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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 28th MEETING

Chairman:

Mr. MROZIEWICZ

(Poland)

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ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 47 TO 65 (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS UNDER ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee for an announcement.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to inform the Committee that the following countries have joined in sponsoring the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.3: Romania;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.4: Brazil and Ukraine;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.5: Argentina;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.7: Bolivia and Indonesia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.9: Bolivia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Greece, Romania and France;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.11: Bolivia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.13: Bolivia and Lao People's Democratic Republic;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.15: Bolivia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.16: Bolivia and Chile;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.17: United States of America;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.18: Bolivia and Romania;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.19: Bolivia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.20: Bolivia and Lao People's Democratic Republic;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.21: Bolivia and Lao People's Democratic Republic;

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Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.23: Bolivia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.25: Bolivia and Lao People's Democratic Republic;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.26: Bolivia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.27: Bolivia and Brazil;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.28: Bolivia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.29: Bolivia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.31: Bolivia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.32: Bolivia;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.33: Cuba, Bolivia, Germany, Philippines and Lao People's Democratic Republic;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.34: Peru;

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.36: Chile, Cyprus and Uruguay; and

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.40: Bolivia.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Finland, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.5.

Mr. PATOKALLIO (Finland): Draft resolution A/46/C.1/L.5, which I have the honour to introduce today, is entitled "Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques" (ENMOD). The draft resolution reflects the results of the consultations which were held by the parties to the ENMOD Convention on 25 October. In this connection, let me welcome the announcement just made by the Secretary of the Committee that Argentina has joined as a sponsor of this draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.5 notes in its operative paragraph 1 that a majority of States parties to the ENMOD Convention have expressed the wish to

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convene the Second Review Conference of the Parties to this Convention in September 1992 and requests the Secretary-General, as Depositary of the Convention, to begin practical preparations in this regard.

In line with the decision already taken by the First Review Conference in 1984, the Second Review Conference will be held in Geneva. There seems to be widespread agreement that the Preparatory Committee to be established in due course would need to meet only once, most probably in April 1992 in Geneva.

In operative paragraph 2 the Secretary-General is requested to provide for the usual secretariat services required for a review conference.

Operative paragraph 3 notes, as is also customary, that the costs of the Review Conference and its preparations will be borne by the States parties.

By September 1992, eight years will have elapsed since the First Review Conference of the ENMOD Convention. By the standards for reviewing multilateral disarmament treaties, eight years is a long interval. There have been many important political and technological developments since 1984. In our view, these developments have had, and will continue to have, an impact on the ENMOD Convention and its future. That impact needs to be assessed and reviewed by the States parties in an organized way. That is why Finland, which was President of the First Review Conference, has taken the initiative for the convening of the Second Review Conference of the ENMOD Convention next year.

Let me add in this connection that recent events, the intentional environmental destruction in the course of the Persian Gulf War, have reinforced our conviction that there is indeed a need to assess what these and other developments may mean in terms of the ENMOD Convention. As a matter of

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principle, we maintain that dormant disarmament treaties are in nobody's interest, whether parties or not.

Destruction of the environment as a means of warfare is an urgent issue that requires, and is in fact getting, attention in many forums and from many perspectives. The issue is currently being dealt with in the Sixth Committee from the perspective of international humanitarian law. Dealing with it in the context of the ENMOD Convention offers a complementary perspective, that of arms control and disarmament.

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In addition to substantive reasons, the timing of the Second Review Conference of the ENMOD Convention has to take into account other important items on the international disarmament agenda, specifically the timing of other review conferences. From that point of view also, September 1992 is a good time to review the ENMOD Convention for the second time.

Before concluding, I should like to note that according to the latest information available - in document A/46/604 - the ENMOD Convention has been ratified by 54 States and signed but not ratified by another 17 States. Echoing what is also found in the first preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.5 the delegation of Finland expresses the hope for the widest possible adherence to the Convention before the Second Review Conference.

