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Chairman:

Mr. RANA

(Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 68, 69, 70 AND 12 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE, CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (chapter III, section D)

Mr. GAXHOLLI (Albania) (interpretation from French): This year, our consideration of the agenda items on international security is taking place in the context of the dynamic events that have occurred in the international arena regarding the maintenance and strengthening of peace, which are in keeping with the people's wish to prevent confrontation and to live in peace and prosperity.

It is true that the international situation has undergone certain positive, encouraging changes that will probably contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security. Nevertheless, the persistence of many problems concerning all aspects of international security is a fact of current international political life. Many of these problems are interrelated, so the solving of one may influence the solving of others. But that does not mean that a problem of international relations can be solved at the expense of, or separate from, others.

The establishment of security and true stability in Europe has been and continues to be an essential element of the foreign policy of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania. That is why Albania has expressed its wish to join in the process of European co-operation and security and has indicated its availability and commitment to adopting the principles and the decisions of the forum.

Because of this concern my country attaches importance to developments in the process of Balkan co-operation. In our view that process is of even greater

(Mr. Gaxholli, Albania)

importance viewed within the framework of developments under way in the world, and particularly in the European continent, of which the Balkan peninsula is a part. If we consider present achievements in the process in the Balkans in various areas we reach the conclusion that it has contributed to consolidating relations among the countries of the region and enriching dialogue, thus helping strengthen security in the area and beyond it. The most recent example of this was the decisions taken at the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Balkan countries held in Tirana in October this year. As was stressed in the joint communiqué of the meeting, the Ministers reaffirmed their countries' commitment to consolidating and further promoting co-operation in the Balkans in the political, economic, cultural and humanitarian fields.

In the debate on disarmament that has taken place we have considered several aspects of this problem, which is vital to peace and security. We mention this because there is a dialectical link between disarmament and international security. In general terms one cannot speak of strengthening peace and security while the arms race continues, while the arms trade fuels various regional conflicts, and while war machines produce new sophisticated weapons. Stepping up the arms race directly threatens international security and breeds distrust and confrontation among various countries.

(Mr. Gaxholli, Albania)

The progress in disarmament achieved in Europe and between the two super-Powers has been welcomed by the international community, because such progress can have a major influence on international security world wide. But what has been achieved is not yet sufficient; the disarmament process must become irreversible and encompass all countries and every region of our planet.

Many areas of regional conflict have existed and continue to exist. In addition to the victims they claim and the destruction they cause, such conflicts are a direct threat to international peace and security. Seeking a just and lasting settlement of those conflicts would be a genuine contribution to strengthening peace and security. We must commend the efforts made by many countries in certain regions to settle their disputes through dialogue and understanding. They set examples to be encouraged. Peace and security require that we do everything possible to ensure that the situation does not deteriorate. Otherwise, the outbreak of a local conflict could engulf the region concerned and serve as a casus belli for foreign intervention.

In analysing recent events in the Gulf region, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East one reaches the conclusion that the process of easing tensions and achieving true security is a delicate task, requiring the participation and contribution of the whole international community, being the responsibility of all. In the conditions of today's world it is therefore necessary to ensure the participation of all States, large and small, in the handling and development of international relations.

In this context, the United Nations plays, as it must, a special role. Security, détente and the maintenance of peace have rightly been major concerns of our Organization. In our view, the potential and resources of the United Nations should be used more, and more effectively, to attain the goals of international peace and security.

Mr. SILOVIC (Yugoslavia): The cold war, which burdened international relations, particularly those between the two super-Powers and their alliances, is receding into history. And there is some justice in the way, and place, in which it is being done: its demise was started, and is unfolding, in Europe, the continent where it began and which it divided 40-odd long years ago.

Since the last session of the General Assembly there have been momentous changes in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, which have had a profound impact on relations between European States themselves. At the level of practical policy it has had a salubrious effect indeed. Arms, both nuclear and conventional, have been reduced; co-operation and the search for common interests have intensified continent-wide; and Europe has seen the rise of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the process designed to encapsulate and institutionalize the specific forms of its "togetherness".

These changes have been reflected world wide; international relations are increasingly based on co-operation and dialogue. Confrontation is being superseded by partnership and co-operation, and dialogue on a wide range of issues is becoming the order of the day. That things are not as they used to be is perhaps best evidenced by the position taken by both the United States of America and the Soviet Union in the Security Council in condemning the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, in the request for Iraq's immediate and unconditional withdrawal and in the imposition of sanctions.

