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Chairman: Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia)

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 71, 72 AND 73

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

The CHAIRMAN: This morning the First Committee will begin its consideration of agenda item 71, entitled "Strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region", agenda item 72, entitled "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", and agenda item 73, entitled "Implementation of the collective security provisions of the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security".

Mr. GBEHO (Ghana): As this is my first statement in the First Committee at this session, Sir, I wish to indulge in the luxury of congratulating you most warmly on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee. We have been colleagues for many years, and I am impressed by your wisdom and diplomatic skill. I therefore consider this Committee fortunate to have you leading it in its consideration of these most difficult issues.

I shall address myself in this statement to agenda item 73, "Implementation of the collective security provisions of the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security". Under this item we were supposed to consider at the last session and again at this session the report of the ad hoc committee which should have been set up in accordance with the provisions of resolution 38/191, adopted on 20 December 1983 by 109 votes to 20, with 18 abstentions. But, two full years later, at the fortieth session, we have neither an ad hoc committee in place nor a report from it to consider.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

It is indeed a matter of profound regret and disappointment to my delegation that for the second year in succession we are taking up this item in the First Committee with no substantial progress whatsoever to speak of. For two years we have equivocated and stalled over setting up an ad hoc committee. Although, as I have indicated, the resolution calling for the establishment of an ad hoc committee was not adopted by consensus, it enjoyed a large measure of support in 1983, which at least reflected considerable interest in the subject among Member States. None the less, regional groups spent the first year after its adoption in haggling and quibbling over the number of seats that should be allocated to the respective geographic regions.

Last year, at the time of the thirty-ninth session, it seemed to us that, after intensive consultations, the President of the General Assembly had finally secured agreement by all regional groups on distributing seats on the ad hoc committee in accordance with the formula used by the Economic and Social Council. That was the gentleman's agreement reached among the regional groups. Another year, however, has passed since then without the formation of a committee or the naming of its members to meet and organize their programme of work.

If we have made no progress thus far, even after having agreed to the establishment of the committee in conformity with the Economic and Social Council formula, it is, regrettably, because some delegations have tried to put their own interpretation on that formula. No sooner had we adopted last year's resolution 39/158, than certain delegations began to propose variations on the Economic and Social Council formula. We believe that those concerned have now realized that the Economic and Social Council formula can have one and only one interpretation. If we were to accept any variation, the formula would cease to be that of the Economic and Social Council. In using it we cannot depart from previous practice and established tradition.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

Although my delegation is disappointed at the lack of progress in this matter, it has not given up hope altogether. We still believe that something positive will come out of this initiative and that the lack of agreement arose out of misunderstanding rather than out of bad faith. In our view, the two years of delay, procrastination and foot-dragging may have been helpful in assuring Member States, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, that nothing sinister was afoot. We sincerely hope that they have now come to realize that the ad hoc committee poses no threat to their status and prestige in the United Nations. We understand the anxiety and the fear of losing their pre-eminence which are at the root of the opposition to the whole idea shown by the permanent members of the Security Council. But we believe that they should now be reasonably assured that erosion of that pre-eminence is not the object of the exercise. The aim and purpose of the ad hoc committee will be to seek ways and means of strengthening, rather than diminishing, the influence of the Council's members, particularly its permanent members. Moreover, it has been provided not only that membership of the ad hoc committee should include permanent members of the Security Council but also that the Security Council should have the opportunity to consider and comment upon the report and recommendations of the committee. We believe that all this should allay the fears of all concerned.

We are aware too that part of the fear of the permanent members of the Security Council is that the powers of the Security Council will be encroached upon by this Committee or by the General Assembly. Let me emphasize once again that that is an erroneous feeling and that our objectives are far from that. In the first place, under the Charter, neither this Committee nor the General Assembly can dictate to the Security Council; it can only recommend. Secondly, there is ample precedent for the General Assembly discussing and formulating proposals on subjects that should properly, or originally, be the charge of the Security Council. I

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

refer to the very question of disarmament, which is now a permanent feature of this Committee's agenda even though in principle the Charter, in its Article 26, gives that responsibility to the Security Council. No one is under the illusion that either the First Committee or the General Assembly is in competition with the Security Council.

For our part, we start from the self-evident premise that there is adequate provision under the collective security provisions of the Charter to enable the Security Council to fulfil satisfactorily its primary responsibility, which is the maintenance of international peace and security. What has been and still is lacking is the ability or capacity to implement those provisions.

We believe that in the 40 years of existence of the United Nations enough lessons have been learned by the international community for it not to allow the potentialities for the resolution of conflicts embodied in the collective security provisions of the Charter to lie dormant and be woefully under-utilized any longer. It is time we wiped the dust off those provisions and took a hard look at them with a view to implementing them.

Why should we implement them if the world has managed to do virtually without them for 40 years now? One reason is that these past 40 years of trial and error, of groping in the dark, have brought us to the perilous certainty of global destruction from nuclear weapons if we do not find other less lethal means of resolving conflicts among nations. International security can no longer be assured by a reliance on nuclear deterrence. New technological advances and the spiralling arms race have guaranteed that the balance of terror can never be maintained for any appreciable length of time. Qualitative refinements are throwing the balance constantly out of gear for one side or the other.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

Another reason, we believe, is that it is the fear of losing power and influence and excessive reliance on the protection of power blocs and regional military alliances that have militated against the full flowering of the collective security provisions of the Charter, and international security is the poorer for it. We believe that this unfounded fear can and should be replaced by far greater reliance by States for their protection on the collective security provisions of the Charter than has hitherto been the case.

Yet another reason is that, as stated by the Secretary-General in his latest report on the work of the Organization (A/40/1), the peace and security system of the United Nations, in the present circumstances, has many weaknesses and shortcomings. Although, like the Secretary-General, we hold the view that the Security Council has played an essential and often central role in providing stability and limiting conflicts, we must, again like him, pose the question how to enhance that role and bring the Council closer to the position prescribed for it in the Charter.

That is one of the questions we wish the ad hoc committee to examine fully, submitting appropriate recommendations for consideration. No Member State should feel threatened in any way by an effort to improve the effectiveness of our Organization through a search for ways and means of implementing the collective security provisions of the Charter.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

There are many other fields of international activity, especially in the areas of conventional and other weapons, in which we have witnessed a steady weakening of our utilization of the collective security provisions of the Charter. It would be instructive and would definitely enhance our mutual security if a group such as the proposed ad hoc committee could study the phenomenon with a view to enabling either the Security Council or the General Assembly, or both, to take appropriate action.

Furthermore, we have just heard, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, a number of eminent Heads of State or Government, or their representatives, express their in-depth views on international peace and security and on the need to strengthen it all round. Does it not make sense to initiate studies that would in the long run underpin the collective security provisions of the Charter?

It is Ghana's conviction, that unless we revive the collective security provisions of the Charter and place greater reliance on them, the United Nations will continue to be deprived of means adequate for the maintenance of international peace and security. We have no preconceived position on the matter, nor do we wish to wage war on any institution. On the contrary, we accept that in spite of the existing collective security provisions of the Charter the world is inching towards conflagration and disaster. The ad hoc committee should come up with the answers on how to avail ourselves fully of those provisions.

In conclusion, my delegation can do no more than appeal once again to those delegations still holding back to be gracious enough to extend their co-operation to and join all of us in reviewing the collective security provisions of the Charter. History has shown that human institutions must continue to be adaptable in order to be effective. The United Nations can be nothing less. On the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, the least we can do is commit ourselves to

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

strengthening the Organization's capacity, through study and innovation, where innovation is demonstrably warranted, to ensure international peace and security. We trust that we shall now be able to make progress in this matter.

