in June 1990 and another in Geneva from 5 to 7 November of this year. A meeting of governmental experts will be held in April 1991. We understand that the object of these meetings is to gather scientifically sound information on these weapons and their effects for consideration and discussion by Governments.

Mr. AMIGUES (France) (interpretation from French): The French delegation has little to add to what Ambassador Hyltenius, the representative of Sweden, has just said on behalf of the sponsors in submitting draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47.

(Mr. Amigues, France)

My delegation would simply like to associate itself with the call for all States which have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, of 10 October 1980. My country regrets the fact that only 32 States have, like France, become parties, although the Convention was opened for signature almost 10 years ago, on 10 April 1981.

The consolidation of humanitarian law is, in our opinion, a subject that merits attention, even though it is only indirectly related to disarmament. Making armed conflicts less inhuman is a noble objective, and one we can all support. For example, nothing can justify either the use of weapons whose principal effect is to injure with fragments that cannot be detected in the human body using X-rays, or the use of mines, booby traps or other devices such as those prohibited under Protocol II of the Convention.

Mr. NORHEIM (Norway): My delegation would like to make a number of comments on agenda item 64. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and its three Protocols. The Convention was the product of many years of consideration by the international community, in particular the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross, aimed at prohibiting or restricting the use of specific conventional weapons which could have excessively injurious effects. In the view of Norway, the Convention represents a successful attempt at developing humanitarian law in the field of disarmament.

(Mr. Norheim, Norway)

The draft resolution on this issue, A/C.1/45/L.47, just introduced by the Ambassador of Sweden and sponsored by my country among others, emphasizes that article 8 of the Convention deals with the question of amendments or new protocols. Norway would like to stress that, if a conference of that kind is to be convened, the issue should be subject to broad consultation between the countries concerned: this applies to reviewing the scope and operation of the Convention, as well as to any new categories of weapons which one might wish to include.

In conclusion, the Norwegian delegation would like to urge countries that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention and its Protocols. The aim should clearly be universal adherence.

Mr. COLLINS (Ireland): My delegation, in co-sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47, introduced by the Ambassador of Sweden, stresses its support for the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. The rules embodied in the Convention and its Protocols represent a significant step, albeit a limited one, in the development of humanitarian law intended to protect civilians and reduce the suffering of victims of armed conflict. As this year marks the tenth anniversary of the United Nations "inhumane weapons" Conference, which agreed the Convention and its Protocols, we are pleased to note that the number of States parties to the Convention continues to increase.

By regulating the use of certain conventional weapons in certain circumstances, the Convention gives humanitarian considerations precedence over military requirements. However, it is not a comprehensive agreement; in this context I would recall that, at the outset of the "inhumane weapons" Conference, the Irish delegation called for a total prohibition on the use of particularly cruel or indiscriminate weapons. We have also taken note of the suggestions which

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

have been made at various times for the provisions of the Convention to be extended to cover additional categories of weapons.

Ireland has long supported the idea of establishing a consultative committee of experts to investigate alleged violations of the Protocols. Such a measure, which would serve to increase the trust and confidence of States parties to the Convention, could help to strengthen it and to promote universal adherence to it. We note the possibility laid down in article 8 of the Convention for renewing the scope and operation of the Convention and its Protocols, and for setting further international standards relating to other categories of conventional weapons not already covered.

In commending this draft resolution to the Committee, I would like to express the hope that, as has been the practice in the past, the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): The representative of Sweden, Ambassador Hyltenius, referred in his introduction of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47 to the fact that the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects was adopted by a United Nations conference in Geneva 10 years ago. The Netherlands would like to join Sweden, France, Norway and Ireland in supporting the Convention, as expressed in the draft resolution.

The Netherlands has traditionally supported the goals and objectives of the Convention; we therefore express the hope that the Convention will, in the near future, command universal adherence. We urge States Members of the United Nations which have not yet done so to exert their best endeavours to become parties to the

(Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

Convention and the Protocols annexed thereto, as soon as possible. In its operative paragraph 3, the draft resolution in A/C.1/45/L.47 also urges States to do so.

The Netherlands believes that the widest possible adherence to the Convention would add to its authority. It is in this light that the Netherlands would welcome the convening of a review conference on the Convention in the future. The review conference should also be geared to focusing the attention of States which are not yet parties on the Convention and its merits. This should not be too difficult, as States which are not parties to the Convention could participate in a future review conference as observers.

The Netherlands expects that the General Assembly will pay particular attention at its forty-sixth session, when the subject will again be discussed, to the possibility of a review conference in the near future; that would set in motion a process which, through practical steps along the road towards universality of adherence, would benefit all States.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of India to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.25 and A/C.1/45/L.24.