Changes in Europe, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, epitomized by the pulling down of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent unification of Germany, have greatly contributed to the creation of a new European architecture as well. These developments have not only accounted for the deconstruction of bloc alliances, but have also brought into question the reason for their very existence. Within that

(Mr. Silovic, Yugoslavia)

context, the CSCE process has been strengthened and is increasingly becoming the moderator of all European processes: political, economic, social or humanitarian.

Europe has benefited from other, as it were, parallel processes: regional and subregional integration of its States aimed at further strengthening security, co-operation and confidence. My country has been involved in various forms of such co-operation, the most prominent being the co-operation between Balkan countries and that within the Pentagone and the Mediterranean. Since my delegation has already presented its views on the Mediterranean, I shall refrain from repeating them.

Exactly a month ago a meeting of Foreign Ministers of Balkan countries was held in Tirana in Albania. In their Joint Communiqué the Ministers stressed that "A stable Balkans, which is advancing on the course of current developments, is a factor of peace and security for the entire Mediterranean region and Europe." (A/45/701, p. 4)

The Pentagone is a specific and novel form of linking countries from the shores of the Mediterranean up to Central Europe within the CSCE process, a grouping that by its composition transcends the barriers that divided those countries in the past.

Nevertheless, overcoming the consequences of the cold war in Europe will require much more effort. The positive changes in political relations will still have to be translated into better economic relations, particularly bridging the economic gap that runs along the former bloc fault lines, a problem that will have to be addressed sooner rather than later.

Furthermore, the resurgence of ethnic assertiveness, compounded by the existing minority problems in practically all European countries, is often manifested in strong disintegrative tendencies, and sometimes even threatens Europe's existing borders.

(Mr. Silovic, Yugoslavia)

The cessation of the cold war, with its imminent confrontation and conflicts, brought about positive movement in a number of crisis spots, such as Central America, Namibia, South Africa, Angola, Afghanistan, Western Sahara and Cambodia. Yet the entire complex of these positive changes, in Europe or elsewhere, has been set back by the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. The crisis in the Gulf, out of place in the prevailing international circumstances, is fraught with multiple dangers to peace in this region and beyond, and every effort must be made to resolve it. How we grapple with this emergency will be of great importance for the future of international relations and will be a litmus test for the role of the United Nations in the new international environment. For the crisis has shown that one country may still threaten international peace, but that the responsibility for the preservation of peace must increasingly rest on all, and that the entire international community has not only the duty to maintain and strengthen it, but an interest in doing so.

At their Ministerial Meeting in New York last October, the non-aligned countries condemned the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, supported the Security Council resolutions requesting its unconditional withdrawal and restoration of Kuwait's legitimate Government and its territorial integrity, and called for the release of all hostages and for continued efforts to resolve the Gulf crisis by peaceful means.

(Mr. Silovic, Yugoslavia)

As the current Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Yugoslavia has striven, so far without evident success, to render its contribution towards the realization of these goals. We therefore follow the continued efforts by the Security Council, particularly by its five permanent members, with great expectations and interest.

In that connection we must not disregard that the crisis in the Gulf is in immediate proximity to the complex situation in the Middle East. This problem has been with us for decades now, and its solution calls for firm resolve on the part of the entire international community to come to grips with it. Although it must be clearly recognized that the solutions of these two crises are not conditional on each other, there is no denying that there is a relationship between them.

Apart from its negative effect on the overall positive developments in the world, the crisis in the Gulf has had immediate repercussions for international economic relations as well, particularly for the economic situation of developing countries.

It has certainly not helped the problem of global development, one of the main causes of instability, either. The prospects for global development depend a great deal on how we tackle macro-economic issues. The long-sought-after stability of the world will evade us as long as these issues are not addressed by collective political action. This is equally true for Europe, for other regions and globally.

There are a number of other equally important issues, the solution of which would contribute greatly to the strengthening of international security and the overall progress of humankind. These include environment, climate change, demography, present and future sources of energy and the transfer of modern technology. We trust, however, that they will be addressed properly in the age of rapid progress in science and technology and that their application will be for

(Mr. Silovic, Yugoslavia)

peaceful purposes. After all, the most potent force in breaking up the hard mould of the Procrustean bed of reality that often encases man's spirit has always been his creative urge to change the established order of things. And it is the bounden duty of those who are better off and have more resources to put their determination and capacities behind this noble endeavour.