Mr. RAMAKER (Netherlands): I am speaking today on behalf of the 10 member States of the European Community, Portugal and Spain in order to share with this Committee some of our views on agenda item 72, entitled "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security".

This year we have been commemorating the foundation of the United Nations 40 years ago. The birth of the Organization came at the end of a long period of global armed conflict. The Charter of the United Nations speaks of the determination of its founders henceforth to

"save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind".

They were convinced of the need

"to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest".

In the 40 years since the United Nations was founded, an ever-growing number of States have gained membership and have thus subscribed to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The United Nations truly has become a "virtually universal world Organization" (A/40/1, p. 3), as the Secretary-General observed in his annual report to the General Assembly this year.

In our view, there is no denying that the United Nations has in some respects fallen short of the expectations and ideals which inspired those who brought the Organization into existence. But we should not underestimate what our Organization has achieved. We share the Secretary-General's view that many of the problems of a

(Mr. Ramaker, Netherlands)

global nature that mankind is faced with in today's world have been addressed under the auspices of the General Assembly, whether they lie in the economic and social field, in the domain of fundamental human rights and their violation, or in the sphere of the management of international crises.

Our responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security is as great today as it was in the years that lie behind us. Respect for the principles of the Charter, the need to develop friendly relations among nations, the promotion of international co-operation and growing exchanges and interdependence among peoples remain essential to our efforts to build a better world for present and future generations.

In our view, an important condition for maintaining international peace and security lies in universal respect for and the full exercise of human rights and the fundamental freedoms of the human being as recognized in the United Nations Charter and in other relevant international instruments. The elimination of all forms of violations of these rights is essential for the enhancement of international security. It should be stressed in this context that the 10 members of the European Community, together with Spain and Portugal, as well as the other States signatories to the Helsinki Final Act, have recognized that respect for human rights constitutes one of the fundamental principles governing relations among States and an essential factor for peace.

Genuine security requires a lessening of international tension and an improvement of the international climate. The Ten, Portugal and Spain are mindful of the fact that a more profound dialogue between East and West would make a major contribution to this. We therefore welcome the outcome of the recent meeting in Geneva between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union, which we hope will lay the basis for a continuing and fruitful dialogue, concrete results in

(Mr. Ramaker, Netherlands)

their negotiations, notably on arms control and disarmament, and an improvement in international relations in general. It is our sincere wish that confidence and trust will be promoted through the United Nations and that arms control and disarmament efforts in that larger framework will be successful. In view of its inextricable link with disarmament, security would thus be greatly enhanced.

All States are under an obligation to respect the principles of the Charter. The Ten, Portugal and Spain regret that the world has seen and continues to see violations of the Charter, including military intervention and the threat or use of force. Lasting security requires universal adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter.

(Mr. Ramaker, Netherlands)

The Charter of the United Nations obliges all States to settle their disputes peacefully. That undertaking is valid for all States, without distinction and irrespective of their political, economic and social systems, their size, their level of economic development or their geographical location.

An effective Security Council, as the organ on which Member States have conferred primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, is essential for the operation of the security system created by the United Nations. We attach great importance to enhancing and strengthening the authority of the Security Council and its role in maintaining international peace and security, as envisaged by the Charter. We consequently support the Secretary-General in his continued efforts in that direction.

One area in which the Security Council has been able over the years to operate effectively is peace-keeping. United Nations peace-keeping forces have proved their usefulness in achieving and maintaining stability and in preserving peace in areas of crisis, pending the achievement of peaceful, just and lasting solutions. A great number of the States on behalf of which I am speaking are at present participating in these peace-keeping operations.

Earlier in the current session, the Ten, Portugal and Spain stated that they are mindful of the triangular relationship between disarmament, security and development. Disarmament and security cannot be seen in isolation from development. Indeed, substantial progress in the sphere of development seems to us to be essential for enhancing international peace and security. That would also apply to an improvement of the prevailing international economic situation which is at present afflicting many countries in the world. As we stressed among other things when stressing the relationship between disarmament and development, the level of military expenditure is difficult to reconcile with the needs of so many, in particular with those of developing countries. We continue to believe that ways

(Mr. Ramaker, Netherlands)

should be found to achieve comparable, verifiable and transparent reductions in military expenditure.

In our search for ways to strengthen international peace and security, we should not overlook the fact that regional approaches can open up promising avenues. In the framework of a process that started 10 years ago with the Helsinki Final Act, the Ten, Portugal and Spain are at present engaged in efforts to achieve agreement on a set of politically binding, militarily significant and verifiable confidence-building and security-building measures covering the whole of Europe and designed to diminish the risk of military confrontation. We would hope thus to create conditions in which the peoples of the participating States can enjoy true and lasting peace without any threat to their security. Through that approach we hope to make a concrete contribution to the full implementation of the system with which the Charter provides us for the maintenance of peace and security.

The Ten, Portugal and Spain have repeatedly stressed their commitment to the full implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. We remain committed to that end. We shall continue to make every effort to contribute to the strengthening of security not only at the regional level but also at the international level.

Mr. BORG (Malta): Like the representative of Ghana, I am making my first statement before this Committee. Better late than never, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other Committee officers on your election. In the past we have witnessed your excellent leadership and diplomatic skill, which guarantee the successful outcome of the Committee's work this year.

I should like to address the Committee on agenda item 71, "Strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region".

The Mediterranean Sea, flanked by three very important continents - Europe to the north, Africa to the south and Asia to the east - has again become the Great

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

Sea. There the first histories, myths and legends of the Medeterranean, which told of wars and adventures, are repeating themselves. But this time, the myths and legends have become hard realities.

The latest events in our region are vivid testimony to the state of alarm which has preoccupied the international community for many years now. We feel that those incidents are a source of worry and tension, for we do not know where they will all end. They tend to escalate; they tend to have unforeseen consequences.

The unsatisfactory security situation in the Mediterranean and the sources of tension in the region have been the subject of consideration by all concerned, in particular by the non-aligned Mediterranean States. Countries in our region have all embarked on a vigorous campaign to transform the Mediterranean into a zone of peace and security. We are promoting that approach in our bilateral contacts, and within the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and, especially, in this Assembly, where in successive years resolutions on the Mediterranean have been introduced and adopted.

Our participation in these activities is to be seen as a function both of the neutral and non-aligned status we have assumed and of our particular geographical and strategic location in a troubled Mediterranean.

This year, Malta joined other countries in celebrating three important anniversaries with major relevance not only for our small island nation but also for the whole Mediterranean region. The first anniversary is that of the end of the Second World War, a war which proved to be the biggest armed conflict in the history of mankind. The fortieth anniversary of the end of a devastating world war has rekindled the anguish of whole populations, particularly in the Mediterranean region, the control of whose Sea proved to be one of the main factors affecting the evolution of the War at its most critical and uncertain periods.

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

In 1945 Malta emerged in a state of utter devastation, but totally unscathed in spirit and honour. Having achieved effective freedom, Malta has assumed the duty of engaging in efforts for the freedom of the region. Today, our efforts in the interest of the future of our country and our region have led us to take initiatives - such as those taken in the 1970s and 1980s at Helsinki, Belgrade, Madrid and now in Stockholm - to secure recognition of the link between the security of the European continent and that of the Mediterranean.