Mr. CHADHA (India): I have asked to speak to introduce two draft resolutions. The first, entitled "Convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons", is contained in document A/C.1/45/L.25 and has been sponsored by Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Yugoslavia and India.

The rationale behind the draft resolution is simple and clearly stated in the preamble. It is accepted that the existence and use of nuclear weapons pose a threat to life on this planet. It is also accepted that the nuclear-arms race only serves to increase the risk of the use of nuclear weapons. The "nuclear winter" studies by R. Turco, O. Toon, T. Ackerman, J. Pollack and C. Sagan (the TTAPS group), by the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment of the International Council of Scientific Unions, and in 1988 by the Secretary-General's Group of Experts have all concluded that the use of nuclear weapons, even on a limited scale of 1 per cent of the existing megatonnage, would produce "irreversible consequences" for life on this planet. I quote further from the study by the Secretary-General's Group of Experts on the Climatic and Other Global Effects of Nuclear War:

"Scientific evidence is now conclusive that a major nuclear war would entail the high risk of a global environmental disruption. ...

Three-dimensional atmospheric circulation models with detailed representations of physical processes indicate regional episodes of sub-freezing temperatures, even in summer. ...

(Mr. Chadha, India)

"Beyond one month, agricultural production and the survival of natural ecosystems would be threatened by a considerable reduction in sunlight, temperature depressions of several degrees below normal and suppression of precipitation and summer monsoons. In addition, these effects would be aggravated by chemical pollutants, an increase in ultraviolet radiation associated with depletion of ozone and the likely persistence of radioactive 'hotspots'.

"... The widespread impact of nuclear exchange on climate would constitute a severe threat to world food production. The prospect of widespread starvation as a consequence of a nuclear war would confront both targeted and non-targeted nations. ... The direct effects of a major nuclear exchange could kill hundreds of millions; the indirect effect could kill billions.

"The socio-economic consequences in a world intimately interconnected economically, socially and environmentally would be grave. The functions of production, distribution and consumption in existing socio-economic systems would be completely disrupted." (A/43/351, annex, paras. 22-25)

Those are only some of the irreversible consequences of a nuclear war.

The Conference on Disarmament at Geneva, the single multilateral negotiating forum in which all nuclear-weapon States are represented, has been repeatedly requested by the General Assembly to undertake negotiations with the objective of concluding a convention that would prohibit the use of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, we have submitted our draft convention to the Conference on Disarmament for its consideration. It is therefore a matter of great regret that the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to register any progress on that priority item.

(Mr. Chadha, India)

At the same time, no logical reasons have been put forward as to why such a convention should not be negotiated. To relate the urgency of preventing nuclear war with preventing all wars is to deny the special menace that nuclear weapons pose to mankind. We must, of course, entirely rule out any kind of war as a possible option. I reiterate, however, that while conventional wars may escalate into nuclear war, and while that fateful transition can be prevented, a nuclear war cannot de-escalate into a conventional war. We are resubmitting our draft resolution to underline the importance of that issue and in the hope that the First Committee will be able to bring the might of its moral authority to bear on the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on that item.

The draft convention is contained in the annex to the draft resolution. It is based on the recognition by this forum that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and contrary to the laws of humanity. That was accepted almost three decades ago in General Assembly resolution 1653 (XVI) in 1961.

The world community has since welcomed the statement by the United States and the Soviet Union that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought". Our draft resolution seeks to transform that understanding into a legally binding commitment. Such a prohibition in the form of a legal agreement would help bring about a qualitative change in security doctrines and policies and create the right climate for negotiations leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

On behalf of the delegations of Afghanistan, Bolivia, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Hungary, Indonesia, Peru, Sri Lanka, Venezuela and my own delegation, I should now like to introduce a draft resolution entitled "Scientific and technological developments and their impact on international security", contained in document A/C.1/45/L.24.

(Mr. Chadha, India)

At the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the threat posed to international peace and security by the growing arms race was acknowledged by the world community. It was agreed that, along with quantitative measures, qualitative measures in the field of disarmament also needed to be negotiated if the arms race was to be halted. More than a decade has passed since the adoption of the Final Document, a decade in which qualitative aspects of the arms race have not received the attention they deserved. That concern was reflected in our initiative at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and in the 1988 General Assembly resolution 43/77 A, in which the Secretary-General was requested:

"to follow future scientific and technological developments, especially those which have potential military applications, and to evaluate their impact on international security".