We seem to have hit a crossroads in mankind's development. Positive developments in the world must be used to serve the establishment of a new, quite different approach to all global problems, including the efficient prevention of aggression, the safeguarding of the territorial integrity of all countries and more balanced development that will bring about full stability.

Europe has made a first step by moving along the road traced by its Conference on Security and Co-operation. Yet we must strive to make the visions and structures of a comprehensive system of security embracing development, disarmament and human rights a reality the world over.

Mr. NGUYEN DUC HUNG (Viet Nam): My delegation wishes to speak on agenda items related to international security.

All nations are sovereign and independent, but at present, as never before, the common problems and challenges of our time have very evidently transcended the borders of individual States. No one country can solve these problems alone. No one State can organize global security, dominate the global economy or determine the course of political affairs. To deal with the problems of the world, nations will have to co-operate and establish stronger forms of international order.

With regard to security, true security is a broader and more complex concept than protection from arms and war. The roots of conflicts and insecurity include poverty, economic disparities within nations and between them, oppression and the denial of fundamental freedoms. Unless problems of social and economic

(Mr. Nguyen Duc Hung, Viet Nam)

underdevelopment are addressed, common security can never truly be attained.

New threats to security are also emerging from environmental problems and the degradation of certain ecosystems. Poverty itself can lead to internal and external conflict. Peace and security, which have been proclaimed as primary international goals, cannot therefore be fully realized unless peoples and nations are released from the trap of poverty through real development. In fact, far more people in the world today suffer from economic insecurity than from military insecurity. Co-operation for common security is unlikely in a world where many poor countries face extremely serious debt obligations, decreasing resources for economic development and widening disparities between rich and poor. There can be no lasting peace and security in the world without the solution of international economic problems, particularly those of the developing countries, and without ensuring the sustained growth and development of the world economy.

Common security imposes global obligations to do away with economic insecurity no less than political conflict and war. International hostilities and suspicions derived from decades of warfare and conflict cannot be abolished overnight. But with the continued concerted efforts of the entire world community, common security can be translated from an idea, a concept, into the common condition of human beings everywhere.

Conflict resolution and management presuppose the political determination of the parties in situations of conflict to abandon war as a means of settlement and to embark instead on a peaceful course. Of the various methods of conflict resolution, management or prevention, it is the confidence-building approach that holds the greatest promise. Through the building of a system of political accommodation, neighbouring countries can gradually retreat from confrontational relationships.

(Mr. Nguyen Duc Hung, Viet Nam)

My delegation highly appreciates and supports all efforts aimed at promoting confidence-building measures at regional and subregional levels in order to ease tensions and strengthen peaceful co-operation and friendship among nations. My delegation fully shares the remarks made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his annual report of 1990 on the work of the Organization:

"To build peace and create conditions of stability in the world of the 1990s will require innovative responses to security challenges of a type radically different from those encountered in the past." (A/45/1, p. 15)

The decades of political confrontation are over. Our world today is that of competition and co-operation in peaceful coexistence. We also realize that today we live in a state of interdependence between nations. We need our neighbours, as our neighbours need us. Would it therefore be appropriate to say that the time has come for concerted endeavours in promoting common security and establishing a dialogue of economic co-operation for the sake of the prosperity and stability of nations regionally and the world over?

(Mr. Nguyen Duc Hung, Viet Nam)

As we stand at the threshold of the twenty-first century, the tireless efforts for peace, national independence, development and social progress are bound to be carried forward successfully, thus enabling future generations to enjoy lasting peace and rise to new heights of human civilization.

To strive for the sake of our children's future and the education of our future generations - such was the greatest goal of our late President Ho Chi Minh throughout his whole life. True to his ideal, we pledge to do our utmost to strengthen friendship with other nations in the world and to contribute to the common cause of peace and security of the world, thus turning to the new millennium in our firm belief in the bright future of peace, development and a happy life on our planet.

Mr. TRAXLER (Italy): I have the honour to speak today, on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community, on items 68, 69 and 70 of the agenda, concerning international security.

The maintenance of international security is an essential purpose of our Organization, the very reason for its existence.

At the time that the United Nations Charter came into existence, the international community had just witnessed the horrors of the most terrible and destructive war ever waged by mankind. It was in the wake of that tragic experience and as a result of so much suffering that the ideals concerning a just and peaceful world society found a new structured expression in the United Nations.