That brings me to the second anniversary, which recalls a turning-point in post-War European history. I refer to the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act with which in the early 1970s the nations of Europe embarked upon the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The Helsinki Final Act recognized that the process of détente in Europe was unthinkable without a similar process taking place concurrently in the Mediterranean.

It is in the Mediterranean that the differences between the various security options which have emerged since the War can be seen most clearly. There are in the region a number of Southern European countries which have chosen the path of armed alliances. There are also a number of States which consider the alternative of neutrality and non-alignment as the most effective road to peace and security in the region. If those alternatives had to be seriously measured against one another, it is in the Mediterranean that this could best be done.

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

The tenth anniversary of the Helsinki Accord marked a common endeavour to strengthen security and co-operation on the continent and to supersede the erstwhile exclusive bipolarized approach. For Malta, its main significance lay in the launching of the Mediterranean dimension of European security and co-operation. We are all conscious that the countries of southern Europe are the ones most adversely affected by Mediterranean turbulence. The Mediterranean remains the region of the world where the two super-Powers boast their biggest array of deadly armaments. Against that background Malta has felt the acute necessity of seeking the path of peace and co-operation in the region rather than accentuating confrontation.

Through our scrupulous adherence to a policy of strict non-alignment we have been developing our political and economic relationship with many countries, and in particular with the two super-Powers. However, Malta's policy of neutrality and non-alignment has not been confined to keeping an equal distance from the two super-Powers. We are also attempting to forge a new unity in the entire Mediterranean, starting with the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement in the region.

In the far-reaching Valletta Declaration for Mediterranean Peace adopted in September of last year the Foreign Ministers of the Mediterranean countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement laid down the essential elements of a programme aimed at bringing peace and stability to their region. They reviewed the situation in the Mediterranean and committed themselves to a process of change. The hand of co-operation has been extended by the Mediterranean non-aligned countries to their aligned neighbours in the region to work together in peace and friendship. We have urged our neighbours to the north, in the first instance, to undertake not to allow any foreign military facilities that exist on their territories to be used against non-aligned States in the region. We know that a number of the aligned States in

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

the Mediterranean are ready to give serious consideration to such an undertaking, thus contributing towards a major, irreversible step in the transformation of our region into a genuine zone of peace.

These efforts are intended to promote good-neighbourly relations in the Mediterranean, the reduction of armed forces, the lessening of tensions, the strengthening of security and widening of the scope of co-operation.

Our objective is to promote the gradual dismantling of the super-Power military presence in the Mediterranean. A reduction of direct super-Power competition in the Mediterranean, phased in such a way as to safeguard at all times the interests of both, would directly contribute towards a reduction of tensions in Central Europe by eliminating one of the most destabilizing factors in current super-Power relationships.

Malta's moral force in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process is being further consolidated at the Conference on disarmament in Europe being held at Stockholm, which is seriously considering proposals for confidence- and security-building that also encompasses naval activities, including those occurring in the Mediterranean. We are convinced that activities taking place there undoubtedly affect the security of the whole of Europe. Our proposals on notification measures relating to the exercise of the right of innocent passage, movements involving the sea transportation of armed personnel, amphibious activities and naval manoeuvres are conceived in the context of an enclosed sea like the Mediterranean, which forms an integral part of the European security domain, even in terms of the two armed European alliances.

The third anniversary we are celebrating this year is that of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. The United Nations has done much to help the Mediterranean countries. When the Charter of the United Nations was signed at San Francisco and came into force in 1945, five Mediterranean countries were

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

Non-Self-Governing Territories under colonial rule. One by one, those countries began to shed their colonial chains and to gain freedom and independence. Freedom from foreign occupation was achieved through much bloodshed and after hard-fought intellectual and armed confrontation. The newly emerging nations of the Mediterranean, with great sacrifice but with much dignity, managed to overcome the initial difficulties inherited from foreign domination and began to reshape their newly acquired identity, a Mediterranean identity.

At no stage during these past 40 years has the Mediterranean been entirely free from war, but we owe it to the United Nations that a much bigger conflagration did not take place. The maintenance or restoration of peace and security in the Mediterranean has on more than one occasion been challenged by a number of events. The Security Council has often been called upon to consider issues of vital importance to the Mediterranean. The Council has played a leading role in providing, through negotiations and quiet diplomacy, a certain degree of peace and stability. The system of conflict control - now better known as peace-keeping - established by the Security Council has been able to prevent incidents from occurring in volatile situations. Three of those peace-keeping forces have a direct bearing on peace and stability in Mediterranean countries and in the region as a whole.

We all know that the problems in Cyprus and the Middle East have posed and continue to pose the most formidable challenges to our collective endeavours and those of the United Nations as a whole. The situation in Cyprus and in the Golan Heights has been remarkably quiet after past hostilities largely thanks to the presence of United Nations peace-keeping forces, the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). In southern Lebanon, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has for several years been an important instrument of conflict control, and yet all

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

the problems I have mentioned are far from solved. Those problems, as well as other incidents in the area are, for a small country like Malta, a continuous source of concern, particularly since we feel that most of the tension in the area is caused by a most flagrant abandonment of the commitment we all undertook when we adhered to the United Nations Charter.

Our concerns are the concerns of the Non-Aligned Movement. The unflagging efforts of the non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean to bring peace and stability to a crisis region have been acknowledged and welcomed by the Foreign Ministers of countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement meeting at Luanda last September. In its section on the Mediterranean, the Luanda Declaration once again noted with concern the continuation of bloc confrontation in the Mediterranean, increased military presence, foreign bases and fleets, including the nuclear weapons of great power, as well as the continued existence of hotbeds of crisis, occupation and aggression in the region, and above all in the Middle East, which endanger the sovereignty and independence of non-aligned countries of the region, in particular, and obstruct the peaceful settlement of problems.

Our concerns are the concerns of the Commonwealth. The Nassau communiqué noted with concern the continuing dangerous situation created by the accumulation of forces in the Mediterranean region and the persistence of unresolved conflicts. It called for restraint and expressed the view that the prospects for a reduction of forces and armaments in the region would be enhanced through a just and durable settlement of all the problems there.

Our concerns are the concerns of this body. The adoption by consensus of the relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 38/189, leaves no doubt as to the support of all United Nations Member States for the principles on the basis of which co-operation is to be developed and the problems of the region solved.

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

In keeping with these declarations of concern and support the non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean are continuing their positive contribution by transforming their region into a region of peace, security and over-all co-operation. Following last year's meeting in Malta, economic experts from 11 non-aligned Mediterranean countries met again in Malta on 13 and 14 November of this year and formulated a set of recommendations which will be submitted for consideration by Governments in preparation for the second meeting of Mediterranean non-aligned Foreign Ministers next year. The recommendations of the experts cover both the aspects of co-operation among their respective countries and the improvement of relations with the industrialized countries of Europe. The recommendations include proposals for new projects of regional co-operation in the trade, communications and research fields.

The experts also devoted particular attention to relations with the European Economic Community and the manner in which the enlargement of the Community's membership could affect the interests of the non-aligned Mediterranean countries. In this context the experts underlined the usefulness of intensified consultation among their countries. It is now expected that over the next few months preparations will begin for the holding of the second meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Mediterranean countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We in the Mediterranean are laying the foundations for a better future. The celebration of International Youth Year has turned the focus onto our young people, who are part of the answer for peace and development. In the Mediterranean context, youth organizations have been co-ordinating their efforts towards those noble goals. The fourth Mediterranean Youth Camp, held in Malta last July, which brought together over 50 young participants from seven Mediterranean cities, considered the role of youth in development and peace, with particular emphasis being put on the promotion of peace in the Mediterranean region. The Youth Camp

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

adopted a Final Document that outlines, inter alia, the steps to be taken to reduce and eventually eliminate the threat of war from the region.