(Mr. Chadha, India)

In the report of the Secretary-General on this subject, it is made clear that "in some respects modern technological advances may be hindering rather than helping the pursuit of international security." (A/45/568, p. 3)

The report identifies five broad fields in which scientific and technological developments should be followed: nuclear technology, space technology, materials technology, information technology and biotechnology. The cumulative impact of individual developments in these five fields could substantively transform the security environment. Taking into account the illustrative set of criteria elaborated in it, the report suggests that the international community needs to be better equipped to follow the nature and direction of technological change and that, in this regard, the United Nations can serve as a catalyst and a clearing-house of ideas.

The Conference on the peace and security implications of new trends in science and technology, which was held in April 1990 in Sendai, Japan, saw a convergence of views favouring the goal of more active and effective multilateral collaboration in the area of technology assessment - in which the United Nations should play a leading role - the purpose of which would be to improve predictability and foster greater public awareness. It was also recognized that it is necessary for the scientific and policy communities to work together in dealing from a truly global perspective with the complex implications of technological change. The Secretary-General has therefore been requested to continue to follow these developments and to suggest to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session a framework for their assessment.

It is interesting to speculate whether the security environment would not be better and safer today if attempts by some scientists of the highest stature had resulted in the creation of a shared awareness against the development of many of the technologies, with their attendant military applications, with which we are

(Mr. Chadha, India)

burdened today. Tomorrow's weapons will be more subtle, more threatening and less verifiable, and will give us shorter response times. The impact of some of these can already be seen in the areas dealt with in the report, and many others can be perceived dimly at present. However, it is sobering to realize that all weapon technologies and systems begin with the postulating of an idea; unrestrained human ingenuity does the rest.

Only watchfulness and collective action can restrain trends that undermine global security. We have a common future and must demonstrate a common determination to give science and technology a human face. The challenges of eradicating hunger, poverty and disease and of solving the problems of global warming, ozone depletion and environment management - all of which have acquired a global dimension - require inventiveness on our part and international co-operation on an unprecedented scale. Scientific and technological development must continue, but should be oriented entirely in favour of peaceful uses, for the benefit of mankind.

My delegation and the others on whose behalf we are introducing this draft resolution hope that these proposals will receive the serious consideration and universal support of the Committee that they deserve.

Mr. HOU Zhitong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): In my statement today I wish to outline the Chinese delegation's position of principle on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Ever since the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the item "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" has remained high on our agenda. In resolution 44/112, which was adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, the Assembly reaffirms the importance and urgency of this question and urges the United States and the Soviet Union, which possess major space capabilities, to intensify their bilateral negotiations with a view to reaching

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

early agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It also requests the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate, as a matter of priority, an agreement to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

Thanks to the concerted efforts of the people of the world, progress has been made in recent years, and is still being made, in certain areas of disarmament. We certainly welcome these positive developments. At the same time, however, it should be pointed out that in the important area of the prevention of an arms race in outer space the required progress has eluded us. It is disappointing that even the two super-Powers, which possess the greatest space capabilities, have to admit that so far their bilateral negotiations on space issues have failed to make headway and that their agenda has always been confined to discussion of the relationship between offensive and defensive capabilities, instead of being directed towards reaching agreement on the prohibition of space weapons.

Meanwhile, research on and development of space weapons has led to a qualitative escalation of the arms race. This situation has not only had a negative impact on multilateral efforts in the Conference on Disarmament but also prevented that body's Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space from conducting genuine and substantive negotiations on this question. This serious state of affairs cannot but arouse concern and anxiety in the international community.

In this context, the declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade - a declaration formulated by the United Nations Disarmament Commission for adoption by the General Assembly at its current session - reiterates once again that "The prevention of an arms race in outer space remains an important area to be further addressed." (A/45/42, p. 27)

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

The international community believes that the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to which China has always accorded great importance, has become a new priority item in the field of disarmament. To give an impetus to the First Committee's consideration of this issue, the Chinese delegation has for the past few years submitted relevant draft resolutions.

China has always been committed to promotion of the early attainment of the objective of preventing an arms race in outer space. We are of the view that effective measures should be taken to ban all types of space weapons - anti-missile and anti-satellite weapons included - so as to bring about the dewateronization of outer space. Meanwhile, it is also imperative that the use or threat of force as well as any other hostile activities in outer space, whether directed from the Earth against outer space or from outer space against the Earth, be prohibited.

It needs to be emphasized that the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of space weapons represents the most fundamental and effective means of preventing an arms race in outer space. We share with the international community the firm expectation that the countries with the greatest space capabilities will fully discharge their special responsibility to prevent an arms race in outer space, speed up in earnest their bilateral negotiations to this end and conclude an agreement at an early date with a view to cessation of the development and deployment of space weapons and the destruction of all such weapons now in existence.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

As the arms race in outer space endangers international peace and security, the elimination of this danger requires the concerted efforts of all countries. For that reason, China maintains that the Conference on Disarmament and its Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space should, without delay, hold substantive negotiations on an agreement to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, to prohibit and destroy all space weapons and to ensure the dewateronization of outer space.