In a similar vein, Finland expresses the hope that draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.5 will be adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Mr. CHIRILA (Romania) (interpretation from French): At this session of the General Assembly, conventional disarmament, especially concern about excessive and destabilizing transfers, has pride of place in the work of the First Committee. My delegation, together with other delegations, considers that the present international climate gives an excellent opportunity to try to increase openness and transparency in armaments so as to strengthen confidence and regional and international security and stability with a view to contributing to moderation in military production and in arms transfers.

The draft resolution entitled "Transparency in armaments" (A/C.1/46/L.18) presented by the Twelve and Japan under agenda item 60 (b) in our view answers an important political need, the setting up of a universal, non-discriminatory

(Mr. Chirila, Romania)

register for international weapons transfers. We wish to note that operative paragraph 2 fosters transparency in other military matters.

In its statement on 18 October, in the general debate on disarmament matters, my delegation expressed its support for the establishment, under the aegis of the United Nations, of a register of international arms transfers as recommended by the Group of Experts that had dealt with that problem.

May I take this opportunity to state that our delegation has become a co-sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.18, "Transparency in armaments".

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.23, submitted by Colombia and Peru, concerning illicit arms transfers, expresses legitimate concern, especially in parts of the world where there are problems of stability and security. As other delegations have expressed here, I said yesterday in my preliminary comments that we consider that that document offers an important additional approach to the initiative of international arms transfers and transparency in this field.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Austria to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.3.

Mr. STELZER (Austria): Since Austria has the honour to chair the 1991 session of the Disarmament Commission, my delegation would like to introduce the relevant draft resolution (A/C.1/46/L.3).

The draft resolution refers to the report of the Disarmament Commission on its 1991 substantive session, the first session to take place after the Disarmament Commission's reform, adopted in "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission". Thus, the form and content of the draft resolution reflect the implementation of the Disarmament Commission's reform programme and the progress achieved under its reformed structure.

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The 1991 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission took place during a crucial phase in the history of arms control and disarmament. The end of a period of extreme bipolarisation of security concerns and the subsequent democratisation of international relations require a rapid adaptation of old dogmas to new realities. Furthermore, the implementation of the disarmament agreement negotiated within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) has highlighted the possible impact of a regional process on global security issues.

Consequently, the traditional pattern of the domination of global issues and the dependency of regional aspects, within which regional conflicts often reflected the global division of the East-West conflict, has been questioned. This results in a new emphasis on regional aspects of security. Shortly after the regional conference in Europe had initiated a process of sustainable cooperation of two formerly antagonistic military blocs, the conflict in the Gulf - at its outset regional in its military dimension - unified the community of nations and mobilized a global effort to solve the regional problem.

Thus, including the issue of regional approaches in the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission's 1991 substantive session was very timely. The agenda items on objective information on military matters, the process of nuclear disarmament, and the role of science and technology in the context of international security complemented an agenda which could hardly have been more up to date.

When the Disarmament Commission met for its 1991 substantive session, important preconditions for a cooperative security policy at a global level

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were in existence and the substantial deliberations in the four working groups were inspired by an improved understanding of global responsibilities. Progress on the agenda item entitled "Objective information on military matters", a better understanding of the regional aspect of disarmament and an appropriate analysis of the complex issue of science and technology in the context of international security were considered to be most important for the enhancement of international security and the advancement of the disarmament agenda.

The 1991 session of the Disarmament Commission was not expected to produce concrete results in the form of clear recommendations on its agenda items. Given a maximum of three consecutive years to elaborate and, consequently, to submit recommendations on each of the four items on its agenda, this year's substantive session of the Commission was required to accelerate progress towards disarmament by defining all possible aspects of the agenda items, thus preparing for a future consensus on possible recommendations.