We have before us document A/40/448, which contains the views of Member States on the question of strengthening co-operation in the Mediterranean. We very much welcome those replies, which we deem very positive and constructive and which confirm the cross-sectional interest in a region that is causing international anxiety and tension. Countries from South-East Asia, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Africa and Central America are unanimous as to the linkage that exists between peace and stability in the Mediterranean region and the European continent. A common view emerges, that of strengthening peace, security and co-operation in the Mediterranean.

Super-Power rivalry, in particular the presence of bases, fleets and armaments, the stationing of nuclear weapons on European soil and the ongoing conflicts, in particular the problems of Cyprus and the Middle East, have been identified as the main causes for the present crippling situation and the heightening of tensions in the region. Strong support for and endorsement of the positive initiatives being taken, in particular, in the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, as well as measures to reduce tension and enhance security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region, are emphasized by the majority of replies received.

We also note and welcome the pledges of certain countries to work with other States, in particular with the Mediterranean States, to find long-lasting and permanent solutions to the conflicts hindering progress and stability in the region.

This Committee - and, indeed, the General Assembly - has, through the unanimous adoption of draft resolutions on the Mediterranean, recognized the importance Member States attach to peace and stability in the region, even though there is a great expanse dividing them.

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

We earnestly hope that this Committee may once again reiterate its support for our regional initiatives to hasten the process of peace so that we can all live in a better world dedicated to the well-being of our peoples.

Mr. AMOKO (Uganda): This year the United Nations is 40 years old. The founding fathers of this body promised us peace, not wars. They promised self-determination for all peoples, not colonialism and foreign domination. They promised social progress, not poverty and economic subjugation. They promised social harmony between peoples and nations and the establishment of peaceful, just and equitable relations based upon the principles of national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. In this year of stock-taking, the achievements of the Organization would be measured by what it has been able to achieve in terms of international peace, security and economic emancipation.

In 40 years we have trekked over rugged terrain. During this long and arduous march we encountered oases of wealth and affluence, on the one hand, and vast oceans of poverty on the other. We came across millions crying for hunger and thirst. We came across millions clamouring for peace. We are indeed at a crossroads of history - in a perilous world strewn with poverty and social turbulence. How far the United Nations has risen to meet these challenges facing mankind is a question we must address.

The United Nations was constructed from the ashes of war bred by national chauvinism, fascism and militarism. Its primary objective is the prevention of wars and the establishment and maintenance of international peace through a mutual collective-security system whose custodian is its Security Council. Multilateralism superseded unilateralism; universality, interdependence and co-operation were to replace parochialism, competition and antagonism. With the progressive collapse of colonialism around the globe, the democratic composition of the General Assembly is virtually complete. Our annual deliberations, in which

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

every State participates on an equal footing, are part of the process for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. They contribute to the understanding of the complex problems that plague the world, to their resolution, and also to the relaxation of tension. The fact that peoples of diverse political, economic and cultural persuasions come together to discuss common problems is itself a positive step. The absence of dialogue can only spell disaster and confrontation. These annual gatherings, if they let out steam, as our critics claim, play a constructive role in the maintenance of peace and prevention of wars.

In the same vein, our endeavours to foster international co-operation have borne fruit, albeit modestly, at the level of the specialized agencies. The disappearance of smallpox from the face of the earth is a living testimony to the benefits of interdependence and global co-operation. Today, thanks to technology, our planet has become a tiny place for all to live in. The horizons of cosmic and spatial explorations have extended to infinity. Indeed, man's human resources are immense and his potentialities unlimited. But those attributes can be fully developed and exploited only within secure and peaceful environs whose custodian is society itself. Man exists within society and not outside it. Similarly, individual nations can prosper within the community of nations, not outside it. It is only when we recognize this indispensable organic whole that we can redouble our collective endeavours to reap the benefits of science for the good of all mankind. We remain fully convinced that multilateralism, whose concrete expression is the United Nations, and not unilateralism, constitutes the soundest basis for international peace, co-operation and development.

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

What are the moral foundations and strength of the United Nations? It is the absence of fascism, racism, colonialism, poverty and wars. It must, we submit, be the presence of peace.

Forty years ago, all freedom loving peoples of the world united to wage relentless struggles against the forces of fascism. It was out of this decisive victory over the pestilence of racial arrogance that this Organization was born. It was then hoped that never again would that evil be permitted to rear its ugly head. We note with much regret that history has disproved us.

In southern Africa a crisis is deepening - a crisis reared by racism and apartheid, on the one hand, and colonialism and state terrorism, on the other. We in Africa observe the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations with mixed and painful feelings. We are imbued with forebodings of betrayal and abandonment. We are betrayed because this Organization has failed to deliver freedom and self-determination to the oppressed peoples of South Africa and Namibia. We are abandoned because some Members of the United Nations that were allies with us during the campaign against Hitlerite fascism are now in alliance with racist South Africa that dehumanizes millions of peoples. We see unrepentent hypocrisy of gigantic proportions - an unholy alliance that drowns the popular aspirations of a people's right to freedom and human dignity. We see a fraternity between apartheid and those who routinely trade in the rhetoric and slogans of human rights and democracy - a fraternity that stands in the way of the South African and Namibian peoples' struggle for freedom, self-determination and human decency.

But let there be no lingering doubts about the issues before us: the problems that bedevil southern Africa are not those of communism, as some would like us to believe. Nor can they be reduced to the quest for strategic targets in the

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

search for global dominance and hegemonic interests which we must roundly denounce. Stripped of its pretensions, the continued collaboration between racist South Africa and its allies smacks of scientifically dubious Darwinian philosophical underpinnings.

As we mark the fortieth anniversary of its founding, history confers harsh judgement upon the United Nations for its benign neglect in the face of the pernicious system of apartheid. The United Nations stands to be accused for its failure to live up to the fundamental principles from which it drew its inspiration. This Organization has performed reasonably well in the process of decolonization. Surely it could do better still. In the fortieth year, the United Nations would have acquitted itself commendably if it had expelled the racist regime from our midst and imposed comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa for its illegal occupation of Namibia, its policies of aggression and destabilization towards neighbouring States and for its abhorrent practices of apartheid, which runs counter to the most elementary values of humanity.

We agree with our Secretary-General that the permanent members of the Security Council should use their membership to make the Council more the guardian of peace it was designed to be and to make deliberate and concerted efforts to solve one or two major world problems. Apartheid and colonialism are in this category of today's problems. But this can be heeded to only if the veto is used to serve the original purposes it was meant for, namely to punish aggressors and not to shield them; to defend the weak and the aggrieved and not to pave the way for international lawlessness. The utter failure of the Security Council to act resolutely and restore peace in areas of tension is a typical example of how our Organization has been perverted from its original objectives. It is a classical

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

illustration where, instead of dancing to the collective tune and the will of the international majority, our institution and its branches have been held hostage to the selfish whims and interests of the most powerful. Instead, the world has been treated to all sorts of unilateral embargoes directed at some of the most undeserving Members of this Organization.