In keeping with this position, the Chinese delegation will actively participate in the relevant deliberations and negotiations in the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament and other disarmament bodies and forums. We will, as always, join other delegations in contributing to the realization of the objectives of preventing an arms race in outer space and of using outer space for peaceful purposes.

Over the past few years the Chinese delegation, along with the group of non-aligned members and other parties concerned, has been committed to the adoption by this Committee of a single resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space as an emphatic expression of the international community's common aspiration, demand and proposition on this important question. The Chinese delegation appreciates the efforts made and the co-operative attitude displayed by all the parties concerned in this regard.

This year my delegation is ready to continue its contribution to this end. We have noted with pleasure that in the consultations concerning the draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space smooth progress has been made and good results have been achieved under the guidance of Ambassador W. Rasaputram. The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/45/L.17 upholds the correct main thrust of resolution A/44/112, adopted last year, and reflects in a fairly

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

balanced and comprehensive manner the common understanding reached by the international community on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. While reiterating its principled position and propositions, the Chinese delegation believes that the fundamental objective and orientation of the present draft are basically in line with ours. Therefore, the Chinese delegation supports, and has joined in sponsoring, this draft resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: The next speaker is the representative of Mexico, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.29.

Mr. HERNANDEZ BASAVE (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): The present state of international relations undoubtedly offers the best prospects to date for making headway in the process of disarmament and arms control. The arms reduction agreements entered into by the two super-Powers in recent years have contributed greatly to improving the international political situation.

For this reason, it is more important than ever that the United Nations should not be left behind in the area of disarmament. Multilateral efforts within the Organization can benefit significantly from well-informed world public opinion. It is particularly important at this stage that civil servants, the mass media, non-governmental organizations, educational communities and research institutes, as well as elected officials, should know, understand and support the work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

That is why the main goals of the World Disarmament Campaign, which was solemnly launched by the General Assembly on 7 June 1982, are to inform and educate the public and to ensure that the public understands and supports the goals of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and arms control. Ever since it was launched the Campaign has focused its activities on the organization of regional conferences and meetings, a broad programme of publications and the holding of

(Mr. Hernandez Basave, Mexico)

special events, such as Disarmament Week, which always begins on 24 October, United Nations Day.

The speed at which international relations are changing makes it imperative that we have balanced and objective information on the vast possibilities offered by the United Nations for consolidating a system of international security based on mutual trust and for making progress in a true process of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament.

That is why draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.29, on the World Disarmament Campaign - which I have the honour to introduce under agenda item 57 (a), on behalf of my delegation and the delegations of Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Egypt, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Venezuela and Yugoslavia - contains a recommendation that the Campaign focus its efforts even more on specific activities that will contribute to fostering an informed debate on arms limitation, disarmament and security, as set out in paragraph 4.

According to the draft resolution the General Assembly would welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the Campaign and the assessment of its achievements and shortcomings. The report states that the main obstacle facing the Campaign as it seeks to attain its objectives is its weak financial base. To overcome that problem, all Member States are invited, in paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, to contribute to the World Disarmament Campaign Voluntary Trust Fund. In paragraph 6 the General Assembly would decide that at the forty-sixth session there should be a ninth United Nations Pledging Conference, and would also express the hope that all Member States that had not yet done so would announce voluntary contributions.

(Mr. Hernandez Basave, Mexico)

The text of the draft resolution contains some new elements and omits others that in the past have caused concern to some delegations. The sponsors of the draft resolution trust that the Committee will approve the text without a vote.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee, who wishes to make an announcement.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I wish to inform the Committee that Costa Rica has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.21/Rev.1; Singapore has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.53; and the United Republic of Tanzania has become a sponsor of draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.22 and L.23.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: At the 19th meeting of the Committee, on 26 October, I drew attention to the text of a letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, which has been officially circulated as document A/C.1/45/6. It concerns the request to the Main Committees of the General Assembly, including the First Committee, to communicate their views to the Fifth Committee on the relevant programmes of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992 to 1997.

At that meeting I requested that those members that wished to express their views on the subject-matter should transmit their comments to me in writing by Monday, 5 November, so that I could forward them to the Fifth Committee as requested.

Since I have received no comments from delegations on the subject, may I take it that the Committee authorizes me to inform the Chairman of the Fifth Committee that the First Committee has considered the issue and that it has no comments to make on the subject?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.