The sponsors of the draft resolutions, representing all regional groups, agree on the assessment that the 1991 session of the Commission made considerable progress. Most of the working groups have made substantial progress in the task of formulating recommendations. Although it might be premature to assess the implicit degree of consensus already existing, positions expressed in numerous statements indicated that on many items progress seems to have stopped just short of consensus. As was mentioned in concluding statements, the prospect of another two years at the Commission's

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disposal for deliberations on three agenda items and one more year for the issue of objective information might have diverted efforts from an uncompromising striving for speedy results. This might also have provoked the temporary resurgence of regional interest and the taking of traditional positions which had seemed to have been overcome.

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While operative paragraph 2 of the proposed draft resolution assesses the considerable progress achieved by this year's United Nations Disarmament Commission, most of the operative part deals with the future work of the Commission. The matters specified in the four agenda items which the Disarmament Commission should be mandated to address during 1992 are based on last year's consensus. The remaining paragraphs, on organisational aspects, do not deviate from hitherto generally accepted traditions.

The sponsors of the draft resolution on the Report of the Disarmament Commission anticipate that the resolution will obtain a consensus.

The CHAIRMAN: I call upon the representative of Mexico to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.12.

Mrs. CARVALHO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): It is now generally accepted that we are living in a new era of international relations. The disappearance of military confrontation between the two great Powers and the changes in the main military alliances and their doctrines have made for conditions conducive to progress in disarmament negotiations which, in previous times, were beyond the reach of the international community.

The Conference on Disarmament has none the less not made substantive progress on most items of its agenda, including the comprehensive programme of disarmament. The comprehensive approach to disarmament, designed to achieve the goal of general and complete disarmament, should have greater opportunities for success today than in the past.

Nobody today would agree to leaving disarmament tasks to bilateral or regional efforts alone. We welcome the achievement of partial disarmament measures but we consider it necessary to have a general framework covering all

(Mrs. Carvalho, Mexico)

steps that may appear to be advisable in order to achieve orderly multilateral negotiations agreed by all. This would undoubtedly facilitate our work and provide a better understanding of the various initiatives that have recently been undertaken at different levels. One of the current concerns of the international community has been to strengthen the United Nations role with regard to international peace and security. A comprehensive disarmament programme under the auspices of the United Nations would contribute to that goal.

We believe that we must safeguard the work done during 10 years of negotiations and give ourselves the opportunity to make adjustments to the texts already agreed and solve pending problems in the light of new realities and prospects.

A few days ago the representative of Argentina was reflecting in this very forum on the need to develop a new, operative disarmament agenda setting out specific objectives. The comprehensive programme of disarmament could very well encompass all the initiatives to which he referred but which have not yet found their place in the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.12 "Comprehensive programme of disarmament" - Bolivia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Mexico - consider that now, more than ever before, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament should be resumed at the beginning of the 1992 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. GARCIA MORITAN (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The General Assembly, since the adoption of resolution 3264 (XXIX), has considered it necessary to take whatever measures might be needed to

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"prohibit action to influence the environment and climate for military and other hostile purposes, which are incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health". (resolution 3264 (XXIX), para. 1)

In response to this concern on the part of the international community, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament adopted a multilateral instrument to regulate these issues, which gave rise to the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (ENMOD), concluded in 1977 and in force since 1978. As the representative of Finland recalled this morning, 54 States have ratified the ENMOD Convention, and 17 signatory States are awaiting ratification. That is a clear demonstration of how important it is to stress the necessity of universal adherence to this instrument.

The negotiations in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament showed, as is normal in any process of this type, that there were various approaches to the problem. Some delegations, including those of Argentina and other members of the Group of 21, advocated a prohibition that would be as broad as possible, with the text of the Convention containing a complete ban on environmental warfare instead of a limited prohibition on damage described as "having widespread, long-lasting or severe effects" - the wording used in article 1 of the ENMOD Convention. The ENMOD Convention therefore leaves open disturbing possibilities, particularly as regards the scale of damage and the very definition of the expression "environmental modification techniques". This flexibility in its text could lead to different

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interpretations as to the evaluation of the consequences of such hostile actions. The recent Gulf conflict can serve as evidence of this.