Writing hundreds of years ago, a European novelist of great repute advised that war is not polite recreation but the vilest thing in life, and we ought to understand that and not play at war. Those words of wisdom by Leo Tolstoy were true then and they remain valid today. By swearing to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, the United Nations was living up to that novelty.

Nevertheless, no sooner was the machinery for the collective security system of the United Nations completed than forces emerged on the scene to undermine this noble objective of the maintenance of international peace and security. The adverse consequences of this development have been grave: mutual trust and confidence amongst nations progressively waned; ideological and political struggles re-surfaced with the attendant quest for world domination and hegemony. In such a precarious situation the strong would surely win, just as the weak would certainly perish.

Ironically, the world which was supposed to be a heaven of peace is today a prisoner. It is a hostage besieged by thousands of nuclear weapons. Our planet is haunted by the pendulum of nuclear horror that hovers above our heads. Either way it swings, the world runs the risk of detonating its own destruction. The philosophy of nuclear deterrence has overtaken that of peace and harmony. Security is perceived through the binoculars of nuclear rivalry and supremacy. The result is self-evident: for 40 years real peace has eluded mankind; though wars of global dimensions have been averted, the South, which has become a testing and dumping

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

ground for conventional weapons is dotted with social strifes and political unrest. In the face of this polluted international atmosphere, the United Nations is yet to conclude a single effective multilateral treaty on disarmament for the sake of international peace and security.

Thus, today, the Security Council, that repository of international peace and security, is in paralysis. Hence the persistent failure of our Organization to take decisive action in not only fulfilling the objectives that provided its moral foundation but also in resolving the pressing problems of hunger and poverty. Yet, the United Nations, its Security Council or any other of its organs was never conceived, let alone contemplated, to oversee or manage competition, either between its few powerful members or between them and the vulnerable majority. On the contrary, it was created to be a vehicle for international co-operation and harmony, a medium for the conquest of poverty and the establishment of social equity and justice.

Our concern then at this stage must be understandable. It is the increasing tendency by some Members of our Organization to move the United Nations to serve the very objectives for which it was not established and the danger posed to our Organization by unilateralism in which some powerful Members of our Organization seek comfort. We must tirelessly fight to counteract such manoeuvres and restore the authority, legitimacy and respectability of the United Nations. This must be, in the fortieth year of this Organization, the overriding task of all those who stand for international collectivism. This is why Uganda advocates the creation of an international regime under the United Nations to manage the affairs and resources of Antarctica.

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

Among those that readily come to mind are resolutions 1803 (XVII) of 14 December 1962 and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, on permanent sovereignty over natural resources and the establishment of a new international economic order respectively. Those resolutions not only affirm the sovereign right of every State to dispose of its wealth and its natural resources in accordance with its national interests but also emphasize the urgent need for the establishment of a new international economic order based on equity, sovereign equality and interdependence in order to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and the poor countries. Regrettably that noble ideal has been honoured more in the breach than in its fulfilment.

Today the United Nations boasts 159 Member States. Curiously, however, it is a community of two nations in that it replays Charles Dickens' celebrated tune, "A Tale of Two Cities". We have a few extremely rich nations coexisting uneasily with a vast majority of poor nations. We recount this painful truth with a sense of bitterness. But what is even more disturbing to us is the fact that not only has our Organization made little headway in redressing these economic and social inequalities between the affluent and the dejected but it is also a cruel truth that some Members of this very Organization are bent on sabotaging the concerted efforts of the international community to address this grave matter in a collective and comprehensive manner. This sabotage has assumed various forms.

First, multilateral organs established so that the rich can popularize scientific knowledge among the poor have been increasingly used as policemen to ensure that those things do not reach the developing countries. And the few that have successfully resisted such undue pressures have been subjected to unwarranted ostracism and slurs. Secondly, some of those agencies, instead of improving the welfare and social conditions of the poor, have promoted programmes that, far from liberating our peoples from poverty, drive them further into social enslavement.

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

Thirdly, international institutions, instead of serving the collective interests of Member States of the United Nations as a whole, are increasingly being used as coercive political and economic instruments to force poor nations to conform with particular political and economic systems that may not only have contributed to but also perpetuated the social deprivation and turmoil to which our countries have been condemned.

Put more candidly, the real issue now at stake is not whether more debt burdens are extended to us but whether we can continue to shoulder the harsh conditions inherent in these traps. We keep on asking whether these staggering debts actually enhance or undermine our national independence. The truth of the matter is that our socio-economic conditions are worsening and our national sovereignty stands in danger. To add insult to injury, veiled threats have not infrequently been issued to certain countries and regions that, should they withhold their natural resources, those areas will be turned into theatres of war. If then, in regard to all the above, one squares up the attempts by some Members of our Organization to use food as a weapon against starving peoples just because the policies of their Governments do not lend themselves to the pleasure of some of us, then surely one must conclude that the moral foundation of the United Nations is seriously threatened.

The United Nations, in which we repose our trust and security, must outright not only condemn political and military intervention but also guard us against the economic coercion and intervention that undermine our national independence and security. It must institute effective measures through its Security Council to guarantee the safety of its small and vulnerable Members and insulate them against the encroachment of the strong.

I have attempted to capture the totality of our frustrations arising from the inability of the Organization effectively to discharge its responsibilities due to

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

the systematic policies of unilateralism embarked upon by some of its Members, policies which negate the cherished principles of this world body.

Let there be no mistakes about this. We did not expect miracles from the United Nations, whose constituents are in any case independent sovereign States. On the other hand, we did not expect too little from it either. But despair we must not. We are here to revitalize the United Nations, not to sound its death knell. Despite its weaknesses - weaknesses that are perhaps more attributable to its Members than to the Organization itself - the United Nations is the only alternative to international anarchy. We must rededicate ourselves to maintenance of the rule of law in international relations through strict observance of the Charter of the United Nations and effective application of the collective security system it provides. All States must abide by the principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States, respect for the independence and sovereignty of States and respect for the right to self-determination and independence of all peoples. It is the obligation of all States under international law to abide by these principles. I wish therefore to echo the broad conclusions and recommendations contained in document A/40/553, on the comprehensive concepts of security.

One of the primary tasks of the United Nations is to maintain and strengthen international peace and security. Security is a condition in which there is no danger of military attack, political pressure or economic coercion - a condition in which States can freely pursue their own development and progress. International security is thus the result and sum total of the security of each and every State member of the international community. International security cannot be attained without full international co-operation. Interdependence rather than unilateralism must therefore be our guiding principle and the United Nations its custodian.

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

This is the most timely moment for all of us individually and collectively to rededicate ourselves to the promotion of the ideals of peace, not war; harmony, not discord; dialogue, not recriminations. To these lofty objectives Member States must rededicate themselves. In this spirit I reaffirm Uganda's unflinching support for and commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations.

AGENDA ITEM 70 (continued)

QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA: GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION UPON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/C.1/40/L.82, A/C.1/40/L.83, L.84 and L.85)

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the Committee's decision, we shall now resume the consideration of and action on draft resolutions under agenda item 70, "Question of Antarctica". In accordance with established practice, I shall first call on those delegations wishing to make statements other than explanations of vote.