The 45 years which have elapsed since then prove that a gradual improvement in international security is by no means a remote ideal, but rather an achievable goal. The progress registered in this respect, especially in most recent years, has resulted in a widely improved international climate and in the ever growing effectiveness of this Organization.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

As Italian Foreign Minister De Michelis said in his statement on behalf of the Twelve in the general debate,

"This is the first General Assembly of the new world emerging from the lengthy post-war period". (A/45/PV.6, p. 26)

It is a new world, first of all, for the radically different relations between the once opposed super-Powers and between East and West. Allow me to refer to resolution 2734 (XXV) of 1970, which is at the root of our debate on international security, and to resolution 44/21 adopted by the General Assembly on this topic in 1989, which reflected the dramatic changes that have taken place in the last few years.

Historians indeed may one day refer to the following landmarks on the road towards international security and co-operation: the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, which started the process on a continental scale, the Stockholm Concluding Document of 1986, establishing confidence- and security-building measures for disarmament in Europe; the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty) of 1987, widely regarded as the watershed between the cold war and the emergence of a new pattern of relations among States, a goal that has not yet been fully reached, but an achievement we cannot but strive for.

On a personal basis I should also like to recall the Concluding Document of the Vienna Meeting, if only because I spent two and a half years negotiating it, which anticipated and legitimized all the changes that took place afterwards and evidenced more than at any other time during the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) the strict interrelationship between respect for human rights and collective security.

New milestones have recently been added. German unity is the paramount symbol of this emerging resolve to live in peace and friendship. The Agreement on Conventional Forces in Europe provides for drastic reductions in a framework of

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

strength and confidence at a continental level. The "Charter of Paris for a New Europe" signed on 21 November 1990 at the Summit Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which will be distributed as an official document of the United Nations, consecrated the following principles cherished by the European peoples:

"steadfast commitment to democracy based on human rights and fundamental freedoms, prosperity through economic liberty and social justice, and equal security for all countries".

The Twelve believe that such developments would not have been forthcoming without the blossoming of democracy and the confirmation of the rule of law in many countries with all its implications for individual fulfilment and collective prosperity, as well as for social progress. The rule of law and democracy are the paramount guarantees of respect for the human person. Without the advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms achieved throughout much of the world during the last few years, it might not have been possible to see such a dramatic enhancement of international security as we have today. Stressing their conviction that the protection and promotion of human rights is the first responsibility of Governments, the Twelve have always maintained that their effective exercise is inseparable from the pursuit of international peace and security.

Thus the beneficial relationship between the development of individual freedoms and the expansion of security has been demonstrated by the most recent experience in Europe. It is our aspiration that such a process will continue unabated, leading to a new dimension in multilateral relations, featuring increased understanding and solidarity among States and entailing even greater progress in the strengthening of respect for human rights, international security, arms control and economic development.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

The Twelve believe that peace and security can be achieved only through full observance of the principles set out in the Charter and of other relevant obligations of international law. They wish to recall the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as the obligations of all Member States to implement its relevant resolutions.

Sadly though, the international community observed with dismay and condemned Iraq's recent and brutal aggression against and its invasion and occupation of, Kuwait, an independent Member of the United Nations. It is essential to overcome this obstacle in the path to a more peaceful and secure world. In fact, the tide of history is flowing against brutal resort to force in order to resolve differences and disputes.

The firm international reaction to the invasion of Kuwait has in turn served to enhance the moral and political authority of our Organization at a moment when there is a clear need for a universal point of reference.

In the new, improved international climate, the United Nations organs and mechanisms are showing an ever increasing effectiveness in facing crises, a fact which gives rise to new expectations. The latest exception to the conciliatory mood prevailing in most of the world does not detract from the evident progress of international security elsewhere.

For two decades the Twelve have campaigned in support of the fundamental rules of international behaviour. They now have the satisfaction of perceiving that such values are indeed more widely shared.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

In this context the role of the United Nations has been of paramount importance to all countries. The United Nations approach has strengthened the conviction that there is no alternative to dialogue in dealing with international problems. Furthermore, the coherent action of the United Nations has demonstrated that it constitutes an essential instrument for maintaining and restoring peace, justice and freedom.