It is not my delegation's intention to analyse this instrument at the present session; rather, we wish to point out that, with the community of nations increasingly concerned about and aware of the requirements of the environment in all fields, we are in complete agreement with the objectives of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/46/L.5, submitted this morning by the delegation of Finland, which so efficiently chaired the First Review Conference of the Convention.

Mrs. URIBE DE LOZANO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): A number of countries have warned for some time now that the modernisation and accumulation of conventional weapons, including delivery systems - having taken on their present proportions and qualitative characteristics through transfers and constant production of these weapons as well as their illicit traffic - have a perilous effect on relations among States and represent one of the gravest obstacles to the establishment of a just and peaceful international order.

Draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.23, which we are introducing today on behalf of Peru and Colombia, entitled "International arms transfers", recognizes this fact and reaffirms the central role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and the commitment of Member States to adopt concrete measures to strengthen that role. The draft also recalls that the final document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, urged major arms recipient and supplier States to consult on the limitation of all types of international transfers of conventional arms.

Our task must be to seek disarmament and should include action to avoid weapons transfers and production leading to excessive accumulation; we must also adopt concrete international measures making it possible to reduce and limit arms transfers, as well as to eradicate illicit arms traffic.

On that basis, the draft resolution calls upon Member States to give high priority to eradicating illicit arms traffic. It also urges, invites, and calls upon States to take various measures, including regional and international cooperation towards that end.

The growing illicit arms traffic is an integral part of an arms trade that involves war, terrorism, organised crime, drug trafficking and mercenary

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greed - factors that cross oceans and continents and adapt to the widest range of diverse situations. For years, we have called the attention of the international community to the consequences of this traffic as a phenomenon that not only exacerbates tensions and threatens national and regional security but has the potential to threaten international peace and security as well.

In this draft resolution, we urge Member States to take all necessary steps to develop an appropriate set of laws and the administrative machinery needed to exert effective control over their arms and military equipment and over their arms imports and exports, so as to prevent these arms from reaching those who conduct illicit trade. Towards that end we also urge States to strengthen existing laws or adopt strict measures for their enforcement, and to cooperate at the international, regional and subregional levels to harmonize relevant laws and administrative procedures, as well as their enforcement measures.

Despite the consequences for many countries that have been victims of this illicit trade, we know more about its impact on society than about the nature of the trade itself. We therefore believe it is important for the countries affected to compile, within the United Nations, information on arms that have been seized by the authorities. That data - to be provided to the Secretary-General - would constitute an analytic basis for exploring ways of eliminating illicit arms traffic.

By the same token, States should provide the Secretary-General with information regarding their policies, laws and administrative procedures with respect to arms exports, imports and procurement, in regard to both the

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authorisation of arms transfers and the prevention of illicit transfers. In this draft resolution we invite Member States to provide such information.

In its sections on illicit arms transfers, the Secretary-General's study recommends specific measures that Member States must take to eliminate this traffic and also gives the United Nations a role to play in the struggle against it. The study welcomes the holding of seminars and meetings to increase awareness of the destructive and destabilizing effects of illicit arms traffic and to deepen understanding of the policies in effect in different countries, so as to facilitate their cooperation.

Since illicit arms traffic is by nature clandestine, it cannot be controlled through a register of arms transfers as proposed in draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.18. For that reason, the draft's sponsors believe that the actions States could take and the ways States could cooperate to eradicate illicit arms traffic should be considered in the Disarmament Commission as soon as possible.

There is no need now to repeat what we have said so many times about the scourge that is illicit arms traffic and the violence it generates. Suffice it to say that the Secretary-General's study condemns such traffic, and that, in accordance with recommendations in that study, measures should be undertaken to eliminate it. We believe that this draft resolution may constitute a step in that direction, and that is why we ask all Governments represented here to give it their support.

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Colombia)

I want to take this opportunity to express thanks for the co-sponsorship of Costa Rica and Bolivia, as well as that of Romania, which has just been announced. I appreciate, too, the support expressed for this draft resolution by a number of other delegations. It encourages us even further in our endeavours to have the draft adopted by consensus.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.