Mr. ZAIN (Malaysia): I should like to begin, if I may, by saying on behalf the sponsors how very sorry we are that, despite protracted and diligent efforts by the interested delegations, it has not been possible to present to the Committee a draft resolution which can expect adoption by consensus. That we failed was not for want of trying or of goodwill. In connection with these efforts I should like to express my own gratitude to all concerned on both sides who did their utmost to accommodate each other's viewpoints and concerns. In particular I should like to express my warm admiration and thanks to Ambassador Woolcott of Australia, who negotiated on behalf of the Consultative Parties as their New York chairman, for his goodwill and understanding as well as for his skill and persistence during these sometimes rather difficult negotiations.

(Mr. Zain, Malaysia)

This is not the place to examine and analyse the differences which finally made a consensus impossible. I would only say now that a companion of document L.84 with the other draft resolutions before the Committee will, I believe, show that our differences were in the end quite small, but also, we must acknowledge, quite significant. Despite our failure to reach consensus, I draw some consolation from the fact that there were many areas of agreement on which we, on our side, have tried to build our draft resolutions which are now before the Committee. In particular, I wish to emphasize that we have done nothing which could be said to jeopardize or undermine the present system. In this connection, I would also emphasize that although a consensus resolution has not been possible, we have not gone back to our preferred position which we took at the beginning of the negotiations, precisely because we do not want to foreclose the possibility of future co-operation with the Consultative Parties.

I turn now to the draft resolution itself which is contained in document L.82 and which I now have the honour to introduce on behalf of the sponsors. In essence, the draft resolution asks for additional information to supplement the earlier study by the Secretary-General by updating and expanding it, because of our conviction as stated in two previous resolutions of this Committee and the General Assembly, which were adopted by consensus, "of the advantages of a better knowledge of Antarctica".

The preambular paragraphs are, for the most part, self-explanatory. In fact, the first eight are practically identical with those of previous resolutions of the General Assembly and only contain textual revisions essentially for purposes of updating.

The ninth and tenth preambular paragraphs reflect a sentiment which was generally expressed in the course of the debate: that Antarctica is important to mankind. We thought it worthwhile that this should be explicitly stated, from

(Mr. Zain, Malaysia)

which it follows that mankind as a whole has a interest in Antarctica - in its management, exploration and peaceful use.

The eleventh preambular paragraph refers to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Here I should like to make an oral revision of a textual character: namely that the words "the coming into force" should in fact be deleted. The paragraph would then read: "Bearing in mind the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,".

The twelfth preambular paragraph once again expresses appreciation for the Secretary-General's study, and the thirteenth preambular paragraph refers to the desirability of examining further certain issues affecting Antarctica.

These issues are set out in operative paragraph 1 and are dealt with in three parts.

The first deals with "the availability of information from the Consultative Parties to the United Nations, on their respective activities in, and their deliberations regarding, Antarctica". Much has been said by the Consultative Parties about what they have done to keep the United Nations informed, and to our mind it would indeed be useful to have this aspect of the matter - what has often been referred to as the "information flow" - more fully set out. The section on the exchange of information in the Secretary-General's report refers essentially to exchanges between the Treaty Parties, and it seems clear to us that this gap in the study relating to the information flow from the Treaty Parties to the United Nations should be filled. As my delegation stated in this debate,

"... it would be useful to examine further the information currently available to the United Nations, not only with regard to the regular biennial meetings of the Consultative Parties, but also with regard to the special consultative meetings, including the current negotiations on a minerals régime, as well as more introductory background information on the operations of the Antarctic Treaty system, the activities of the respective Treaty Parties in Antarctica,

(Mr. Zain, Malaysia)

reports on compliance with the provisions and regulations of the Antarctic Treaty System and so on, in order to enable us all to be more familiar with what is going on in Antarctica." (A/C.1/40/PV.48, p. 14-15)

The second area deals with "the involvement of the relevant specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations in the Antarctic Treaty system". Here again, I would refer to the Secretary-General's report which does contain useful information on international scientific co-operation, including the scientific activities of international organizations in Antarctica. As my delegation stated in the course of this debate, we believe these references could be further elaborated, from which we would all benefit. We should like to know in some detail how at present the relevant specialized agencies and other international organizations which deal with matters such as scientific research, the environment, meteorology, telecommunications, fisheries, natural resources and so on are involved with the Antarctic Treaty system. These would include specialized agencies and intergovernmental bodies such as UNESCO and its intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Committee on Natural Resources, as well as other organizations outside the United Nations system, such as the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) and the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and the International Whaling Commission (IWC). We believe it would also be useful to examine how their involvement could be appropriately expanded and deepened.

The third area relates to "the significance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in the Southern Ocean". We have done so because the Secretary-General's study did not truly cover this area and it is one which has

(Mr. Zain, Malaysia)

great relevance to the relationship between the United Nations system and the future of Antarctica. I wish to underscore in this regard that we have used the term "Southern Ocean" in a broad rather than a restricted sense. We therefore mean all the physical elements of the ocean space surrounding the Antarctic continent, including the continental shelf and the ocean floor. In short, the study should concern the way in which the Convention applies to the Southern Ocean in the broad sense I have indicated, without leaving aside, of course, the fact that the Antarctic Treaty system exists and, further, that territorial claims have been laid to parts of Antarctica. The Law of the Sea Convention has been elaborated and adopted under the auspices of the United Nations, which is committed to the success of its implementation when it enters into force. To this end there exists an office under the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea on whom we have no doubt the Secretary-General would wish to rely in conducting this part of the study.

(Mr. Zain, Malaysia)

Paragraph 2 deals with the international bodies and organizations the Secretary-General should consult in the implementation of the draft resolution. It follows the pattern established in the consensus resolution of 1983, but includes also a reference to seeking the co-operation of the relevant non-governmental organizations. In our view this would embrace international organizations such as Greenpeace International, the Antarctica Southern Ocean Coalition, Friends of the Earth and the World Wildlife Fund, which have shown a deep interest and have been involved in Antarctic matters. Here again, as a minor textual amendment, I would note that the reference to "the relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies" should, for the sake of consistency, read "the relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations".

In paragraph 3, the Assembly would request the submission of the study at its forty-first session. We are all aware of the enormous effort that went into the 1984 study, despite which it could not be made available until just before the debate in this Committee. However, our present proposal relates merely to updating and expanding the 1984 report in the ways I have indicated. We therefore believe and very much hope that the study will be ready in good time, before the forty-first session, to enable delegations to engage in a substantive debate at that session.

Paragraph 4 is self-explanatory; in it the Assembly would decide to include the item in the provisional agenda of its forty-first session.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize once more that we have tried to build this draft resolution on many of the areas of agreement which could be discerned in the course of the negotiations, although it would be fair to admit that such agreement on the part of the Consultative Parties was conditional on agreement in other areas. But more fundamentally, I emphasize again that nothing in the present draft resolution - which, I repeat, essentially seeks additional information - can or

(Mr. Zain, Malaysia)

should be interpreted as an attempt to jeopardize or undermine the present Antarctic Treaty system.

Speaking personally, my involvement in this subject, particularly here in the United Nations over the past two years - during which I have learnt a lot and have developed a great deal of respect for those involved in dealing with Antarctic matters - has convinced me deeply that in the final analysis the objectives in Antarctica of all of us, Treaty parties and non-parties alike, are not irreconcilable. I should like to regard our present failure to reach consensus as only a detour from the path towards that objective. Malaysia for its part once again commits itself to working with all concerned to get us all back on the path.