Through the Security Council and the Secretary-General, in particular, the United Nations is increasingly responding to the need for a worldwide crisis-management system suitable for preventing the expansion of formerly unavoidable and destabilizing emergencies. The Twelve wish to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General for the patient and effective initiatives he has undertaken, with the untiring support of his staff, for the peaceful solution of controversies as well as for the prevention of conflicts. In this respect the recent remarkable success of the United Nations peace-keeping operations and their encouraging future prospects have inspired new confidence throughout the community of nations.

The Twelve will continue to assess the effectiveness of the functioning of the United Nations in the context of the new political reality of a world where the interdependence of States is becoming more and more of a permanent feature. The Twelve believe that there are areas of activity where the United Nations, given the political will of Member States, has untapped potential for achievement.

We should also bear in mind that nowadays some threats to security tend to take a subtler and somewhat more devious form than in the past. A particularly insidious form of threat derives from the spread of advanced technology when it leads to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Furthermore, there should be greater transparency in the trade in conventional weapons, not least to prevent the illegal activities frequently

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

connected with it, such as drug-trafficking and terrorism. In all these areas the Twelve intend to contribute to a wider awareness of the problem and to the achievement of increased transparency.

The experience in Europe has shown that increased transparency represents an essential step towards what the Charter of Paris describes as

"a new perception of security in Europe and a new dimension in European relations",

based on a common effort to strengthen confidence and security and to promote arms control and disarmament. The Twelve consequently welcome the unprecedented Agreement on Conventional Forces in Europe signed at Paris on the occasion of the summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), as well as new approaches to substantial confidence- and security-building measures, which will contribute to strengthening stability and security in Europe.

The practice of long years of debate on the issues relevant to international security and the experience of ever-more-intensive arms control negotiations have thrown a clearer light on the relevance of their regional dimension. Taking into account the specificity of regional conditions, neighbouring countries may now find it more effective to launch a local process of dialogue and negotiation, with improved chances of early success in a step-by-step approach to security issues.

That has, in fact, been the experience of the CSCE process that has just celebrated its fifteenth anniversary in a context giving particular satisfaction to all participating States and their peoples. A new era of democracy, peace and unity is dawning throughout Europe, thanks to the political will of the countries involved to keep that regional forum operational even when their relations were at their lowest ebb.

As a matter of fact, the CSCE experience has helped generate a radical change on the European continent. The Paris summit meeting of the 34 Heads of State or

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

Government marked the end of the cold war. A substantial set of commitments has put a lasting seal on the new state of affairs among the participating States. Among the essential criteria for the future, multi-party democracy, respect for human rights and encouragement of private initiative have been set out. The Paris summit meeting has laid the foundation for the new Europe and for advancement unprecedented in the long history of our continent and fully within the scope of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The European Community has established its own economic and political identity and has emerged as an influential factor for change and for civil, social and economic progress. At the same time, the Community has always refused to consider itself bounded by the protection of its own interests. It has, instead, always strongly felt that the security of each and all of its member States is linked as much to that of the rest of Europe as it is to that of the other regions of the world. The Twelve have therefore wholeheartedly adhered to the commitment made at the Paris summit to

"solidarity with all other countries, standing ready to join with any and all States in common efforts to protect and advance the community of fundamental human values."

Dialogue and integration are the best answers to security problems at both the global and the regional levels. The Twelve trust that serious efforts to that end will be undertaken at every regional level, making use of whatever valid precedent can be drawn from the experience of others.

The Twelve welcome proposals made by Mediterranean nations to increase co-operation in that region. It is worthwhile to endeavour to disseminate in the Mediterranean principles and measures capable of enhancing stability and security and of encouraging economic and social progress.

(Mr. Tressler, Italy)

The idea that each State needs to achieve self-sufficiency in an essentially hostile environment should be definitely rejected. Assertion of national interests at the cost of others is contrary to the norms of contemporary security, which is based on co-operation on the basis of shared values rather than on mere historical and geographical factors.

I should like to end my statement on behalf of the twelve members of the European Community by expressing the hope that a similar concept may soon prevail throughout the world. International peace and security would then cease to be a matter of deep concern to Governments and to peoples and would finally represent a guaranteed and irreversible acquisition of the whole of mankind.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to inform the Committee that tomorrow afternoon, Wednesday, 28 November, the Committee will take decisions on the draft resolutions submitted under agenda item 67 - namely, draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.63/Rev.2 and A/C.1/45/L.64/Rev.1.

I should also like to inform the Committee that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions under agenda items 68, 69 and 70 is 6 p.m. today.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.