Mr. SAEED (Pakistan): This third debate on the question of Antarctica has affirmed the general awakening of interest in that vast, important and uninhabited area of the world. A primary issue raised by all delegations during our debate was the negotiations under way among Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty on a minerals régime for Antarctica. The unanimous decision of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit, declaring Antarctica to be the common heritage of mankind, is closely related to the question of the mineral resources of the region. Indeed, all States here have acknowledged the interest of all mankind in Antarctica. That interest, we all understand, is not merely theoretical or academic. It is related to the benefits which may be derived from the exploitation of the resources of Antarctica, including the possible future exploitation of Antarctica's minerals.

The position of Pakistan and the other sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/40/L.83 is that the benefits of the exploitation of Antarctica's resources should be shared equitably by all nations and peoples. The negotiations on a minerals régime which have been opened by the Consultative Parties is a new element to be added to the existing Antarctic Treaty system.

(Mr. Saeed, Pakistan)

The concerns regarding these negotiations which have been voiced in our debate by many delegations arise from several factors. First of all, there is the closed nature of the negotiations among the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. We have noted, of course, that as an outcome of the General Assembly's discussions, the non-consultative parties have recently been associated with the talks on a minerals régime. However, that participation by the non-consultative parties is thus far on an unequal footing. But the non-parties to the Treaty have not been consulted at all. The sponsors of the present draft resolution cannot expect that the interests of all mankind will be preserved in a régime negotiated by a few States only.

That is borne out by some of the information which has been available to countries outside the Antarctic Treaty system. First, it has been reported that there remains disagreement among Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties about the need for and scope of a future minerals régime in Antarctica. Secondly, the eight claimant States apparently want special status in the minerals régime according them a privileged position with regard to the minerals of Antarctica. Thirdly, it has been pointed out that some of the research activities conducted by certain Consultative Parties were intended to identify resource-bearing structures and that some oil-bearing structures have already been identified. Fourthly, it has been conjectured that an emphasis on claims regarding the minerals of Antarctica and on commercial exploitation of those minerals could erode the original values of the Antarctic Treaty.

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/40/L.83, which I have the honour of introducing on behalf of Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Mali, Nigeria, Oman, Rwanda, Sri Lanka and my own delegation, seeks to have the General Assembly take action to avoid any possible negative aspects arising from the negotiations on a minerals régime in Antarctica. The preambular paragraphs of the

(Mr. Saeed, Pakistan)

draft resolution recall the background of this issue, including the fact that restricted negotiations are being held on this issue among the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties, with the non-consultative parties as observers.

In operative paragraph 1, the General Assembly would affirm what we believe should be generally acceptable principles regarding the nature of any future minerals régime relating to Antarctica. It would affirm that any exploitation of the resources of Antarctica should ensure the maintenance of international peace and security in Antarctica, the protection of its environment, the non-appropriation and conservation of its resources and the international management and equitable sharing of the benefits of such exploitation.

In paragraph 2, the Assembly would invite the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to inform the Secretary-General of their negotiations.

In paragraph 3, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit a report containing the replies he receives for consideration at the next session of the General Assembly. For that purpose, the Assembly would finally decide to include the question of Antarctica on the agenda of its forty-first session.

The sponsors believe that the adoption of this draft resolution, and compliance with its provisions - especially by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties - would help create mutual trust and confidence among Parties and non-parties to the Antarctic Treaty regarding a future minerals régime in Antarctica. We hope that reaffirmation by the General Assembly of the principles of equity and justice will also help ensure that the benefits of any future exploitation of the minerals of Antarctica will be universally and equitably shared by all mankind.

Mr. BWAKIRA (Burundi) (interpretation from French): A few days ago, draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.85 was submitted on behalf of the Group of African States by the representative of Mauritius, who acted as Chairman of that Group for November.

In his absence, it is my honour today to introduce that draft resolution on behalf of the Group of African States. Informal consultations have been under way with other regional groups, and it has been the hope of the African Group that this draft resolution, on the question of Antarctica, would be the result of consensus. This draft resolution is of major importance to Africa; it expresses the concern of all the African countries members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at the continued presence of the apartheid régime of South Africa at the meetings of Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty. It is not the intention of the African Group to attack the Treaty; far from it. It is our wish that the Consultative Parties expel the apartheid régime, which defies the resolutions of the United Nations and the norms of international law, and which has been suspended by the General Assembly.

We therefore appeal urgently to the members of the First Committee to vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.85, which, I repeat, is of considerable importance to Africa.

Mr. WOOLCOTT (Australia): I am speaking today in my capacity as Chairman of the New York group of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. I should like to stress that I am not speaking as the Permanent Representative of Australia.

It is a matter of great regret to members of the Antarctic Treaty that the tradition of consensus decision-making, which has been followed since the question of Antarctica was first included in the agenda of the United Nations, at the thirty-eighth session, has this year for the first time been broken. The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have been firm in their determination to proceed by

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

consensus and have negotiated earnestly towards that end with Malaysia and with some other delegations.

Draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.84 is the product of those negotiations. It represents a compromise which posed difficulties for the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties but which they would have been prepared to accept, to enable the Committee to proceed by consensus. We regret that, despite our very best efforts, it was not possible to reach agreement on that draft resolution. That draft resolution was submitted and has remained under consideration until the last moment in the hope of achieving consensus. But I am now obliged on behalf of the Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty to withdraw draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.84.

The Consultative Parties have decided not to participate in the voting on draft resolutions A/C.1/40/L.82, L.83 and L.85. However, one or two delegations either wish to reflect their positions on the issue raised by draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.85 or to abstain in the vote rather than not to participate. That action on their part does not affect their positions on the functioning of the Antarctic Treaty.

In conclusion, the Consultative Parties regret that the proponents of the draft resolutions were not in the end prepared to abide by the consensus traditions that have been established in the handling of this item in previous years. The Consultative Parties are firmly of the view that consensus offers the only realistic basis for the consideration of Antarctica by the General Assembly. Accordingly, they will be compelled to reconsider their further participation in the consideration of this item unless consensus can be restored.

On behalf of the Treaty Parties, I would also ask that roll-call votes be taken on the draft resolutions on which we shall be voting, so that non-participation may be correctly recorded.

Mr. MGBOKWERE (Nigeria): We have listened with a great deal of interest to the debate on the question of Antarctica. Nigeria fully and unequivocally supports the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/40/L.85 of 27 November 1985.

It will be recalled that in my statement on this subject on 26 November 1985 I underlined that South Africa's inclusion among the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties raised serious political and moral questions. What the draft resolution before us is seeking to achieve is part of the legitimate moral and political campaign of the international community to bring pressure to bear on the pariah régime to compel it to respect human dignity in South Africa itself and to end its illegal occupation of Namibia. We are asking that our conviction - the conviction of our Organization - that the freedom we all nurture and cherish should triumph over the forces of apartheid.

The Pretoria régime has been suspended from participation in the work of the General Assembly, because we all feel deep repugnance at the apartheid system. South Africa has consistently disregarded all the resolutions of our Organization seeking to achieve a reform in South Africa's society in conformity with the United Nations Charter. It has done that with the utmost abandon and disdain.

Therefore, we are glad to be told by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties that their activities in Antarctica are conducted in accordance, inter alia, with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and of promoting international co-operation for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

(Mr. Mgbokwere, Nigeria)

We must say that the participation of a régime that has dispossessed its inhabitants of their birthright on the basis of its contempt for the black race and has subjected them to economic deprivation, a régime that wages street battles in the capitals of its neighbours without provocation, a régime that has on several occasions and is still carrying out acts of subversion, cannot be in the interests of the purposes and principles of the Charter. Its acts have been accepted as threats to international peace and security. We fail to see how some of our good friends can sit down to share comradeship with the Pretoria régime, particularly at this point in time when there is a spontaneous international demand for the diplomatic, economic and political isolation of that régime.

We cannot but pay high tribute to some of the Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty for their contribution to freedom and justice in Africa, as I have said in the debates. We feel that it is in the interest of humanity that we continue to redouble our efforts in achieving our objective of establishing a non-racial society in South Africa. It is against that background that we are merely urging the Consultative Parties to exclude the racist apartheid régime of South Africa from participation in their meetings at the earliest possible date. The emphasis is on that - "the earliest possible date". I therefore hope that the Committee will have no difficulty in supporting the draft resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon representatives who wish to make statements in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. KIRSCH (Canada) (interpretation from French): In its statement last Friday, my delegation stressed the importance of basing any General Assembly resolution on the question of Antarctica on general agreement. My delegation regrets that it has not been possible to reach such agreement. In demonstrating our inability to reach agreement on the appropriate way to deal with this question in the future, we are in no way contributing to the functioning of the Antarctic

(Mr. Kirsch, Canada)

Treaty, whose contribution to international peace and security and scientific co-operation, the preservation of Antarctic resources and the protection of its environment, is widely recognized.

Instead, we are creating a gap between the Parties to that Treaty and the rest of the international community rather than adopting measures that could benefit the international community through the Antarctic Treaty system. Because of the unproductive nature of the draft resolutions submitted to the First Committee, Canada will therefore abstain on principle in the votes on draft resolutions A/C.1/40/L.82, L.83 and L.85.

Mr. TREVES (Italy): On behalf of the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden, I should like to express our deep concern at the fact that this year consensus could not be obtained in the Committee's deliberations on Antarctica. In this situation we, as States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty, have not found it possible, exceptionally, to participate in the vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/40/L.82, L.83 and L.85.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.82, as orally revised. This draft resolution has 13 sponsors and was introduced by the representative of Malaysia at the fifty-fifth meeting of the First Committee on 2 December 1985. The sponsors are: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Ghana, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mali, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda and Sri Lanka.

Before proceeding, I call upon the Secretary to read out a statement.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): In connection with draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.82, which has now undergone oral revisions of a technical nature, I have been asked to bring to the attention of the First Committee the following statement:

(Mr. Kheradi, Secretary of the Committee)

"Should the General Assembly decide to adopt draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.82 the Secretary-General would assign responsibility for its implementation to the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, which would undertake the activities related to the draft resolution under the provisions included in programme element 2.3, 'Peace, security and co-operation in the sea and ocean areas', output (II), 'Reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly as required by legislative action' of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987. The activities can be undertaken without affecting the delivery of outputs in the approved programme of work; thus no programme budget implications statement would be required in respect of draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.82."

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.82, as orally revised. A roll-call vote has been requested.

A roll-call vote was taken.

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

In favour: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: None

Abstaining: Austria, Canada, China, Haiti, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Samoa, Turkey

Draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.82, as orally revised, was adopted by 80 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.\*

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.83. This draft resolution has 13 sponsors and was introduced by the representative of Pakistan at the 55th meeting of the First Committee on 2 December 1985. The sponsors are: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mali, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Rwanda and Sri Lanka.

A roll-call vote has been requested.

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\*During the course of the roll-call vote Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay announced that they were not participating.

A roll-call vote was taken.

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

In favour: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: None

Abstaining: Austria, Canada, China, Haiti, Ireland, Luxembourg, Peru, Portugal, Samoa, Turkey

Draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.83 was adopted by 78 votes to none, with 10 abstentions.\*

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.85. It was introduced by the representative of Burundi on behalf of the Group of African States at the 55th meeting, on 2 December 1985.

A roll-call vote has been requested.

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\*During the course of the roll-call vote Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay announced that they were not participating.

A roll-call vote was taken.

The German Democratic Republic, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: None

Abstaining: Austria, Canada, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malawi, Portugal, Samoa, Swaziland, Turkey

Draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.85 was adopted by 81 votes to none, with 9

abstentions.\*

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call now on those representatives wishing to explain their votes after the voting.

Mr. HUANG Jiahua (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation abstained in the votes on draft resolutions A/C.1/40/L.82 and L.83. On the basis of the Chinese Government's consistent political stand of supporting the African people in their struggle against the apartheid policy of the South African authorities, the Chinese delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.85.

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\*During the course of the roll-call vote Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Lesotho, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay announced that they were not participating.

(Mr. Huang Jiahua, China)

We wish to make the following explanations. First, the Chinese Government has consistently maintained that Antarctica should always be used for peaceful purposes and should never become an arena of international disputes, so that it may forever serve international peace, the development of science, and the common interests of mankind. The purposes and principles of the existing Antarctic Treaty embody the above spirit and requirements. Being a party to the Antarctic Treaty, China supports the purposes and principles of the Treaty and will continue to work together with the other Parties to the Treaty for their implementation.

(Mr. Huang Jiahua, China)

At the same time, we also hope that serious consideration will be given to reasonable proposals which are conducive to the realization of the purposes and principles of the Antarctic Treaty and the expansion of amicable international co-operation in Antarctica, so that it may better serve the whole of mankind.

Secondly, consideration of the question of Antarctica at the previous two sessions of the General Assembly showed that the discussion was useful notwithstanding differences in the understanding of the question. The Chinese delegation deeply regrets the fact that no consensus was reached this year by the parties concerned. We are convinced, however, that consensus will be possible as long as all parties cherish common aspirations and try to seek common ground, while setting differences aside.

Thirdly, pending a consensus among the parties concerned, our actions on the question of Antarctica should be as helpful as possible in the creation of a harmonious atmosphere, in the avoidance of confrontation, and in continued dialogue. Our votes on draft resolutions A/C.1/40/L.82, L.83 and L.85 were all based on that fundamental consideration.

The Chinese delegation sincerely hopes that the above position of China will be helpful in the quest for the possible restoration of consensus among the countries concerned, including all the Consultative Parties, non-consultative parties and non-parties to the Antarctic Treaty.

Mr. RIVERA (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): As we pointed out in the views we conveyed to the Secretary-General in 1984 on the question of Antarctica, my country believes that all States Members of this Organization have a natural interest in the fate of that continent. The decision by the General Assembly to consider this question reflects that interest, and we support it. Thus, it is our understanding that draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.82, which has just been adopted, in no way interferes with the purposes and objectives of the Antarctic Treaty or

(Mr. Rivera, Peru)

attempts to undermine its validity and implementation. On the contrary, it is intended to develop and up-date information on the process being carried out with respect to Antarctica, in which a great part of the international community has shown growing interest. That can be facilitated through means and resources available to the United Nations.

Mr. GEZER (Turkey): We have evaluated this debate from two angles. On the one hand, we cannot but agree with the view that the Antarctic Treaty is a valid treaty and that we should not contest its validity. On the other hand, we share the view that the interests of the international community as a whole are involved in activities regarding Antarctica. The Antarctic régime needs to be adapted to those interests, but we do not consider that that purpose will be served by the adoption of resolutions not reflecting consensus.

Nor can we support - whatever our abhorrence of the South African régime - a recommendation by the United Nations to the Consultative Parties concerning the membership of the Treaty.

It is for those reasons that we abstained in the votes on all three draft resolutions.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.